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AESTHETIC-ETHICAL DUPLICITY IN MELVILLE

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

of

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EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SPRING, 1969

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled

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ABSTRACT

The theme of aesthetic-ethical duplicity in Herman Melville is explored in this dissertation in terms of the environment of the existential premises of three notable Christian existentialists: Soren Kierkegaard, Nikholas Berdyaev, and Miguel Unamuno, with basic reference to the first of these. From this inquiry emerges the conclusion that Melville's *truth*, which must "fly like a scared doe in the woodlands," is the primitive *kerygma* of the Gospels held in polemical opposition to what Melville, in common with the existentialist writers cited above, calls "this world of armed and crested lies." Melville's stance is seen to be that pietistic anarchism which in various times and places has been called religious nihilism or *nadaism*, and more recently, Christian existentialism. The treatment of the aesthetic-ethical fusion in Melville's works is based upon Kierkegaard's revelation of the *duplex factum* of his authorship which he made in his *Report to History*. In this book the Danish father of existentialism "drops the guitar," to use his own phrase, and avers that by means of the aesthetic allurements of his pseudonymous works he wanted only to seduce his readers into an ethical concern about themselves. Melville's foible of preaching, his constant digressive interpolations, the dialectics of his immense religious poem, *Clarel*, and

his private confession that he wrote in madness and anguish because an author could not be frank with his readers, are seen as evidence of his suppression of that protodoxy, or *urdoxa*, as his German critics have called it, which he acquired from his frequent "earnest reperusal of the Gospel." The mode of inquiry is in the existential tradition, with a combination of critical and explicative approaches, occasionally interspersed by illuminating theological commentaries. The treatment of the subject expands from the basic premises which are at first posited, sometimes with only a single undocumented supporting phrase from Melville, to a fuller statement of this phrase in context, subjected to varying degrees of discursive analysis. The result is not only a demonstration of the fact of duplicity in Melville's works, but also, hopefully, a significant and original contribution to Melville scholarship, in terms of the conception of Melville's writings as maieutic literature.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
	Foreword	i
	Introduction	1
I.	The Duplicity of Language	16
II.	The Necessity for Duplicity	66
III.	The Mechanics of Duplicity	135
IV.	The Duplicity of Existence	216
	Notes	279
	Bibliography	326

FOREWORD

Herman Melville would no doubt be both shocked and pleased with the attention which is now being given to his work, if he were alive to receive the accolades. He who complained that the world neglected its great men during their lifetimes, found, after the first brief flush of favorable publicity, that he too had failed to achieve contemporary recognition. If the current revival of interest comes too late to reward the author himself, it is nevertheless satisfying to every lover of Melville's exuberant style that this "Milton of America" has now achieved recognition, and a critical attention which shows no signs of waning.

Some of the previous flurries of interest in Melville had died rather quickly, without leaving any permanent results, except as some of the commentaries have been preserved for posterity. At his death in 1891 there was a ripple of reminiscences, and in 1904 a renewed wave of interest, which, however, seems soon to have subsided. It is the surge of interest which began sometime during the first world war which has left an indelible impression, and which, although it was followed by periods of declining interest, seems to have set in motion a tidal wave of later recognition. The turning point seems to have come on the hundredth anniversary of his birth; the periodic surges of literary attention which Melville's works have enjoyed,

yielded in 1919 a number of essays of permanent value. This renewed interest led to the posthumous publication of *Billy Budd* in 1923, as part of *The Complete Works of Herman Melville*. The articles of that period, says Michael P. Zimmerman, fell into a pattern; with "fatal predictability" the commentators praised Melville as a "superb romancer of the South Seas," and almost invariably concluded that after 1852 the romancer had lost himself in mysticism and "ceased to write meaningful books."[1] A closer investigation of what Melville was all about began in 1926 with the release of John Freeman's *Herman Melville*, a book which became the point of departure for many ensuing articles and other books. This book was the first biography of an American to be written by an Englishman, and marked the beginning of a period in which American studies were beginning to command some respect in American universities.

By the end of the twenties, the Melville literature had become an important object of scholarly research, although a few critics saw the revival as merely another upsurge of interest which was destined to pass over. Lewis Mumford's biography of 1929, although it was based on some inaccurate sources, opened some lesser known works of Melville's to the reading public. Articles and books began

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[1]Michael P. Zimmerman, *Herman Melville in the 1920's: A Study of the Origins of the Melville Revival, with an annotated bibliography*, pp. 150,151.

to appear with increasing frequency, as the critical material accumulated, and as new sources of material, such as Paltsits' *Family Correspondence of Herman Melville 1830-1904* became available.[2] Acceptance by academic institutions was evidently slower in coming. Henry A. Murray complained publicly in 1929 about this conservatism, although in fact, there had been a few learned men who had previously given Melville critical attention. Murray wrote:

> [Melville] has not, of course, been generally admitted into academic circles. Indeed, there may be a latent period of two generations before appreciative lectures are delivered upon the summit achievement of American letters ... for the learned are encased in their incapacity to experience the unusual.[3]

Through the thirties there were numerous articles and a few books which dealt with Melville's works, largely influenced by Sigmund Freud and the "new" insights provided by the psycho-analytical approach. It was also in the thirties that European scholars began to devote serious study to Melville, including those French and German critics cited elsewhere in this dissertation.

After World War II, the enlarging of the American consciousness contributed to a deeper probing of Melville's

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[2] Victor H. Paltsits, ed. *Family Correspondence of Herman Melville 1830-1904,* from the Gansevoort-Lansing collection.

[3] Quoted from Zimmerman, p.180. The source is Henry A. Murray, "Herman Melville," *The New England Quarterly* II (July 1929), p.524.

involuted works, and Murray's prophecy of academic acceptance in two generations was fulfilled in one generation; but it was a generation which had lived through the bloodiest war in human history, and which had seen the worst bestiality in the annals of mankind break out in the very heart and centre of human civilization. There was thus another surge of interest when the critics living in what Edward Waggenknecht has called the "futilitarian era" found in Melville a pervading nihilism which matched their own disillusionment.[4] In the meantime, a number of dissertations were being produced at Yale, under Stanley P. Williams in the 1940's and early 1950's on the man who had boasted that a whaling ship was his Yale and Harvard. It was at this time that the parallel treatment of themes in Dostoevsky was also noticed, and the discovery was made that Melville had much in common with the Danish Christian existentialist, Soren Kierkegaard.[5] The stage had been set for still another surge of interest, as these new doors were opened.

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[4] Edward Waggenknecht, *Cavalcade of the American Novel*, p.74

[5] See G. Clive, "Teleological Suspension of the Ethical in Nineteenth Century Literature," *Journal of Religion* XXXIV (April 1954), 75-87; M. O. Percival, *A Reading of Moby Dick*; Marjorie C. Dew, "Herman Melville's Existential View of the Universe: Essays in Phenomenological Interpretation," [Kent State University, 1967]; and my master's thesis, "The Existential Melville," [unpublished], University of Alberta, 1966.

In their *Directory of Melville Dissertations* published in 1962, Tyrus Hillway and Hershel Parker reported that there were at that time 82 American dissertations known to be completed, while at least 11 others were in progress. At that time it was still possible to compile a Melville bibliography in a manageable little booklet. Critical attention to Melville has vastly multiplied since then; at the time of writing there are more than 200 dissertations extant, and a score or more in progress. The critical journals are replete with articles on every facet of his many-sided works. Several new books on Melville are published every year: new textually corrected editions of his works, explicative analyses of his themes, and compilations of reviews and articles, some of which include assessments of the criticism as well as new assessments of the author under study. An area of recognition which would be of special interest to Melville himself is his "discovery" by fellow writers. His status as a literary giant seems to be assured for all time.

Although the present dissertation appears largely to proceed into new territory, the writer does not consider it to be a radical departure which will turn the course of Melville criticism, but rather as another brick in the growing edifice of that criticism. It is a brick in the north wall of that edifice, to steady that wall against the impact of barbarian interpretations of Melville's Gothic

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horrors. The documentary history of the unique element in this dissertation involves a partial recapitulation of Melville criticism since 1850. The allegation of *duplicity* in Melville's works is not new; what is new is that this duplicity is of a peculiar and very narrowly defined sort. At the same time, none of the senses in which the term "duplicity" has been applied to Melville by others is denied. While some reviewers and commentators have not explained precisely what they mean when they say "duplicity," others have used the term in a variety of ways which will be briefly examined here; most of these uses seem valid enough in their own context, though it must be said that they have only a tangential relation to the *duplicity* posited in this dissertation.

Writing in 1915, D. H. Lawrence maintained that Americans tended to refuse everything explicit, and always put up a sort of double meaning. He amplified:

> They revel in subterfuge. They prefer their truth safely swaddled in the ark of bulrushes, and deposited among the reeds until some friendly Egyptian princess comes to rescue the babe.[6]

He expressed the notion that it was high time that "someone came to lift out the swaddled infant of truth that America spawned some time back." Lawrence's conception of the duplicity parallels that posited in the present thesis

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6 D. H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, p.ii.

although the *truth* which he discovers casts quite another light upon Melville's intentions in "hoodwinking" or "bamboozling" the public. The present thesis posits that the "duplicity" is not a technical choice which the artist makes, but a necessity forced upon him by the polemical opposition of the world to truth. There seems in Lawrence's essay to be no presentiment of Kierkegaard's conception of an aesthetic writer composing his works with a "caustic fluid" so that only the elect will understand, or of writing like Clement Alexandrinus, so that the heretics will not understand; that is, the sort of duplicity in which Pierre engages when he "writes two books at the same time," passing off a "blasphemous rhapsody" under the guise of a novel. However, Lawrence corroborates the thesis that there is a *duplex factum*.

In a similar tradition, Leslie A. Fiedler describes the determining quality of America's great books as "duplicity and outrageousness."[7] The nature of the duplicity in Melville he calls a tension between *eros* and *thanatos;* he speaks of the double aspects of "terror and joke" in Melville's works; and of contradictory ambitions on the part of the author. It was Melville's ambition, he suggests, to drag Leviathan onto the dramatic stage, to

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7 Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel*, p.15.

bring him to the surface; and this, Fielder says, he tried to do in *Pierre;* that is, he tried to probe the deepest recesses of the human soul, and to do so within the framework of the novel. Did Melville really think, Fielder asks, that he could "conceal his Kraken in a bowl of milk"?[8] The present dissertation in no way takes issue with this valuable insight; it is posited, however, that what was concealed was not only the subject of the total depravity of man's whole *psyche,* but also the redeeming truth of "chronometrical excellence." This position, as the argument attempts to demonstrate, can be validated only, however, by reading Melville in terms of the existential premises of Soren Kierkegaard, Nikholai Berdyaev, and Miguel de Unamuno. Placed in this environment, Melville's writings reveal a message written in "caustic fluid" which yields a *truth* quite other than the concealed truth which Fiedler discovers.

Fiedler's posited duplicity resides in an ambivalence between Melville's public and private conception of women and sexuality, as expressed in his confused treatment of the themes of the "fair maiden" and the "dark lady." He posits a psychological attraction-repulsion in Melville which produces the author's ambiguities with respect to

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8 Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel,* p.243.

many issues. He corroborates the present thesis in defining a secret which Melville has suppressed, but supposes the secret to be some "secret sin" which Melville confesses on behalf of Hawthorne, or possibly, like Hawthorne, on behalf of his own ancestors.[9] In my thesis, what Melville suppresses is held to be a primitive protodoxy which he withholds from public gaze lest it be ridiculed; nevertheless he reveals it by "bits and snatches," and betrays the suppression in various ways which are discussed fully in this dissertation. His *duplicity* is posited as consisting in entertaining his readers with the aesthetic vehicle, with Fiedler's "bowl of milk," while at the same time interpolating and mixing the suppressed *truth* in order to arouse in the reader a concern for the ethical issues of life.

A further condition of the existential environment distinguishes the present thesis from most of the previous discussions of literary scholars who have mentioned Melville's duplicity. This is the Kierkegaardian conception of the teleological suspension of the ethical.[10] Pierre's conduct

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[9] Fiedler, p.419. The reference is to Melville's conversation with Hawthorne's son, in which Melville expressed the belief that Hawthorne's art had been informed by the suppression of some secret closeted sin. (Jay Leyda, *The Melville Log* II, 518.)

[10] For a brief statement, see G. Clive, "Teleological Suspension of the Ethical." For a full statement of Kierkegaard's frequent theme, see *Fear and Trembling*, p.38ff.

has traditionally been seen only as the fruits of a wrong course, and his final disaster as evidence of his perdition. But Kierkegaard's conception enables us to see Abraham, not as a filiocide, but as "the father of the faithful." Likewise we may see Pierre not as the perpetrator of incest and murder, but as the "fool of truth" whose acts must be judged in terms of Pierre's obedience to a higher law than the morality of "terrestrial" virtue. Such a reading of Melville's works does, in fact, open the way into new and previously unexplored channels. This is not to call into question any of the previous readings of Herman Melville, but merely to extend the exploration into hitherto hidden areas.

INTRODUCTION

From the very beginning of Herman Melville's literary career, his critics and reviewers have observed in his prose works a fusion or juxtaposition of disparate elements. Commentators have spoken of the double character of his works, and of an "unctuous toying with double meanings." Evert Duyckinck noted that *Moby Dick* resisted a distinct classification as either fact, fiction, or essay, while Klaus Lansinger discusses the novel in terms of a pervading *zweideutigkeit*, and James Guetti speaks of the special vocabularies of the tale of the whale. In 1853 an anonymous reviewer said of Melville, "Surely the man is a Doppelganger - a dual number incarnate." He described his works as "a huge dose of hyperbolical slang," while another reviewer thought that *Pierre* was the "craziest fiction extant." Hans Helmcke mentions the *doppelsinnig* character of Melville's world, and nearly everyone has had something to say about Melville's ambiguities. Moreover, in what John Freeman sees as an autobiographical revelation, one of the author's *persona*, the high-spirited Pierre, himself an aspiring author, confides that he is writing two books at the same time. Finally, the fact of *Clarel*, a book to which Melville devoted half of his adult life, casts a significant illumination upon the rest of his works, so that the total "authorship" attains the special status of a *duplex factum*,

to use Soren Kierkegaard's description of his own authorship.

This evident confusion of two disparate elements in the works of Melville will in this dissertation be denominated aesthetic-ethical duplicity.[1] While no one has heretofore described the doubleness in terms of aesthetic-ethical duplicity, such a delineation has been largely anticipated. As early as 1851, Evert Duyckinck had written about *Moby Dick* and one or two other Melville works, that an assessment was difficult because of "the double character under which they present themselves." He wrote at that time:

> In one light they are romantic fiction; in another, statements of absolute fact. When to this is added that the romance is made a vehicle of opinion and satire through a more or less opaque allegorical veil, as particularly in the latter half of *Mardi*, and to some extent in this present volume, the critical difficulty is considerably thickened. It becomes quite impossible to submit such books to a distinct classification as fact, fiction or essay.[2]

In *Moby Dick*, he writes, there are evidently two or three books rolled into one. There is an ostensible factual cetology, there is the romantic spiritual cast of German drama, and there is an interwoven vein of moralizing, half essay, half rhapsody. Although Duyckinck inveighs against Melville's excesses, his Carlylean conceits, and his violation of sacred associations, he concedes that this "flame in a whirlwind" has achieved "things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme," and recognizes the unruly style to be

informed by "divine impulses." Evidently those reviewers who described Melville's later novels as "the craziest fiction extant, sad trash, lunatic,"[3] had seen only too clearly what Duyckinck had seen, but had not perceived any purpose in the style.

So many critics and reviewers have mentioned the double character of Melville's works, that a rigorous inquiry into the nature of this *duplicity* seems in order. Frederick S. Cozzens writes about *Moby Dick*:

> A vein of sly humor percolates through the book; and a sort of unctuous toying with double meanings is once in a while to be met with.[4]

He does not elaborate further upon the double meanings, nor indicate any awareness of duplicity being practised on a global scale, in terms of the novel as a whole. An anonymous reviewer writing under the pseudonym "Sir Nathaniel," addresses himself to the problem in what seems strikingly like Melvillean diction:

> Surely the man is a Doppelganger - a dual number incarnate (singular though he be, in and out of all conscience): - surely he is two single gentlemen rolled into one, but retaining their respective idiosyncracies - the one sensible, sagacious, observant, graphic, and producing admirable matter - the other maundering, drivelling, subject to paroxysms, cramps, and total collapse, and penning exceeding many pages of unaccountable 'bosh.' So that in tackling every new chapter, one is disposed to question it beforehand, 'Under which king, Bezonian?' - the sane or the insane; the constitutional and legitimate, or the absolute and usurping?[5]

Once again the reviewer makes no attempt to account for

the *doppelgang*, or to explain the possible motives behind such extravagances as Melville is accused of employing. It is noteworthy, however, that his enflaming style frequently elicited from the reviewers an emotional reply in kind, so that it can be inferred by indirection that the author's intention was precisely to arouse responses in his readers beyond the category of neutral aesthetic criticism.

The German critics are unanimous in their observation of a two-sidedness in Melville's works. Klaus Ensslen writes with respect to Melville's world-view as revealed in *The Encantadas* that the author distincly spells out in the chapter title, "Two Sides to a Tortoise," "*die widersprüchliche Doppelseitigkeit der Phänomeme dieser Welt.*" Hans Helmcke observes that whenever Melville wishes to discourse of "*prinzipiellen Dingen,*" he habitually resorts to a "*konstruierten Zweisprache des Erzählers mit dem Publikum,*" and that this technique casts a *doppelsinnig* aura over Melville's works.[7] Klaus Lansinger sees in Melville's novels a *zweideutigkeit* which he considers to be a trademark of his works. The informing cause of this *zweideutigkeit* he sees in Melville's awareness of the vast gulf between the Christian ideal and its expression in the world. This awareness Lanzinger sees as deepening into a realization of the incongruity between thought and existence; and this, he supposes, leads ultimately to a conception of what Melville calls this "step-mother world"

in which there is a complete divorce between reality and appearances. According to Lanzinger, Melville always uses the term "ambiguity" with connotations of treachery and betrayal. He observes that Melville distrusts even the "gentle thoughts of the feminine air," because he simultaneously recognizes the concomitant "murderous thoughts of the masculine sea."[8] He sees Melville's conception of the hypocrisy of bourgeois morality deepening into the recognition that not only human society, but also external nature, and last of all, the very recesses of the would are ambiguous, that is to say, treacherous, in view of the deep cleft between *truth* and the world. Thus the author's works become themselves ambiguous, that is, treacherous; they are invested with a *zweideutigkeit* which leaves appearances and reality in an unresolved tension, while yet revealing by flashes, Melville's sympathy for and longing for a primitive and integral *truth*, the proto-doxy learned at his mother's knee. In search of this primitive *truth*, Melville's characters go voyaging across seas and deserts, to the far Pacific and into the innermost sanctum of the self. It is this principal concern which invests his novels with what Lanzinger calls *doppeldeutigkeit*.

By way of introduction, something must be said concerning the treatment of duplicity in terms of aesthetic and ethical. In the context of duplicity the words must, in fact, be defined simultaneously and in terms of each

other. Even the dictionary defines aesthetic: "pertaining to the beautiful, as distinguished from the moral." The aesthetic is the perception of the beautiful; aestheticism is the appreciation of and response to the beautiful, as it is defined by Webster: "devotion to the principles of beauty and good taste as basic, with moral principles regarded as derivative." By contrast, the ethical relates to moral action, motive, or character. Kierkegaard posits an absolute distinction when he describes the aesthetic as characterless; that is to say, the aesthetic is the non-ethical.[9] For him the distinction exists in the relation of aesthetics and ethics to choice and decision, very much in terms of the etymologically determined meaning of the words, with the aesthetic construed as a perception of the beautiful, and the ethical construed as a response based upon character, conviction, and firmness of will. Kierkegaard's aesthetic man, full of "worldly shrewdness" cleverly avoids engagement with issues which require a crucial response; while by contrast, it is the character of the ethical man to choose. When he speaks of the *duplex factum* of his authorship, it is in terms of the aesthetic-ethical, and when he speaks of the duplicity of the pseudonymous works, it is again in terms of the distinction between their superficially apparent aestheticism, and the indirect and hidden ethical polemic, which he avers is always resident, even when it is least obvious.

It must be pointed out that Kierkegaard by no means advocates an ascetic denial of the aesthetic, but rather the dethronement of the aesthetic, which is the mediocre man's god. Authentic and integral existence means not a progress through the stages - aesthetic, ethical, religous - but an existence simultaneously in all three stages, an existence in which the senses, the mind and the heart are held in proper relationship to each other as they engage at the same time in a full confrontation of reality. His *authorship*, as he always calls the corpus of his works, is an intended demonstration of such an integrated existence. It is interesting to speculate that Melville's confusion of fact, fiction, and essay is likewise such a demonstration of what it means to exist authentically. Inasmuch as whole reality comprises both the natural world, with its laws predicated upon the conception of order and design, and also the spiritual world posited in freedom, precisely to that extent must authentic existence consist of an aesthetic sensibility and response to visible externals, of a rational and logical conception of the fitness of things in a comprehensive pattern toward which the intellect must respond by positing distinctions, and of a movement of the spirit by which the self posits itself in freedom from the world of natural necessity, but with an ethical duty to the eternal, for the spirit, like eternity, does not change. Such a response is the *redintegratio ad statum pristinum*

which both philosophy and poetry have long sought.

Kierkegaard posits man as a spirit-creature, a synthesis of the infinite and the finite existing simultaneously in two worlds: in a world of freedom, and a world of natural necessity. Although man lives and dies bound to the earth, and aware that he so bound by the claims of natural necessity, yet his spirit positing itself in freedom, and flying in the face of all positivistic evidence, retains what has been called a vision of the heavenly; that is to say, the spirit dreams the dream of freedom, absurdly and illogically, and in the face of all experiential evidence. How pertinent this problem is to Melville may be inferred from some lines in *Clarel:*

> And swam before her humid eyes
> In rainbowed vision, Paradise,
> Faith, ravished, followed fancy's path
> In more of bliss than nature hath.
> But ah, the dream to test by deed,
> To seek to handle the ideal
> And make a sentiment serve need:
> To try to realize the unreal![10]

There is no question about the validity and reality of the dream; the puzzling problem, as Pierre and other Melvillean heroes find it, is to find a *modus vivendi* between the claims of the two worlds, the realm of natural necessity, and the realm of spirit. The primary evidence which the spirit has that its dream of freedom is not merely a *phantasma* is man's profound discontent with existence in ambiguity. The realization of the dream cannot consist, however, of an

escape from the limitations of natural necessity. The freedom of the spirit must be posited with a full and complete comprehension of the reality of nature and the world, and the enduring heart must resist mystical explanations which would promise an escape from natural necessity. Thus there emerges a theology, not of escapism, but of endurance; the existent confronts the wisdom that is woe with heroic courage. This is the trial of pietistic anarchism, for such a man is by his pietism bound to laws natural and social, and by his anarchism devoted to freedom. He is, like many of Melville's heroes, in the world but not of it, to use the scriptural phrase which Melville uses. The dream must be tested in deed, not merely in terms of abstract speculation, and it must be tested in an enemy world, "soaking and saturate with lies," as Melville describes this world.[11]

The foregoing converges in the religious paradox of the divine incarnation, and the "agonistic" definition of the Christian faith.[12] The theologians say, *Verbum caro factum est;* and the claims of the *logos* and *sarx*, now that ὁ λόγος σάρξ ἐγένετο, are joined in battle in the arena of existence. The theologians say that while the Mediator is divine, he is also significantly the Son of Man. In this status, his freedom is limited by natural necessity, so much so that Clarel comes to the conclusion that the lore of heaven is impotent on earth. Unlike the gods of the mystical aesthetes, who rise from a pearl in a dew-drop in a rose, the Mediator

is born by slow natural process, and after enduring a severely limited life, dies according to the manner of men. He leaves behind no legacy except a Gospel of hard ethical choices and endurance vile in a hostile world. When the natural man sees this paradox, he turns to materialistic interpretations,[13] or he becomes a docetist,[14] for the offensive paradox that the eternal entered time is too great a shock for the aesthetic sensibilities of the natural man. When the *logos* suggests to the natural man that his life need not be completely bound by the *leges* around which his existence is organized, he will habitually misunderstand, and become an antinominian mystic; if he does not deny the claim of the spirit altogether.

It is in these terms that the claims of the spirit will inform an author's works with aesthetic-ethical duplicity. Man must choose, like Melville's barber in *The Confidence Man*,[15] either to let his life be determined by the aesthetic, which according to Kierkegaard leads to perdition, to a stage of non-existence; or to seize freedom by faith, which leads to suffering, to consciousness, and to knowledge.[16] There are no canons of either taste or judgement to guide the authentic existent who has chosen freedom. As many of Melville's characters do, he must live in isolation, and endure his agonies alone; he will discover that the lore of heaven is impotent on this earth, and that the celestial chronometer in his breast is out of time

when it is compared with any terrestrial horologes whatsoever. Hegel's conception of a synthesis (in this case, a *synchronism*) is simply irrelevant here. In the characterless category of the aesthetic, antithetical elements can indeed be resolved into a synthetic whole, but such a proposition has no relevance or even a referential nexus to existence in the real world. The mistaken attempt to apply the categories of abstract speculation, that is, of non-decisive and characterless aesthetics, seems to be achieved, but only by a sleight-of-hand, by eliminating one of the theses. But if a man denies the spiritual category of freedom, the result will be a crippling despair, the malaise which covered Kierkegaard's Europe and today's America, the now familiar "intellectual gloom" of the aesthetes described by Lynn White.[17] On the other hand, a denial of the world of natural necessity will lead to an irrational mysticism, and culminate in the absurd, in the fractured portraits of the contemporary artists, and in the verbal gibberish of many of the contemporary writers. The agony of living simultaneously in two worlds may well turn an author's works into a "fantastic fiction," it will certainly invest his works with ambiguity, but it will not turn his works into nonsense; for that happens only when one of the stages of existence is denied. These two worlds are too far apart to admit a synthesis, which is as logically absurd as it is existentially impossible.

Not only are the two worlds as far apart, in Melville's language, as a Greenwich chronometer from a Chinese clock, not only is synchronism impossible, but there is hardly even a ground upon which a dialogue is possible. Here the ethical plays its rôle, though not exactly in a mediatory sense, for the ethical is a biased mediator; it is on the side of the religious. Nevertheless, the language of ethical discourse is comprehensible to the aesthetic man, so that Nikholas Berdyaev's category of the religious positing itself in freedom can be indirectly communicated via aesthetic-ethical duplicity.

Finally, the reader may be disconcerted that what promised to be a preliminary exploration of aesthetic-ethical duplicity has veered into the area of the religious. He may also be warned that the same digression occurs occasionally in the following dissertation. However, in the last decade a number of eminent critics have come to realize that theological insights may contribute a great deal to a criticism of literature. In *Theology and Modern Literature*, Dr. Amos N. Wilder explores the new artisitic sensitivity and the recent shift in critical concern which promises to bridge the long-standing cleavage between theology and the arts. He sees that the problems attending a theological criticism of literature are considerable. First of all, as he points out, the field of literary criticism has its own highly specialized autonomy. On the

other hand, the artist does not usually have a precisely theological concern, although he may have a religious concern, as Herman Melville, for one, very evidently does. But the real need for theological insights resides in the fact that the scholar who has been educated in the humanistic tradition is severely handicapped, according to Wilder, in dealing with "the Scriptures and their heritage." He writes;

> Teachers trained in humanistic method and on classical and Western models are ill-prepared to deal with the Hebraic-Christian presuppositions wherever they appear, and especially with the Scriptures even when they are treated as an English classic in the form of the Authorized Version. But this is only to say that there are inevitable hazards wherever there are frontiers to be crossed.[18]

When one considers that *Moby Dick* alone contains over 1,400 scriptural allusions, not even to mention the Hebraic-Christian presuppositions underlying Melville's writings as a whole, it would appear that the Melville criticism could certainly profit from a rigorous theological examination. The present dissertation is by no means such, although it occasionally steps just across the forbidding frontier. This transgression seems to be legitimate on other counts, for if a work of art brings "news of whole reality," it may be that theological scrutiny will reveal something which literary criticism cannot or dare not see. Inasmuch as science and philosophy, through the agency of verificational linguistic analysis, have forced the theologian to talk

sense,[19] it may now be that other disciplines can learn something from theology, which surely represents one aspect of "whole reality."

Wilder sees in Herman Melville's works the genuinely tragic Adam, a portrait of "innocence and naïveté unprepared for the deeper enigmas and shocks of the human condition." The striking relevance of this commentary to Pierre, White Jacket, Redburn, Israel Potter, Billy Budd, and perhaps Hunilla, every Melville reader will warmly concede. There is in this primitive Adam a streak of the untamed, Wilder goes on to say; and he expresses his suspicion that "the Almighty takes some special pleasure in this wild strain from the ancient stock." If the theologians are capable of bringing such accurate insights to the criticism of Melville, and if they promise to be as critical in theology as in aesthetics, they ought to be encouraged to offer their services. Perhaps he who thought of "writing the Gospels in this century" could profit more than any other artist from such a criticism; perhaps such a criticism would elucidate his "ontological heroics,"[20] and illuminate his existential ambiguities.

The mode of inquiry in this dissertation is in the tradition of Kierkegaardian criticism, in which the critic "risks" himself in the process of drawing inferences from the *doppelgang* of maieutic literature, for as Kierkegaard warns, the contradiction of ambiguous and indirect discourse

will force the reader to reveal what is in his heart.[21] The procedural method employed is the existential technique of rotation and repetition, as the treatment of the subject expands from the basic premises which are at first posited, perhaps with only a single supporting phrase from Melville, to a recurrence of the phrase in context, with elucidation and elaboration. The positing of new categories, and the precise definition of new terms is followed by discursive critical analysis. When this appears to wander off into prolix aesthetic speculations, when the reader is "taken for a walk," then comes the leap, the μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος,[22] from an aesthetic category value-basis into a new critical insight or ethical revelation. The inferences which are drawn, based as they are on the background and subjective responses of the critic and reader, are validated by the test of internal coherence, and more traditionally, by corroborating evidence from Melville's novels, short stories, poems, comments in the margin of books, journal entries, and his considerable correspondence with his contemporaries. It is to be hoped, then, that this inquiry will not only demonstrate the fact of aesthetic-ethical duplicity in Melville's works but will also reveal significant new aspects of those works.

I The Duplicity of Language

When the rhythmic incantation of the poet begins, and his listener is called, in Coleridge's words, to a willing suspension of disbelief, it takes little imagination to see that the stage has been set for deception. When the reader experiences what Herman Melville called "the shock of recognition," and submits himself to being instructed with delight, the operation begins. Then as the smooth and sonorous flow of words begins to open up reality and open up the heart, the genuinely literate reader, to use George Steiner's phrase, will know that he is being lured by the operations of the structuring hand of the poet, and will feel that he wants to have it so. He will find himself carried on the wind of the wings of that same Catskill eagle which Melville assures us lies in some hearts, carried into the supramundane and sunny ecstacies of joy, but also into the subterranean and black gorges of despair, as unable to resist the descent into Tarturus, as he was unwilling to resist the ascent into the Empyrean. The reader who has, in quiet and selfless empathy, surrendered himself to the poet's power, will discover in this mood that the news of whole reality comes charged with poetic impact. He may find too late that the poet is always a deceiver, and that the honey which was smeared on the lip of the cup, in the words of Lucretius' metaphor, was designed only to make the medicine more palatable.

The poet promises, when he begins, to entertain his reader with aesthetic delights, but he fulfills his promise by piercing the reader's mind with the news of whole reality, and this he accomplishes by ingress via the avenue of the heart.

The reader whose submission to the aesthetic allurement has made him ready for the news of whole reality may recognize that the impact of the poet's emotionally charged language arises from the exuberant energy generated in the poet's imagination by the ordeal of repression. In the words of Lawrence Lerner, when the informing doctrine is suppressed, it becomes emotion and is expressed. Like a torrent impeded by a strong dam, so the moral energy of a strong ethical conviction, when its expression is impeded by the strictures of this "marble-hearted world," will burst its barriers and become transformed, as it cascades over the barriers in exuberant language. The impediment may be critical censure, such as the consensus that art should not be didactic. If this is the case, the verbal torrent may first flow around the barrier, then over it, and finally pour heedless over the dikes. Something of this informing exuberance appears in Babbalanja's account of his dream:

> Strange throbbings seized me; my soul tossed on its own tides. But soon the inward harmony bounded in exulting choral strains. I heard a feathery rush; and straight beheld a form, traced all over with veins of vivid light. The vision undulated round me.[1]

The reader who has entered into the world of the poet's mind and imagination may recognize that such resources of language can flow only from a profoundly ethical concern, and he will realize that their impact will induce an equally profound moral concern in him, perhaps even to the extent of informing the moral will. If in this mood of aesthetic elation and ethical readiness, he should be asked to articulate a rigorous statement concerning either the author's style or the nature of the truth which the poet wishes to convey, it is not hard to imagine that his task would be attended with some difficulty. For the individual of poetic temperament, the temptation to emulate the pseudo-critical school of "poetry about poetry" might be overpowering. But just as the theatre-goer can with admiration and yet with sobriety talk about a play after dinner, so it seems that there ought to be a way of treating literature with a proper mixture of aesthetic response and critical judgement. It seems that there ought to be a way of critically distinguishing between the phrastic and neustic elements of language without committing that alleged crime against art which would dissect an artistic creation by dividing the content from the structure in such a way that they cannot be put together again. Such a method, which might be called aesthetic-critical, will be employed in this inquiry into the subject of aesthetic-ethical duplicity in the works of Herman Melville.

"In literature there is no such thing as pure thought," writes J. Middleton Murry, "in literature, thought is always the handmaid of emotion."[2] Proceeding upon this assumption, but also mindful of Emil Staiger's suggestion that the critic must "obey the rhythm of the work" with which he is dealing,[3] and further, mindful of F. R. Leavis' plea that academic research ought to show "perception, judgement, and responsibility,"[4] the student of so exuberant and yet sometimes so intellectual a writer as Melville may well develop his subject in terms of the posited poetic, or aesthetic-critical method. The point is precisely that the modes of response to the phrastic and neustic elements of language are largely inseparable, with the senses and the intellect engaging simultaneously in a combined operation which might be called affective cognition. In the first place, the emotionally taut language of such a writer as Herman Melville emanates from his own vital exuberance, as he says of himself;[5] that is to say, thoughts evidently come to his mind with the energy of highly-charged emotion. Whether it be unconsciously or by design,[6] he employs the method of hypnotic and lulling incantation to lower the reader's normal resistance to certain unpopular ideas. As this inquiry proceeds, it will become evident that in Melville's writings the poetic incantation is nearly always the precursor of some ethical concern. However, with the

exception of his earliest novels, it is not as if he played a tune to lull the reader, and broke off suddenly to convey a pure idea, or what Evert Duyckinck called "an absolute fact." In the category of linguistic duplicity, construed at the level of words and sentences, the reader will usually find that the manner or mode of conveyance and the subject being conveyed are inextricably fused. This is not to say that the medium is the message, or that form and content really comprise the same thing, for it seems that these propositions are not logically valid for literature in general; it is simply to say that the reader, or the critic, cannot easily separate the aesthetic qualities or properties of language from those ethical meanings which are inherent in the words, or those connotations which have come to surround the words.

Even if it were true that an indicative phrastic statement adequately conveys a fact, it would still be necessary almost to invent a new vocabulary in order to remain rigorously within the realm of neutral phrastics, for the current language is simply permeated with neustic values. As soon as the critic sees words as something more than naked symbols for external objects, he enters into a numinous world of emotionally predicated nuances, so that he can hardly tell, for instance, whether the statement, "I am going home," is phrastic or neustic. That is not even to ask anything about the psychological operations by which

the sound of *home* arouses the familiar pattern of its connotative associations. In the chorus of the Aztec-Christian hymn, "Más allá del sol," the word for *home* (hogar) is probably the most unaesthetic word in the phrastic "my home far beyond the sun." The lines are:

> Más allá del sol, más allá del sol
> Yo tengo un hogar, hogar, bell hogar
> Más allá del sol.

Hogar does not please us, but to a Spanish-speaking Aztec, the word undoubtedly "sounds" as beautiful and pleasing as *home* does to an Englishman. Besides, what "far beyond the sun" may mean to an Aztec, or even what it might have meant to our forefathers, is indicative of the fact that "far beyond the sun" is a neustic utterance, to the extent that it is not really related to the sun at all, but to something else, to home, and to *home* surrounded by a cloud of feelings and memories. The informing doctrine, something about *la santa Sion*, when it turns to longing, becomes poetry; the poetry is filled with longing, and to the extent that the poetry is ethically functional at all, the longing arouses memories of the doctrine.

With respect to this question of phrastic and neustic content, it is interesting to observe how skillfully Melville articulates the excitement which seizes the passengers of the *Highlander* upon approaching the shores of America. He might have said, with as much phrastic neutrality as is possible, "The ship neared the shore. The passengers

thought of home. They were excited." Obviously no artist would do that, but Melville is exceptionally skilled in neustics, in conveying emotions and convictions. He writes, "Presently up came a dainty breeze, wafting to us a white wing from the shore - the pilot boat!" The thought of returning home arouses excitement, and the emotion when it is articulated becomes the pleasing alliteration of "wafting to us a white wing from the shore." This in turn hopefully recreates in the reader the original emotion; provided, of course, that the reader has at sometime in his life learned what longing means. In *White Jacket*, the emotion is expressed by the balanced phrase: "Homeward bound-harmonious sound!" It is further enriched by the strong dactylic rhythm of the related paragraph. It may well be questioned whether the sound of "homeward bound" is really harmonious, if somehow the expression could be stripped of every sentimental nuance, and if the poet would forego his dactylic rhythm and his alliteration. Would a foreigner, for instance, who did not understand the words, find them aesthetically pleasing? Albert G. Guerard tells the story of an early experience in his life. Wandering about rather aimlessly one evening, he entered a hall in London, where he found a group of German exiles listening to a poetry reading. He was bemused by the workings of the reader's face, as he carefully articulated the harsh gutturals. Silence fell on the group, and then, to Guerard's amazement,

tears began to flow down the cheeks of nearly everyone present. At once Guerard resolved to learn German; and supposing that wars might cease if only men understood each other, he spent a large part of his life promoting Esperanto.[7] To the auditors who know the meaning of the words, the meanings carried suggestions of world-weariness, thoughts of the homeland. They felt no doubt that the words sounded beautiful, and that was why they wept.

Homeward bound - harmonious sound. The dainty breeze wafting to us a white wing from the shore. In this manner Melville invests his statement of fact with an aura of emotion, in order to entice the reader, that he too may experience longing; for as Berdyaev insists, the determining quality of bourgeois man is that he has never felt longing. Repeatedly Melville employs the sonorous, poetic cadences to invest an object or an idea with that surcharge of emotion which accompanies the original affective cognition of the character being portrayed. He does this so well that the French critic, Mayoux, says of Melville as seen through the eyes of Melville's youthful adventurers in his novels, "How he must have suffered!"[8] Although in the instance cited, the object is ultimately identified directly, the preceding aesthetic nuances have guaranteed that none but the dullest reader will see "the pilot boat" as the mere symbol of external material form. It is in any case not precisely the pilot boat which is being wafted on white

wings; it is obviously the aspirations and longings of the passengers and crewmen which might better, in an objective sense, be so described. As a matter of fact, precisely this confusion of facts with feelings if the only way in which existential reality, as distinguished from objective externality, can be communicated. An objective statement of fact in this situation would not constitute an approximation to truth; it would rather be a desertion of reality and an evasion of truth. Literature we expect to bring us news of whole reality, and not merely statements about isolated and incomplete facets of reality.

The words and phrases of a master craftsman of language always have this property of eliciting an emotional and an intellectual response simultaneously. For it just so happens that a word which is richly musical may also convey some idea which will evoke a memory and a whole train of inner responses which are both aesthetic and reflective in character; a line rich in alliteration, rhythm and consonance, may also convey some grand proposition which will at once engage the aesthetic sensibilities and the ethical criteria of the reader; and a stanza which attracts the reader's attention by its rhyme and meter, may also convey an ethical or religious postulate which demands some existential response on his part, if he is, as George Steiner says, literate in the only sense which matters.[9] However, it must be said that in the category of contextual

duplicity, the author may alternate between two modes of relevance, a point to be fully elaborated later. There are numerous examples of such alternations, particularly in *Typee*, with continuous and digressive ethical interpolations replacing the story, rather than ethical implications being inherent in the story, although it is also true that there are ethical implications in the aesthetic fabric of the tale.[10]

The careful reader of Melville's early novels will, in fact, soon come to expect an ethical interpolation, perhaps a digressive commentary merely, whenever Melville "loudly sweeps the string." It is hard to say whether the surfacing of an ethical concern in his mind unconsciously induces the rhapsodic prelude, or whether the poetic cadences are deliberately employed to lull the reader, to lower his practical awareness, and to lead him into a state of readiness for the *truth* that he is about to be taught. Particularly when Melville indulges in his frequent biblicisms, when he uses not merely the phraseology but the cadences of the King James version of the Bible, as in "for the scent and savor of poverty was upon me"; or in the psalmodic rhapsody appearing in *Pierre*: "Oh, praised be the beauty of this earth; the beauty, and the bloom, and the mirthfulness thereof!"[11] particularly then is he about to fall into his old foible -- preaching. Forever his "righteous indignation" at injustice, cruelty, mediocrity, "the endless catalogue

of civilized crimes," emerges in the form of angry words, usually preceded, however, by the *furor poeticus* manifesting itself in the form of highly charged poetry. An interesting example of this high aesthetic elation followed by a surprising alternation of mood is revealed in the following passage from *Redburn:*

> Yes! Yes! give me this glorious ocean life, this salt-sea life, this briny, foamy life, when the sea neighs and snorts, and you breath the very breath that the great whales respire! Let me roll around the glove, let me rock upon the sea; let me race and pant out my life, with an eternal breeze astern, and endless sea before!
>
> But how soon these raptures abated, when after a brief idle interval, we were again set to work, and I had a vile commission to clean out the chicken-coops, and make up the beds of the pigs in the long-boat.
>
> Miserable dog's life is this of the sea! commanded like a slave, and set to work like an ass! vulgar and brutal men lording it over me, as if I were an African in Alabama. Yes, yes, blow on, ye breezes, and make a speedy end to this abominable voyage![12]

While every psychologist knows that he has here an example of the "manic-depressive," every student of Melville will know that he has here an example of aesthetic-ethical alternation, if not duplicity, with the aesthetic prelude being an almost invariable concomitant of an explicitly ethical concern. It is especially interesting that just prior to the passage quoted, Melville has arrested his digressive commentaries upon *names* with the statement, "But I must quit this rambling, and return to my story." No sooner having said this, he launches into the high flown

peroration on the delights of sailing, only to break off again, and reiterate his oft-repeated assertion that for a sensitive young man, the world is a very bitter place.

A little later in the story occurs an almost exact repetition of this alternation, but in this later instance, very much in the mode of duplicity, with intimations only of the ethical concern beneath his high-flown language.

> I took great delight in furling the top-gallant sails and royals in a hard blow; which duty required two hands on the yard. There was a wild delirium about it; a fine rushing of the blood about the heart; and a glad, thrilling, and throbbing of the whole system, to find yourself tossed up at every pitch into the clouds of a stormy sky, and hovering like a judgement angel between heaven and earth; both hands free, with one foot in the rigging, and one somewhere behind you in the air. The sail would fill out like a balloon, with a report like a small cannon, and then collapse and sink away into a handful. And the feeling of mastering the rebellious canvas, and tying it down like a slave to the spar, and binding it over and over with the gasket, had a touch of pride and power in it, such as young King Richard must have felt when he trampled down the insurgents of Wat Tyler.[13]

The reader will note that the delirium somehow evokes thoughts of high judgement, and the angel of Revelation standing with one foot on the water and one foot on the land. Then follows an anticipation of Father Mapple's sermon, with the humble and meek being "trampled" by proud King Richard, one of the judges and commodores of this world, against whom the true man ever holds forth his own inexorable self. He goes on to remind the fine ladies and "snivelized" gentlemen on the ship, that although they may

think little of the helmsman of the ship, yet all their lives are in his hands, an observation which we find repeated in *Moby Dick*. The inferences which can here be drawn are corroborated, of course, by explicit statements elsewhere in Melville.

It has already been intimated that genuine literacy on the part of the reader means that there exists in him the capacity to feel, to understand, and to respond. With respect to the passage just quoted, the reader would have to feel the poetic cadences, know who Wat Tyler was and what he represented, recognize the reference to the judgement angel standing over the earth with one foot on the water and one foot on the land, and be willing or able to respond to the seduction by which the author uses aesthetic devices to recreate the emotions of the actor in the reader. It seems necessary to say, in an age when this appears sometimes to have been forgotten, that part of the poet's task is precisely to heighten these capacities; the first by a surge of energy, the second by lucidity, and the third by what might be denominated as *charisma;* that is, by a divinely inspired power to move other men. The media and the methods of transmission ought to be, in the words of J. Middleton Murry, "music, precision, and concreteness." As Murry suggests, "to communicate an emotion means, in fact, to impress it;" but this does not obviate, of course, a real necessity for affectional and cognitive capacity in the

reader. Now, how does an author impress an emotion upon his readers? Without attempting anything like a comprehensive analysis of linguistic functions, it will be useful to posit that an author attempts to achieve such an effect by using the traditional literary devices of rhyme and meter, alliteration and consonance, metaphor and simile, the choice of suggestive or connotative words, and by an infusion of what Murry calls "compulsive virtue."

Concerning the poetic devices which an author may employ to achieve his intended effect, Murry writes:

> Rhythm and meter, which are the formal distinguishing marks of poetry, have the power of throwing the reader into a state of heightened susceptibility to emotional suggestion ..... the recurrence of a regular rhythmic beat has an almost hypnotic effect; it completely detaches our attention from the world of everyday, lulls the practical alertness which the world demands.[14]

As the reader will so often find in Melville, the presence of rhythmic cadences in prose has this lulling effect to a heightened degree, particularly when alliteration and consonance accompany these devices. The choice of suggestive and connotative words obviously presumes both memory and familiarity on the part of the reader, or at the very least some common cultural basis of cognition, as Murry asserts:

> If we regard writing as the establishment of a relation between the author and his audience, it is clear that the amount of compulsive virtue which he has put into his language will depend upon the extent to which the feelings and thoughts he wishes to communicate are familiar or strange to his reader.[15]

"No organ," writes Melville, "can make music in unmusical breasts."[16] Even a Jew's harp, he writes, may be so played as to awaken all the fairies that are in us; but he presumes that the auditor has fairies within him to be awakened. Silence is the proper stance before any man who has no fairies in him. *Nolite mittatis margaritas vestras ante porcos*, said the Shiloh; but Melville says of his father's memoirs, "I will not quote thee, old Morocco, before the cold face of the marble-hearted world." However, if there are any responsive chords to be struck, Melville will make the fairies dance.

But assuming that the responsive chord is latently present, in what way can an author compel a decisive response in his reader by investing his language with "compulsive virtue"? A mere quantum of virtue, in the sense of force or strength, as in the Greek term, *charisma*, which usually means "a divinely inspired power," may as easily evoke a negative response to the ethical question as the desired assent. What is needed is a display of force in the sense of a passionate identification, and this is best conveyed at the level of a basic and fundamental commonality of experience in terms of concreteness. When people speak of the charisma of a popular demagogue, it may be that they mean only to say that the charismatic folk-hero has found, or has discovered in himself, the capacity to attain an empathetic identification with his hearers on the basis of

a common experience expressed in terms of the most common concrete facts of existence. Murry offers an example of a biblical text which has this compulsive virtue, in the present case, to arouse religious feelings, perhaps even so much as to command awe and obedience. The line is: "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." There is here in a single sentence, an example of music, precision, and concreteness; but the impact does not really depend so much upon the vaguely poetic cadence, nor upon the structural precision, which indeed, could be criticized; [illegible] the anglohebraic concreteness which makes the li[illegible]rable and compelling.[17]

It is interesting to ob[illegible]w, again in *Redburn*, Melville employs music, prec[illegible]d concreteness to establish an early empatheti[illegible]fication with his reader. Consider, for instance, his [illegible]tion of the heaviness of his departure from home.

> It was with a heavy hea[illegible] full eyes, that my poor mother parted with [illegible]

There is first of all the mus[illegible] the alliteration of "heavy heart" and "my poor mother pa[illegible]." The precision is created by the use of homely and simple words, for this is an affair of the heart, and no time for high-flown rhetoric. There is also the concrete reference to reality in "full eyes"; and also if we look deeper into the soul of man, in the phrase, "heavy heart"' for what man has not felt the literal "weight"

in his breast in the day of sorrow. But what of the phrase, "my poor mother"? Perhaps this is an example of compulsive virtue, for if any reader does not know what longing is, or has never felt the heartbreak of parting, yet every man has a mother; so that "my poor mother" may evoke a memory, strong and compelling, to the end that there may be sympathetic and harmonious emotions in author and reader.

In a chapter dealing with the persuasive function of literature, Nathan C. Starr writes on this matter of compelling the reader:

> The transfer of the aesthetic experience from author to reader demands the artist's ability not only to communicate but also to persuade; to persuade, moreover, at a high level. As readers, we must expect to go beyond emotional excitement to the stage of belief, to the conviction that the author has penetrated the tough shell of life to the inner core. With him we gain in wisdom.[18]

Starr believes that the relationship between the author and the reader depends upon the force with which the author makes himself part of a given situation, the sublety with which he has used the imagination to give vivid freshness to the world, and the strength of his belief in man himself. It will be remembered that in the quotation cited from J. Middleton Murry, he contends that the extent of the transfer from author to reader depends upon the reader's readiness. Starr discusses the problem in somewhat different terms. Our feeling of release in reading Melville's *Typee*, he says, is based upon simple projection into a narrative situation of

pleasing strangeness or of heroic quality. Then he comments:

> The transfer from author to reader is quickly and easily made. A somewhat more complex response is aroused when we see man not merely as an agent and an object in a world of adventure, but rather as an individual who moves in two worlds, whose pragmatic existence is constantly affected by intangible values, by the sudden insight which finds kinship between the real and the ideal. I have used the word *sudden* deliberately, because it suggests the shock of surprise when we see the world of men and women, and inanimate things, and of emotion and thought, suddenly illuminated by a new light.....The illumination will come only as the result of our own effort. That is, we must match the author's conviction with conviction of our own. We must see in what ways his imaginative experiences can bring to mind our less-formed but no less valid reachings toward power of feeling.[19]

The question of living in two worlds at the same time, or living in one and obeying the laws of another will be dealt with fully in a later chapter on the duplicity of existence. Israel Potter is very distinctly an example of an individual who lives in two worlds. Perhaps it could be said that all of Melville's narrators fall into this category. Clarel discovers that the lore of heaven is impotent on this earth. Pierre discovers that "In things terrestrial a man must not be governed by things celestial"; but more of this later.

On the subject of how emotions are transferred, in terms of the reader's readiness to be "deceived," Starr comments pertinently regarding the prerequisite fundamental commonality of concern which predisposes both author and reader if there is to be empathy and a transfer of experiences. He writes:

> Furthermore, readers should never forget that the excitement felt and described by an author is an excitement to which they too have a right. That is, it represents a body of experience which may differ from theirs in degree but not in kind. If there is anything mysterious in the nature of literary creation it is the mystery of our minds also; if there is any acute awareness on the part of the poet, it is also the awareness of every man who catches the message to the inward ear. The sensitizing of the imagination, then, depends upon the immediate illumination of the author's response by the widening circle of the reader's own responses, as based on experience of the same general kind, and an analogous, though perhaps hitherto unrealized, emotional quality.

Literature gives us understanding, he says by presenting planned pictures of a wide variety of experiences; it gives us breadth of understanding by showing us not only the outer world of experiences, but also the inner world of thought and feeling. The structuring hand of the poet reminds us of familiar scenes, only to open new vistas of experience for our reflection. Gradually we learn that just as the poet remains in control of the situation when the plot deepens and evil or anarchy threatens to overtake the imaginative world of the drama, just so there is perhaps after all a structuring hand in human events. Richard Y. Hathorn comments on the subject of one lesson which the spectator might learn from *Oedipus Rex*. The whole play, he says, is rich in tragic irony. Of this he writes:

> Since irony, on one side, depends on the disclosure of ignorance that thinks itself to be knowledge, the spectator, watching Oedipus' folly in cursing the murderer of Laius, must uneasily perceive that here is a symbol of every man's situation; Aristotle's tragic fear should strike into his soul when he

> realizes that just as from his superior position he views the antics of a wise fool, so there may be other still higher beings who are similarly audience to his own play.[20]

Thus part of the poet's task is to deliver us from such ignorance, he says, from "pride of intellect untrammelled by the embarrassing particularities of existence." The foregoing commentary may aptly be applied to Melville's treatment of the situation in *Pierre* and in *Moby Dick* particularly. While Ishmael stoically endures existence with "a strong decotion of Seneca," always "under the surveillance of the invisible police officer of the fates," Ahab insists that he must know the secrets of "the very pelvis of the world." In the end fate intervenes, as it were, and Ahab is caught in the uncoiling harpoon rope and ingloriously pitched into the mere. As Hathorn says, tragic fear should strike into the reader's soul when he realizes that there may be another world of command somewhat above and exceeding the authority of the *Pequod's* captain. Pierre also would like to tear away all veils from false idols, recklessly trying to force events, but succeeding only in enmeshing himself ever further. He discovers, however, the wisdom that is woe; he finds that "whatever other worlds God may be Lord of, he is not the Lord of this." Yet somehow he remains "agonizingly conscious of the beauty of chronometrical excellence." The chronometer is, of course, the "heavenly watch" which Christ brought to Jerusalem time, as

Melville writes. The apparently capricious dealings of fate can be explained just as soon as the existing individual realizes that setting his watch by Jerusalem time will involve him in that age old struggle between Michael and Satan; and as the dominions of this world are the dominions of the Adversary, that individual will find himself arraigned against princes and commodores and judges, not even to mention the church, which, as Melville writes in *Clarel*, "prolongs in sacerdotal way, the lower empire's bastard sway." Melville writes:

> Now in an artificial world like ours, the soul of man is further removed from its God and the heavenly truth than a Greenwich chronometer carried to China.[21]

In every detailed respect, Pierre discovers, the gods of this world stand in diametrical opposition to the Maker.

> What man carries a heavenly soul in him has not groaned to perceive, that unless he committed a sort of suicide as to the practical things of this world, he can never hope to regulate his earthly conduct by the same heavenly soul? And yet, by an infallible instinct he knows that the monitor cannot be wrong in itself.

The woeful wisdom, which Redburn also discovers, is that in this world goodness is hated, while, as Melville says in *Clarel*, "Unrighteousness succeeds in every endeavour." Thus always in Melville we find the ethical interpolation, or the ethical implication, as in the famous "chronometer" passage.

Nathan C. Starr has something further to say about what it means to live in two worlds simultaneously, and

what we can learn about ourselves from the reading of worthy literature:

> We begin to see the patterns which explain apparently capricious action or which lie behind long and successful activity. We begin to understand what men live by and what they die for. And we see into that mysterious world of the emotions and the subconscious mind. External reality is touched and illuminated with flashes of color, light, and shade from our own emotional association with it. This imaginative association not only creates at once an unpragmatic, ideal relationship between ourselves and the world, but it also makes possible an extraordinarily elastic and vivid relationship between apparently isolated phenomena in our minds.[22]

Then, he says, when we have come to perceive form and purpose in the world, and the nature of objective experience and the character of the inner life, we find ourselves almost without realizing it, in the domain of spirit. Thus the aesthetic elements of language seductively lead us into a concern for the ethical.

Such, then, is the function and power of language, in all its duality; a duality, moreover, which corresponds with the duality in man himself, if we grant Kierkegaard's assumption that man is a synthesis of the finite and the infinite. In this regard, Starr says:

> Man lives in two worlds. He is not simply a mechanism adjusting itself to its immediate environment; he can escape the present through memories and anticipations. This is to acknowledge the essential truism that he is a reflective as well as a practical animal. And it is just as he reconciles these two characteristics that he lives a fruitful life. The two forces, under constant strain, seek a point of repose in which one element will support and buttress the other.

> Because this reconciliation is a part of life, so it is reflected in literature.... The two worlds are twin necessities.... Each of the worlds, then must be clearly recognizable if literature is to achieve its greatest power.[23]

It is interesting to compare the foregoing commentary with something that Merlin Bowen says about Melville, or perhaps, more precisely, about the Melvillean hero. He writes:

> His life proceeds by imbalances constantly redressed, and the soul's still centre is at first no more than the incredibly fine point of the fulcrum upon which it all rests. By the teaching of pain, by experience, by reflection, by the deepening of his sympathies, and by the long practice of a stoic discipline, the realm of quiet may be gradually enlarged. It is not to be attained, however, through the denial of any part of a man's nature. A Nirvana of ignorance or of insensibility represents a less than human goal; man's task is to weigh and to bring to a poise the realities both of head and heart. Small wonder, then if the long-desired stillness, once achieved, is found to be no true stasis, but a trembling, even a precarious balance.[24]

Starr speaks of the "constant strain"; Bowen speaks of a "trembling imbalance." Both writers assert that a reconciliation must be found between the claims of the heart and the claims of the head, between the infinite and the finite! They agree, moreover, that neither reality can be suppressed if true peace is to be found.

In a letter to Hawthorne which well illustrates his habitual foible--preaching, so much so that he appends a postscript, "You must not fail to admire my discretion in paying the postage on this letter," Melville perorates on the subject of a stasis:

> It is a frightful poetic creed that the cultivation of the brain eats out the heart. But it's my *prose* opinion that in most cases, in those men who have fine brains and work them well, the heart extends down to the hams. And though you smoke them with the fire of tribulation, yet, like veritable hams, the head only gives the richer and the better flavor. I stand for the heart. To the dogs with the head! The reason the mass of men fear God, and at bottom dislike Him, is because they rather distrust his heart, and fancy Him all brain like a watch.[25]

To Clarel's question, "Who's the eye that sees aright, if any?" Mother M. D. Mahoney replies that Melville recognizes that "seeing aright" is the privilege only of the integrated individual, one "who is capable of both thinking and feeling and of engaging in both activities simultaneously."[26] At any rate, such would seem to be the implication of the dialectics of *Clarel*, and of the somewhat ambiguous declaration in the letter to Hawthorne quoted above. What is necessary, then, is "to think with the heart," something which Melville nowhere explicitly says, but everywhere implies.

This "anglohebraic" mode of thinking must result, of course, in a psychoöntology in which ideas come wafted on the white wings of emotion, and in which powerful emotions always underlie, and are always concomitant with the loftiest conceptions. To think grandly and deeply means to feel powerfully. Thought divorced from emotion is a desertion of existence, as Kierkegaard says; and also a desertion of reality and of truth. To make the naked statement that when

the ship approached the harbor, a pilot boat was sent out, is to hide two-thirds of the facts. The truth is: "up came a dainty breeze, wafting to us a white wing from the shore--the pilot boat." For man lives in two worlds, a world of material things, and a world of spirit; and he lives in both worlds simultaneously. Moreover, both worlds are real, notwithstanding the persistent gnostically orientated commentaries on Melville, which would posit a necessary choice between accepting "subjective illusion" or the "material fiction," to use Edgar A. Dryden's phrases.

To speak the truth means, then, to describe simultaneously the facts of both worlds, with emotion and idea confused, as emotions and ideas are confused in reality. It has already been observed that *home* as a naked symbol ought to mean nothing more than a dwelling, a house or a tent or an igloo, but that in fact, *home* always means much more: the idea of home always comes to mind with trailing clouds of glory, with a numinous aura highly charged with thoughts and feelings.

It is interesting to observe how the text which Murry took as an example of rhythym, precision, and concreteness: "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day," can be adapted as an illustration of Starr's conception of man living in two worlds simultaneously. The infinite and the finite are concretely associated, so that the relieving cool of evening is itself invested with

thoughts and feelings of that other world, the world which existed before the "orchard thieves," as Melville says, bargained away their access to the tree of life in return for a separated life in the arid regions of the world far away from the four rivers. Even coarse Ahab finds his soul melted by contemplating a beautiful morning when the winsome sky caresses him, and this "step-mother world" so long cruel and forbidding, now throws her affectionate arms around his stubborn neck, and Ahab drops a tear into the sea. Ahab recognizes in his own way that man exists in two worlds simultaneously. At the end of the "Sphynx" chapter he rhapsodizes:

> Would now St. Paul would come along that way, and to my breezelessness bring his breeze! O Nature and O soul of man! how far beyond all utterance are your linked analogies; not the smallest atom stirs or lives in matter, but has its cunning duplicate in mind.[27]

Somehow the mind perceives and understands the material world, and it would seem that this perception, as in some of the romantic poets like Wordsworth, is based upon memory. Man himself has sometimes been described as a synthesis of soul and body, of the spiritual and the material, and somehow or other these two disparate elements function together, and interact upon each other. Likewise, external nature acts upon the mind; or in any case, the mind perceives the motions of external nature in terms of its own operations. In dreams and in the poetic delirium, the self

remembers its place in the scheme of total reality, caught between spiritual and material reality. In *Redburn* there is a familiar Melvillean reference to the garden of Eden, one of scores of such allusions in his works. Redburn muses about the cripples on the Liverpool dock:

> I could not but offer up a prayer, that some angel might descend, and turn the waters of the dock into an elixir that would heal all their woes, and make them, man and woman, healthy and whole as their ancestors, Adam and Eve, in the garden.[28]

In *Moby Dick* the narrator parallels the conception of God walking in the garden in the cool of the evening. He writes about angels walking in the garden on the morning of creation:

> What a lovely day again! were it a new-made world, and made for a summer-house to the angels, and this morning the first of its throwing open to them, a fairer day could not dawn upon that world.[29]

Thus man must ever try to mitigate the aridity of his existence in this present "step-mother world" by remembering another world, in which angels consorted with men in the freshness of the morning and in the cool of the evening, a world in which there was no barrier between the finite and the infinite. Now, whenever the poets speak of that world, their language becomes strangely ambiguous, for they can speak of it only in terms of the present visible realities; they can speak of it at all only because they can be sure that a residual memory of that world exists in every man. Regardless of what quotodien distortions meet the eye, the heart knows that it could be otherwise; and the tongue

speaks duplicitously, for it must speak of the eternal verities in terms of the present realities.

If such is the nature of man and the world, and such the informing condition underlying poetry, then the critics, too, have a duty and a task with respect to the author. John P. Pritchard quotes Evert Duyckinck's charge in the 1847 *Literary World* that few of those who sat in the seat of judgement were worthy to occupy it; they were "wanting in true literary feeling, in honest indignation, in independence, in knowledge," in all the qualities which he believed would enable their possessors to accompany the author in his creative courses. Pritchard remarks that critical attention to style is significantly not included in the list of necessary qualities. "Duyckinck's anger had been kindled," he goes on to say, "by his contempt for the venal reviewers and the cliques which they had formed." He also quotes James K. Paulding, who declared that the competent critic must share the author's genius, and even exceed him in taste and judgement. The reader will remember that the Duyckinck brothers largely guided Melville's career, and that Evert had advised Melville to "read, think, and write." Before Americans could perform worthy critical service for either their own or for British writers, Duyckinck warned, American criticism would have to purge itself of its baser practioneers so as to gain honesty and depth.[30]

In the forward to his book, *Explication as Criticism*, W. K. Wimsatt alludes to a kind of bondage to philological specialization which had made "much of our work impeccably accurate and completely inconsequential."[31] Wimsatt maintains that assertion and structure are united in verbal discourse, so that mere stylistic criticism is not true to the nature of literature. Writing about poetry, he says:

> Poetry is a complex kind of verbal construction in which the dimension of coherence is by various techniques of implication greatly enhanced, and thus generates an extra dimension of correspondence to reality, the symbolic or analogical. But all this structure of meaning rises upon a certain element of unavoidably direct reference to outside reality and upon at least a minimal truth of such reference.[32]

He goes on to say that in view of the nexus which obtains between words and things, the response of reality to verbal expression is somewhat "elastic and plastic," though in other ways obdurate and recalcitrant; but elastic in the sense that words can be stretched a long way and yet maintain a coherence and validity of their own, as long as the referential relation to reality is not entirely broken. He then proceeds to a consideration of explicative criticism as it may be contrasted to purely stylistic criticism with its ever-present tendency toward neutrality. By explicative criticism Wimsatt means the discovery and evaluation of both the explicit and implicit values of a work of art, a judgement of the poet's head, and heart, and hand. He deplores the tendency of literary criticism

toward a constant regression of key value terms toward the level of neutrality. It is little wonder that the poet is often angered by this treatment, for neutrality is the last thing in the world which he wants; he wants precisely an existential response. Indeed, says Wimsatt, if we concede the presence of this nexus between words and things, and the intimate fusion between the sound of a word and the thoughts and emotions which it may convey, we are led to question whether critical neutrality is not indeed a desertion of the subject, which may make our work impeccably accurate, and completely inconsequential. He develops his theory by affirming the advantages of explicative criticism. Far from being something to be avoided, value-judgements are precisely part of the business of criticism. The critic is just as much bound to point out an idea which is false or silly, as he is ready to point out bad meter or questionable word-choice. The problem, then is to make our understanding "valuative," he avers, inasmuch as we preserve on one side a cognizance of the analyzable facets of literature, while on the other hand we recognize also the indefinable and unanalyzable meaning of poetry.

The noted Swiss theologian, Karl Barth, comments pertinently on the gulf between ultimate truth and speculative abstraction, and on the question of relating ourselves to ultimate truth as contrasted with what Barth calls its

antithesis, abstract and specialized knowledge. He asks:

> Why do we not break through into the clear conclusion that our sense of being outside, our naturalism, our soulless historicism, and our aestheticism are mistaken?[33]

We succeed in ignoring, he writes, what our philosophical labors have taught us, and that is the unity of the human soul. In forgetting this, we contrive to have our sum of knowledge fragmented into a thousand parts; when actually we ought to begin at the beginning of wisdom by recognizing the totality and unity of our experience. But because of our habit of pretending that we are outside, Barth complains, we come to feel an unrest. This unrest, however, is to some extent beneficial, inasmuch as it brings men back into critical contact with life. Something fundamental in us, he writes, denies the authority and the categories of speculative philosophy to the extent that it is abstracted from concrete existence. The desideratum is precisely a re-integration of the whole human being, an existence simultaneously in the aesthetic and ethical and perhaps the religious categories. Relating the foregoing to the concept of aesthetic-ethical duplicity in literature, it will be seen that literature, or even language as such, is part of the experience of an author and a reader. If the songs of the poet are as fraught with meaning as they are melodious with cadence, then an integrated study ought not merely to be concerned with critical analysis in the sense of analyzing the severated components of literature, but rather with

obtaining an integral view, one which is imaginatively conceived, but also rigorously submitted to the judgement of the story which the author tells.[34]

All of the foregoing has led inexorably towards Kierkegaard's view of language. On this subject he expresses himself extensively, and a compressed and concise summary will have to suffice for the present. He writes:

> As a medium, language is the one absolutely spiritually qualified medium; therefore it is the proper vehicle for the idea.[35]

Music is the daemonic, he has said, the full expression of the erotic-sensuous, complete in its immediacy and finding its end in the arousal of emotion; but language is determined by the idea; and the ideal essence of man is spirit. In language, he avers, the sensuous is annulled. But an extremely interesting dialectic follows.

> If I assume that prose is the language that is farthest removed from music, then I notice even in the oratorical discourse, in the sonorous structure of its periods, a hint of the musical which manifests itself more and more strongly at different levels in the poetic form, in the structure of the verse, in the rhyme, until at last the musical has been developed so strongly that language ceases and everything becomes music.

But he has no sympathy, he asserts, with that sublime music which thinks that it can dispense with words, for music must remain forever inferior to language. This antipathy he develops in a dialectical antithesis to the preceding quotation. Here he develops the thought that the reflective qualities of language destroy, or at any rate annul, the

immediate aspects of music.

> Language involves reflection, and cannot therefore, express the immediate, and hence it is impossible to express the musical in language; but this apparent poverty of language is precisely its wealth. The immediate is really the indeterminate, and therefore language cannot apprehend it; but the fact that it is indeterminate is not its perfection, but its imperfection.[36]

But is it then impossible to express anything which is immediate, except by resorting to music? It will not do to separate the sonorous cadences from the meaning of the words, for if the critic falls prey to this temptation, he will be unable to put the language together again. In that "happy Greek view of the word which calls the world a *cosmos* because it manifests itself as a harmonious whole" every high-minded soul finds its chief delight, finds a sacred joy, "to behold the union of those things which belong together." Music can effectively banish thoughts, he says; and he has expressed the opinion that language is the perfect vehicle for conveying thought. But there is an interesting integration of music and thought in his own invocation of the muse to direct him aright in his own critical literary efforts. He writes:

> You friendly genii, who protect all innocent love, to you I commit all endowments of my mind and soul; guard the questing thoughts that they may be found worthy of the subject, fashion my soul into a harmonious instrument, let the soft breezes of eloquence flow over it, send the refreshments and blessings of fruitful moods!.....You powerful spirits, you who know and understand the hearts of men, stand by me

> that I may catch the reader, not in the net
> of passion, not by the artfulness of eloquence,
> but by the eternal truth of conviction.[37]

Perhaps this is what is meant by compulsive virtue; that is, the force of the truth of conviction. His peroration is illuminating indeed, and highly germane to this investigation, for it illustrates concisely and lucidly the intricate fusion of aesthetic and of ethical elements in a remarkable critical eloquence. Indeed, it appears that his prayer is fulfilled even as he writes. As the soft breezes of eloquence pleasingly play upon the harmonious instrument of his soul, the blessings of fruitful moods engage the reader, first arresting his attention by the clever aesthetic play, but then leading him to ethical conviction. An immense Kierkegaardian criticism is extant, but there has been little authentic investigation of the linguistic functions operative in his aesthetic works. He says in his *Report to History* that his critics, whom he calls "perjured liars," had no presentiment that there was anything behind the poet. He complains that his works cannot be approached by a merely aesthetic treatment. In his introduction to *The Present Age*, Walter Kaufmann verbalizes Kierkegaard's abhorrence of the "literary influence" approach, and the "history of ideas" methodology. Too often, he says, the preacher who wished to shock his readers into an ethical concern for themselves is milked of his venom, bowdlerized, betrayed with invalid

interpretations; compared to Nietzsche and others with whom he has little or nothing in common; men regarding whom he would say, "I do not like the men with whom the kissing Judases insist on lumping me."[38] The present age, Kaufmann sees Kierkegaard as affirming, is not like a revolutionary age; rather, "it leaves everything standing, but cunningly empties it of significance." Perhaps a merely aesthetic treatment of Melville is equally inadmissible. Kaufmann writes:

> Kierkegaard is safely dead and therefore had the right to be as nasty as he pleased and to make fun of the professors of his day and of the foibles of his age. He can even count on the applause of those, a hundred years later, who walked in the footsteps not of Kierkegaard, but of the men at whom he laughed.

Perhaps now that Melville is safely dead these seventy-seven years, he too may be allowed to have his laugh, as his stealthy implications and interpolations are studied with an ethical as well as aesthetic concern. The apostle who thought of writing the Gospels in this century is called a genius, and thereby robbed of apostolic authority, so that his work is cleverly emptied of real significance.[39]

But what is particularly relevant to this thesis is Kierkegaard's assertion that he wishes to "catch" the reader, and his use of every aesthetic device to do so. That Melville passionately identifies with his *persona* has been noted by the critics, but there is still something to say about Melville's intention of seducing the reader into passionately

identifying himself as well. Any number of examples from Melville might be offered, but in *Redburn* there is an example of aesthetic-ethical language, which reveals not only the author's intention of seducing the reader into empathetic identification, but illustrates also a mode of thinking, and writing, which shows what it means "to think with the heart." If the reader will merely note the recurrence of the words *thought* and *heart*, as they occur in the following passage, perhaps also the use of *feel* and *know*, it will become apparent how the protodoxy learned at his mother's knee, and which must be suppressed in the face of "this marble-hearted world," emerges as emotionally informed rhetoric; which, however, in turn, is intended to arouse empathy in the reader, as the last line seems to indicate. He writes of Redburn, as the ship puts to sea;

> My heart was like lead, and I felt bad enough, Heaven knows; but then, there was plenty of work to be done, which kept my thoughts from becoming too much for me.

In spite of the work, however, it is apparent that he does not stop thinking, and it is interesting that his thinking is emotion-based; he thinks and thinks and thinks, and all his thoughts are inspired by his heavy-heartedness. There is a perfect confusion of emotion and reflection, and this confusion is reflected in the language.

His emotions inspire his thoughts, and his thoughts feed his deep-seated emotion; the responsive reader may find that the same process is taking place in himself.

Melville continues:

> And I tried to think all the time that I was going to England, and that, before many months, I should actually have been there and home again, telling my adventures to my brothers and sisters; and with what delight they would listen, and how they would look up to me then, and reverence my sayings; and how that even my elder brother would be forced to treat me with great consideration, as having crossed the Atlantic ocean, which he had never done, and there was no probability he ever would.
>
> With such thoughts as these I endeavoured to shake off my heavy-heartedness; but it would not do at all, for this was only the first day of the voyage, and many weeks, nay, several months must elapse before the voyage ended; and who could tell what might happen to me; for when I looked up at the high giddy masts, and thought how often I must be going up and down them, I thought sure enough that some luckless day or other, I would certainly fall overboard and be drowned. And then I thought of lying down at the bottom of the sea, stark alone with the great waves rolling over me, and no one in the wide world knowing that I was there. And I thought how much better and sweeter it must be, to be buried under the pleasant hedge that bounded the sunny south side of our village graveyard, where every Sunday I used to walk after church in the afternoon; and I almost wished I was there now; yes, dead and buried in that churchyard. All the time my eyes were filled with tears, and I kept holding my breath, to choke down the sobs, for indeed I could not help feeling as I did, and no doubt any boy in the world would have felt just as I did then.[40]

The aesthetic elements, that is to say, the alliterative pairs, the repetition, the cadence of such phrases as "the great waves rolling over me," are all apparently intended to elicit an ethical as well as an aesthetic response, for the entire period is infused with suffering, which is the *primum mobile* of ethical concern. It may well be argued, however, that all these elements in combination

carry no resident intention whatsoever, but are merely, so to speak, an expertly existential description of the responses of a young boy when he first confronts the great and terrible world outside of his home. However, it is significant that his reflections are predicted rather more upon the future than upon the memories of the past, so that he is situated teleologically, very much in the situation of every man who is born into the world and must realize at some time or other of his life that there is a long and hazardous voyage to be made before he can go to his long rest.

It is true, then, that the language he employs is an accurate reflection of his mood. The aesthetic-ethical mode reflects the nature of his responses. There is an interesting corollary passage in *Israel Potter*, again describing a young boy's leave-taking.

> Israel looked at the budding leaves, and round on the budding sod, and up at the budding dawn of day. He was so sad, and these sights were so gay, that Israel sobbed like a child, while thoughts of his mountain home rushed like a wind on his heart.[41]

Once again, the memories of the pristine springtime of his life, or perhaps of the springtime of the world, as is elsewhere suggested, arouse in him such powerful emotions that he sobs. But the bare statement that Israel thought of home and wept would not only fail to be an accurate description of Israel's existential response, but would have little power to elicit an empathetic response in a reader.

So the statement that Israel sobbed like a child is introduced by language which is surely intended and devised to unstring the reader's heart. There is here also an explicit revelation of what is meant by thinking with the heart; that is, "thoughts of his home rushed like a wind on his heart." The sequence of events is that he thinks of home, his affective capacities are aroused, and then the emotion which is released informs all his thoughts with high energy. The mode of verbalizing these events follows the same sequence. First there is the statement that he has decided to leave home. This ethical decision in defense of his own dignity results in his spending the first night under the open sky. In the act of choosing to leave his father's home, his own life begins, as a bud on a tree denotes the appearance of a new branch, and this is linguistically conveyed in the triple repetition of "budding." For Israel, the whole world is beginning, and he might, except for the hypersensitive fibres of his soul, share the aesthetic elation which infuses all nature in the morning. But his ethical choice has predicated a separation; and so we have the emphatic "literary" contrast--" he was so sad, and these sights were so gay." The final line epistemologically shows the mind and the heart seeking solace in each other in the moment of profound sorrow. It may well be supposed that a similar sequence of responses will be invoked in the reader. That is, he is first apprised

of the situation, he is then caught by the poetic devices, and seduced, hopefully, into empathetic identification.

It is now possible to say that the function of language is to convey information and to elicit a response. This is somewhat different than "to instruct with delight," a phrase which Melville amplifies in Redburn's description of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* as "entertainment and edification beautifully and harmoniously combined." The point is that the response is in this case not merely the aesthetic response concomitant with being delighted, but also an ethical response, one which requires a decision, and hence one which requires character. But the aesthetic is always characterless, Kierkegaard insists. Hence the duplicity, which consists in the fact that the reader is being led through the quite common avenue of aesthetic response to a simultaneous ethical response. From the view point of the author, the ethical is conveyed through the aesthetic medium, and is fused with it; from the view point of the reader, the aesthetic response conditions the reader for a concomitant ethical response.

The foregoing has its philosophical basis in F. H. Heinemann's response theory, which is based upon his first principle; *Respondeo, ergo sum.* Having found the Cartesian "cognito, ergo sum" psychologically invalid inasmuch as it is incomplete, and having seen that the "existo, ergo sum" of the so-called existential philosophers is really, after all, merely a tautology, Heinemann

posits response as the distinctively human attribute. He believes that his theory corresponds more closely to the great accumulation of biological and psychological facts which are known about the human being. It is not the fact that a man thinks or feels, but that he responds to external stimuli which guarantees his authentic existence as a subject in relation to objects, to other subjects, and to ideas. The greater a man's responsivity, then, the truer man he is. Melville seems to have this conception in mind when he writes, "And he who has never felt, momentarily, what madness is, has but a mouthful of brains."[42] This is also why he considers the "jovial sorts" as either untrue or undeveloped. Melville must be aware that if music cannot strike a responsive chord in unmusical breasts, neither can an ethical concern rouse the aesthetic man, who is, in this sense, *irresponsible*. That is more than to say that he is not responsive; for an act of will is involved. The jovial sorts have chosen to grin at the world; while the Hoffman who goes mad has sought the penetralia of retreat. But the Melville who staunchly maintains "the perilous outposts of the sane" has resolved to preserve his chimney intact.[43]

He has chosen to confront existence without flinching, he has accepted the suffering of religiosity, he has braved the risk that madness will be the ultimate result, as Melville writes of Israel Potter:

> And so Israel, now an old man, was bewitched by the mirage of vapors; he had dreamed himself home into the mists of the Housatonic mountains; a ruddy boy on the upland pastures again.[44]

All dreams are one dream, and that dream is of the pristine innocence of the garden. When the giants have trampled down all the cities, then there are still always the mountains, says Robinson Jeffers.[45] Those men who have chosen to be men accept the isolation and the pain and the risk of madness precisely in order to become men. It can be seen that to be responsive is an act of *responsibility*, attended with the necessity for perception and judgement.

On the contrary, to refuse to respond wholly is to refuse to exist, in precisely that sense in which Kierkegaard says that modern man does not exist. If a man neglects, refuses or is unable to respond, he is denying his responsibility. It will be observed, of course, that in this context, the term *responsible* has a new dimension. The proponents of detachment have supposed, apparently, that a negative response to literary stimulation, that is to say, neutral objectivity, absolves them of what is here called "responsibility"; the proponents of the philosophy of commitment apparently suppose that a positive response to any real or fabricated external situation is sufficient. Indeed, in a given situation either response may be valid, even it is not *responsible* in the ordinary sense of the word. What is really reprehensible, however, what is so inhuman that it is a virtual denial of existence is not to respond at all,

to be neutral, to be objective, to maintain the stance of aesthetic or ethical detachment. That man who has never felt what madness is, that man who has by cleverly calculated shrewdness avoided the delirium that accompanies genuine ethical choices, that man, Melville would say, is not true, either not true or not developed; that man, Kierkegaard says, does not exist. This description is valid even when *exist* is etymologically construed; that is to say, that man does not stand forth, he has sought asylum and security in neutral objectivity, in objective or scientific detachment, in detached abstraction, as if he were already dead! That man is dead, and there are no longer any fairies in his soul which the poet's harmonies might arouse to dance.

In terms of the category of responsibility, formulated upon the premise: *Respondeo, ergo sum*, a man may be denominated as irresponsible in various categories of existence. He is aesthetically irresponsible when he refuses "to find thrillers thrilling"; he is ethically irresponsible when he evades "valuative judgements," and he is religiously irresponsible if he refuses to "make a decision in spite of uncertainty," if he "wants to twaddle when he is asked to obey" as Kierkegaard says.[46] The genuinely literate reader, then, in the sense in which George Steiner uses the term, will first of all, willingly suspend his judgement and allow himself to be seduced by the poet's song;

secondly, he will choose, reject, make decisions in a consistent character; and thirdly, he will hold fast, even with his understanding, to something which his understanding can by no means grasp. Man formulates his conscious responses, Heinemann says, by speech. Thus there emerge both science and philosophy as human responses to the order and design of the universe. He does not elaborate upon the responses to beauty, pain, or disorder. Speech is still the mode of formulating the responses, but now the speech becomes charged with emotion; it flows rhythmically and sonorously, it articulates strong impressions by means of repetition, and it verbalizes heartbreak at the incongruity between what is and what should be by means of contrast, as in Melville's description of his youthful hero after his first night under the stars: "He was so sad and these sights were so gay, that Israel sobbed like a child." The inner responses which are not wholly conscious also give rise to the poetic devices of simile and metaphor, to the language of analogies, as word-making man strains to articulate feelings. He describes his inner motions in terms of those external motions and forces which he has seen, and to which he has responded. Thus Melville appends to the statement "Israel sobbed like a child" a description of the state of Israel's heart, a description formulated in terms of analogous references to natural motions; "while thoughts of his mountain home rushed like a wind on his

heart." As efficient a word-maker as man is, he must nevertheless resort to analogies the moment that his descriptions of reality enter into the world of spirit; hence the resident duplicity in poetic language, whatever poetic devices may be used.[47] Under no conceivable circumstances can the motions of the spirit be directly communicated.

When we read *Redburn,* says Jean-Jacques Mayoux, we realize with what force existence confronted the growing boy, Melville, and are led to exclaim, "How he must have suffered!" Mayoux recognizes also that Melville responded to the events in books as to realities; with his anglo-hebraic mind he thought in his heart that ideas were real. Before he himself began to write, the *évocateur* responded with imagination and exhiliration to the writings of others, as he confesses with regard to his reading of Dana's *Two Years before the Mast,* and much later, regarding his reading of Hawthorne's *Mosses.* Mayoux writes about Melville's precocious responsivity:

> Jamais peut-être homme ne fut remué aussi profondément par de simples lectures, ni ne les saisit autant comme réalitiés.[48]

When he himself begins to write, *ideas* are clothed with reality, as for instance, in the case of Yillah, who, says Mayoux, is hardly a woman of blood, flesh, and bones, but rather,

> Elle apparaît comme une idée, un principe de beauté spirituelle, d'harmonie, de pureté.

While different readers may disagree regarding precisely what it is that Yillah represents, there is general agreement that she is much more than a woman of blood, flesh, and bones. If we transliterate the word into Semitic characters, we get something like *God*. Perhaps she is the true church, all of whose daughters are, however, captives in the kingdom of Hautia without knowing it. At another level she may symbolize the discovery of every young man that when the angel is caught, she becomes only a woman; or as Pierre discovers, that Eve can no more be divorced from sex than a rose from the soil, that her smile is the vehicle of deception, and her bosom made of too-deceiving clay, a trap to delay the existential pilgrim.[49] Perhaps the pursuit of Yillah represents man's eternal longing for the *redintegratio in statum pristinum*. Mayoux writes:

> Elle exprime, cette quête, un effort obstiné, désespéré, pour retrouver l'intégrité natale ou prénatale, l'innocence blakienne.[50]

If this or any similar interpretation of what the quest expresses is a valid one, then it is apparent that every word spoken about her or about the quest is invested with duplicate meaning. On the superficial level of the story or narrative itself, the quest expresses the quite normal pursuit of a man after a woman of blood, flesh, and bones; on another level of interpretation, she may represent primal innocence, and the quest then becomes an articulation

of the inexpressible longing in every man for a distant lost paradise which he seems vaguely to remember, and which he can regain only in the imagination.

In any case, Melville as poet obviously feels that he can convey his spiritual responses to the age-old dream only in terms of aesthetic narrative. It is not surprising that as soon as the critics, in deference to the requirement of the age, no longer found spiritual symbols in literature, they at once began to discover sexual symbols. As C. S. Lewis asserts, sexual attraction is the last motion of the spirit, when nothing else is left.[51] To the extent that this attraction is indefinable it is the last guarantee that man is spirit. To see sex symbols everywhere may be a perverted way of reading, but it is nevertheless better than to see nothing, for it is a *response* to the *duplex factum* in literature. The language of spirit is the language of analogy, so that a spiritually impotent reader who is otherwise intellectually acute must see a substratum of another kind. This may distress the author, but then he knows that the heavenly harp cannot strike responsive chords in unmusical breasts. Kierkegaard rants and rages because "these perjured gentlemen had no presentiment that there was anything behind the poet"; but he consoles himself with the thought that someday, when his "lover" will come, he will explain the whole significance of his authorship; he trusts that he will find one reader.[52]

Obviously irritated by what Kierkegaard calls "so illegitimate a tribunal as the public," Melville also came to the conclusion that it was enough to find one responsible reader, as he writes to Richard Henry Dana:

> Did I not write these books of mine almost entirely for lucre, by the job, as a woodsawyer saws wood, I almost think I should hereafter, in the case of a sea book, get my manuscripts neatly and legibly copied by a scrivener, send you that one copy, and deem such a procedure the best publication.[53]

Melville's disappointment with the left-handed praise which he has received for the aesthetic enjoyment he affords his readers is quite apparent. He who thought of writing the gospels in his century finds that he must appeal to popular tastes, and must grind out copy like a hack, at a given number of dollars per serial installment. It is not surprising that his suppressed ethical concern everywhere emerges, at first in the form of interpolations, but in his later works, in more careful and beguiling disguises.

When Dostoevsky's "queer fellow" awakens from his dream of "the earth as yet unpolluted by transgression" inhabited by men who had yet known no sin, he is exalted by an ineffable rapture and exclaims:

> Yes, to live, and to preach. O that very minute I decided to preach, yes, to preach all my life long. I would preach, I longed to preach--what? Truth, for I had seen her, seen her with my eyes, seen her in all her glory...Since then I have preached. They say already that I am wandering... It's true, I wander and perhaps it will be worse in the future. And of course, I shall wander many times before I find out how to preach, with what words and deeds, for these are hard to find... and I will perhaps speak with another's words,

> but not for long. The living image of what I saw will be with me always, and will correct and guide me....After my dream I lost all my words, at least, all the important words, those I need most. But so let it be; I will go on and preach untiringly, because I saw plainly, although I cannot relate what I saw. But the mockers do not understand....Let it be that this will never come to pass and there will be no paradise--that at least I understand well, still I will preach.[54]

He affirms that the truth is simple, but hard to do, and impossible to relate: he does not know precisely how he will preach, but if the authorship of Dostoevsky is admissible evidence, it is apparent that he did, after all, learn how! Melville asserts that the true man must stand fast in the face of falsehood, even if to be false were salvation. He is fully aware that any preacher who spoke the truth would be railroaded out of his church, but he learns in anguish of spirit that there is, after all, a way of preaching the gospels in this century, a way of tickling the ears of the fine ladies and the dilettantes who have no presentiment that there is anything behind the poet, and at the same time incessantly preaching, seducing, deceiving men into the truth of existence. It is not that Melville originated the method of duplicity, for every man resorts to this kind of language when he wishes to discourse of the spirit and the motions of the spirit of man. Language is just that vehicle by which the ethical idea is transmitted through the medium of the aesthetic. Words that stand as symbols of the most concrete external objects have long ago been adapted as the

means of describing the concrete realities of the inner life. Language informs, moves, persuades; words evoke pictures of the external objects which they symbolize, but they also evoke simultaneously memories and aspirations related to those external symbols. It is this quality of language which makes aesthetic-ethical duplicity an admissible category of criticism.

II The Necessity for Duplicity

The suggestion that there is an aesthetic-ethical duplicity in the writings of Herman Melville rests upon the basis of the important underlying assumption that the author in question considers duplicity, construed in both the sense of doubleness and deceitfulness, as an absolutely necessary means of communicating his truth to men. An inquiry in this direction will take the reader out of the purely literary realm, for the fact that an author believes duplicity to be advisable or necessary betrays something fundamental to his view of human nature. Considerable evidence can be adduced from Melville's writings to show that he felt the necessity of "wearing a false brow" before the reader, and to elucidate his conception of the nature of man, a conception which makes duplicity towards men a necessary corollary of communicating with men. There is something more involved here than mere evasiveness, or the ambiguity of surfacings from what Coleridge calls the "deep, deep well of cerebration." There is not necessarily any ambiguity at all, neither any obscurity, but rather a duplicity consciously practiced upon the reading public at large, because of an awareness upon the part of the author that the truth cannot be told directly, that men cannot stand the unvarnished truth, and that it is actually dangerous to tell the truth. "Heaven" writes Melville, "let any clergyman try to preach the truth from its very strong-

hold, the pulpit, and they would ride him out of his church on his own pulpit bannister."[1] If such is the true state of affairs in the world, then it is little wonder that he who would "preach truth to the face of falsehood" must "wear a false brow."

While the Melville criticism contains many hints of such duplicity, there is a surprising lacuna evident with respect to any direct treatment of the subject. Various commentators have spoken of the double character of Melville's works, of their *zweideutigkeit* and *doppelsinnigkeit:* but always without a rigorous attempt to posit and test the category of duplicity. It will therefore be necessary to begin with some general critical commentaries not directly related to Melville.

Commenting upon the nature of literature in general, Lawrence Lerner writes, "The honey is mixed with the medicine."[2] He understands that for some reason which he does not precisely articulate, there is something unpalatable about the naked truth, and that this state of affairs is general. In the discussion of the duplicate function of language, reference has already been made to the often-quoted dictum that the function of literature is "to instruct with delight." However, a new dimension is added when Lerner speaks of mixing honey with the medicine, for here there is a suggestion that the instruction is therapeutic rather than merely informational, as if there were some shortcoming

in the reader other than mere ignorance. It may well be asked why it should be necessary to mix any honey with a direct answer to a direct question. Obviously, people who speak about literature in such terms feel that something has to be done in order to overcome a natural reluctance to assimilate truth. In his satirical parody of literary criticism, Frederick C. Crews says, "In every case of authentic literature...the literary value results from a kernel of serious moral doctrine that is surrounded by a superficial appeal to the eye and ear."[3] There need be no objection to having an aesthetic-critical inquiry submitted to Crews' corrosive scorn, as it is evident in any case that his satire in this regard is directed against those critics who see such kernels of truth in *all* literature, whatever the intent of the author may have been. Besides, Crews has stated the point succinctly. But his comment also raises another question with which the literary critic must be concerned. If in a serious work of art there is actually present a doctrine or a kernel of truth, and if this gem of wisdom, as Crews suggests, is surrounded by every sort of aesthetic appeal, the question arises as to the way in which the ethical kernel is related to what he might derisively call the aesthetic chaff. This subject is closely related to the primary concern of the preceding chapter, for the very term *duplicity* suggests an intimate contingency of elements in

an organic fusion which has been expressed by using the particular term *aesthetic-ethical duplicity.* In the light of Crews' satire, it may be advisable to leave the extraction of the kernel to other laborers in the Melville vineyard, and to confine this study rather to an investigation of why the author feels that he cannot be entirely frank with his readers; and subsequently, to an investigation of the mechanics of this duplicity.

It is interesting to observe the persistence with which authors, critics, and parodists of the critical method have felt this concern about hiding kernels among the chaff, or mixing honey with the medicine, or instructing with delight, rather than instructing merely with unadorned fact. In a subjective investigation, posited upon the premise that the truth lies in subjectivity, it is interesting to note what Soren Kierkegaard, the Danish aesthetic-ethical critic, has to say, in this case, about the premise that the truth cannot be directly communicated, and that he who wishes to preach the truth must wear a false brow. Commenting upon the significance and place of the pseudonymous and aesthetically orientated corpus which accompanied his religious discourses, Kierkegaard writes:

> The pseudonymous authors constantly had existence in view, and thus maintained an indirect polemic against speculative philosophy.[4]

What was needed, he adds, was a "God-fearing satire" precisely directed against speculative philosophy, and against human

education in general.[5] The *duplex factum* of the aesthetic productions, and in fact, the underlying theme of his entire literary activity, as he calls it, was to "deceive men into the truth." Once again the student of literature is confronted with this persistent insistence that there is something extremely difficult about conveying the truth to men.

Against the background of Ishmael's reminder that a whaling ship was his Yale and Harvard, Kierkegaard's comments about human education are cogent. Perhaps the most concise summary can be found in a short entry from his *Journals*. He writes:

> Providence has given every man certain characteristics. The important thing in life should therefore be to develop that characteristic, strengthened and confirmed by the conflicts which it must produce with its surroundings. Human education, on the other hand, is demoralizing, is calculated to teach a man how not to have an air, not to use a word, not to undertake the least thing without having a guarantee that numbers of others have done the same thing before him.[6]

Underlying this sort of education, he asserts, is the principle of quantification, the belief in numbers, that demoralizing corollary of democratization. The effects of this he describes:

> But again and again to be absorbed in this everlasting quantification is harmful to the observer, who may easily lose the chaste purity of the ethical, which dismisses the quantitative infinitely with a sacred contempt, though to the sensuous man it is his eyes' delight, and to the sophistical man, his fig-leaf.[7]

Thus he dismisses the appeal to pragmatism, and expresses the opinion that someday it will be considered as puerile to

point to results as it is now considered puerile to point a moral. While quantification is a strategic method of intercourse which depends upon quoting results, that is, appealing to objective evidence, the principle of particularity cannot make any such appeal. He comments:

> The communication of results is an unnatural form of intercourse between man and man, in so far as every man is a spiritual being, for whom the truth consists in nothing else than the self-activity of personal appropriation, which the communication of a result tends to prevent.[8]

It can be seen how such a view of the nature of man would lead an author to create the *duplex factum*, inasmuch as the direct communication of a serious moral concern is rendered impossible.

There is another consideration arising out of the statement that "the truth consists ... in the self-activity of personal appropriation." If such is the case, it becomes evident why the truth has to be honey-coated, why the truth has to be surrounded with everything that appeals to the eye and ear. The author must first of all appeal to the sensuousness of the sensuous man, to the sophistication of the sophistical man, compelling both to choose the truth. This is far from understanding a revelation, or adding new knowledge to old. What is involved, says Kierkegaard, is a decisive transformation in the individual, and it is here that the supreme difficulty lies. As a result of this condition attached to the conveyance and appropriation of truth, there is nothing of which man is so mortally afraid

as he is afraid of the truth! He elaborates:

> No, instead of wishing, like the young man, to tear away the veil from divinity, I wish to tear the veil from human twaddle and from the conceited self-complacency with which men try to convince themselves and others that man really wants to know the truth. No, every man is more or less afraid of the truth, and that is what is human, for truth is related to being spirit, and that is very hard for flesh and blood to bear. Between man and truth lies mortification-you can see why we are all more or less afraid.[9]

Elsewhere he writes, "Spirit precisely is this: not to be like others."[10] If the truth lies so wholly in subjectivity, it becomes understandable why madness and anguish should accompany the endeavor to communicate truth to others, for both the sensuous man and the sophistical man will defend themselves against mortification.

It remains to be demonstrated how relevant the foregoing is with respect to Herman Melville. First of all, it must be remembered that many of the earlier Kierkegaard critics in Germany were both astonished and academically embarrassed when successive translations of Kierkegaard's works revealed that the editors and critics had entirely overlooked the major concern and primary intent of the entire pseudonymous corpus. It is possible that a similar and hardly less serious embarrassment may be due in America when the nature and degree of Melville's *duplex factum* is fully elucidated. In his *Report to History*, Kierkegaard dropped the bombshell which, in the opinion of some of the later critics, rendered virtually all of the then extant

criticism valueless.[11] Once the secret was known, no one remained to defend the earlier critical positions, except that a few unlucky American editors fell into the same trap when they expressed themselves upon the basis of a limited reading of the pseudonymous corpus, coupled with complete ignorance of the religious works. Anyone who has read only "The Banquet" or Quidam's Diary" or the other aesthetic selections in the early English anthologies may well be excused for misunderstanding the whole Kierkegaard; but some of the critical comments made look none the less foolish in the light of the entire literary activity of the man they tried to analyze. Unfortunately for Melville criticism, the first book published in America which promised to study Melville in the light of Kierkegaard's insights was based upon a superficial reading of such an anthology, and a blind acceptance of the editor's ill-founded conclusions.[12] As a result, the thesis here posited has to make headway not merely into a void, but into a void, so to speak, obstructed by an already existing misunderstanding. The Nobel price-winner, Max Planck, writes that a new scientific theory can make headway in the scientific community only after most of the defenders of the old theories have died; but in the field of literature, hopefully, there ought to be a greater responsiveness to a genuine critical insight, provided of course, that it can be adequately documented. As has been stated, once Kierkegaard's

secret was known, it was only too evident that his entire "authorship" was a vast and carefully deliberated conspiracy to deceive men into the truth.

The task of demonstrating Melville's duplicit intent is manifestly more difficult, for he has left behind him no such obvious "Report to History," overtly and substantially to declare his intentions as an author; as a result of which fact it is necessary to ask whether the fact of an intended duplicity can be found somewhere, perhaps as a kernel in the "cake and ale" sea stories. It is now well documented that Kierkegaard had given adequate warning of his design to deceive. As his American editor, Dr. Walter Lowrie, has commented fully upon the question in numerous introductions to his translations of Kierkegaard critique, it will suffice to quote only one of Kierkegaard's most obvious betrayals of his secret, the famous "drop the guitar" passage. Having elaborated the thesis that the world loves the poet because its relation to the poet and his poetry does not require any decisive existential response, he accuses the state priests, whose sermons he calls "half pagan, half poetic," of having turned the stark truth of primitive Christianity into poetry which is neither morally binding nor compelling. Then follows an astounding revelation:

> Under the name of a poet I then drew out a number of ideals, brought forth that to which - yes, to which 1,000 royal functionaries are bound by an

> oath. And these good men noticed nothing whatever, they felt perfectly secure, to such a degree was everything spiritlessness (i.e. stupidity) and worldliness; these good men had nc presentiment that anything was hidden behind the poet, that the line of action was that of a detective's shrewdness in order to make the person concerned feel secure, a method the police use precisely for the sake of having a chance to get a profounder insight!
>
> Then some time elapsed. I even stood on very good terms with these perjured men...
>
> Then this poet suddenly transformed himself, threw away the guitar, if I may speak thus, brought out a book which is called the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.[13]

It is shocking indeed that such a clever aesthetic writer as the author of the pseudonymous wcrks should so deceive thousands of his readers, that having enchanted their eyes and ears, he should confess at last that his only concern was for their souls. In a moment the chaff is all blown away, and the kernel lies bare before his reader. What if a major novelist were to attempt the execution of a similar trick!

If this suggestion is to be authenticated, it will be necessary to read Melville very carefully, and to steer a critical course circumspectly between the Scylla of obscurantism and the Charybdis of arid objectivity. On the one hand, no one could wish to fall into the error of the extravagant critic who wrote, "And Moby Dick will give a great bellow like a foghorn blowing, and stretch 'fin out'

for the sun away in the west..." As William S. Gleim has pointed out,[14] a more careful reader would have observed that "the whale has no voice," being a "vast dumb brute" whose "genius is declared in pyramidical silence." He would further have discovered that when the whale turns 'fin out,' he is dead! On the other hand, it must be equally unpleasant to be found critically wanting, as were those Kierkegaard critics who "had no presentiment that there was anything behind the poet." As the Melville literature manifestly attests, even the rigors of an austere critical discipline are not an absolute guarantee that the reader will not succumb to the temptation of "liking what he likes," or seeing what he wants to see, whether it is there or not, or failing to see what he does not wish to see. This is not even to mention the far more common failing of not being able to see what he is not prepared or equipped to see simply because he does not suspect its presence. Indeed, one of the corollaries of the thesis which has been posited is the belief that when the reader is confronted with the problem of a suppressed moral doctrine manifesting itself in aesthetic form, as in poetry, perhaps in the form of exuberant energy, he is going to find it difficult to reconstruct the original doctrine from the material alone. It should, however, be possible conclusively to demonstrate an author's suppressed

concern, and to analyze its effect upon the literary form of expression which he happens to choose.

In order to develop this subject, it is not necessary to construct a mythical pattern which will account for all the varied symbols in the work of an author, his whales and his women, symbols real and imagined. It may be that *Moby Dick* is an allegory of epic proportions, or that *The Confidence Man* is a homily on the Beatitudes. If either or both propositions were true, the question would remain as to why the author should have chosen the specific vehicle he did for the transmission of the truth which he wished to convey. That Melville was concerned about the fabricated mystical meanings which posterity might place upon his works, he has revealed. Such an inference may be drawn from the lines:

> So ignorant are most landsmen of some of the plainest and most palpable wonders of the world, that without some hints touching the plain facts, historical and otherwise, of the fishery, they might scout at *Moby Dick* as a monstrous fable, or still more detestable, a hideous and intolerable allegory.[15]

He seems to be concerned that the literal story will stand by itself, or as Nathan C. Starr insists, that there will be a substantial nexus between his words and the world of external reality. In any case, a great many critics have simply dismissed his declared dislike of such a mode of interpretation by stating that his quoted objection is very

obviously ironical and humorous, and that a story of such length and scope can hardly be accepted as a mere fish story.

Melville himself compounds the problem further when he tells Hawthorne in a letter that the story has a meaning too. In the text of his epic work occurs a long, descriptive paragraph, heavily loaded with symbols and allusions, and with what he himself calls "subtile hints." This paragraph may be viewed as a preliminary example of the mechanics of duplicity, a subject to be elaborated later. While the ostensible subject of the paragraph is "the chase of whales," the mode and the manner of presentation seem constantly to suggest some underlying, informing concern. The nexus with external reality is steadily maintained, but the flow and exuberance of the passage, invested as it is with numerous poetic devices, points unmistakeably to its causal nexus with the world of spirit. He writes:

> Here be it said, that this pertinacious pursuit of one particular whale, continued through day into night, and through night into day, is a thing by no means unprecedented in the South Sea fishery. For such is the wonderful skill, prescience of experience, and invincible confidence acquired by some great natural geniuses among the Nantucket commanders; that from the simple observation of a whale when last descried, they will, under certain given circumstances, pretty accurately foretell both the direction in which he will continue to swim for a time, while out of sight, as well as his probable rate of progression during that period. And, in these cases, somewhat as a pilot, when about losing sight of a coast, whose general trending he well knows, and which he desires shortly

> to return to again, but at some further point; like as this pilot stands by his compass, and takes the precise bearing of the cape presently visible, in order the more certainly to hit aright the remote, unseen headland, eventually to be visited: so does the fisherman, at his compass, with the whale; for after being chased, and diligently marked, through several hours of daylight, then, when night obscures the fish, the creature's future wake through the darkness is almost as established to the sagacious mind of the hunter, as the pilot's coast is to him. So that to this hunter's wondrous skill, the proverbial evanescence of a thing writ in water, a wake, is to all desired purposes well nigh as reliable as the steadfast land. And as the mighty iron Leviathan of the modern railway is so familiarly known in its every pace, that, with watches in their hands, men time his rate as doctors that of a baby's pulse; and lightly say of it, the up train or the down train will reach such or such a spot, at such and such an hour; even so, almost, there are occasions when these Nantucketers time that other Leviathan of the deep, according to the observed humor of his speed; and say to themselves, so many hours hence this whale will have gone two hundred miles, will have about reached this or that degree of latitude or longitude. But to render this acuteness at all successful in the end, the wind and the sea must be the whaleman's allies; for of what present avail to the becalmed or windbound mariner is the skill that assures him he is exactly ninety-three leagues and a quarter from his port? Inferable from these statements, are many collateral subtile hints touching the chase of whales.[16]

From the employment of the biblical archaism *Leviathan*, to the use of the epic similes, the reader is made aware in the midst of otherwise ordinary narrative that some extraordinary compulsion has suddenly seized upon the writer. The quoted passage can hardly be construed as merely historical information about the fishery. It looks and sounds more like poetry, like a welling incantation from

the subconscious deep. A sensitive critic may have to allay the temptation to interrupt his inquiry by writing an explication of the passage, which, however, may not be his concern at this point; but even a casual reader may be moved to ask what in the name of whaling could have brought on such a sudden and pompous digression on the part of the author. Prior to this epic paragraph, Melville has written, "If the gods think to speak outright to man, they will honorably speak outright; not shake their heads, and give an old wives' darkling hint." The poet, however, has left the reader shaking his head, and wondering what subtile matters might legitimately be inferred from his darkling hints. Perhaps the oracle of the gods has not been quite honorable with his readers.[17] The reader may well feel that some sort of crafty duplicity is being practiced upon him, and his curiosity is likely to be aroused; but it is also true that while man's insatiable intellect is curious to know the hidden secret, his proud will is vaguely cognizant of the fact that the secret is perhaps to be left hidden, lest an existential demand be made upon the reader.

Perhaps Melville's readers and critics would not feel so strongly that there is a subtile meaning to be inferred, if it were not for more direct and clearly obvious statements by Melville in other places, particularly in his letters to his closest intimates, whom, it may be supposed, he felt no need of deceiving. In one such letter to Hawthorne,

he writes:

> The reiterated imputation of being a romancer in disguise has at last pricked me into a resolution to show those who take any interest in the matter that a real romance of mine is no *Typee* or *Omoo*, and is made of different stuff altogether. My romance, I assure you, is no dishwater nor its model borrowed from the circulating library. It is something new, I assure you, and original, if nothing more. It opens like a true narrative... and the romance and poetry of the thing thence grow continually, till it becomes a story wild enough, I assure you, and with a meaning too.[18]

In view of the triple assurance, it is little wonder that the literary journals are replete with erudite investigations into the meaning. But then, Melville has something to say about the futility of erudition when a man is dealing with matters of the most profound importance; that is, if he assumes that the author is doing something more than spinning a yarn laced with practical information about the South Sea fishery. Melville writes:

> There is no earthly way of finding out precisely what the whale really looks like. And the only mode in which you can derive even a tolerable idea of his living contour, is to go awhaling yourself.[19]

Somehow he leaves the impression that he is duplicitously talking about his "whale of a book" as well as about natural whales. In another place he writes:

> For as the swift monster drags you deeper into the frantic shoal, you bid adieu to circumspect life and only exist in a delirious throb.[20]

Now, if in the process of its creation, the romance and poetry of the thing grew continually until it became a wild story, all these literal references to real enough

natural dangers suddenly become invested with another meaning; it seems that he is inviting the reader to let himself be drawn into the frantic tale, deeper and deeper until he exists in a delirious throb, which is exactly as Melville would have it. If the informing doctrine is to be conveyed, the reader must agree to suspend his circumspect judgement, to allow a willing suspension of disbelief.

In still another place, Melville contributes further to this subject, again in a duplicit mode of speaking; that is to say, with a referential nexus to the scientific study of whales, simultaneously with a *subtile* suggestion for the literary critic or reader. He says:

> How vain and foolish, then, thought I, for timid, untravelled man to try to comprehend aright this wondrous whale, by merely poring over his dead, attenuated skeleton, stretched in this peaceful wood. No, only in the heart of quickest perils; only when within the eddyings of his angry flukes; only on the profound, unbounded sea, can the fully invested whale be truly and livingly found out.[21]

The reader has only to remember the rhetoric question in *Clarel:* "Whose is the eye that sees aright?" to become suspicious of a possible duplicity in "comprehend aright." While the author is perorating upon the inadequacy of scientific abstraction from living reality, he seems at the same time to be saying something about the futility of passionless erudition with respect to so wild a romance as his book. Kierkegaard, with obviously similar

intent, ridicules the evasive bravado of inquiring after trackless wastes when one is seated in the inn, after dinner. Only in the heart of quickest perils, he would say, can reality be truly and existentially found out. In a humorous entry in the *Journals*, he comments upon an objective detachment from life, with special scorn for passionless religion.

> ....the bourgeois love of God begins when vegetable life is most active, when the hands are comfortably folded on the stomach, and the head sinks back into the cushions of the chair, while the eyes, drunk with sleep, gaze heavily for a moment towards the ceiling.[22]

It is not in the soft cushions of an armchair, but in the heart of quickest perils that the truth may be apprised. So Melville seems to assert that no amount of erudition can take the place of imaginative insight and the risk of passionate involvement. The mass of men, he says, "must get just as nigh the water as they possibly can without falling in." So it is with landsmen; and therefore men must be deceived into taking the leap and getting wet; but against this, wordly shrewdness defends itself with every possible evasion.

Because of the vast ocean of imponderables which surrounds human existence, Melville questions the wisdom of developing the intellect at the expense of other faculties. He asks:

> Why then do you try to enlarge your mind? Subtilize it! You would know no more if your eyes were broad as the lens of Herschel's

> great telescope, and your ears capacious as the porches of cathedrals.[23]

It may be that Melville learned this from Thomas Carlyle, who observed that while those "medieval blockheads had no telescope, at least they had an eye!" Numerous ancillary comments are scattered throughout Melville's writings. Elsewhere in *Moby Dick* he states that the real knowledge of life cannot be found in books, "For whatever is truly wondrous and fearful in men, never yet was put into words or books." Melville's own conclusion to this collation of his comments upon the inadequacy of erudition, might perhaps be found in another passage, with its own resident duplicity. He writes:

> The secrets of the currents in the seas have never yet been divulged; even to the most erudite research.[24]

But any serious man will refuse to be put off in this manner; and if erudite research will not reveal what is wondrous and fearful, the reader may well wonder what method will do so. If objective detachment is not the way, perhaps subjective involvement is.

The preceding section may appear to be somewhat digressive from the immediate concern of this chapter, but in reality it does illustrate an important facet of the posited thesis. Precisely this conception of reality and of the nature of man, which posits that the truth cannot be directly communicated, includes also the premise that

direct cognition is likewise impossible. Thus the reader who would discover Melville's "meaning" must evidently proceed by making inferences from duplicit passages in which seemingly profound utterances are delivered in the medium of poetry, passages in which a probable kernel of truth is not only surrounded by, but intimately contingent with, every mode of aesthetic appeal. By drawing further and similar inferences from Melville's major works, together with an erudite documentation, the probability of the primary postulates in this chapter might be increased; but in view of Melville's hints it is apparent that no amount of work done in amassing such inferences could directly establish the premises, or validate the original thesis. Accordingly, a change of direction seems to be indicated, in terms of the categories of rotation and repetition; which, as Kierkegaard defines them, involves not a change of field, but a change of crop.

This change of direction involves an inquiry into a few of Melville's direct statements in his personal correspondence, where it may be assumed that he is speaking plainly from the heart, with no need to wear a false brow. In a letter addressed to "My dear Duyckinck," he confesses:

> What a madness and anguish it is, that an author can never, under no conceivable circumstances, be at all frank with his readers.[25]

The possibility presents itself at once that it is precisely this "madness and anguish" which informs the poetic outbursts in his novels, such as the lengthy paragraph

previously quoted, full of subtile matters ostensibly pertaining to the chase of whales. In the second place, the reader is led to wonder what it is that he wants to say, but which he feels so strongly cannot be said. And thirdly, the question arises as to why an author should feel that he cannot ever be frank with his readers. The problem must be serious indeed, if an author would rather endure such madness and anguish than risk being frank with his readers. Syncretically, the aforementioned problems raise a fourth question, and that is the problem of whether it is the nature of the truth which he wishes to teach, or the nature of man whom he wishes to teach, or a combination of the two, which makes the teaching so difficult that anguish seizes him at the prospect. If he believes that he has the truth to preach, and feels so strongly compelled to preach this truth, while at the same time he anticipates active resistance from his hearers, with the result that he is filled with madness and anguish, then it becomes understandable why he should seek a compromise between keeping his high and holy secret, like *virgo mater* hiding her secret under her breast, and preaching it directly from a pulpit. It becomes evident why he should seek a compromise in duplicity, to do as the wordly preachers do (that is, to say smooth things for itching ears, as Scripture has it); but at the same time he must satisfy his own basic need to preach the truth by surreptitiously

including in the siren song an emotional appeal to the dormant will to rise in response to the ethical imperative encouched in his song, an imperative which impinges upon the will in the very process by which the resistant psyche is not only being lulled, but also lured by every aesthetic appeal.

There is something about the nature of man and the nature of Melville's truth, which makes such duplicity necessary. What this is, he does not explicitly state, even in the personal correspondence which is extant and available. But something of the truth is implicit in his "pulpit bannister" passage, a fragment of which has previously been quoted. He writes to his confidante, Nathaniel Hawthorne:

> This is ludicrous, but Truth is the silliest thing under the sun. Try to get a living by the Truth, and go to the soup societies! Heavens, let any clergyman try to preach the Truth from its very stronghold, the pulpit, and they would ride him out of his church on his own pulpit bannister. It can hardly be doubted that all reformers are bottomed upon the Truth, more or less; and to the world at large, are not reformers almost universally laughed at? Why so? Truth is ridiculous to men. Thus easily in my room here do I, conceited and garrulous, reverse the test of my Lord Shaftesbury.[26]

Evidently he shares the view of the Russian philosopher, Nikholas Berdyaev, that the insignia of the truth is that it goes ill with it in this world! While Melville has not explicitly revealed what this truth is, he has implied

something about it; enough, in any case, to show why he must consider it a madness and anguish to be in possession of such a treasure which men insist on refusing, so that this truth cannot be communicated easily, and never directly. The reader will remember that Shaftesbury had said that falsehood was apparent because it was ridiculous to men, so that sophisticated gentlemen would laugh at it, whereas the truth was apparent because of its eminent reasonableness. Obviously, however, he was talking about bourgeois morality and ethics, and not about that deep truth which Melville has in mind.[27] Melville has something more to say about Shaftesbury in the poem *Clarel*. Derwent has described his hermaphroditical Christ as follows:

> I do avow he still doth seem
> Pontiff of optimists supreme.

Mortmain makes an observation about this bourgeois gospel:

> 'Twas Shaftesbury first assumed your tone
> Trying to cheerfulize Christ's moan.[28]

The warning of objective critics who would enlarge upon the dangers of identifying Melville himself with any of his characters in *Clarel* may probably be safely ignored in this instance, for Mortmain here expresses a viewpoint which is otherwise frequently reïterated by Melville. If it is true, as Kierkegaard says, that evil proceeds from the crowd, then it becomes evident why the truth is ridiculous to men, and why the truth assumes a polemical position against men.

The fact that the "crowd" may be a covey of gentlemen in no way mitigates this judgement, in view of Melville's low opinion of high society, a subject to be elaborated in the proper place.

It is grief and sorrow that are the companions of truth. In *Pierre*, Melville describes the woes of isolation:

> And the great woe of all was this: that all these things were unsuspected without, and undivulgible from within; the very daggers that stabbed him were joked by at Imbecility, Ignorance, Block-headedness, Self-Complacency, and the universal Blearedness and Besottedness around him.[29]

Melville himself explains the Carlylean invective in this passage when he says of Pierre's literary efforts, "For the pangs in his heart he put down hoots on the paper." There is then a duplicit quality in the invective, of which more will be said later. Pierre begins to feel an abhorrence of the loftiest part of himself, the author tells us. No book could be a success unless each meritorious kernel of truth is surrounded by nine hundred and ninety-nine husks of chaff. Melville writes:

> The brightest success, now seemed intolerable to him, since he so plainly saw, that the brightest success could not be the sole off-spring of Merit; but of Merit for the one thousandth part, and nine hundred and ninety-nine combining and dovetailing accidents for the rest.[30]

Thus Pierre, "with the soul of an an atheist, writes down the godliest things"; like Melville himself, he writes a wicked book, but feels as spotless as a lamb, with pyramidi-

cal scorn for his critics.

In *Moby Dick*, Melville perorates at length upon the wisdom that is woe, and the woe that is madness. He exclaims:

> that mortal man who hath more of joy than sorrow in him, that mortal man cannot be true - not true, or undeveloped. With books the same. The truest of all men was the Man of Sorrows, and the truest of all books is Solomon's, and Ecclesiates is the fine hammered steel of woe.[31]

The distinction is between earnestness and levity. As the catnip and the amaranth represent the distinction between "man's earthly household peace, and the ever encroaching appetite for God," so they may be taken to represent also the distinction between bourgeois ethics and the true wisdom; the first is of the earth, and succeeds in every endeavor, but the lore of heaven is impotent on this earth, as Clarel discovers. The first is genial and comfortable; the other is the mother of all woes.[32]

In a letter to Hawthorne, Melville bewails the fact that, "Though I wrote the Gospels in this century, I should die in the gutter." In the same letter he comments further:

> It seems to me now that Solomon was the truest man who ever wrote, and yet he managed the truth with a view to popular conservatism.[33]

But in a letter written later the same month, he apologizes to Hawthorne for having again fallen into his old foible-preaching. While the foregoing documentation may not bring the reader much closer to identifying Melville's *truth*, it

does reveal the necessity for duplicity in the process of putting this truth into words in books. The truth is that although men try to convince themselves and others that they are seeking the truth, there is really nothing of which they are so much afraid; hence the erudite investigations of scientific objectivity, which by its cleverly calculated prolixities forever postpones the moment when an existential response to the truth must be made; hence also modern liberal theology, which would turn the truth into whatever appeals to the natural man.[34] The truth is a terrible wound, says Kierkegaard; and Melville has seen that the "terrible embrace of the Deity " is devastating.[35] It can be seen why men are all more or less afraid of the truth; that is, afraid of that subjective truth which Melville burns to preach, a truth which can never be popular, and which will render the preacher subject to hatred, and perhaps even the cry, "Away with that man; he is not fit to live.[36] The crowd seeks security in the prolixities of family, community, and race, lost in aesthetic perdition; but the truly developed man courts madness in order to learn the highest wisdom. Melville writes of such men:

> And there is a Catskill eagle in some souls that can alike dive down into the blackest gorges, and soar out of them again and become invisible in the sunny spaces. And even if he forever flies within that gorge, that gorge is in the mountains; so that even in his lowest swoop the mountain eagle is still higher than other birds upon the plain, even though they soar.[37]

At such high altitudes, the soul exists only, as he has said elsewhere, in a delirious throb, having bid adieu to circumspect life. In some men the "encroaching amaranth" entirely crowds out the domestic catnip.

Throughout his entire life, Melville was unable to free himself from a serious existential concern about this own salvation. Hawthorne says of him in his *Journals:*

> Melville, as he always does, began to reason of providence and futurity, and of everything that lies beyond human ken, and informed me that he had "pretty much made up his mind to be annihilated"; but still he does not rest in that anticipation, and I think, will never rest until he gets hold of some definite belief....[38]

Like Father Mapple's Jonah Melville would have liked to run away, on "a ship made by men to carry him to countries where God does not reign, but only the captains of this earth." But apparently he could not rest in the anticipation of placing himself irrevocably beyond the divine mercy and being annihilated.[39] Melville can no more settle for an intellectual belief which does not square with the contingencies of existence, than can his *persona*, Pierre. The "fool of Truth" discovers that in this world error is well entrenched, secure in its tangled prolixities, while truth must fly like a scared doe in the woodlands; thus there is no rest for the truth-seeker.[40] Hawthorne writes further:

> It is strange how he persists, and has persisted ever since I knew him, and probably long before,

> in wandering to and fro over these deserts, as dismal and monotonous as the sandhills on which we were sitting. He can neither believe, nor be comfortable in his unbelief; and he is too honest and courageous not to try to do one or the other. If he were a religious man, he would be one of the most truly religious and reverential; he has a very high and noble nature, and is better worth immortality than most of us.[41]

Too honest to "mock God by moderation," he could not settle for any ideal middle way between the claims of the two worlds in which man lives. The truth which he possessed, and which he could not or would not explicitly articulate, apparently could not be communicated even to his nearest friend; and this also is very much a characteristic of the truth. The truth does not bring men together; it divides them, father from son, and wife from husband. The Man of Sorrows attests that he brings not peace to the earth, but a sword. Spirit precisely is this: not to be like others; and a corollary of this truth is: spirit precisely is restlessness. But this is woe, for after all, a man longs to be with others, longs for the security and comforts of home and family.[42] Melville's pilgrims endure the woes of isolation, because they know that the truth cannot be found in society. The truth is as homeless as its devotees.

In his descriptions of Bulkington, the wandering Ishmael describes the helmsman of the Pequod in language highly reminiscent of Hawthorne's already-quoted description of Melville. At the beginning of the "Lee Shore" chapter, Ishmael says of the man:

> I looked with sympathetic awe and fearfulness upon the man, who in mid-winter just landed from a four year's dangerous voyage, could so unrestingly push off again for still another tempestuous term. The land seemed scorching to his feet.[43]

Once Melville's spirit had been loosened for free inquiry, "It fared with him as with the storm-tossed ship, that miserably drives along the leeward land." He has decided that "better it is to perish in the howling infinite, than to be ingloriously dashed upon the lee, even if that were safety." In the heat of his madness and anguish the aesthetic and ethical elements fuse:

> For worm-like then, oh! who would craven crawl to land! Terrors of the terrible! is all this agony so vain? Take heart, take heart, O Bulkington. Bear thee grimly demigod! Up from the spray of thy ocean -perishing straight up, leaps thy apotheosis.

The question of "who would craven crawl to land" he answers in *Pierre:*

> Wherefore whoso storms the sky gives best proof he came from thither! But whatsoever crawls contented in the moat before that crystal fort, shows it was born within that slime, and there forever will abide.[44]

It may be noted that *who* would worm-like crawl is not a person, but a thing, a *what;* not a true man, or undeveloped. In any case, in his "reckless sky-assaulting mood, " Melville seems to be invoking his muse, praying to the inner Urania to uphold the structuring hand of the poet in his madness and anguish. While he is in this mood, the aesthetic elements of rhythmn, alliteration, repetition, and poetic

incantation, yield and give way to something far more vital and of far more serious concern. The reader may well wonder what terrible truth informs this apostrophe, what terror urges and at the same time restrains; and moreover, how all of this would emerge if Melville actually were in the pulpit, if he actually wrote the gospels; and further, what the response of his hearers would be, if he suddenly were to "drop the guitar."

Melville knows as well as any existential pilgrim that he could avoid the agony by merely putting in to shore, and he knows that his best friend would like to help him find "some definite belief." Kierkegaard advised the young man who complains that truth had inflicted a profound wound upon him, "Be shallow, and all your troubles will cease." But highest truth hounds the God-fugitive, who sometimes longs for annihilation, who sometimes longs for rest. It becomes evident why men are more or less afraid of the truth. Let a man dabble with the key to the crystal fort but once, and he can be sure that his life is ruined, and his hopes of a career blasted to the four winds. Moreover, true refuge is not in safety, but in deadly peril! Perhaps no writer has ever stated the existential paradox as explicitly, nor portrayed the romantic agony as graphically as has Melville in *Moby Dick*

> The port would fain give succor; the port is pitiful; in the port is safety, comfort, hearthstone, supper, warm blankets, all that's

> kind to our mortalities. But in that gale the port, the land, is that ship's direct jeopardy; she must fly all hospitality; one touch of land, though it but graze the keel, would make her shudder through and through. With all her might she crowds all sails off-shore; in so doing, fights 'gainst the very winds that fain would blow her homeward; seeks all the lashed seas's landlessness again; for refuge's sake forlornly rushing into peril; her only friend her bitterest foe![45]

Once again the referential nexus to external reality is barely maintained as the interior world of the poet breaks into the open. The reader may observe the poetic ellipsis in "gainst," the rhythmn in "one touch of land, though it but graze the keel, would make her shudder through and through," or the alliteration and consonance in "With all her might she crowds all sails offshore" or in "seeks all the lashed sea's landlessness again." In the heart of quickest perils the delirious throb from some profundity of consciousness informs the lines. Truly, bourgeois gentlemen ought to be persuaded by these lines to stay on shore. This posture will enable them to maintain jealously their thesis that the vast ocean lashed by the angry flukes of the whale is eminently reasonable. It is much better to examine the "dead attenuated skeleton" than it is to risk one's dignity or reputation in the heart of quickest perils, where the test of my Lord Shaftesbury might be immodestly reversed. Again, the very exuberance of the poetic flight suggests a deeper concern.

The *duplex factum* in Melville's writings may be seen from still another point of view, if an examination is made of his attitude toward society, particularly polite society, civilized society with all its sophisticated social institutions. Such a survey will reveal also his opinions about education. In Melville's day, the most popular domestic superstition was the belief in continuing progress, in the perfectibility of man and the evolution of his social institutions, the two processes combining to make the world better in every way, every day. Among the educated classes, it is probably safe to say that transcendentalism and humanism were then considered to be the more respectable worldviews. Although unknown to American writers, Kierkegaard was just at this time describing the first as "an optical illusion" and the second as the "dregs of Christianity." In the field of theology, the higher criticism had begun to make its way, applying the criteria of the scientific method and scientific objectivity to matters of faith. About each of these things Melville has something to say, explicitly, implicitly, and sometimes with duplicity. His reactions to these various patterns of thought have been partially documented, but additional evidence can easily be adduced to show that his position was sufficiently polemical to lend authenticity to the premise that only aesthetic-ethical duplicity could be used in order to communicate with men who had been trapped

in illusions. Such men, particularly if they were well educated, could only be deceived into the truth; that is, deceptively maneuvered into an existential awareness about themselves.

An investigation of this subject might begin at any point, but perhaps the fundamental schism, or area of opposition, between Melville and the nineteenth century, resides in his low opinion of formal education. At the very time when a great many people were coming to believe that education offered some solution to the problems of the human condition, Melville questions its importance and significance with respect to the fundamental issues of life, with respect to the most pressing problems confronting man. A whaling ship was his Yale and Harvard, he boasts, with a free man's open contempt for the sheltered sort of education which a man might obtain from what he calls elsewhere, "the prosing euphonists of Acadème."[46] The fact of the matter is that a free spirit like Melville's is not really amenable to formal education at all. On this subject, Merlin Bowen comments:

> To such a mind, all books, all previously evolved ideas, are essentially foreign, mere incidental helps at best. The soul attains to maturity only as it learns in 'stillness and seclusion...to think untraditionally and independently; receiving all nature's sweet and savage impressions fresh from her own virgin, voluntary and confiding breast.'[47]

In support of this statement could be cited Melville's

eclecticism, his sometimes careless borrowings, and the rapidity and facility with which he apparently assimilated new ideas. Everything which he encounters is immediately weighed against an existing criterion in his mind; and this enables him to accept a whole philosophy as true in a moment, in the luminous shock of recognition; or else to see and reject an entire system offhand, with equal alacrity and with equal assurance. His reactions to the thoughts of others are so rapid because there exists in his mind a fundamental basis of truth against which he measures all human claims. It hardly ever occurs to him to doubt his own judgement, and it certainly never occurs to him to submit an important issue to the judgement of someone else. This veridical basis is so profound that Melville has little doubt about the divine origin of his truth. All his opinions about the nature of the truth and the nature of man evidently arise from a single ground. As custodian and guardian of this profound truth, he feels at once a compulsion to divulge it, and a fear of the likely consequences of so doing, as has been pointed out. One of the results of this internal tension is a form of expression in which occurs a rotation of explicit, implicit, and duplicitous statements, all equally designed to convey his truth, and all standing in the same polemical opposition to the claims of others. In a very striking way this exemplifies

the dictum: "Spirit precisely is this, not to be like others."

It must not be supposed however, that all of Melville's education came from his experiences on a whaling ship. He grew up in a home which was comfortable enough, he received a smattering of formal education at school, and was introduced to the amenities of civilization. But by far the most significant informing influence on his early life was the Bible. As Nathalia Wright has pointed out, the Bible was the only book with which he was well acquainted before his twenty-fifth birthday, and its names, images, and symbols, lay at the deepest level of his consciousness.[48] In *Moby Dick* alone, she discovered more than 1,400 biblical allusions; while in *Israel Potter* the density of scriptural allusions is approximately similar. Furthermore, Melville never appeals to any sort of authority whatever, other than Scripture; though it must be emphasized that this source of authority is always subject to his own private interpretation. On the surface, at any rate, it appears that the Bible was for Melville, as it was for an earlier Protestant America, the last and final authority with respect to all questions. His right of private interpretation he exercises fully and nobly, sometimes with a rather appalling literalness. In the banal dialogue of the poem *Clarel*, he also reveals an awareness of the contentious theological issues of his day, and invariably

betrays his own firm stand on the side of scriptural orthodoxy, as contrasted to the claims of either church tradition or modern liberalism. And all of this in an age when doubt had begun to replace wonder, and cultivated people no longer referred to the Bible, except, in a somewhat nervous embarrassment, as great literature! Nathalia Wright has adduced ample evidence that Melville would have used the Bible even more freely, if it had not been for the public.[49] Educated men who have been indoctrinated with transcendentalism and platonism really cannot help the fact that they feel so strongly about the naïve particularism of the Hebrew scriptures; but it is this particularism which most attracted Melville to "the truest book ever written." Melville is quite aware of this, and although it contributes to his madness and anguish, he concludes that he cannot afford to irritate his genteel readers with too many references to a royal theocracy, which to an educated man appears, however, to be simply a special anarchy. What a madness and anguish this occasions can only be imagined; and the only relief for the inner burning is duplicity. The poet realizes that he must in some way shatter the domestic illusions of his day, and compel men existentially to confront stark reality. What the world really looks like, Melville reveals, albeit "covertly and by snatches," with many a stealthy interpolation.

Lawrance Thompson maintains that Melville consistently upholds the scriptural worldview in favorable opposition to the claims of renaissance humanism.[50] Theologians might argue about precisely what this worldview is, but there is no question about it for anyone steeped in the biblical tradition; there is no question about what Melville means when he says that he wishes he could use the Bible more freely. First of all, he evidently regards the doctrine of the total depravity of the natural man as in complete accordance with the realities of existence. How this doctrine, when it is suppressed, becomes emotion, and is expressed, will be developed under the category of the mechanics of duplicity. Secondly, he sees the world as a hard world, a "Calvinistic" world, in which pain outweighs joy, and in which moments of pleasure are balanced by years of sorrow. Of this, more is to be said later. He is much more explicit about this phase of his truth than about some other facets of truth, probably because this viewpoint cannot be charged with being tinctured by the biblical element, something of which, as an artist, he was frightened, for he knew that polite society did not take kindly to such a literary lapse. But in regard to this facet, he can appeal to Seneca and the Stoics, as he frequently does; and he can speak of Fate when he manifestly is thinking of Providence. On other occasions he appeals to "unchristian Solomon's wisdom," deeming that the pragmatic pronouncements

of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes strike some sort of a balance between highest wisdom and what he calls "popular conservatism." In a private letter he confesses, "I read Solomon more and more,"[51] but he knows that the fashionable world has a peculiar malignancy about this, as a result of which an author steeped in this tradition can by no means be frank with his readers.

In an interestingly explicit passage in *Billy Budd*, Melville expresses his awareness of the discomfiture which the biblical tradition induces in men. He writes:

> And indeed, if that lexicon which is based on Holy Writ were any longer popular, one might with less difficulty define and denominate certain phenomenal men. As it is, one must turn to some authority not liable to the charge of being tinctured with the Biblical element.[52]

Then follows some discussion of the aspects of a "natural depravity" which "folds itself in the mantle of respectability." There is an aspect of cool, insane judgement about such men, and they are not usually subject to the common lusts and vices. If in the quoted passage, Melville intends surreptitiously to remind his readers that the Bible does categorically label and denominate such men, this suggestion is implicit. What is important is that at the very end of his life, Melville is still chafing because an author can by no means be entirely frank with his readers; particularly as the men who dominate polite society, and the matrons of the fashionable world, dictate that an

artistic creation should not be liable to the charge of being tinctured with the biblical element. It is evident what a madness and anguish it is when a writer must wear a false brow, when a writer cannot use the one authority which lies at the deepest level of his consciousness; cannot say anything, in fact, without censoring it carefully, lest polite society be offended. Indeed, the fashionable world can by no means allow anyone to lift its mantle of respectability...to reveal the utter depravity beneath. Now, as Kierkegaard says, one must be on good terms with these "perjured teachers"; they must suspect nothing, they must have no intimation or presentiment that there is anything behind the poet. If a man burns to "preach truth to the face of falsehood," then an agonizing aesthetic-ethical duplicity is the prime necessity.

There occurs in the source material additional evidence of Melville's attitude toward polite society. First of all, there are the letters and comments of his acquaintances, which indicate that his social manners were something less than desirable. This is a common and characteristic sympton of one of "God's true Princes of the Empire." Inasmuch as he cannot very well explicitly express the fact that he does not owe any honor to the captains of this world, he can always implicitly convey the message by ignoring or defying the social conventions, and especially by contravening the rules of the religious establishment, which every elect

prince of the empire immediately recognizes with shock as the control machinery of the scriptural *diabolos*. Precisely the church, says Melville in *Clarel*, "Prolongs in sacerdotal way / The Lower Empire's bastard sway." This opinion is highly characteristic of that special brand of pietistic anarchism which Melville betrays in Father Mapple's sermon and elsewhere. It is an expression in poetry of the persistent doctrine of an "invisible church," an ecclesia of the elect, who are *incognito*, and must remain so, if they are true princes. The significance of this underlying doctrine resides in the fact that such a worldview places the "true princes" in a peculiarly isolated position, so that communication with or action upon the society in which they live is rendered virtually impossible. Because of their status in the category of the *incognito*, preaching is out of the question. In any case, as God selects his champions from "the kingly commons," their influence in polite society could by no means be direct. But God, he writes, "who didst not refuse to the swart convict, Bunyan, the pale, poetic pearl," gives his "divine inert" a weapon mightier than the sword.[53] "Only the pen is left," he writes in another place.[54] But for the princes who are less articulate, or like Ethan Allen, less patient, a settled program of religious disobedience is the signal that their citizenship is in a country where the captains of the earth have no authority.

Another facet of the character of these "foretopmen in the unprincipled" is their proneness to using coarse language, especially with respect to the hallowed conventions and institutions of their time. In order to "illuminate the solemn churches that preach unconditional inoffensiveness by all to all" these royal commoners must be coarse-mouthed, these "loose-fish" must shock the "fast-fish" out of their mortal security. Stubb reprimands Fleece, "Why, damn your eyes, you musn't swear that way when you're preaching. That's no way to convert sinners." But Fleece realizes that when "der bellies are full" it is impossible to get the attention of these "sharks" except by swearing. Melville is certainly not the innovator of this evangelical technique. You must be coarse-mouthed, urges Kierkegaard; at a fire the usually pleasant fire-chief bawls at the populace, "Go to hell with your pitchers and squirts."[55] Kierkegaard's *Attack upon Christendom* is probably the most venomous and sustained invective ever written (All for the sake of the truth!); a good part of it consisting of labelling the state priests with every vile and ridiculous name possible. As an artist, Melville really dare not allow himself such a luxurious excess, but many of his comments on missionaries in his early novels reveal clearly enough that he is privy to the secret symbol of the privately elected preacher.

Writing to his father after a dinner at which he met

Melville, Henry Gansevoort commented about the author, "Brilliancy but misanthropy. Genius but less judgement. He evidently mistakes his sphere."[56] In terms of this thesis, perhaps the truth is that Melville did mistake his sphere, or did not know in which sphere he was, or lived in a limbic twilight between two spheres such poles apart that he could not communicate across the gulf. Perhaps the bad language which he allegedly sometimes used in the company of others was just "madness and anguish" having been suppressed, becoming emotion and being expressed. A noticeable lack of taste and judgement in his use of language is evident also in his early novels. Some of the passages in *Typee* and *Omoo* shocked his genteel readers; although it must be said that Melville knew perfectly well that polite society did not really mind being shocked by profanity; indeed, was quite positively delighted at being titillated by the image of Fayaway standing naked in the boat; more, was ravished by Melville's naïve comment that hers was "the most bewitching ankle in the universe." There was only one thing. They said to the poet, "Sing some more"; only as long as their sacred cows were not touched, and the biblical tincture was not too evident. A later example of this evangelical technique occurs in *Israel Potter*, where the imprisoned Ethan Allen roars at the fine English ladies coming to visit the prison on a Sunday afternoon, "You Turks never saw a Christian before!" This is in the finest

tradition of invective as practised by the *incognito*, when this hitherto unknown "Prince of the Empire" is exasperated into dropping his pose, and declaring explicity that he alone is a true Israelite, living in the midst of an infidel gentile sea. "The great Jehovah and the Continental Congress will avenge me," he asserts, as he hurls his "boiling anathemas" against his captors.[57] All the daughters of Yillah live in the kingdoms of Hautia, and when they become aware of this intolerable situation, their language sometimes betrays their sublime exasperation and rebellion.

What Herman Melville thought of such formal dinners and other occasions as the one which Henry Gansevoort described, may be inferred from such comments as his outburst to Nathaniel P. Willis, after an evening spent in the salon of some affluent bourgeois philistine, Melville having, no doubt, endured the insufferable abrasions of polite social intercourse, scarcely able to conceal his lofty scorn. He writes to Willis:

> ...yet the class of wealthy people are, in the aggregate, such a mob of gilded dunces, that not to be wealthy carries with it a certain distinction and nobility.[58]

He would no doubt share St. Thomas a Kempis' assessment of social intercourse; "As oft as I have been among men, I returned home less of a man."[59] In another place he expresses the feeling that a true man cannot hope to rise in the world; that is, seek peer status with the gilded

dunces of polite society. Of this he writes:

> For be a man's intellectual superiority what it will, it can never assume the practical, available supremacy over other men without the aid of some sort of external arts and entrenchments, always, in themselves, more or less paltry and base. This it is, that forever keeps God's true Princes of the Empire from the world's hustings; and leaves the highest honors that this air can give, to those men who become famous more through their infinite inferiority to the choice hidden handful of the Divine Inert, than through their undoubted superiority over the dead level of the mass.[60]

As well as expressing his opinion about society and its governors, he has here also quite explicitly articulated one of the doctrines which apparently lies deep in his consciousness. The "princes of the empire" who are also the "choice hidden handful" are described in terms as explicit as one could find outside of a theological treatise on the doctrine of election and the invisible and inert church.

Now, while this statement of the doctrine is explicit enough, there is resident in it also an implicit key to the interpretation of the novel in which it occurs, and perhaps of all of Melville's work. In the chapter on the duplicity of existence, this key will be applied to several novels. For the present it is enough to observe the implication that the captains of this world are vastly inferior to the "choice hidden handful." This passage raises the issue of whether there is a *persona* in *Moby Dick* who plays the secret and hidden rôle of a true prince. At once, the aesthetic categories are invaded by ethical considerations. Evidently we are no longer dealing with a "cakes and ale" sea story;

this is no "dishwater romance whose model was borrowed from the circulating library" as Melville says. Perhaps this tale of the fishery is an existential exposition of a doctrine, which having been suppressed, thus becomes emotion and is expressed. The concern of this investigation is why such a method of treating the subject should be employed. While there may be nothing "duplicit" in this particular paragraph itself, there is surely something marvellous about its occurrence in the novel, especially in conjunction with scores of similar interpolations, including one full sermon. But the point at hand is that Melville knew very well that he could not stand up in any pulpit in the land, or on the political hustings, and tell the fashionable world that its little gods were vastly inferior to the hidden and unknown princes of another kingdom, not of this world. No one would have listened, and he would have been ridden out on his own pulpit bannister; the words, if spoken from a pulpit, would no doubt be lost. Preaching will not do; only the pen is left! So among other doctrines which find expression in the novel, there is in the early chapters of *Moby Dick* this explicit commentary upon the exclusion of the true man from the affairs of the world; and this kernel of truth survives in an age of mediocrity and collectivism because it is carefully though lightly covered with aesthetic chaff on every side, so that the medicine will be swallowed with the honey,

and may secretly do its work. That such indirect instruction is necessary becomes more evident, in view of the nature of Melville's truth, the nature of man, and the situation of the preacher of truth.

In his copy of a translation of Balzac's *Eugénie Grandet*, Melville underlined the following passage:

> He had received the horrible education of that society, where in a single evening, are committed, in thought and words, more crimes than the law punishes at the Court of Assizes; where a jest or sneer annihilates the grandest conceptions; where a man is deemed strong only as he sees clearly; and to see clearly there, is to believe in nothing, neither in feelings, nor in man, nor even in events; for they concoct false events.[61]

In the margin Melville commented, "This describes man in his consummate flower of civilization." With the shock of recognition, he saw in a moment that another writer had said precisely what he himself burned to say, but did not know precisely how to say. The reader may remember an early passage in *Typee*, where the doctrine of perfectibility through education and refinement is similarly called into question.

> The expedition for the occupation of the Marquesas had sailed from Brest in the spring of 1842, and the secret of its destination was solely in the possession of its commander. No wonder that those who contemplated such a signal infraction of the rights of humanity should have sought to veil the enormity from the eyes of the world. And yet, notwithstanding their iniquitous conduct in this and in other matters, the French have ever plumed themselves upon being the most humane and polished of nations. A high degree of refinement, however, does not seem to subdue our wicked propensities so much after all; and were civilization itself to

> be estimated by some of its results, it would seem perhaps better for what we call the barbarous part of the world to remain unchanged.[62]

The suggestion comes through that education and polish merely educate men in subtler forms of cruelty, and in refined methods of depriving the defenceless of their natural right to exist as free human beings. The despotism of polite society becomes ever more refined; that is, refined in putting down "high-spirited revolts," in destroying "high-spirited travellers," as Melville suggests in "Cock-A-Doodle-Doo!" Of French civilization, Melville has something more to say in *Israel Potter*, in a description of Paul Jones viewing Paris at night. He writes:

> So at midnight, the heart of the metropolis of modern civilization was secretly trod by this jaunty barbarian in broadcloth; a sort of prophetical ghost, glimmering in anticipation upon the advent of those tragic scenes of the French Revolution which levelled the exquisite refinement of Paris with the bloodthirsty ferocity of Borneo; showing that brooches and finger-rings, not less than nose-rings and tatooing, are tokens of the primeval savageness which ever slumbers in human kind, civilized or uncivilized.[63]

But if such is the condition of civilized men, that they are utterly depraved while at the same time they suppose that they represent the flower of civilization, if education increases the powers of rationalization while at the same time it stunts the powers of ratiocination, if wealth depraves men morally and intellectually; if such is the case, it can be seen that only a guarded and indirect polemic could be maintained against such a situation, that

is, an aesthetic-ethical communication designed vaguely to disturb the settled security which has settled on the face of falsehood. Thus Melville takes his position solidly against the doctrine of perfectibility, the fervent belief that in time, education would refine the savage beast into a reasonable man. Peter F. Drucker has commented upon this emotionally held belief:

> You may take the creed of progress in its most naïve and therefore most engaging form - the confidence that man automatically and through his very sojourn in time becomes better, more nearly perfect, more closely approaches the divine. You may take the creed in its more sophisticated form - the dialectical schemes of Hegel and Marx in which truth unfolds itself in the synthesis between thesis and antithesis, each synthesis becoming in turn the thesis of a new dialectical integration on a higher and more nearly perfect level. Or you may take the creed in the pseudoscientific garb of the theory of evolution through natural selection. In each form it has the same substance: a fervent belief that by piling up time we shall attain eternity; by piling up change we shall become permanent; by piling up trial and error, we shall find truth.[64]

To these conclusions Melville evidently came, not so much by reasoned analysis, as by swift perception that the doctrine of progress has no basis in reality. He would no doubt concur with Mark Twain's ironic assertion that mankind has indeed "descended" from the monkeys, a postulate for which considerable evidence can be adduced. The general form and content of his opinion about this question is probably well summarized in a fragment of a line from *Pierre:* "the steady regression of the race since creation."[65] As some of the

more mature Melville critics have observed, he could find no warrant for the progressivist doctrine, either in history or in his own life experience.

Another expression of Melville's stance toward society occurs in a commentary by Henry Nash Smith. He writes:

> The sentiments with which Ishmael shipped on the Pequod, and those developed in Father Mapple's sermon, derive from the assumption that organized society is intrinsically evil. Despite the pretence of virtue which characterizes official codes of morals, society is founded on force and fraud. Its rulers - the proud commodores, the senators and judges - are but the more eminent in wickedness and hypocrisy. They are the mighty ones whom every speaker of truth, every Jonah sent to wicked Nineveh, must defy. Every annointed prophet of the Lord will become an outcast, driven forth for the crime of uttering the truth.
>
> It is evident that from such a standpoint Melville can develop no sanction for the institutions of organized society. The state and political theories, the law, property rights - none has ethical standing; all are expressions of force, thinly masked by fraud.[66]

This states the case very forcefully, and is highly pertinent to the present investigation, for if such is the state of human affairs, that every preacher of truth becomes an outcast from society for the crime of speaking the truth, then, if this preacher cannot still the burning compulsion nevertheless to preach truth to the face of falsehood, he will find it necessary to resort to doubleness and deceit. As no direct assault against the ikons of polite society is possible, the preacher of truth must don a mask, and reïntroduce an ethical concern

in man, through the aesthetic medium.

Under these conditions, or more correctly, in view of Melville's conception of the human condition, the preacher of truth must disguise his deep ethical concern; he must become a poet, for all the world loves a poet. Why this is so, Kierkegaard elaborates very lucidly. Melville's many revelations of the anguish of writing, surrounded by duns and damned by dollars, would indicate that he would heartily share his contemporary's views. The poet, Kierkegaard says, is the beloved foundling of the human heart; the world loves the poet because it can enjoy his charm without being called upon to respond in a concretely existential way, other than to applaud the music. But the world does not know that the music comes from secret sufferings, from the agony of lonely creation; for the world has no presentiment that there is anything behind the poet. He writes:

> What is a poet? A poet is an unhappy being whose heart is torn by secret sufferings, and whose lips are so strangely formed that when the sighs and the cries escape them, they sound like beautiful music....And men crowd around the poet and say, 'Sing for us soon again'; that is as much as to say, "May new sufferings torment your soul, but may your lips be formed as before; for the cries would only frighten us, but the music is delicious![67]

And the critics come also, and say, "Quite correct, and so it ought to be according to the rules of aesthetics." And the reviewers write:

> ...the result is a very racy, spirited, curious and entertaining book which affords quite an amount of information, excites the sympathies, and often charms the fancy....Language in the hands of this master becomes like a magician's wand, evoking at will "thick-coming fancies" and peopling the "chambers of imagery" with hideous shapes of terror or winning forms of beauty and loveliness....The humor of Mr. Melville is that of subdued, yet unquenchable nature which spreads such a charm over the pages....irresistible comic passages..... The joyous elasticity and vigor of his style ....compensate for all faults, and even his tasteless passages bear the impress of conscious and unwearied power.[68]

Possible the tasteless passages are those in which the author failed to mix sufficient honey with the medicine. In any case, the ladling out of such "tuns of rancid fat" illustrates the shallow inadequacy of a purely aesthetic critique.

What needs to be investigated is not so much how the lips are formed, but why they should be formed in this way. If it is impossible to determine the exact nature of the secret sufferings, the least that can be done is to acknowledge that it is such sufferings which generate the "thick-coming fancies." Dostoevsky writes, "Suffering is the sole origin of consciousness." Pierre discovers that grief is the chamberlain to knowledge. So Melville sings "delicious songs" in deepest grief, in madness and anguish; and when people complain about his excessive exuberance, he replies, "As to that exuberance which you allege against the work, it is the exuberance of that prime staple - vitality."[69] When the doctrine is suppressed, it becomes emotion, and

is expressed with exuberance; its beauty, as William Blake saw, transformed into exuberance. Excluding the tasteless passages, his readers like the music, for all the world loves the poet. Why this is so, Kierkegaard explains with his usual eminent lucidity:

> Spiritually understood, man in his natural condition is sick, he is in error, in an illusion, and therefore desires most of all to be deceived, so that he may be permitted not only to remain in error, but to find himself thoroughly comfortable in his self-deceit. And a deceiver capable of rendering him this service is precisely the poet; therefore man loves the poet above all.
>
> The poet has to do only with the imaginative powers, he depicts the good, the beautiful, the noble, the true, the sublime, the unselfish, the magnanimous, etc. in a mood as remote from reality as the imagination is. And at this distance how charming is the beautiful, the noble, the unselfish, the magnanimous! On the other hand, if it is brought so close to me that it would compel me, as it were, to make it reality, because he who depicted it was not a poet, but a man of character, a witness to the truth, who himself made it reality - frightful! That would be unendurable.[70]

This attitude toward the poet he calls the most refined hypocrisy, inasmuch as it enables man to applaud the poet, while at the same time, in actual fact, to ignore him with respect to every vital essence.

That Melville was not merely an aesthetic charmer, but also a man of *ethos*, has been observed by some of the traditional critics. A considerable presentiment of the truth seems to be present in a study by Henry A. Murray, in which he avers that Melville was by no means content to depict the tragic dramas of life at a safe "poetic" dis-

tance from reality; *poetic* here being construed in terms of its aesthetic elements as divorced from any ethical concern. He writes:

> To this Columbus of the mind, the great archetypal figures of myth, drama, and epic, were not pieces of intellectual Dresden china, mere heirlooms of a classical education, mere ornamental bric-a-brac to be put here and there for the pleasure of genteel readers. Many of the more significant of these constellations were inwardly experienced by Melville, one after the other, as each was given vent to blossom and assert itself. Thus we are offered a spectacle of spiritual development through passionate identifications. Only by proceeding in this way could Melville have learned on his pulses what it was to be Narcissus, Orestes, Oedipus, Ishmael, Apollo, Lucifer. "Like a frigate," he says, "I am full with a thousand souls."[71]

Like many of the great poets, particularly the prophetic ones, Melville has a mythic consciousness, rather than being simply conscious of myth. Furthermore, it is hard to say to what extent Sophocles and the others also "lived through" the experiences of which they wrote. Murray certainly does not suggest that they did not undergo a similar empathetic identification. What he does seem to imply is that the great figures of tragic drama have become mere pieces of "intellectual Dresden china" in the hands of intellectual aesthetes who wish to be left in their comfortable delusions about life. Murray does not say, but he surely implies, that Melville's posture is not only an attitude of honesty toward himself as a poet, but also a vitally necessary posture to take, if the truth is to be

compellingly given a voice with exuberance and authenticity.

Indeed, when an author is so out of tune with the times in which he lives, the problem of eliciting an existential response from his readers must appear insurmountable. In an age when optimism reigned supreme, Melville was fated to hold a generally pessimistic view of the world, and of human society;[72] not even to mention his view of man, a view which one critic uncharitably has called his "growling misanthropy."[73] Melville's panegyric on "Indian-hating" will be considered in another place; but in the present context it is necessary to consider briefly his generally dismal view of human society and the world, which makes his misanthropy, if such it may be called, not only comprehensible, but perhaps concretely realistic. It is not only that wealthy people are in the aggregate a mob of gilded dunces, as he says; his real contempt is for the frivolous man, whether he be rich or poor. Melville's high-spirited, youthful adventurers invariably set out into the world with a keen awareness of their own spiritual aristocracy, and a scorn for the captains and first mates whom they perceive as lesser men than themselves; but when they are rebuffed by the upper classes, and seek solace among the commoners of the crew, they find that they have even less in common with the waistrels of the crew. A man who lives lightly is not a true man, for it is apparent

that his grinning optimism and his frivolity are evidence that he has somehow managed to evade the tragic collisions of life. In this regard it must be pointed out that Melville is equally concerned with avoiding that despairing pessimism from which he was saved by the imperturbable chanticleer of "Cock-A-Doodle-Doo." When he writes that "my soul snorted within me," or avers that at the death of a relative he will drink "stout in preference to porter," it is not because of oblivion or evasion, but because he has faced reality, temporarily fallen into despair, but then risen as in a resurrection to a teleological awareness of the ultimate eschatological "fall of wicked Babylon.... the triumph of righteous Joshua in the vale of Ashkelon."[74] The very language he uses indicates that his sudden "top-gallant delight" comes not from any dimming of his vision of the reality and power of evil in the world, but from an inward belief in its final apocalyptical overthrow when the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of, to use Father Mapple's words, "The Lord his God."

It is evident that Melville judges both men and books by the rigorous criterion of seriousness. He writes in *Moby Dick:*

> The sun hides not the ocean, which is the dark side of this earth, and which is two-thirds of this earth. So, therefore, that mortal man who hath more of joy than sorrow in him, that mortal man cannot be true: not true, or undeveloped. With books the same. The truest of all men was the Man of Sorrows, and the truest of all books

> is Solomon's, and Ecclesiastes is the fine hammered steel of woe. 'All is vanity.' All. This willful world hath not got hold of unchristian Solomon's wisdom yet. But he who dodges hospitals and jails, and fast crossing graveyards, and who would rather talk of operas than hell...and throughout a carefree lifetime swears by Rabelais as passing wise, and therefore jolly; not that man is fitted to sit down on tombstones, and break the green damp mold with unfathomably wondrous Solomon.[75]

In the face of reality, in terms of the exigencies of the concrete facts of existence, exigencies such as suffering and death, levity must mark a person as something less than human; the first requisite of a seeker after truth is seriousness. Levity seems to be merely an escape from the existential imperative of becoming oneself. For as frivolity makes a man stupid, so also it makes his life easy, provided only that he bids adieu to everything high. Kierkegaard comments:

> Be frivolous....and you will see, all difficulties disappear; you will see that, whereas all men of character have found out and borne witness that this world is a mediocre world, a poor wretched, depraved and evil world; you, however, will see, you will find, that this world is a glorious world, just as though it were contrived for you![76]

These are words that Melville might have written himself, thoughts very characterisitic of that peculiar, pietistic anarchism towards which Melville seems to be orientated. There is certainly no question of direct literary influence here, as these men did not know or read each other. They simply happened to live at the same time, and each of them had a message of seriousness to bring to his own generation

in his own country, at a time when a frivolous optimism was sweeping over the western world, just in advance of some of the most horrible bestialities in the heart of civilization that the world had ever seen. It may be true, as C. L. R. James says, that Melville's depiction of Ahab is a prophecy of a future dominated by "scientific barbarians" who optimistically believe that they can manage the world, but who will, in reality, bring about a new dark age.[77]

Looking at the problem from another standpoint, it seems possible that Melville's "madness and anguish" arises partly from the fact that there are so few opportunities to discuss the truth deeply and seriously. On one occasion he complains:

> for in this world of lies, Truth is forced to flee like a scared doe in the woodlands; and only by cunning glimpses will she reveal herself.... covertly and by snatches.[78]

This is again highly pertinent to the present thesis, first of all because it provides a commentary upon the evidence of ethical concern which is always present in Melville's mind. If the world, and men, and books, are related as in his "dark side of this earth" passage, then it may be expected that if in the world Truth flees as a scared doe in the woodlands, it will be of rare occurrence among men; and in books such as Melville's, will appear only covertly and by snatches. Those who take pleasure

in discovering the parallel fractured half-line, will be interested in Kierkegaard's "antecedent." He writes:

> And the opportunity to suffer for the truth we have of course every second. How could it be otherwise *in this world of lies* and deceit and knavishness and mediocrity.[79]

Curiously enough, the Russian Christian existentialist, Nikholas Berdyaev uses the very same phrase.[80] Again, there is no question of literary influence in this parallellism. There is, however, something else: the community of genius, and for the wise reader, the shock of recognition. Melville does admit on one occasion, "I feel this Hawthorne had dropped some germinous seeds into my soul"; and there is ample evidence that Melville borrowed widely and somewhat indiscriminately, but he does not recognize any theory of organic association or even influence, but rather a community of genius. Of this he says:

> For genius, all over the world, stands hand in hand, and one shock of recognition runs the whole circle round.[81]

He may have learned this from Emerson's essay on "Self Reliance," or perhaps more directly from "Circles." In any case, the glorious ones recognize each other in a moment, for they are all informed by the same spirit. When two of the elect saints of this invisible ecclesia meet each other, they know that they have met, and rejoice in the shock of recognition; but then they go their independent, separate ways, perhaps never to meet again; each in his

own way secretly upholding the truth, using whatever methods he can find. Once again Kierkegaard has an illuminating and pertinent commentary. The *unrecognizable*, he says, does not remain unnoticed. He would say that the true laborer in the Melville vineyard will find the hidden jewel, "as a woman's coyness has a reference to the true lover, and yields when he appears."[82] Thus, while Melville finds few opportunities to discuss the truth, his soul snorts within him whenever he encounters a fellow "high-spirited traveller." In this content it may be noted that Melville's fictional adventurers usually find one understanding comrade aboard ship with whom they can talk.

But in the world at large the true princes are unknown. The marks of nobility which cover them, are, to the world, marks of abasement. Reference has already been made to Melville's commentary that not to be wealthy is a mark of distinction. Kierkegaard usefully provides another commentary:

> ...one of the glorious ones, the genuine saints, whose worth therefore is not attested by the spurious marks of profit, stars, and titles, but by the genuine marks of poverty, abasement, ill-treatment, persecution.[83]

Thus, while the world worships the dead saints, it persecutes the living ones in their midst. But the "saint" who concludes that only the pen is left, finds himself treated the same way. While the literary aesthetes gather

at the shrine of the departed poet to offer their oblations of rancid fat, they never recognize the living poet among them. Melville complains bitterly about such treatment, recognizing however, that in this world of lies it must be so; the true princes must travel incognito. He writes:

> With reverence be it spoken, that not even in the case of one deemed more than man, not even in our Saviour, did his visible frame betoken anything of the augustness of the nature within. Else, how could those Jewish eyewitnesses fail to see heaven in his glance?[84]

So Christ was the unrecognizable, and the fashionable world of his day had not the slightest presentiment that there was anything behind the carpenter. In his deepest, highest part, writes Melville of Pierre, he felt in his heart this great woe: "that all these things were unsuspected without, and undivulgible from within."[85]

The world has not changed in the least since the days when those Jewish eyewitnesses failed to perceive the hidden augustness. Melville elaborates upon this subject:

> But Shakespeare has been approached. There are minds that have gone as far as Shakespeare into the universe. Believe me, my friends, that men not very much inferior to Shakespeare are this day being born on the banks of the Ohio... It is of a piece with the Jews, who, while their Shiloh was meekly walking in their streets, were still praying for his magnificent coming; looking for him in a chariot, who was already among them on an ass![86]

It is precisely the question of contemporaneous recognition which so engages Melville's concern. When the saint

or the poet is dead, when a hundred years have passed, then his genius is recognized; although it remains true that his truth is obscured by the prolixities of speculative criticism, obscured at any rate, until the true lover comes and the matrical coyness yields its secret. But of this the true man really ought not to complain, for his existential imperative is not to convert the world, but to bear witness to the truth; and this Melville sometimes seems to recognize, though not always with equanimity, and sometimes indeed, with madness and anguish.

Covertly and by snatches, glimpses of the truth which Melville burns to teach have been revealed in this inquiry. It is increasingly evident why duplicity must be practiced, and men must be *deceived* into the truth, inasmuch as the direct communication of truth would fail entirely in its intended effect; that is to say, overt teaching would reach an insignificantly small audience, and would, in any case, merely irritate the members of polite society, who have long since passed beyond such primitive inanities. Besides, the method of aesthetic-ethical duplicity consists, to some extent, in hiding the truth, while surreptitiously revealing glimpses of it. With such documentation as Melville's books and letters afford, fragments of this truth have been exposed in an indirect fashion; but it is apparent that neither erudite research nor mystical intuition can formulate a coherent abstraction of the resident doctrine,

for this truth really has relevance only in existence. The truth is discovered in action; but this does not mean "involvement" or anything of that sort. Anyone who takes direct action to change the world proves thereby that he is not one of the true princes, but a man of the world, seeking merely to improve the conditions of his homeland. "Christ had no thought to mend a world amiss," writes Melville; and as Henry Nash Smith says, Melville has nothing in common with the reformer. He is not a man of the world, and he holds a religious contempt for men of the world who are not as concerned with spirit as he is, and who would despotically put down such "high-spirited revolts" as his. Nikholas Berdyaev offers an interesting description of this man of the world, in lines which occasionally parallel parts of "Hawthorne and His Mosses" and "Cock-A-Doodle-Doo." He writes:

> The evil in human life is most disturbing and painful, not when it strikes one in the eye, but when it is partly concealed by falsehood and deceit, when it tempts man by the pretence of being 'good'. The greater part of the evil in world history takes the form of 'the good'... Bourgeoisity is a spiritual category only in the sense that it is a denial of spirit, the deceitful transformation of spirit into something just the opposite. The whole history of the world has a fatal tendency to settle into the realm of the bourgeois, to hedge itself in, in the spirit of the bourgeois. Christianity means the cessation of the creative movement of spirit, the quenching of the spirit; there is not a single great symbol of the past which it has not used for its own purposes. Bourgeoisity does not believe in the world of the unseen and will not accept the risks which accompany the joining of one's fate with that world ......It has made Christianity into a guarded, visible

> thing. Bourgeoisity is afraid of anything that does not offer a guarantee, anything which may be problematic. The bourgeois is always afraid that something may disturb his guaranteed and peaceful existence. A special sort of spirituality has been worked out for the bourgeois, although this spirituality is anything but spiritual. A great amount of literature, drenched in rose-water or oil from the church lamps, has been written to reassure the bourgeois. The kingdom of the bourgeois is the kingdom of the world.
>
> The bourgeois is the metaphysical sense of the word, is a man who firmly believes only in the world of visible things, things which compel him to recognize them, a man who wants to assure himself a firm place in the world.... The bourgeois is a citizen of this world, a king of the earth....The bourgeois is deeply rooted in this world and is content with it as the basis of his ordered life....The bourgeois is an individual, sometimes a very swollen individual, but he is not a personality.[87]

The reader will remember Ahab's declamation: "Here stands a personality." Melville's heroes invariably uphold, not their "right," but their personal dignity and their individual integrity. Man the phenomenon is a part of the race, a citizen of the world; but man the noumenon is spirit, with no necessity other than freedom. The poets have long affirmed that man lives in two worlds. Phenomenally, he is contingent upon a hundred natural necessities and a thousand artificial conventions; but noumenally, he is free and chafes at every restriction.

Everyone of Melville's "high-spirited travellers" is very much such a noumenal spirit; and the evidence that they are on the side of truth is that it goes ill with them

in the world. Israel Potter, who supposes that he can assure himself a good life by defeating the enemies of his homeland, goes through the successive stages of abasement, until he finds himself rejected even on the lowest wrung of the social ladder. Slowly he learns that evil proceeds from the crowd, and thus he endures his captivity in the cindery city of Dis, serving not some "noble" cause, but the war effort of the enemy world. Ishmael asks, "Who ain't a slave?" Clarel roams around Palestine, where clouds hang low but yield no rain. In the interminable and sometimes banal dialogue, fragments of the truth appear, but in the end Clarel, like the reader, must go his own way, finding his own truth. Pierre finds that he is "utterly without sympathy from anything divine, human, brute, or vegetable"; he leans what the truth is not, finding that whatever other worlds God may be lord of, He is not the lord of this one. Hunilla simply endures existence on the cindery beaches of the Encantadas, and finds, when every hope is gone, the religion of the heart, and a hope sustained not from without, but from the fresh springs of the inland vales. Pip, whose rôle in *Moby Dick* is in exact proportion to the rôle of the glorious ones in the earth, is humored but rejected. It hardly occurs to these Melvillean heroes to betray their real citizenship in the kingdom of spirit by attempting to mitigate their sufferings in the kingdoms of this world. This

also is a facet of Melville's truth.

This inquiry into the necessity for duplicity on the part of an author who wishes to teach as well as to entertain has, then, uncovered a number of facets of the truth which the author wishes to convey to his readers. If these facets of truth appear to be mere fragments, perhaps not even organically related, this is also a facet of truth; for the real truth of existence cannot be communicated except in this fragmentary manner, covertly and by snatches. It seems, however, that there is inherent in all of Melville's works a doctrinal spirit, a coherent though not synthetic pattern of ideas based upon a fundamental ground of authority residing at the deepest level of his consciousness. It has already been indicated that this inquiry into Melville's aesthetic-ethical duplicity is not intended to extract the ethical pattern from the aesthetic; neither is this really possible. It will be sufficient to demonstrate his ethical concern, and the fusion and interrelationship of the aesthetic and ethical elements in his work.

In spite of the difficulty, a few critics have seen through the façade to the doctrine of *personalism* which informs his thought. Merlin Bowen, among others, has suggested some new insights. He says:

> It may be questioned whether his books are stories or novels at all, in the customary meaning of these words; certainly plot and character are not their strong points. Nor do all of them have to do with the sea. But

> there is one thing that all of them have in common, and that is a concern with the problem of self-discovery, self-realization.... If we are to understand him, we must meet him on this, the ground of his principal concern, and survey his work from here....One may hope that some new insights may result when his works.... are seen as so many dramatic representations of the encounter of the self and the not-self, of the single human human person and all that is set over against him, the total reality of nature, mankind, and God. For it was in terms of this conflict that the human experience, from first to last, presented itself to Melville.[88]

Some new insights may indeed be elucidated in an examination of the means by which the total subjective self, with all its limitations, and subject as it is to organic disorders, as Melville says, and existing in a sort of half-disciplined chaos, must maintain its integrity and balance in confrontation with the whole network of the nonself, and actually achieve the *redintegratio in statum pristinum* in the face of every external diversion. Bowen's initial premise seems to drop some germinal seeds into the soul. Elsewhere Bowen declares that Melville sees man's task as being the bringing to a poise the realities both of head and heart.[89] But it seems that Melville's agony comes not merely from the difficulty of achieving a delicate internal balance. His emotions appear to be aroused by suppression of some sort, seemingly by the fact that he feels very strongly that he has something to say, and feels equally strongly that it cannot be said, at any rate, not directly. There are hundreds of occasions in which an emotional and poetic outburst is followed by some reasoned, ethical consideration. A typical example can be adduced from *Moby*

Dick:

> Oh grassy glades! oh ever vernal landscapes in the soul; in ye - though long parched by the dead drought of the earthly life - in ye, men yet may roll, like young horses in new morning clover;

The foregoing is the familiar aesthetic prelude to an inpinging and suppressed teleological concern. He goes on:

> and for some few fleeting moments, feel the cool dew of the life immortal on them. Would to God these blessed calms would last. But the mingled, mingling threads of life are woven by warp and woof; calms crossed by storms, a storm for every calm. There is no steady, unretracing progress in this life; we do not advance through fixed gradations, and at the last one pause..... But once gone through we trace the round again... eternally. Where lies the final harbor, whence we unmoor no more?[90]

Once again it may be seen how in his introduction of an ethical or teleological concern, he indulges in alluring aesthetic playfulness: the alliteration, the metaphor, the charming poetry; and then the bitter question! This is the method of duplicity, which will be elaborated in the following chapter. For the moment, it will be sufficient to point out that although Bowen's observation is very useful, it must probably be modified in the light of Melville's own techniques and procedures.

What, then, is the ground of Melville's principal concern? If this question could be answered directly, there would be little need for a further inquiry into the necessity for duplicity, and the modes and techniques of its operation. Something concrete can be inferred, however,

from the survey and analysis in this chapter. Perhaps his basic concern is that man should realize his god-like potential, that men should be men, and not something less. Obviously his concern is not only with himself, for he betrays a strong desire or compulsion to preach. A corollary of this concern is his often expressed dilemma regarding how his truth can be communicated, with effect and without offending its intended beneficiaries. Further, he is concerned with the problem of right thinking, apparently as the first requisite for right living. On this subject Mother M. Denis Mahoney contributes some thoughts:

> The ability to 'see aright' demands constant renunciation. Such a man must be a true ascetic; a man of the stature of Bulkington, who is willing to forsake all comforts, all known and ordinary values to launch into a world of desert, of loneliness, of suffering- for only in such a world will he be prepared for the vision of truth....He must neither be a sentimental optimist nor a cynical pessimist. He must be able to think deeply, and willingly face his own dark thoughts. He must also have the power of the heart - the power to desire, to give himself totally to a cause....He must, therefore, be a man who is capable of both thinking and feeling, and of engaging in both activities simultaneously.[91]

Now, if feeling and thinking simultaneously is indeed the fundamental criterion, then aesthetic-ethical expression seems to be the likely manner of speech. Mahoney's suggestion that only in a world of loneliness and suffering can man experience the vision of truth, is a highly valid and perceptive insight into the nature of Melville's truth. She apparently perceives also, in the best terms of Kierkegaardian

existentialism, that compelling in men a serious ethical concern does not mean that they must be weaned away from the aesthetic stage, or that the aesthetic must be superceded by the ethical; but rather that men must be compelled to live at their full potential, in the aethetic, ethical, and religious stages simultaneously, with each category of existence held in proper balance. If Melville fails to articulate this doctrine explicitly, it can nevertheless be legitimately inferred from what he does say. Perhaps this doctrine could also be inferred from his life, but that is dangerous, for the *unrecognizable* will pose as a flâneur when he supposes that this will serve his purpose, assuming the characterlessness of the aesthetic precisely in order to deceive men into the ethical.[92]

Melville feels strongly that he has truth to preach, and as he sees the world of men and their institutions as founded upon force and fraud, and the popular philosophies of his day as prolix evasions of the existential imperative, he perceives that he must deceive men out of their comfortable illusions. This he proceeds to do by an indirect polemic aimed against all kinds of one-sidedness, whether of the intellect, of sentiment, or of ethical self-sufficiency. As he feels and thinks simultaneously, so his writing is characterized by a fusion of emotion and reason, with the intent of compelling a response from the reader by trapping him in the conceit of aesthetic-ethical duplicity.

III The Mechanics of Duplicity

The next phase of this inquiry will deal specifically with the methods and forms of duplicity, and the way in which the informing doctrines may be inferred from the evidence of the material. It has been seen that the duplex character of literature arises, first of all, from the fact that words are not merely naked symbols for things or action, that the gulf between Melville's "world of lies" and the truth predicates that the poet who brings "news of whole reality" will necessarily have to resort to duplicity in order to convey his message. In terms of the preceding chapters it has also become evident that the duplexity under discussion is sometimes simultaneously linguistic and thematic, and that sometimes a thematic duplicity may be practised by virtue of the linguistic duplexity of words. In spite of the fact that the categories are inextricably fused in the context of the novels, it may be posited that Melville's duplicity is expressed in four ways: by the use of metaphor, analogy, allusion, and simile, including his extended "epic" similes; by irony, satire, humor, and invective; by an excessive exuberance, involving an intimate but strained relationship between his narrator and an implied audience; and by his choice of theme and treatment of character. It must be noted that these methods of indirect discourse are seldom employed separately, and that in the

most significant passages under study every technique of "double-talk" may be operative at once. Sometimes the occurrence of a verbal signal indicates the tension of withheld information and the approaching release of some part of it. Sometimes the linguistic exuberance entirely beclouds whatever unspoken thought is present, and there is nothing more to corroborate the suspicion of the *duplex factum* than the simple fact of exuberance, which the present thesis attempts to explain more fully than has been the case in previous studies dealing with this subject. Sometimes bitter irony or an outburst of invective betray the suppressed concern; and always the choice of theme and the treatment of character reveal that the unfolding of events is not the principal concern of the author.

Before beginning the actual presentation of data from the novels and other sources, it will be necessary to define these categories precisely. Under the category of metaphor and simile must be included the use of the suggestive word, whose connotations or nuances suggest an ethical concern apart from the ostensible theme of the story. For instance, when Melville calls London "Thebes," there exists at once a suggestion that he is being motivated by considerations other than those normally involved in relating a tale of patriotism of the national sort. It is not a mere metaphor with which the reader is here involved; certainly not merely a geographical analogy. *Thebes* suggests a whole train of

ideas peculiar to Melville's somewhat pietistically orientated anarchism. In this particular instance, Melville goes on to make the implication lucidly explicit, although in thousands of other cases, the symbolic word or phrase is left standing alone, so that what Kierkegaard said of his own *duplex factum:* "Like Clement Alexandrinus, I have tried to write in such a way that the heretics would not understand," could likewise be said of Melville's work.[1] Also to be considered at this point is Nathalia Wright's discovery of more than 1,400 biblical allusions in *Moby Dick* alone. While it is true, as Melville observes, that "to any monomaniac man, veriest trifles capriciously carry meanings," it is equally true that to any man who recognizes all of these allusions with the proper shock, a secondary meaning, as well as a secondary level of aesthetic enjoyment, will emerge from the story. Perhaps there is nothing capricious about seeing profound meanings in veriest trifles once the formal patterns of the suppressed doctrine are recognized. It must be evident, however, that many of these allusions are probably nothing more than linguistic interpolations from the "the deepest level of this consciousness" and do not necessarily have any further significance.

Secondly, a word must be said about Melville's use of irony and invective; and perhaps about the rationale behind the inclusion of both in a single category. The early

sea-stories are full of ironic implications directed at official Christendom: in *Moby Dick* this attitude becomes concretized in "the Archbishop of Savesoul," a borrowing from one of his spiritual mentors, Thomas Carlyle. Then there is Father Mapple, who serves as an example of a true minister of the gospel, expressing in his sermon all the things which the official preachers could never say, without being run out of their churches on their own pulpit bannisters. By irony, then, is meant not merely ironic indirection, but the continuing polemic against the official world of polite society. Capriciously, perhaps, the reader may presume that any sly and sometimes perverse commentaries upon the priests of Mardi may legitimately be transferred to the priests of Nantucket, in precisely the same way as Jonathan Swift lampooned his society in an indirect polemic structured as the diary of one Gulliver, travelling in strange lands. In *Moby Dick*, Stubb finds that he must swear at the "sharks" when he is preaching to them. In this light, even Melville's sea-tales may be seen as an anticlerical satire hardly less devastating than Kierkegaard's vicious attack against Christendom. Also, Melville's "perverse" profanation of "holy things" can then be seen as a general expression of his contempt for ritual and form, a postulate expressed explicitly in *Clarel*, and implicitly in *Typee*.

Then there is the category of Melville's exuberance,

what he himself calls an evidence of that prime staple - vitality. Every serious Melville scholar has observed this exuberance, and both readers and reviewers have been either attracted or repelled by its sheer energy and excess. But if this exuberance is regarded as one of the evidences of a *duplex factum*, an entirely new category of critical approach becomes possible. First, however, it is necessary to say with regard to the fourth category, that Melville's choice of themes and his treatment of character reveals conclusively that he is hardly concerned with this novels as art forms. This leads Merlin Bowen to question whether his works can properly be called novels at all.[2] Plot, as he points out, is not their strong point. Not things, nor events, but ideas, are the real subjects of concern; ideas, however, presented not in abstraction, but in a series of what Henry Nash Smith calls "passionate idenitifications" with real, ethically choosing characters. Ishmael, Israel, Hunilla, Clarel, and others, "exist" in the face of two sets of claims: a natural, worldly, racial, social, and collective claim; contrasted to the claims of the existential imperative to be themselves in complicity with "the great Jehovah," or simply to be themselves, against the others. What is most individual about every man is precisely his emotions; and thus the categories must be rotated to return to a consideration of Melville's

emotionally charged style, his vital exuberance.

In *The Truest Poetry*, Lawrence Lerner develops a number of insights into the poetic processes which are highly pertinent to this study of Melville; that is, to the question of the methods and mechanics of aesthetic-ethical duplicity, if indeed, the process can be called a method. About the terms *poet* and *poetry*, he says:

> I shall throughout this book use the word 'poem' to include novels, plays, and other forms of what is vaguely called creative or imaginative writing; and 'poet' to include the author of these other forms.[3]

In view of the opinions already expressed about Melville's art, it will be seen that it is useful to designate him as a poet, and to call all of his work poetry; particularly as most of *Moby Dick*, and parts of all his novels, are considerably more "poetic" than his poems. In the second place, it is interesting to observe how closely some of Lerner's descriptions of the poetic process parallel Melville's scattered aphorisms on the subject of literary creation, and even more important, how accurately these commentaries seem to describe Melville's actual poetic process. Strange things happen to the poet, when, as Melville confesses, "an author can never, under no conceivable circumstances, be entirely frank with his readers." Immediately upon the adoption of this attitude, a censorious wall of inhibitions is erected between "the deep, deep well of cerebration," that fountain of memories and

aspirations, and the outside world, the world of men, who, as the poet well knows, will be repelled by his truth. In his letters to Hawthorne and others, as he has been shown, Melville frequently apologizes for having fallen into his old foible - preaching. The reader may begin to wonder what he is doing when he is not preaching, when he is aware that as an artist he must suppress the doctrine which informs and energizes his will. Why then, Lerner says pertinently, "The doctrine becomes emotion and is expressed."

Commenting upon a poem by Lucretius, Lerner elaborates upon how the doctrine of Epicurus is poetically transmitted. He writes:

> Poetry, that is, is the honey which doctors smear on the lip of the cup, that children may be 'deceived' for their own good; *decept-aque non capiatur*. The medicine is what makes the poem useful: in this case, the Epicurean philosophy ....But here we can offer to solve its great defect. It contains an obvious falsehood: smearing honey on a cup of medicine is not a good analogy for poetry, for it implies that the medicine remains ordinary medicine, and the honey quite distinct. It would be truer to say that the honey is mixed in with the medicine and combines to produce something different from either; but it would be truest of all to say that the medicine itself must secrete another substance; that is, that the knowledge or moral judgement being conveyed must pass from the mind of the poet into experience, must become part of his emotional life, and can then be expressed - and will taste something like honey. The old view thought of doctrine plus beauty. We ask what is the special way these two are fused in real literature, and the answer is that the doctrine becomes emotion, and is expressed.[4]

This statement clearly expresses a major premise of the theory of duplicity, and can be elaborated only by a demonstration of the process in Melville's works. Of particular note is the suggestion that the doctrine itself must secrete something. Whether the secretion is emotion; that is to say, "madness and anguish," or something else, the important thing is that the "sighs and the cries" will sound like beautiful music; so that in the final mixture of medicine and honey, the two are inextricably fused. Thus a formal analysis of the components will not likely be as successful as will be the attempt to show that, in fact, the aesthetic-ethical fusion is the best evidence of the deep ethical concern which informs the exuberant outburst of energy in the form of highly charged poetry. Herman Melville, having stated explicitly that he burns "to preach truth to the face of falsehood," and having confessed his belief that an author cannot be frank with his readers, thus implicitly suggests that he is practicing some deception. Having surreptitiously implied that the poet must wear a mask, Melville can be seen in the rôle of the Confidence Man, seeking to seduce his readers into his truth. The question of what this truth is must be left for the moment. It can in any case, not be expressed directly, but it will emerge; and one facet of this truth will be seen to be the conception that man is mortally afraid of the truth, inasmuch as between man and truth lies mortifi-

cation.

It is evident that the critical reader must "by indirection seek direction out," on the basis of Lerner's premise. If the doctrine becomes emotion and is expressed, one resident implication, if not, in fact, a psychological necessity of the process, is that the doctrine undergoes not merely a change of form, but perhaps also, and this is surely a serious matter, a change of content. The point may be illustrated by positing that one facet of the doctrine which is residual in Melville's subconscious mind is that old and unpleasant doctrine of the complete depravity of the natural man. The germinal statement of the doctrine may be found in Genesis: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."[5] Upon this slender seminal source the theologians have constructed elaborate structures, of which the most brilliantly intellectual is probably Calvin's, a structure which, of course, had an important and direct effect upon Melville's thought. For explicit treatments of the doctrine, a reader could peruse any number of homilies, all of which would serve to convince him, if not of the truth of the doctrine, certainly of the truth of the parable about the mustard seed growing into a great oak. Upon the basis of this slender, though vivid evidence, a mountain of critical theology has been developed, attesting to the fertility of man's imagination, if nothing else. But this raises the

problem of what would happen if an artist who supposes that this doctrine cannot be openly expressed, were to wish, nevertheless, to preach this doctrine. Why then, as Lerner says, the doctrine becomes emotion and is expressed. It may be expressed in the literary genre of the novel, possibly in the whole of an author's literary production.

It is not surprising that in the process of becoming emotion, partly through having been intellectually suppressed, that the doctrine should be obscured almost beyond recognition; but then it could also be said that the theologians have likewise obscured the doctrine almost beyond recognition. If a reader should object that the premise that this doctrine is expressed in Melville is purest conjecture, the only possible reply must be an attempt to show by indirection that evidence of the doctrine can be inferred from Melville's writing in terms of various techniques which he uses. There are some fairly explicit revelations in Melville, some of which will subsequently be cited, to support this premise; although with respect to the theory of duplicity, it must be acknowledged that such explicit interpolations are of little consequence, except to show that he may have on occasion bungled the job of mixing the honey with the medicine. It is necessary, rather, to show that the doctrine *informs* a novel, or all of his works perhaps; and that it is so interwoven with all else, so *untrennbar zusammengeflossen*, to use Peter Kesting's phrase, that it is impossible

to derive it directly from the aesthetic context. Indeed, where there is duplicity, the reader may see only ambiguity or obscurity, or what James Guetti calls a "fundamental imaginative instability," a disintegration of meaning resulting from what he supposes is "the insufficiency of language."[6]

It may be supposed, however, that if the reader holds the key to Melville's thought, of which John Freeman speaks,[7] he ought to be able to penetrate the philological, philosophical, and psychological media by which the doctrine becomes emotion and is expressed. To the initiate, the sign of the fish makes all things clear,[8] and the ensuing discussion can proceed without the further necessity of explaining the basic suppositions in Melville's mind which informed his art. But it is evident that while some critics have been fully aware of the paradox of Melville's language, they had no presentiment of the basic cause of his linguistic aberrations. It will be necessary to devote some space to the problem as stated by Guetti in "The Languages of *Moby Dick*." What is pertinent and valuable in Guetti's analysis is his observation and demonstration of the fact that there is something "beyond" Melville's literal forms.[9] Guetti supposes that the failure to communicate what he calls the "ineffable" results from "a deficiency of language," but this conclusion

must be questioned, particularly as Melville is such a master of language. It is difficult to conceive of a man having a thought without holding some sort of linguistic or verbal symbol for that thought; at any rate, if he is a verbal man, as Melville was. It may be granted that a man might be unable to articulate an emotion, or that a man who does not know any Greek may be unable efficiently to create a verbal symbol for his conception of, for instance, *photosynthesis;* but otherwise it must be held that thought consists of the manipulation and interchange of verbal symbols. Whether the manipulation efficiently results in the creation of a single word from the components of *photosynthesis*, or whether the articulation is at the level of a grade school science text, it remains true that the distinctively human attribute is language. Every experience and the response to it is conveyed by some sort of verbal articulation; and even the deaf mute strains to say words. That some men articulate their thoughts and feelings imperfectly or inefficiently does not materially alter the case.

But Guetti has something important and pertinent to say. First of all, he observes that in *Moby Dick* the author presents the reader with a great deal of information about cetology, and other matters, in the form of allusions and anonymous reports, as well as with direct information, conveyed, however by a special vocabulary. He writes:

> The narrative of the book takes three basic forms; in the first place, Melville often makes use of sustained, special vocabularies in describing whales and whaling, and although we have little difficulty in making sense of these vocabularies in terms of their internal, word-to-word consistency, when we attempt to apply them to more essential matters - Moby Dick, for example - they seem remote, arbitrary, and artificial. Secondly, although the narrator employs many separate vocabularies that seem to originate in himself, he also presents a reader with many more in the form of allusions to and reports of what someone else has said or might say about whales and Moby Dick. Thus we may be given, almost simultaneously, a firsthand, dramatic account of a fight with a sperm whale, an allusion to a Greek myth which might be relevant, an account of what the most superstitious character in Nantucket has said about similar fights, and a reference to the fabulous remarks of some historians of whaling. These allusions are part of a large body of figurative language in *Moby Dick* - language that is ostentatiously qualified by means of either its deliberate presentation as allusion and report or an explicit figurative tag, an 'as if' or a 'seemed.' Such qualifications are frequently belied, however, by the intensity with which the figures themselves are presented; in this manner they create an allusion of distinctness in opposition to the vagueness produced by their multiplicity, the freedom with which they replace one another, and their avowed qualifications. The third narrative method to be found in *Moby Dick* is the use of figurative language that within itself is both complex and unresolved, language that is significant as an explicit or implicit admission by the narrator that he cannot know or say what is most important.

Guetti's suggestion that the "complex and unresolved" figures of speech are an admission that the narrator cannot know or say "what is most important" is extremely interesting. It is surprising that he overlooks the possibility that the narrator cannot say what is important for reasons

other than "the insufficiency of language." It is to be noted that in *Redburn*, the narrator says, "A veil must be drawn"; in this case not because the "ineffable" cannot be articulated, but because polite society cannot stand the truth.[10] Throughout the entire chapter, Guetti resolves the problem of the veil between what is said and what is important, by falling back repeatedly upon his premise that language is an inadequate vehicle for communicating certain important things. He sees this "cetological way of talking" as the only way of communicating the important facts about "the very pelvis of the world."

He has observed, as well, that Melville always stops short of the direct communication about "the very pelvis of the world" because his language fails him. Again it must be said that if the position on the necessity for duplicity is substantial, the reason for stopping short of an explicit communication may very well be something quite different and other than the poet's deficiency of language. Perhaps the deficiency lies in the listener and not in the speaker. Guetti goes on to say that Ahab's doctrine of masks asserts a "split universe," and that the "unknown may not exist in a definable form." He writes about Ahab:

> He suggests constantly that he must proceed into and through the impenetrable and the unknown, while he is also aware that the unknown may not exist in a definable form, that it may be only the ineffable itself, 'imponderable thoughts.'

Having observed that the book begins with "whale" in thirteen languages, Guetti treats the various "languages" or special vocabularies of the book. He writes of Ishmael:

> It should be apparent at this point that the languages Ishmael employs, despite their various particularities, are in their rhetorical function equivalent. All begin with qualifications imposed by their nature as special vocabularies, reports, allusions, or, in general, as figures of speech, and all reflect the added limitation of Ishmael's refusal to commit himself to them. The final effect of all these languages, again, is to turn back upon themselves as artificial forms, as language, and in doing so to assert the existence of something ineffable beyond themselves.[11]

Thus repeatedly Guetti seems to evade the possibility that it is not the insufficiency of language, but the necessity for duplicity which obviously inhibits the articulation of the narrator. But this is the familiar intellectual evasion, according to Kierkegaard, which produces its prolix investigations after truth on the premise that the truth is hard to discover or apprehend. It has been seen, however, that there is nothing difficult about knowing the truth of reality; what is difficult is to respond existentially. But because men somehow know that knowledge will bring guilt and its whole train of pathological consequences, they defend themselves against the truth with every power of rationalization, so that the awful confrontation with truth can be forever evaded...by a prolix inquiry after truth. It is apparent that precisely to destroy this prolix illusion, Melville brings the terrors of the deep upon the dramatic stage, seeking to inveigle the spectator into passionate

identification, into suffering if possible, in order to get him to see stark reality, necessarily, and to deceive him into his truth.

Thus he teaches not by saying but by depicting. But as a writer, he must depict in terms of language; he must therefore, as it were, say the important thing without saying it. It is this psychological necessity and not this verbal insufficiency which so often causes the narrator to interrupt his commentary. Of this inability of the narrator to go further, Guetti writes:

> Closely related to this attitude are the narrator's frequent admissions of his inability to pursue the meaning of the story. We may consider the following passage: 'Dissect him how I may, then, I but go skin deep; I known him not and never will. But if I know not even the tail of this whale, how understand his head? Much more, how comprehend his face?' This attitude is both familiar and important, especially when we consider that it is simply the articulated synonym for Ishmael's constant failure to commit himself to a single perspective or vocabulary. This lack of commitment in itself comprises a great series of statements to the effect that the essentials cannot be known.[12]

Once again he has interpreted Ishmael's words: "Seldom have I known any profound thing that had anything to say to this world," as evidence of the inadequacy of language to communicate the important things. He has overlooked a view of "this world" such as the one which was documented in the last chapter. Thus he evinces a lack of presentiment that a profound man may very well be silent, not because profound wisdom cannot be communicated verbally, but for the reason that the speaker of truth might be forced from

his pulpit, or left to die in the gutter, or otherwise derided and persecuted. It is not language which is insufficient, however, it is man. The sort of men who live today, writes Kierkegaard, would simply die if they had to face the truth of the New Testament.[13] Melville would likely agree that they would surely die if they "got a hold of unchristian Solomon's wisdom." It would appear that this premise adequately explains why Melville's narrators frequently interrupt their discourse to confess that they can go no further; why in the story of Hunilla, for instance, the narrator repeatedly interrupts his narrative, protesting that he will say no more. It may well be that the interruptions betray, not inarticulacy, but a deliberate suppression of a stark profundity. Guetti has overlooked that within the range of the angry flukes of the whale, on the precipice of "the wisdom that is woe," it is not language, but man, who falters and fails to go on.

However, Guetti's thesis was not introduced in order to disprove it, or to challenge his conclusions. What is pertinent is his corroboration of the premise that the language of Melville suggests something "ineffable" behind it, something which cannot be said. He seems, after all, to have a presentiment that there is something behind the poet; erring only, it would seem, in attributing the failure of the poet to say it explicitly, to linguistic inadequacy,

which with regard to Melville, must be considered a strange conclusion. He quotes Melville pertinently to the present subject of concern in many ways, as in "all manner of morbid hints, and half-formed foetal suggestions of supernatural agencies" to be found in the narrative. He wonders what sort of "remarkable documents" Melville had in mind. He perceives the "strained and complex" allusions to another "theory." He comments upon "veriest trifles capriciously carry meanings that Ishmael apparently draws the inference that the "trifle" is the "meaning." He opposes the "harsh clarity of Ahab's vision of a definable reality" to the "indirectness and indefiniteness" of Ishmael's truth, and its assumption that reality can be expressed only suggestively and negatively; and he sees the latter as the highest truth possible, but again explains Ishmael's "assumption" in terms of the insufficiency of a single language to convey every aspect of reality. He concludes, "The reader becomes aware of something ineffable that is opposed and surrounded by suggestive rhetoric insufficient to define it."[14] Except for the concluding attributive phrase, his summary casts an illuminating light upon the present thesis. He should have said: "designed to lure the reader into a confrontation," a definition that seems to be implied by the term "suggestive rhetoric."

The problem under investigation has long occupied

linguists, and theologians in particular. Charles L. Stevenson, in a treatment of the characteristics of moral discourse and the manner in which ethical postulates can be communicated, writes:

> In virtue of this kind of meaning, ethical judgements alter attitudes, not by an appeal to self-conscious efforts as in the case of imperatives), but by the more flexible mechanism of *suggestion*. Emotive terms present the subject of which they are predicated in a bright or dim light, so to speak, and thereby lead people, rather than command them, to alter their attitudes.[15]

Stevenson says that the emotive meaning of words lies precisely in their suggestiveness. That this mode of communication of ethical postulates is effective, he sees in the fact that a reader may reject the suggestion, but hardly the inducement accompanying it. Since in any case the logic of ethics depends upon what may be called self-evidence, and as the existential imperative is highly individual, the preacher of truth is psychologically correct in employing those indirect modes of discourse which are so predominant a feature of Melville's writing. Against the background of this amplification of Melville's vital exuberance and emotionally-charged material, this inquiry into the mechanisms and modes of duplicity may proceed.

By rotating the categories which have been posited, an analysis can be conducted in terms of Melville's own awareness of the difficulty of imposing a formal order upon the random occurrences of specific "experiential" data

from life or from books. He writes in *Israel Potter:*

> The career of this stubborn adventurer signally illustrates the idea that since all human affairs are subject to organic disorder, since they are created in and sustained by a sort of half-disciplined chaos, hence he who in great things seeks success must never wait for smooth water, which never was and never will be; but with what straggling method he can, dash with all his derangements at his object, leaving the rest to fortune.[16]

The intricate fusion of modes of discourse in Melville's works, with aesthetic and ethical elements "*untrennbar zusammengeflossen*," indeed leaves some appearance of organic disorder; but Melville no doubt conceives that the reader's "interest" will silence any possible objections to the mode of presentation. What is more, the critical analysis of such a straggling style becomes difficult, for every technique is sometimes operative at once.

Some lines which have already been quoted in this regard, will serve to illustrate the process of doctrine becoming emotion and being expressed. The lines are:

> He whom love of country made a hater of her foes, here he was at last, serving that very people as a slave, better succeeding in making their bricks than in firing their ships. To think that he should be thus helping, with all his strength, to extend the walls of the Thebes of the oppressor, made him half mad! Poor Israel, well-named bondsman in the English Egypt. Who ain't a Nobody? All is vanity and clay.

First of all, as the reader will have come to expect, the poetic diction, the structure and rhythmn, indicate that a suppressed ethical concern is secreting emotion, as Lerner says. Then comes the single word *Thebes*, as was previously

noted, which at once suggests, in a peculiarly Melvillean way, in terms of its biblical connotations, a deeper concern than the narrative demands. However, the choice of the term could in this instance be dismissed as an allegorical allusion, designed merely to intensify the stated facts of Israel's condition. Melville's biblical allusions are so persistent, in fact, that it would be a mistake to attempt an explication of every such reference, or to attach unwarranted weight to every such allusion. In the present instance, however, the symbolic word which ought to induce in the reader a heightened identification, seems to trigger in the author a momentary forgetfulness of his story, as he shifts to an explicit statement of an ethical concern. Poor Israel, he says; and it becomes evident that the name which he has chosen for his hero at the outset is already designed somewhat to condition the mind and sentiments of his readers in the right direction. He means to say, "Poor wandering Jew in exile among the Gentiles." In "Cock-A-Doodle-Doo" occurs a reference to the Babylonian exile, but here the reference is to the Egyptian exile. Israel is also a potter; being in this case, however, the clay being molded, rather than the active agent in the event. Thus both parts of his name allude directly to scriptural sources; and the occurrence of *Thebes* is merely a further suggestion of the ethical concern underlying a tale which was written in parts for serial presentation in a magazine.

"Well-named bondsman in the English Egypt," Melville goes on, lest any reader may have missed the point. So far, implications only; metaphor to heighten dramatic effect. But then comes the explicit statement of what is his constant concern. Homilectically he asks, "Who ain't a nobody? All is vanity and clay." The reply to his own question, the reader will recognize as a paraphrase of wise Solomon, so that the original verbal allusion to "the truest book ever written" has now been expanded to a thematic allusion. In a few lines the reader has been carried from the remote allusion to an ancient city, directly to the informing doctrine stated in terms of an almost equivalent parallel of the original source quotation, as found in Solomon's book. It is as if Melville were giving the reader a hint of how his works must be read, for in countless cases, the reader must complete his own passage along the Ariadne thread into the labyrinth of Melville's subconscious mind, with no such assistance as he receives here.

The rhetorical "Who ain't a nobody?" is not directly allusive to Scripture, but rather to another of Melville's novels. In *Moby Dick*, the wandering Ishmael, whose role is given some elucidation in the reference to Ungar as "a wandering Ishmael from the west," and who, on the other hand, is in many respects a prototype of Israel Potter, with the latter "knowing" what the former has "learned," expresses similar thoughts. Contemplating his new status as a common sailor, he philosophizes:

> No, when I go to sea, I go as a simple sailor, right before the mast, plumb down into the forecastle, aloft there to the royal masthead. True, they rather order me from some, and make me jump from spar to spar, like a grasshopper in a May meadow.

Once again the light-hearted aesthetic prelude advertises and signals an underlying ethical concern. He muses:

> And at first, this sort of thing is unpleasant enought. It touches one's sense of honor, particularly if you come of an old established family in the land, the Van Rensselaers, or Randolphs, or Hardicanutes. And more than all, if just previous to putting your hand into the tar-pot, you have been lording it as a country school-master, making the tallest boys stand in awe of you. The transition is a keen one, I assure you, from a school-master to a sailor, and requires a strong decoction of Seneca and the Stoics to enable you to grin and bear it. But even this wears off in time.

Indeed, the transition is a keen one, and the reader will find that the youthful adventurers in *Redburn* and *White Jacket* express very similar sentiments. What they all have to learn is how to reconcile their pride in their personal integrity with the exigencies of life in "this man-of-war world." But to return to "Who ain't a nobody?" What the narrator of *Israel Potter* says in four words, Ishmael homilectically amplifies:

> What of it, if some old hunks of a sea-captain orders me to get a broom and sweep down the decks. What does that indignity amount to, weighed, I mean in the scales of the New Testament? Do you think the archangel Gabriel thinks anything the less of me, because I promptly and respectfully obey that old hunks in that particular instance? Who ain't a slave? Tell me that.[17]

A passage beginning with "May meadows" has turned into an explicit statement of Melville's attitude to society and the

world, and to the scales in which he habitually *weighs* everything. No finer statement of the creed of pietistic anarchism can be found in the letters of Waldensian fathers to their sons. Perhaps the last quoted section is an unartistic interpolation; it is also too explicit to be an example of duplicity within itself. The nature of this commentary, however, is a key to the story, so that the duplicity exists on the level of the whole structure of the story, which contains many such homilies. Father Mapple's sermon is not the only explicit statement of Melville's views on the question of the true man's posture toward the world. The reader does not have to turn to *Clarel:* "Christ had no thought to mend a world amiss," to arrive at Henry Nash Smith's conclusion that Melville has nothing in him of the social reformer. His concern is too intensely related to the individual for him to think about reforming the institutions. The true princes do not labor to change society: Melville's glorious ones labor to find a *modus vivendi* within society as it exists.

It is now possible critically to reread *Israel Potter* in order to see how this doctrine of *gelassenheit* is worked out within the context of the story, with only minor explicit interpolations. Here may be perceived the process of duplicity operative at the global level. Also, something of the informing doctrine may be seen if it is posited that Melville's "true princes of the empire" are strangers and

pilgrims in this world, as Father Mapple asserts, and if it is granted that this conception becomes emotion and is expressed, not as an occasional recollection, but as the constant determinant which informs the narrative. In one episode of the story, Israel is serving on an American privateer which has engaged the English frigate, the *Serapis*. As the spanker-boom of the English vessel tips over to Israel perched on his own mast, he seizes it, and when the ships roll apart, finds himself with a firm grasp on the enemy spar, and no footing on his own. Instantly he changes ships. Without recourse to Freud, it could be assumed that this is an allegorical representation of the birth of a child in this enemy world, transplanted to a foreign soil through no will of his own. Realizing that daylight will expose him, Israel devises a cunning plan. He has observed that ship's crews have a tendency to group themselves into bands; hence, during the night desperately tries to get himself recognized as belonging to one of the bands, for it is clearly impossible for him to survive as an *isolato* on the enemy ship. As Melville has already been quoted with respect to his recognition of the status of the *incognito*, the reader may be left to draw his own inferences.[18] Israel tries one after another of the bands. "With similar perseverance of effrontery, Israel tried other quarters of the vessel," only to find that "jealous with the spirit of class, no social circle would receive him." Once again the

explicit translation "social circle" betrays the intended design to speak of one world in terms of another.

Then begins a virtual treatise on the agonies of the true princes of the empire who are excluded from the herd.[19] Israel tries at last to identify himself with the waisters, the "vilest caste of an armed ship's company," but he has to learn the lesson which all of Melville's youthful seafarers learn - they do not want him either. "Blackballed out of every club, he went disheartened on deck." All the ship's hands had rejected him; the *incognito* is descried as an alien. At this point the doctrine again comes near the surface, as Melville writes:

> They had been molested by a vagabond claiming fraternity, and seeking to palm himself off upon decent society.[20]

The wandering Jew is rejected by the Gentile world, which in its rejection of him sets the pattern for its rejection of God. At various levels of perception, Israel's plight may be interpreted as that of a Jew in the "Christian" world, an American frontiersman in the English world, a citizen of the "new" world in the "old" world, a man of concern living in a world without concern, the naked individual in an all-too-social world, or simply as the plight of an individual who is separated from the herd by some isolating peculiarity. On a specifically Melvillean level, the episode may be construed as a parable about the plight of the true man in "this world of lies," the fate of those

individuals who in "high-spirited revolt" have denounced the authority of the gods of this world, and who, having offended its senators and judges, nevertheless suffer deepest pain when the world which they have rejected rejects them. Israel then takes an assumed name and pretends to be out of his mind; it is the only way in which he can survive on the foreign ship.[21] The captain of the English ship concludes:

> He's out of his reason; out of all men's knowledge and memories! Why, no one knows him; no one has ever seen him before.

Israel's dovelike and serpentine duplicity has had the usual result: he is considered mad. There are echoes of Antigone's appeal to "everlasting, unwritten, unalterable laws of God and heaven," beyond such justice as "dwells with the gods below;" and Creon's conclusion that she is not only proud and insulting, but "hardly in her right mind either." The gods of this world are unwittingly right when they protest, "He hath a daemonium." At any rate, Israel remains *incognito*, and is allowed to live; albeit as a slave. It is also commonplace that he suffers from a persecution complex: "All hands seem against me." It is finally ascertained, however, that he came from the American ship, although the captain cannot understand what might have induced him to make the jump.

There is also a further amplification of the theme inherent in "Who ain't a nobody? All is vanity and clay."

The story becomes a study in existence of Solomon's philosophy of times and seasons, as given in Ecclesiastes, a theme which occupied Melville a great deal.[22] Israel's situation had reduced him to complete resignation and to the necessity for stoical endurance without complaint. The narrator concludes:

> At length Israel was set at liberty; and whenever there was any important duty to be done, volunteered to do it with such cheerful alacrity, and approved himself so docile and excellent a seaman, that he conciliated the approbation of all the officers, as well as the captain, while his general sociability served, in the end, to turn in his favor the suspicious hearts of the mariners.

Like Daniel in the court of Shushan, and Moses in the court of the proud pharoahs, Israel wins the favor of the princes of this world, assuming a posture of flexibility in peripheral matters outside the circumference of his being, while remaining intransigently loyal to his homeland beyond the seas.

It has been previously noted that not all of the glorious ones can resign themselves so quickly or so well. Ethan Allen curses the lords of the enemy world:

> General Lord Howe? Heed how I talk of that toad-hearted king's lickspittle of a scarlet poltroon; the vilest wriggler in God's wormhold below! I tell you that herds of red-haired devils are impatiently snorting to ladle Lord Howe with all his gang....into the seethingest syrups of Tophet's flames.[23]

Shocking as this exuberant invective may seem, it is the logical extension of the premises underlying and explicit in Father Mapple's sermon. The behavior of the imprisoned Ethan Allen explains why the elect princes have so often been accused of using indecent language, and of lack of taste or judgement. Melville says of that "royal captive" lying in chains:

> Often, when no other avengement was at hand, he would hurl on his foes such boiling anathemas as fairly to shock them into retreat.

Melville is privy to the secret sign. Blasphemous language, particularly when it is directed against the first and second estates of society, is one of the marks of "the patriot to heaven" who ever stands forth his own inexorable self. It is the public place corollary to Father Mapple's sermon.[24] In his impotent rage Ethan Allen roars at the fine English ladies: "You Turks never saw a Christian before!" One can fairly hear the invective of a Swift or Carlyle, or the cutting satire of Kierkegaard, as in "factious scorn for scorn" they hurl themselves at the "proud gods and commodores of this earth," rather than retreat in submissive quietude and *gelassenheit*.

But Israel is submissive; and like the Israeli slaves building the walls of Thebes, he helps the war effort of his enemies in madness and anguish, thinking perhaps, as does Ethan Allen, that "the great Jehovah and the Continental Congress will avenge me." It must

be noted that he does not serve some noble cause, but the cause of his enemies. Thus Israel survives his captivity in an alien land, "desperate as the lost soul of a harlot," like Cartiphilus the Jew, unable to go mad, and staunchly maintaining "the perilous outposts of the sane." When he was young, "all the fibres of his heart trembled within him," but the mountains had made him strong and able to endure. Then a few events of his youth taught the naïve boy a few things, so that Israel now had "much of the gentleness of the dove....not wholly without the wisdom of the serpent," as Melville says in a paraphrase of Christ's admonition to his disciples; an equilibrium eminently suited for the operations of duplicity.[25] His early misfortunes, the reader is informed, were designed to prepare him for misfortune, inasmuch as "being of the race he was, felicity could never be his lot." Melville writes:

> But hereby stoic influences were at work, to fit him at a soon-coming day for enacting a part in the last extremities here seen; when by sickness, destitution, each busy ill of exile, he was destined to experience a fate, uncommon even to luckless humanity, a fate whose crowning qualities were its remoteness from relief and its depth of obscurity: London, adversity, and the sea, three Armageddons which at one and the same time, slay and secrete their victims.

Thus it is always in Melville. The sole purpose of suffering is that the sufferer will be strengthened to suffer some more; but the *telos* is, "Grief is the chamberlain to

knowledge."[26] It is also to be noted that Melville again says "fate" when he obviously means "providence," for the "stoic influences" are the deliberate design of some higher being. "With a dolorous heart he mildly yielded to what seemed his fatality," Melville writes; and again, "in a fit of despair he was about to surrender himself to his fate." But he betrays his *duplicit* use of the term *fate* in this and other novels when he writes:

> Thus repeatedly and rapidly were the fortunes of our wanderer planted, torn up, transplanted and dropped again, hither and thither, according as the Supreme Disposer of sailors and soldiers saw fit to appoint.[27]

There is then evidently a purpose in subjecting a man to such trials of his manhood. The biblical "When thou hast tried me, I shall come forth as pure gold" informs Melville's teleological vision.

But as the Potter places and keeps Israel in the crucible of affliction, he seems at last to break down, and seeks "the pentralia of retreat." He conceives eleven children in the land of Egypt, ten of whom he not unhappily lays into the grave. To the "remaining Benjamin of his old age" he tells wild stories of the promised land across the sea. It is apparent how constantly the Bible furnishes him not only with vocabulary but also with themes. But Israel is now suffering hallucinations. When a huckster-woman with a cart of vegetables passes him, the sights and the smells of these relics of rural American freedom,

the dream of Moravian pietistic anarchism, bring a longing insanity over him.

> And so Israel, now an old man, was bewitched by the mirage of vapors; he had dreamed himself home into the mists of the Housatonic mountains, a ruddy boy on the upland pastures again.

This is the divine madness; the terrible cost of the embrace of the deity, the wisdom that is woe: that God punishes those whom he loves.[28] The woes of isolation drive the princes of God into dreams of the delectable mountains. Thus they succeed, at all events, in "keeping the vital nerve of the tap-root alive." If only Israel would have said "Sir" to the English gentleman, he could have become one of the great ones of the earth, perhaps one of the "princes of the Power of the air," as Melville calls the captains of this world. But Israel, "bred among mountains, found it impossible...to do so." Like Father Mapple's "patriot only to heaven" he cannot help defying the authority of earthly commodores and captains; yet he obeys them. Like Ishmael, he evidently supposes that the angel Gabriel will not think less of him if he meekly obeys his earthly overlords in other, inconsequential things. "Who ain't a slave? Tell me that!" The explicit conclusion to "Who ain't a nobody?" is in *Clarel:*

> But while low ducks each lofty steed
> Behold how through the crucial pass
> Slips unabased the humble ass.[29]

Narrow is the way, and strewn with griefs; and Hunilla's

"humble pride" the proper posture for the pilgrim on the *via dolorosa.* As Melville writes elsewhere, "The true lore is impotent for earth" but "unrighteousness succeeds in every endeavor." Thus an aesthetic critique has stumbled upon the ethical; and the consequence is that the reader is betrayed into precisely that aesthetic-ethical confusion which is the category of the religious. Melville has deceived the reader, first by a word suggesting a deeper meaning, then by a commentary on submissiveness, then by the merging doctrine of *gelassenheit,* or pietistic quietism. Thus cleverly has Melville deceived the reader into confronting the wisdom that is woe: the terrible truth that the truth is in suffering, the truth that the great Jehovah rewards his glorious ones by secretly designing new adversities for them, precisely so the captains of this world will be confirmed in their illusion that the *incognito* have been forsaken by God, as well as by men, as Melville express in *Clarel:* "Smitten by God, by men rejected."[30] It must not be supposed, however, that each and every allusive play of words will yield an insight into the informing doctrine, at any rate, not in a sense which would enable the researcher to articulate the doctrine in a prescribed theological way, for Melville is concerned with the truth in existence, and not with the formulation of a creed.

In *Typee,* his first novel, Melville already served

notice that his "cake-and-ale sea-stories," as he was later to describe his early novels, were not written merely for the entertainment of genteel readers. By his own admission, he is "sadly discursive," and he entreats the reader's patience," apparently with respect to his digressive interpolations. Frequently, as in *Redburn*, the narrator arrests his digressions from the recital of events with such statements as, "But I must quit this rambling and return to my story." His discursiveness is a technique of duplicity on the level of the novel construed as a whole, inasmuch as the digressive philosophical ramblings provide evidence of the persistent proximity of a second concern; or at any rate, of a habit of mind which consistently looks at experience in the aesthetic stage of existence in terms of evaluations derived from ethical existence. The alternation between the narrator's tale, and the narrator's thoughts and comments upon what is happening falls short of exemplifying the concrete situation of existing in two stages at the same time. There are, however, hints of what is to come; and the "sadly discursive" style, although it is in the mode of aesthetic-ethical alternation, rather than duplicity, is evidence of precisely that impinging of the ethical upon the aesthetic which subsequently culminates in the *duplex factum*, particularly from the point of view of his authorship as a whole.

That an allegorical substratum of meaning may legitimately be inferred from the entire episode of the

wanderer in the valley of the Typees, seems apparent from a few instances in which the external corollary can definitely be established. One such instance is the chapter on the feast of calabashes. At once the alert reader will be intrigued by the possibility that this is an intended parody on "the feast of tabernacles." The allusion would appear to be too obscure to substantiate, and of too little importance; but some interesting observations result, when the chapter is read as such a parody. First of all, there is an initial symmetry between "The Feast of Calabashes" and the "Feast of Tabernacles" which alerts the reader. Then also, there is a correspondence of syllables and of accent on these syllables; the two lines sound alike. A closer look reveals that there is also a correspondence of vowel values; that is to say, although the actual letters differ somewhat, the vowel values are similar. Ta-ber-na-cles corresponds to Ca-la-ba-shes in such an obvious way, that the reader may feel his initial suspicions confirmed. There is noticeable though less obvious relation between the parallel occurrences of the consonants. Whether all of this is by conscious design, or whether, at this stage of Melville's development, it is merely an accident produced by his subconscious memory of old themes, may be an open question. In any case, there does appear to be some intent of creating a suitable climate for making some stinging comments upon clericalism and perverted ritual.

In the description of the feast, he drops some hints about the baffling origin of the feast, and at once serves notice that he intends to use the occasion for purposes other than to give an objective report for some journal on anthropology. He writes:

> Although I have been baffled in my attempts to learn the origin of the Feast of Calabashes, yet it seemed very plain to me that it was principally, if not wholly, of a religious character. As a religious solemnity, however, it had not at all corresponded with the horrible descriptions of Polynesian worship which we have received in some published narratives, and especially in those accounts of the evangelized islands with which the missionaries have favored us.

Whether or not the Typees actually observed a feast by that name, or whether Melville concocted the idea from some vague memories of the Feast of Tabernacles, about which he had often read in the Old Testament,[31] he proposes, not merely to inform or entertain the reader, but also to enlighten him in other ways.

His introduction of an actual event prepares the ground for a lengthy panegyric on the evils of formal religion as represented by the missionaries. He writes:

> Did not the sacred character of these persons render the purity of their intentions unquestionable, I should certainly be led to suppose that they had exaggerated the evils of paganism, in order to enhance the merit of their own disinterested labours.

The irony is obvious; he is going to question their motives indeed. A page later he drops his ostensibly objective

pose:

> The fact is, that there is a vast deal of unintentional humbuggery in some of the accounts we have from scientific men concerning the religious institutions of Polynesia.

Although he calls the humbuggery "unintentional," he is about to show that it is intentional; intended precisely to perpetuate the fraud which is organized religion. The manner of such objective, scientific reporting, he understands very well. In the name of scientific exactitude, the "anthropologist" becomes a creator of fiction:

> and his powers of invention increase with the credulity of his auditors. He knows just the sort of information wanted, and furnishes it to any extent.[32]

Once having laid the groundwork for his panegyric on Christendom, he becomes explicit in his denunciation of that sort of "evangelism" which consists of imposing upon the natives of Typee the depraved mediocrity and fraudulent presumptions of "the Catholic world." He writes with religious fervor:

> Better will it be for them forever to remain the happy and innocent heathens and barbarians that they now are, than, like the wretched inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands to enjoy the mere name of Christians without experiencing any of the vital operations of true religion, whilst, at the same time, they are made the victims of the worst vices and evils of civilized life.[33]

As always, he lodges his protest against Christendom in the interest of vital piety; and even the most casual

reader may suspect that not only in Polynesia, but also in America, many have the mere name of Christian, without its vital operation.

From this inquisition into the motives of the missionaries, he turns to a consideration of the local political aristocracy. He describes civilization in its consummate flower of glory:

> The 'royal blood' is an extremely thick, depraved fluid; formed principally of raw fish, bad brandy, and European sweetmeats, and is charged with a variety of eruptive humours, which are developed in sundry blotches and pimples upon the august face of 'majesty itself', and the angelic countenances of the 'princes and princesses of the blood royal'.[34]

Here Ethan Allen's boiling anathemas against Lord Howe are taking form, with the young author exercising great restraint in the face of some deep, interior provocation. His language is even more outrageous, when the reader begins to suspect that Melville may be writing not particularly about a Polynesian "fat, lazy,...blockhead," but about the finest flower of European royalty. It seems that to assert his own authority, a Prince of the Empire may resort to any weapon available, to utter whatever "boiling anathemas" come into his mind, to destroy the usurped authority of the judges and senators of this world. In view of his repeated outbursts of this sort, it is surprising that no major critic has consistently developed the theme of Melville's strong and primitive "Christian" anarchism,

particularly as none of his works of any length fail to include the digressive interpolation castigating the "official world."[35]

Once again, with a word or a phrase, Melville has opened the ground for the arena in which he will preach truth to the face of falsehood; here, in his first novel, not with well-practiced duplicity so much as with explicit interpolations, which, however, lend the aura of duplicity to the work as a whole. Thus his works can be read for aesthetic enjoyment, or for the pecularly Melvillean doctrine of "the priesthood of believers," emerging in the form of an assertion of "the aristocracy of spirit," a belief uniformly shared by every youthful Melvillean adventurer. Both parts of the *duplex factum* are present, not well fused in *Typee*, but blended in an admixture of honey and medicine.

The way has been prepared for a consideration of another facet of Melville's pilgrim flight "into a country where God rules not, but only the captains of this world." In this world, he has observed, every facet of the true faith has been inverted. The "vital operations of true religion" have been replaced with sacerdotal, aesthetic enjoyments, the crowd having forced from the priests what it wants to hear. The officials "know just the sort of information wanted, and furnish it to any extent." The "Feast of Calabashes" is an inspired perversion of the simple

ritual of the true faith. When the animal sacrifices are prepared "without letting any blood from the body," the priests assert their authority against the biblical "perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood."[36] Melville's detailed description of the preparation of the sacrifice of the "unfortunate porker" appears to be a perverse parody of the Levitical ordinances. The correspondence is far too obvious to be dismissed as of no consequence; perhaps it is of the greatest consequence. It may be that he has found a technique, by such inversions of biblical ordinances, of saying that the function of the priest is to invert the truth, to turn the truth precisely into the opposite of what it is, as Kierkegaard explicitly and savagely maintains in his *Attack*. First, the priest sacrifices a "porker," the flesh of which ought not to be eaten (in the biblical context); then he carefully kills the animal "without letting any blood from the body." So the parody proceeds, for once, the reader suspects, without anguish on the part of the author; perhaps with tongue in cheek and deceitful smile.

It is interesting to compare Melville's commentaries in *Moby Dick* on the eating habits of civilized people. Some light seems to be cast upon the possibility that the depraved blood of royalty may come from those tender morsels of perverse-minded and rebellious hogs. Having observed that whale's brain somewhat resembles calves' head,

Ishmael muses:

> and everyone knows that some young bucks among the epicures, by continually dining upon calves' brains, by and by get to have a little brains of their own, so as to be able to tell a calf's head from their own heads; which, indeed, requires uncommon discrimination. And that is the reason why a young buck with an intelligent looking calf's head before him, is somehow one of the saddest sights you can see. The head looks sort of reproachfully at him, with an 'Et tu, Brute!' expression.[37]

What is even more abhorrent is the practice of eating whale steak by the light of whale oil.[38] At this point the narrator's passion rises as he suddenly turns to an evangelical diction:

> But no doubt the first man that ever murdered an ox was regarded as a murderer; perhaps he was hung; and if he had been put on his trial by oxen, he certainly would have been; and he certainly deserved it if any murderer does. Go to the meat market of a Saturday night and see the crowds of live bipeds staring up at the long rows of dead quadrupeds. Does not that sight take a tooth out of a cannibal's jaw. Cannibals? who is not a cannibal? I tell you it will be more tolerable for the Fejee that salted down a lean missionary in his cellar against a coming famine; it will be more tolerant for that provident Fejee, I say, in the day of judgement, than for thee, civilized and enlightened gourmand, who nailest geese to the ground and feastest on their bleated livers in thy pâté-de-foie-gras.

As there seems to be no evidence that Melville ever upheld the claims of vegetarianism, the passionate humor in this passage appears to point to something else. The language and diction is so precisely a parallel of the Gospel, that the reader's mind is at once carried to the original text of Christ's condemnation of pharisaical righteousness.[39] Repeatedly then, Melville is carried away from the narrative

into another concern, as demonstrated not only by his biblical phraseology, but also by his associated passion. The rhetorical function of such passages seems to be to arouse the reader out of his smug complacency.

A further stage of Melville's satire is reached when he extends his comments to the sacrifice itself. He writes:

> Such is the summary style in which the Typees convert perverse-minded and rebellious hogs into the most docile and amiable pork; a morsel of which placed on the tongue melts like a soft smile from the lips of beauty.[40]

Perhaps just then a smile crossed the author's lips. The duplicity is very clever, though, in terms of the preceding revelations, by no means obscure. Converting "perverse-minded hogs" into docile and amiable morsels may have only a slight relation to Typee, or to the wild boars found on the islands. Particularly when every detail of the preparation of the sacrifice is "perversely" the contrary of the Levitical injunctions, the reader cannot help but wonder if these "hogs" are not Kierkegaard's "cannibals" who devour the flesh of the glorious ones.[41] Perhaps Melville's irony and invective is informed by his anger at the official perversions. But it is easy for men to become accustomed to what they are officially taught. In a line reminiscent of Alexander Pope, the narrator confides, "However, after the first shock had subsided, the custom grew less odious in my eyes, and I soon accustomed myself to the sight." Indeed, vice easily becomes virtue; and the official fraud becomes Christianity. In "this world of lies" the "traveller

in time" must learn to adapt himself to the situation, whether in Israel's submissiveness, or in Ethan's boiling anathemas hurled at the Turks of Christendom. The narrator of *Typee* offers some excellent existential advice with regard to one's participation in the official fraud. He confesses:

> I pretended to yield to the deception, and repeated the words after him several times, as though acquiescing in what he said.[42]

There is no other way for the alien traveller to exist in the enemy world, flexible at the circumference and intransigent at the core; unless, of course, he has predilection for a swift demise at another sort of ritual, the auto-da-fé. Little wonder that the narrator is "Anxious to Escape" (Chapter xxxii), for he knows that when his pretence of accepting the religion of the island is exposed, he will hear the cry, "Away with that man. He is not fit to live." If he could only accept the religious conditions for existence on the island, he would find that "the whole year is one long tropical month of June just melting into July." Be frivolous young man, Kierkegaard advises, and all your troubles will cease. But frivolous Melville cannot be, except when this serves his purpose to challenge the authority of this world's commodores, or when it serves his purpose to "deceive the reader for his own good."

While the foregoing may appear novel, it was in fact virtually anticipated by John Freeman, who in the early

twenties of this century, probably had a clearer presentiment of what lay behind the poet than many a later worshipper who brought his "tun of rancid fat" to the "shrine of the departed poet," while at the same time obscuring the *kerygma* by a prolix speculation into some symbol or other.[43] From the point of view of the premises here posited, Freeman's most important insight is his awareness of the fact that Melville's exuberant energy comes from suppression. Precisely what it was that Melville suppressed, Freeman leaves in some doubt, but he suggests that it was, for some reason not explained, a suppression of his native genius. Recognizing Pierre's comments on literature and its critics as being Melville's own, Freeman finds in them a candid admission of the agonies of literary creation. "Pierre had written many a fugitive thing," he quotes; but without further amplification of "fugitive." As he subsequently quotes the "Truth must fly like a scared doe in the woodlands" passage, it is surprising that he does not link "figitive" with truth's "flight" in "this world of lies." He observes further that Melville loved pseudonymity, and "in the absence of recognition, proudly invested himself with obscurity."[44] Apart from a clear understanding of the modes of aesthetic-ethical duplicity, Melville's posture may indeed appear to be an investiture of obscurity; but in terms of the present thesis, it may be

seen that it was not himself whom he obscured, so much as it was his rôle as a preacher which he obscured.

There is in Freeman's book, also, an almost accidental anticipation of the rôle of the unrecognized posing as a romancer. He quotes the lines;

> Toby, like myself, had evidently moved in a different sphere of life, and his conversation at times betrayed this, though he was anxious to conceal it. He was one of that class of rovers you sometimes meet at sea, who never reveal their origin, never allude to home, and go rambling over the world as if pursued by some mysterious fate they cannot possibly elude.[45]

Again Freeman does not elaborate, although he must have seen some special significance in the lines in order to take the trouble of quoting them. Perhaps he had a presentiment that this suppression of information about "home" is part of the characteristic background of the Melvillean pilgrim, who finds himself a stranger in this world. Neither does Freeman amplify the reason why these youthful adventurers should be anxious to conceal their spiritually aristocratic origins. He writes again, "His reserved nature hourly deepened with all suppressions....with the removal of his unconscious self-control, as in the scene with Captain Claret, the secret fury of his nature is liberated.[46] It seems that Freeman regards this pent-up fury as a consequence of Melville's shocking discovery of man's inhumanity to man. With this there could hardly be any disagreement; but perhaps the secret fury may involve something more than a natural revulsion against such

degradations of the individual as flogging. Redburn's "oath with my soul" that Claret would not degrade him is spoken in the hot pride of youth; Melville has yet to discover the wisdom that is woe, the bitter truth that between man and truth lies mortification. Redburn resists the temptation to drink or smoke, "trying to keep himself unspotted from the world," as Freeman notes; but it would seem that as Melville's spiritual development grows apace, his characters discover that only in the inmost sanctum of the self can a man remain unspotted by the world. In the dominions of the "prince of the power of the air" the body must sometimes be given to be burned, or flogged.

Remembering the fact that Melville was thirty when he wrote about the adventures of Redburn, Freeman describes the manner in which the reflective author recollected his youthful "intellectual rovings through heaven and earth." Sometimes there occurs the unguarded expression of what had been carefully concealed and suppressed, "the maturer mind and more enduring heart snatching the pen for a stealthy interpolation." While the "stealthy interpolation" of which Freeman speaks may not be the best evidence of duplicity in language, it is nevertheless part of the general mechanics of the method with regard to Melville's authorship. Freeman writes:

> When he wrote of himself at this time, he slipped now and again by chance into a less guarded expression, and what transpires is a simple, natural religiousness of the heart. Then, as later, his Christianity appeared as a living thing, and it is

> significant that so many of his references to Jesus Christ - and all are not many, though passionate - are to Him as the Redeemer; consciousness of what was ill within, of weakness, fear and lack of love, taught him to look to one who might redeem man from weakness and coldness, and give him a stabler heart. 'To be efficacious, Virtue must come down from aloft, even as our Blessed Redeemer came down to redeem our whole man-of-war world; to that end, mixing with its sailors and sinners as equals.'[47]

The occurrence of such "less guarded" confessions of concern amidst the narrated events of life at sea, reveals again Melville's old foible - preaching. He who knew that to preach the Gospel in his century would ensure death in the gutter, seems deliberately to invite rejection by the reviewers and the public, and a lifetime of obscurity, by allowing such explicit, unguarded revelations to appear in his otherwise aesthetically enjoyable novels. Duplicity is such an agony that occasionally the confidence man drops the guitar. That which is always near the surface breaks through.

The contrast that Melville has drawn between the "sacerdotal fraud" and the "vital operations of true religion" can clearly be seen, yet many of the critics who have noted Melville's revolt against puritan formalism, have rather too quickly concluded that his revolt is also against Christianity. His "high-spirited revolt" is evidently part of his movement to a more primitive and vital "rereading of the Gospels." Even a cursory examination of pietism, beginning with the Johannine literature, a brief examination

of the codices of the Moravians or Catharsi, will reveal the spiritual, if not the literary, antecedents of Melville's pietistic anarchism; and Father Mapple's sermon is cast in the finest tradition of this creed. Melville's religion is highly individualistic but it is by no means unique, or entirely pecular to himself. It is the religion of theologically illiterate fishermen, sailors and sinners. How it ever crossed the borders of Palestine is not known; for this faith has never had a pulpit; its propagation has always been a mystery; it seems simply to have grown on persecution from the official fraud. Melville's recourse to conveying the doctrine surreptitiously, by "stealthy interpolations" and the running commentaries of his narrators, his sometimes well-guarded aesthetical-ethical duplicity at the linguistic level, all these are the methods by which secret doctrine is broadcast; only this way and precisely in this way can he fullfil his burning wish to preach truth to the face of falsehood.

Writing of Father Mapple's sermon, Freeman speculates upon the character and unique purpose of this sermon, concluding that it provides the key to an understanding of Melville. He writes:

> Sombre in dehortation, novel in its familiar wave-like rhythmn, it has something peculiarly Melvillean in its doctrine.[48]

The doctrine, however, has a long and intriguing history; so that what is peculiarly Melvillean may be the poetic incantation upon which the exhortation is floated congregation-ward.

Instead of conveying the secret symbol in an aesthetic framework, there is here something like a reversal of aesthetic-ethical duplicity; here the ethical is on the surface, with lulling waves of aesthetic allurement underneath. The doctrine, however, as the records of killing and maiming and book-burning reveals is really so offensive to this world's commodores and judges, that Melville must always be concerned with finding new situations into which he can drop the "stealthy interpolation."

The reader will have noted that John Freeman has heretofore always referred to the *chance* by which the "less guarded expression" occurs. He has however, also expressed some presentiment of design.

> Indded, there is something like design, the skill of a deliberate and consummate artist, in the effect produced by the recurring asides, the incidental excitements, the grave meditations, with which the latter half of *Moby Dick* is diversified. Hamlet-like soliloquies, a Shakespearean idiot who breathes wisdom in his pleading fidelity, passages of the intensest dramatic value turning upon ordinary matters and vivifying the theme with continually fresh energy, these are not only singularly powerful in themselves; they are also powerful in their contributory effect.[49]

The methods of duplicity could hardly be better summarized, and it is interesting, also, that Freeman perceives that all of this is not mere chance, but possible a half-disciplined design. In a footnote, he quotes Lewis Mumford, from *Aesthetics, a Dialogue:*

> People have criticized *Moby Dick* because it is formless and full of irrelevancies; but the truth is that the irrelevancies are an essential part of its form, and had Melville attempted to reduce the bounds of his universe to the scene required for a slick story of the sea, that universe would not have been the multitudinous and terrible thing he sought to create.[50]

As Mumford observes, the seeming irrelevancies are part of the structure, part of a deliberately designed conceit. If *Moby Dick* is not good art, the author will find himself "damned by dollars," but he seems to accept this as part of the price of achieving the intent behind this "no ordinary romance."

The purpose of "the terrible thing he sought to create" is to arouse emotions, and to involve more of the reader's self than is the case with most novels. The "objective" critic may be reluctant to admit this, as Lawrence Lerner observes, "for fear that it should impugn the status of art." He adds, "And it is thus a part of highbrow patter not to find thrillers thrilling." It appears, then, that the vital exuberance and the persistent digressiveness are part of an intended design. In *To Augustus* Alexander Pope describes his ideal poet:

> Tis he who gives my breast a thousand pains,
> Can make me feel each passion that he feigns;
> Enrage, compose, with more than magic art,
> With pity and with terror tear my heart
> And snatch me, o'er the earth, or through the air
> To Thebes, to Athens, when we will, and where.

Diderot begs of the poet:

> Move me, amaze me, rend my heart; begin by making me tremble, weep, shiver, with indignation.

With these requirements, Melville complies. Every aesthetic means of gaining an avenue to the reader's mind is legitimate when the end is so noble an aim as to deceive men into the truth. If the "academic twaddlers" of Kierkegaard, or Melville's "prosing euphonists of Acadème" refuse to be thrilled, then they must be angered, provoked to indignation, moved in some way, forced to descend from "the blue mountains of academic speculation" and to respond emotionally; for only in this way can they be snatched away to "where" the author wants them. And he wants them precisely where the confrontation with the existential imperative cannot gracefully be evaded. This method is not required when an author speaks to sailors and fishermen, for these simple people are not ashamed to laugh or cry, and they are too unsophisticated to be ashamed of their untheological religion of the heart, like Redburn, who faces the world with "no resource outside his own heart."

But he who would preach truth to that world in which truth must fly like a scared doe in the woodlands, he who feels with Pierre "the pyramidical scorn of the genuine loftiness for the whole infinite company of infinitesimal critics," he who knows that he can "love" men only by seeming to hate them, that man must arouse passion. That man must remember Father Mapple's words:

> Woe to him who seeks to please rather than to appal! Woe to him whose good name is more to him than goodness! Woe to him, who in this world, courts not dishonour! Woe to him who would not be true, even though to be false were salvation.....

It may be that by a judicious exercise of cleverly calculated wordly shrewdness, a critic may bravely, if somewhat nervously, evade Melville's many-faceted attack against wordly mediocrity, but it is not easy. Like Kierkegaard, Melville is less interested in tearing the veil from divinity, than he is in tearing the veil from "human twaddle," to expose the prolix speculations, divorced from existence, as merely nervous evasions of the truth in existence. Hence the excesses of *Pierre*, the exuberance of *Moby Dick*, the digressive lulls everywhere, the swift, unbalancing change of moods, the poetic flights, the sudden ethical interpolation, the ubiquitous scriptural allusions, the irony and invective, the pure aesthetic melodies as devoid of thought as it the song of singing birds. Every device which his imagination can conceive is designed to open a psychological avenue to the reader's heart and mind.

Still to be considered is an important subsidiary device by which the poet may, by swift unbalancing changes, involve the reader emotionally, with the intent of inducing a passionate identification. One way in which this device is used, is by a double-talk in which the narrator offers a proposition, which when it is fairly established, he calls

into question. At the linguistic level, the maneuver is accomplished by an alternation of the personal subject in a single paragraph, or even as is often seen in Melville's works, in a single sentence. These two devices, which will presently be illustrated from the experiential data of Melville's writings, do not seem to fall into the categories of aesthetic-ethical duplicity; but they may be seen as part of the general method by which the author seeks to elicit an existential response. Nathan C. Starr discusses the alternation of linguistic structure as a device to entice the reader. He comments:

> This fluidity of prose movement is dependent to a large extent upon the use of contrast. The structure of the sentence may be altered in a successive series....or the sentences may be varied in kind, from declarative to interrogative...Whatever the means employed, however, there must still be the fundamental sense of continuity; but, to recur to my original figure, it will be the continuity, the restless and yet undeviatingly directional ebb and flow, rise and fall, of the waves of the sea. So again in the internal form of prose do we meet the necessary and seemingly paradoxical compromise between the forces of rest and the forces of motion, between regularity and variety.[51]

It is interesting to note how well "undeviatingly directional" does describe the movement of *Moby Dick*. The tidal flux occurs not only in a global sense, but within individual paragraphs. There is an alternation of pronoun subjects, a rotation of postulates, an alternation between the personal and impersonal, between levity and seriousness, between the aesthetic and the ethical.

The German critic, Hans Helmcke, has seen in Herman

Melville a consistent use of devices which in their structural ebb and flow are designed precisely to unbalance the reader, and to elicit from him a response which cannot be merely objectively critical. The devices are of two sorts; the holding of antithetical postulates in proximate juxtaposition, and the alternation of personal subjects within one sentence or thought unit. At the level of structural form, this alternation is illustrated by Helmcke, whose quotations from Melville are here repeated. He quotes from *Moby Dick:*

> It touches *one's* sense of honour, particularly if *you* come of an old established family in the land....And more than all, if just previous to putting *your* hand into the tar-pot, you have been lording it as a country school-master..... The transition is a keen one. *I* assure *you*.

Helmcke comments upon this swift transition of subjects, a keen transition indeed.

> Hier findet sich zunächst das eigentliche unpersönliche 'one' in einem Atemzug mit dem relativ unpersönlichen 'you' in selben Grad der Verallgemeinerung ausgesprochen. Zugleich begreifft aber dieses 'you' - mehr noch als das vorausgehende 'one' - auch den Ich-Erzähler selbst mit ein. Dieser benutzt also hier den konkreten Einzelfall - nähmlich seinen eigene -, um zu zeigen, wie es Menschen in seiner Lage gehen würde, was sie empfinden würden, usw; und diese allgemeine Aussage dient ihm dann wieder zur Illustration seines eigenen Falles, von dem er ausgegangen war. Das eingeschobene 'I assure you' hingegen kann nur eine direkte Anrede an das Publikum sein. Beiden Verwendungsarten des 'you' ist die Einbeziehung einer grosseren Gruppe von Menschen gemein; einmahl einer relativ beschrankten Gruppe deren allgemeine Reaktion der Erzähler anspricht.[52]

Helmcke then proceeds to give additional examples of the occurrence of this technique in Melville, together with numerous examples of the use of both the personal and impersonal *you* as means by which the concrete event or fact is generalized, but only again to become a concrete datum. In the quoted passage from Melville, it can be seen that "touches one's sense of honour" is ambivalently personal and collective, but in any case, no less concrete than if the narrator had said, "It touches my sense of honour." Then, as Helmcke has observed, the English *you* is duplicit in function in any case, being both a personal pronoun, and also a sort of collective pronoun hardly distinct from *one*. Its use has the impact of inducing involvement, in a way, however, in which *one* does not. But there follows a swift alternation, as the narrator detaches himself in a single *Atemzug*, in a single inhalation of one's breath; detaches himself and addresses the reader, person to person, "I assure you...." From the position of a consideration of the *duplex factum* in Melville, it will also be noted that the term *transition* has an obviously duplicate interpretation. Its use can be introverted back into the structure to describe the swift transition from one subject to another; while at the literal level, it deals simply with the move from master to servant, a mortifying transition indeed. It seems plausible that the term *transition*, particularly with its attributive *keen*, may describe the very morification which is necessary for the self-seeking mediocrity of "Indians" to become that

renunciation which Mahoney sees as the prerequisite to receiving the vision of truth. The transition may be, as in *Clarel*, that of the "humble ass" moving through the "narrow pass."

Helmcke's study of this technique of the narrator is well documented, so that the example cited may suffice for the present. Another aspect of alternation must be explored, with respect to what Helmcke, in a partial anticipation of the present thesis calls *"konstruierten Zweisprache des Erzählers mit dem Publikum."* This mode of addressing the reader involves such linguistic devices as alternating between the declarative and interrogative, as Starr noted; but it involves also an alternation at another level. As Helmcke has documented, there is also an alternation of postulates. This sometimes involves interrogating the reader with respect to what has just been confidently stated; or sometimes, calling into question the narrator's judgement or wisdom. Some examples of the latter may be seen in:

> But, peradventure, it may be sagaciously urged, how is this? We thought the tissued infiltrated head....

And again:

> But how now, Ishmael? How is it, that you a mere oarsman in the fishery, pretend to know ought about.....

Scores of such rhetorical questions could be adduced, in every case consisting in the interrogation of a preceding

declamation; but the quotations cited may suffice for this investigation.

The reader may well ponder the designated intention of the author, or the function of this strange dialectic in which Melville declaims and amplifies a postulate through his literary *persona*, and then mechanically confutes the situation by introducing a third person, as it were, who asks Ishmael how he could have come into possession of such knowledge. A critical reader may wonder if there is either design or purpose in consistently ignoring the literary convention regarding "point of view." Melville enters into everyone's mind; his narrators know things that they cannot possible "know" and they report on events of which they can neither be cognizant nor even aware; he ignores every rule of artistic detachment. But it may be that objective detachment is one facet of the "falsehood" which he proposes to destroy, precisely by his exuberant treatment of his material, in disregard of the conventions of objective and impersonal detachment. He disdains the literary conventions of polite society, not so much in words as in practice. He employs every imaginable technique to unbalance the reader by subjectively involving him in existential responses to the narrated events, to the homilies, to the continuing polemic. He asks the reader questions, he confutes what he has just affirmed, and calls into question what has been confidently asserted.

Helmcke recognizes this technique of Melville's as designed specifically to inquire *"nun nicht mehr nach einzelnen, konkreten, sondern nach prinzipiellen Dingen."* These are questions, he says, which even the critical investigator cannot circumvent, so compellingly has Melville, with deliberate forethought, interwoven them with his story. In such a modal dialectic, the ground of Melville's principal concern is inextricably interwoven with the story, thus perfectly exemplifying the effective and smooth administration of the medicine, not so much with the honey smeared on the lip of the cup, as Lucretius suggests, but with the honey and the medicine mixed so that what looks simply like nectar is really medicine of high therapeutic order, as in the case of the book which John the Revelator is given to eat.[53] Melville will not let the reader settle back in comfortable ease and simple aesthetic enjoyment. No sooner is the reader lured into that happy relationship which, aesthetically, ought to exist between an author and his reader, than Melville, true to the Kierkegaardian conception of a true teacher or apostle, suddenly turns and ruptures the relationship by questioning his own authority, by leaving the reader suddenly with his own thoughts, aroused and uncomfortable.

Now as Helmcke observes, Melville cannot communicate directly his ethical concern; when he wishes to discourse of *"prinzipiellen Dingen,"* he habitually resorts to duplicity,

so that what was before explicit becomes ambiguous, and what was before implicit, at any rate to the discerning reader, now surfaces. Helmcke comments:

> Hier kommt das Hin und Her, das Für und Wider des Gesprächs besonders klar zum Ausdruck. Die Vertraulichkeit zwischen Erzähler und Publikum ist bereits auf einem Punkt angelangt, so man sich gegenseitig 'reinlegen' will und jeder dem anderen die Freude hieran gönnt. Die Leserschaft hat so viel Profil erhalten, dass sie bereits durch einen Sprecher dem Erzählenden gegenüber vertreten ist.[54]

The dialectical antithesis is by no means posited with the intention that the reader should arrive at a median synthesis, for such a mediocrity Melville must have abominated. The point is precisely to *prevent* any sort of synthetic stasis, pertinent to which Merlin Bowen has already been quoted.[55] The desideratum is to create an imbalance and a tension which cannot be resolved. For spirit is restless-ness; the true seeker finds that "the land is scorching to his feet." Thus the structural *"Hin und Her."* the playful dialectic of *"Für und Wider."* If man's potential predicates that he is to be like one of the gods, then he must by all means be prevented from sinking into the happy status of a vegetable, which is both well rooted and well rested. "The sole origin of consciousness is suffering," writes Dostoevsky; "Grief is the chamberlain to knowledge," writes Melville. The purpose of the dialectic is to posit the antithetical elements of existence in a world of natural necessity and spiritual freedom, to heighten the tension, and precisely to prevent any synthetic resolution of the

tension, lest in the barren stasis of logical objectivity, he who ought to have been like one of the gods, becomes a vegetable, like Kierkegaard's bourgeois church-goer, relaxing in somnolent indolence.[56] Thus the function of the various devices employed is not merely to provide aesthetic titillation for his genteel readers, but to induce spiritual unrest, to induce what the bourgeois has never felt, to induce longing.

The technique of *contrast* has been examined at the verbal level, in the transition from one pronoun form to another; it has been seen in the process of the confident and ostentatiously explicit declamation interrupted by a shattering interrogation; it is also evident in the alternation of antithetical postulates. But Helmcke has noted an even more fundamental contrast in the novel *Moby Dick* taken as a whole. On the one hand is the monomaniac Ahab. If the characterization of this *persona* were any less extravagantly blasphemous, as Melville suggests; or crass, as Helmcke says; then the book would lose half its force. But the book would also lose its impact if it were all about Ahab, without a relieving contrast. Thus there is Pip, who is the concise antithesis; but as Helmcke points out, and as the more perceptive critics have long known, there is always Ishmael as the counterpoise. While Ishmaël admits at first that "Ahab's quenchless feud seemed mine," he is saved from Ahab's fate, in the opinion of Nathalia Wright, because of his peculiar world-view, a radical antithesis

to that of Ahab.

The informing cause of the vulture which feeds on Ahab's mind, if it is possible to speak of *cause* with respect to so irrational an intellectualism as his, appears to be his projection of a morality into the physical universe, as a result of which he "bursts his hot heart's shell" upon the whale. By way of contrast, according to Nathalia Wright, Ishmael's conception of the whale is projected in biblical terms; that is to say, he discovers and maintains the distinction between the world of natural necessity and the world of spirit. Concerning this she writes:

> The whale is thus symbolic of a universe, which for all its marvels, is not only amoral but inscrutable....it is essentially the view of the universe expressed by the Hebrew wisdom writers, most notably by the author of Job.[57]

Israel's posture, she says,

> is to Ahab's pursuit of Moby Dick what Jehovah's reply is to Job's complaint; an oblique denial that morality is inherent in the creation.... the natural world is neither good nor evil, but sheerly marvellous!

While Ahab's wrong view of the world and the whale leads him to ultimate destruction, Ishmael, although he is like Pierre almost deluded by "those chattering apes, Plato and Spinoza" into believing that "night is day," avoids drowning in "Plato's honeyed head," and is saved from Ahab's fate. Nathalia Wright comments further:

> The knowledge of cetology which he acquires seems calculated to save him from a fate similar to Ahab's by persuading him of the purely physical nature albeit the endlessly marvellous complexity of the universe.....The cetological chapters also represent

> a correction of Ishmael's own tendency to lose himself in abstract speculation about the nature of the universe and the identity of the self.

Melville himself, she asserts, was at first uncertain about this issue, but in his "whale of a book" resolved the argument in favor of a physical rather than a metaphysical universe. "Moby Dick," she concludes, "is indeed a Job's whale rather than a Jonah's whale."

Quite apart from the specific articulation of Nathalia Wright regarding the nature of the antithetical elements in the book, Helmcke says that it is the contrast of Ishmael's position against the background of Ahab's usurping folly which gives the novel strength and greatness. It has previously been noted that invective and coarse language are betraying signs of the true princes. It was not intended, however, to leave the matter by quoting Ethan Allen's "boiling anathemas." Something of larger significance has been held in abeyance, with regard to the ethical use of invective. This form of expression can be employed on the scale of an entire novel, as well as on the verbal level of occasional expletives. The use of this technique on the grand scale will produce a "blasphemous book," as Melville himself called it. Unfortunately much of the Melvillean criticism is replete with juvenile aspersions directed against spirit, so that the discerning reader must be careful to discover precisely which gods are being blasphemed, or if the *obvious* may not have to be taken ironically in a sustained inversion. Too many critics have betrayed their

puerile hostility towards a certain Hebrew tribal deity, when a more objective appraisal of Melville's quarrel with the gods might have revealed that "human twaddle" is what elicited his profoundest contempt. His works explicitly reveal that the names of the gods with whom he has a quarrel are Plato and Spinoza, Goethe and Hegel, Renan and Comte, Strauss and Niebuhr, to mention only those to whom he refers in his works. Some he calls chattering apes, and others he heartily wishes to the dogs.[58] His quarrel is with the "prosing euphonists of Acadème: and with "the whole infinite company of infinitesimal critics." His quarrel is with the proud gods and commodores of this world, with depravity and mediocrity. Everywhere and on all fronts he wages his "high spirited revolt" against the senators and judges of this world. Every novel he wrote has the same basic theme, except that in *Moby Dick* the "usurping folly" of proud man is delineated in bolder strokes than elsewhere. Against the captains of this world, Melville's youthful "high-spirited travellers" invariably appeal precisely to "the great Jehovah," knowing that even when they are found guilty by this world's judges, as in *Billy Budd*, nevertheless, "the Last Assizes shall acquit!" Once again, what began as an aesthetic inquiry into linguistic alternation, and pointed the way to contrasting postulates, concludes in the probing of the very basis of Melville's constant and unwearying ethical concern; that is, the relation of the spirit of man to the eternal,

and the agonies of choice that authentic existence involves.

There is another formal device employed by Melville, which reveals something about his double concern while writing. This is his use of prophetic portents, both past and future. As Helmcke has noted, Melville's *"programmatische Hinweise"* constitute part of his general method of "careful disorderliness." At the structural level, these internal cross-references provide an element of continuity and organic coherence. But these particular usages should not be thought of as being little streamlets which form part of a confluence into a general whole. Melville does not think that way or write that way. He says, "Out of the trunk the branches grow; out of them, the twigs; so, in productive subjects, grow the chapters." It is from the trunk, from what has been called the primary ground of his principal concern, that the particulars arise and emerge. To say that he employs prophetic portents with regard to the past means that when he is in the process of narrating in the present tense and in present time, he frequently looks back to find portents in something prior which to his mind elucidates the present event. These references are not merely literary flash-backs, but rather intimations of a "divinity which shapes our ends," a recognition of a divine governance, sometimes called *Providence*, but more often *fate*.

His most consistent use of this technique occurs in *Israel Potter*. The young Israel has just returned home

from a military engagement at Bunker Hill, only to find that "if hopes of his sweetheart winged his returning flight... the dear, false girl was another's." Bitter events were to cure him of his hopeless passion, predicts the author. It becomes evident that the divine governance has taken it into its head to educate Israel *privatissime*. Melville writes:

> It was a sultry night in July, and that he might travel with more ease on the succeeding day, he lay down at the foot of a pine tree, reposing himself till an hour before dawn, when, upon awakening, he heard the soft, prophetic sighing of the pine, stirred by the first breath of the morning. Like the leaflets of the evergreen, all the fibres of his heart trembled within him; tears fell from his eyes. But he thought of the tyranny of his father, and what seemed to him the faithlessness of his love; and shouldering his bundle, arose, and marched on.[59]

Once again there is the poetic movement, the simile, the sonorous cadences of emotion-charged language, and in the midst of this, and very much a part of all this, a prophetic sighing. Suffering is to be his lot in life, as his earliest experiences portend. What Melville calls a "peculiar disinterested fidelity" is at once the cause of Israel's profound and enduring grief, and also the factor which enables him to endure every adversity. He is very sensitive; hence a man acquainted with grief and sorrow.

> Israel looked at the budding leaves, and round on the budding sod, and up at the budding dawn of the day. He was so sad, and these sights were so gay, that Israel sobbed like a child, while thoughts of his mountain home rushed like a wind on his heart.

Here are the familiar poetic cadences and the emphatic repetition, in the third phrase consituting a metaphor. And then comes the ethical breakthrough: "He was so sad." After that, the contrast, to heighten the sense of alienation and of tearing apart: "He was so sad and these sights were so gay." The echoing alliterative forms in this line are reminiscent of the cadences and alliteration of Old English verse. Then there is the explicit, "Israel sobbed like a child," and what might be called the romantic, "while thoughts of his hountain home rushed like a wind on his heart." The backward looking thoughts are part of his constitution, a constant way of reminding him that "being of the race he was, felicity could never be his lot." Every event of his life portends something or other, as one adversity steels him for confronting the next.

A typical Melvillean interpolation, repeated in different ways many times, is the following:

> In a fit of despair he was about to surrender himself, and submit to his fate, when Providence seasonably interposed in his favor.

Seasonably, also, Melville intervenes, stepping obtrusively into the story; for the structuring hand of the poet has a design to execute. In another place, the aesthetic element is overshadowed by an explicit statement of Melville's creed; a creed which apparently at the same time describes his own creative process, and his belief in divine goverance. He writes of the wandering Israel:

> Thus repeatedly and rapidly were the fortunes of our wanderer planted, torn up, transplanted, and dropped again, hither and thither, according as the Supreme Disposer of sailors and soldiers saw fit to appoint.

It has already been noted that one element of his style is his use of contrasts, his swift transitions, and his antithetical postures. He seems to structure his works with an awareness of mutability, and in accordance with the conditions of existence. The vicissitudes of life are not, however, a meaningless absurdity; the prophetic portents provide an organic coherence and a deliberate *telos*. But the intrusion of his divine governance is not the only ethical element present in this novel. Equally important is the reminder that evil proceeds from the heart of man. He describes the cultural advantages of London:

> As the vitreous rocks in the cursed Gallipagos, over which the convict tortoises crawl...Nor marble, nor flesh, nor the sad spirit of man, may in this cindery City of Dis abide white.

Noticeable again is the fusion of elements. As the reader will now have come to expect, the ethical is introduced by a throbbing aesthetic incantation. In the hardly restrained emotion of "As the vitreous rocks in the cursed Gallipagos, over which the convict tortoises crawl," the triple repetition of the r-s sequence intensifies the curse. Then comes the poetic crescendo through the steps of the ladder of being: "nor marble, nor flesh, nor the sad spirit of man." Mineral, animal, and spirit, are all deformed in existence.

And again there is the secret symbol; the corruption of marble and flesh and spirit occurs in the cindery City of Dis. Apart from the alliteration in "cindery City of Dis," there is also the scriptural allusion. There is an unspoken simile in the metaphor: "As the Israelis built Thebes and Dis in the land of Egypt, so Israel Potter must make ammunitions to be used against his homeland." He must endure the corrupting pressures of the secular city. This is strange material indeed to find in an adventure novel. Mixed with poetry, or rather, borne on the wings of poetic flight, always comes the fundamental ethical concern about the conditions under which "the sad spirit of man" must work out its destiny in existence.

Regarding the question of providential intervention, Melville has much to say, and he says it in various ways. Some of his stock phrases are: "when Providence seasonably interposed"; "according as the Supreme Disposer...saw fit to appoint"; "but hereby Stoic influences were at work, to fit him...."; "the invisible police officer of the fates"; "the grand programme of providence"; "nature intended a rare and original development in Pierre"; "her programme happened to coincide in some degree, with a previous one in heaven"; "but a hint from heaven assures me now"; "the hand of fate had snatched all their souls"; and Ishmael's final obsequy, "I was he whom the fates ordained." Early in the novel, Ishmael has committed himself to the Supreme

Disposer, to the invisible police officer of the fates, "who has the constant surveillance of me, and secretly dogs me, and influences me in some unaccountable way." It is evident that in Melville's usage, "fate" and "providence" are virtually synonymous; and that "stoic influences" is just another way of speaking about "the grand programme of providence." Thus, while in *Israel Potter* there occur all the explicit references to a divine governance, in *Moby Dick* the author has found a more suitable vocabulary for the expression of an ethical conception which the author correctly feels cannot be directly communicated. Those who with a "strong decoction of Seneca" submit themselves to the grand programme of providence attain spiritual integration, while at the same time they become fully conscious through grief and suffering. Those who question the autocratic decrees designed to make them into men, find that providence does not seasonably interpose in their behalf, but simply permits them to entangle themselves in an ever-increasing turmoil culminating at last in disintegration. Thus the structuring hand of the poet creates the concretely realistic situation of existence, with the *kerygma* being invisibly inherent in his work as a whole. He teaches by implication, so that the reader must learn by inference. This method is necessary in order to break the natural link between student and teacher, for the neophyte must not become a disciple of the apostle, but a follower of the narrow way

into which he has been deceived, and abandoned there to suffer the terrible embrace of the deity, forsaken to languish from the infliction of that mortal wound which is the truth.[60] To say *Seneca* when he means *Gabriel,* and *fate* when he means *providence,* is one facet of the duplicity which Melville practices upon his reader.

Still to be considered is the methodology of *The Confidence Man,* a book which has perhaps rightly been dismissed as poor art, being neither novel nor fable, but a collection of loosely related incidents. Briefly, the issue is between levity and seriousness, between Rabelais' "pro-wine Koran" and Mahomet's "anti-wine one." The process consists of a suave cosmopolitan, in the crucible of existence, undergoing "an increase in seriousness." Central to the book is the "Indian-hating" episode of Colonel Moredock, an episode in which the reader finds that a wise father who loves his son will instruct him fully regarding the natural depravity of "Indians." The crisis comes when the barber is urged *either* to trust, *or* to take down his trust sign. At once there comes to mind Kierkegaard's *Either/Or,* the insistence that men must either choose the ethical or choose the aesthetic, provided only that they know that a choice has to be made; for in fact, not to make the choice is to choose the aesthetic, for the ethical is precisely the character of choice.

Here, as in *Moby Dick,* "the world's a ship on its passage out." The ship in this case is a steamer called,

fittingly, the Fidèle, for the issue of life in this case is going to be the matter of placing existential faith in one's postulates. The "Rupture of the Hypothesis" (Chapter xli) is not affected by any closely reasoned argument in abstraction, but by a demonstration that the hypothesis cannot be applied to existence without dire consequences. This is Melville's habitual method of working. He posits a thesis, creates a character to embody it, identifies passionately with this character, and then disposes men and events in such manner that the validity of the hypothesis will be tested in existence. In the book, the cosmopolitan, a "metaphysical lover" of mankind, upholds the liberal premise that men are really good fellows at heart, and that if they lack something in goodness, education will instill virtue as it does a knowledge of French.[61] The counterpoise is Colonel Moredock, who believes, and for whom experience has well confirmed the fact, that the imaginations of the heart of man are only evil continually. There is also a judge, who relates the story of the life and beliefs of the "Indian-hating" backwoodsman; and in so doing, presents the backwoodsman in a favorable light.

A critical inquiry into the meaning of the book cannot be made until the nature of the problem and the methods by which the author proposes to deal with the dichotymous hypotheses have been examined. As always, Melville proposes to test the truth in existence. R. M.

Hare has described the validity of this method; that is, of testing a hypothesis against a particular case. He writes:

> Just as science, seriously pursued, is the search for hypotheses and the testing of them by the attempt to falsify their particular consequences, so morals, as a serious endeavor, consists in the search for principles and the testing of them against particular cases. Any rational activity has its discipline, and this is the discipline of moral thought: to test the moral principles that suggest themselves to us by following out their consequences and seeing whether we can accept them.[62]

If this man of serious ethical concern is an aesthetic author, he will not state his own judgement directly, but will leave it to be inferred from his presentation of a hypothesis in a bright or dim light, as Charles L. Stevenson says. According to George C. Kerner, the cognitive states which stimulated the author's emotion will be duplicated in the reader, whose emotional response will set the psychological pattern for cognition.[63] In these terms, moral discourse consists of the speaker, himself emotionally impelled by his likes and dislikes to color his verbal statements, to present ideas in "a bright or dim light," to paint in such a manner the premises which he has posited, that the reader will himself experience, first of all, parallel emotions, and then a sympathetic or antipathetic "cognition" of the subject, colored and influenced by the flexible mechanisms of the author's suggestion. This difficult and indirect method of discourse is one of the means by which men may be deceived into the truth.

Melville knows that it will not do simply to compare ethical postulates in abstraction, uncontaminated by the exigencies of existence. He must posit an idea, and ideas are *real* for Melville; and then in a negative and circuitous manner lead the reader to see an idea in a favorable or unfavorable light, always in terms of concrete existence. Such a method may employ the aesthetic vehicle, but is, as Kerner notes, "intimately connected with action, attitudes, intentions, and decisions." When the doctrine is to be presented to a generation which regards ethics as relative, which supposes, like Melville's impotent minister, Falsgrave, that "millions of circumstances modify all moral questions,"[64] then it is incumbent upon the preacher of truth, precisely not to demand a moral judgement from his readers, for a moral judgement "man in the consummate flower of civilization" has shrewdly learned not to make. Only sailors and fishermen make value judgements, and they consistently pay the severe penalties for their presumptuous folly. But although the objective philistines pretend, as Kierkegaard says, that they are already dead, the truth is that while they have a pulse keeping them alive, they may be reached by an appeal to their emotions, much as they deny that their emotions ever color their refusal to make a judgement.

In any case, Melville knows better than to suppose that he could by direct means induce a change of mind. It is, furthermore, perfectly futile to convince a man to change his mind. The point is that his subconscious

motivation must be altered, and this can be achieved, and indeed, must be achieved, by a subtle inducement operating at a subcognitive level. If actions spring from emotions, and the intent is to alter a man's behavior, then the correct method is evidently an operation upon his emotions. It has been noted that Melville considers an intellectual and formal acceptance of Christianity to be worse than nothing; he emphasizes that what is needed is the "vital operation upon the heart." It is the same with other ideas, for which reason it is simply futile to convince a man of intellectual error. Inasmuch as the name of the steamer in the book is the Fidèle, it may be profitable to quote an observation by George Price on Kierkegaard's conception of faith, a conception which seems validly applicable to Melville. He writes:

> First, it must be clearly understood that for Kierkegaard, faith is not a form of knowledge. To assume that it is, is to misunderstand it 'romantically' as some form of intuition - which Kierkegaard abominated! He declares with great force that no knowledge can have for its object the absurdity that the eternal is the historical. Faith is therefore not knowledge; it is an act of will, of passionate belief in something that *cannot* be known, and whose factual content and meaningfulness cannot be demonstrated....[65]

From this point of view, any attempt to demonstrate the pragmatic usefulness or meaningfulness of faith is a denial of faith, and a relapse into the bourgeois-like grasping for a guarantee. The barber in *The Confidence Man* is induced to take down his "No trust" sign, but worldly shrewdness induces him also to keep it in a bottom drawer

of his cash register. He does not respond to the imperative asking him to throw it away altogether; he wants to be guaranteed against loss. Faith, however, consists precisely in the absence of a guarantee.

What emerges from this is that faith cannot be conceived in error, as if the truth were resident in man, needing only to be drawn out. Colonel Moredock knows better than that, having long lived with "Indians," and having discovered at first hand, what is in the heart of man. Natural man is in error, and the nature of this error is far more fundamental than the natural man will be willing to concede. Price comments on this subject:

> Error, then, is not a condition which is merely outside the Truth, but which is polemical in its attitude towards it; that is, the learner has deprived himself of it, and is forever engaged in doing so. Furthermore, the man in error is unfree....The man in error has chosen and willed it; and all his powers unite to make him a slave to what he is - even in his capacity for self-discernment.[66]

There is nothing, therefore, to which a man must assent intellectually; the issue is one of action; it is a question of will, and not in any way a question of knowledge.

Against the background of this commentary can be understood not only the doctrine being communicated in *The Confidence Man,* but also the reason for which Melville should have chosen precisely this manner of expression of that doctrine. The masquerade is necessary because of the polemical opposition of falsehood. The doctrine is not stated explicitly; but its antithesis is so stated, and is allowed to work itself out in existence, only to

be found wanting. The technique is not quite the same as in Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*, but the intention is the same, and the reason for employing such techniques is the same. The problem is the difficult one of teaching a fool, or a man in error. "Look a lie and find the truth," says the boy to the cosmopolitan to whom he wishes to sell a "counterfeit detector." Indeed, in order to detect Melville's intent, the reader needs some guide, at least some half-formed hints; perhaps he has to observe merely with what colors Melville paints the ideas which he posits; but then also, the reader must be on guard against an irony which could make his conclusion as ridiculous as that of the unlucky critic who in a ponderous tome dismisses the whole subject with a single reference to Melville's "snarling misanthropy." There seems, however, in that expression, some emotion, although negative. The objectivist has betrayed that he is still alive, and to this extent the method has worked. *Either* admit or act upon Melville's ethical postulate, *or* confess your polemical and emotional opposition, for the confidence man will not let the reader off with mere sentimental speculations.

To inquire more closely into the mechanics of duplicity in the dialectical antithesis of "philanthropist" and "misanthrope" it will be necessary to posit a sustained allegory, in which "Indian" alludes to the natural man; the "backwoodsman" is a true man living in terms of concrete

reality unclouded by metaphysical speculations; and the "philanthropist" represents the view that while "Indian-hating" may once have been justified, the progress of mankind has made it totally unjustified. It may be supposed that the backwoodsman is one of the "true Princes of the Empire," having fled like a scared doe into the woodlands! Melville describes him in language which would seem to make this supposition admissible. He writes:

> The backwoodsman is a lonely man. He is a thoughtful man. He is a man strong and unsophisticated. Impulsive, he is what some might call unprincipled.[67]

The last attribute is not surprising, as in the enemy world, Ishmael also found himself "foretopman in the Unprincipled." This is part of the posture of the inexorable self in the face of falsehood, as illustrated in the "justified" guerilla warfare conducted by Paul Jones and Ethan Allen. Melville speaks further of the backwoodsman:

> At any rate, he is self-willed; being one who less hearkens to what others say about things, than looks for himself, to see what are things themselves.

These are sentiments expressed by other Melvillean heroes; but more than that, this describes the conduct of these heroes. Elsewhere he has written that whatever is truly wonderful and marvellous in man has never yet been written in books; he has confided that he trusts the pristine and savage impressions arising from the heart; and boasted that a whaling ship was his Yale and Harvard.

> If in straits there are few to help' he must depend upon himself; he must continually look to himself. Hence self-reliance, to the degree of standing by his own judgement, though it stand alone!

Now this is remarkable. The judge has articulated in the clearest terms possible the doctrine of the "priesthood of believers" with its corollary of private interpretation. Here is the very man who "against the proud gods and commodores of this earth ever stands forth his own inexorable self," the man who "acknowledges no law nor lord, but the Lord his God, and is only a patriot to heaven." Here within the framework of allegory the shockingly explicit revelations in Father Mapple's sermon are supported. The judge's description of the backwoodsman complements Father Mapple's description of the man for whom is reserved "top-gallant delight," though at the same time, he will spend most of his life in lonely grief.

The ethical implications, however, reach beyond the terms of the backwoodsman's personal existence, and into the more general realm of education. While the cosmopolitan supposes that some boys "know not virtue for the same reason that they know not French," having never been taught virtue; the backwoodsman sees vice and virtue as "two shadows cast by the same nothing," with a show of virtue being as palpable evidence of natural depravity as a show of vice. But this sort of language must arouse the indignation of the members of polite society, as Melville explains:

> The Indians, indeed, protest against the backwoodsman's view of them; and some think that one cause of their returning his antipathy so liberally as they do, is their moral indignation at being so libelled by him.... At any rate, it has been observed that when an Indian becomes a genuine proselyte to Christianity.. he will not in that case conceal his enlightened conviction that his race's portion by nature is total depravity; and in that way, as much as admists that the backwoodsman's worst idea of it is not very far from true.[68]

The confidence man has again dropped the guitar. It is evident that his "Indians" are related to Ethan Allen's "Turks" who never saw a Christian before. The reader need no longer surmise that the book is about natural depravity and becoming a Christian: as is so often the case with Melville, when he has spun the web with intricate care, he drops the pose, doffs the mask, and becomes explicit. What is more, he poses a challenge. If the Turks of Christendom will become proselytes of his "vital piety" they too will see how depraved the rest of the Indians are.

The backwoodsman teaches his sons, not the sentimentally romantic speculations of Rousseau, but the plain facts, as the judge says. George Fox's *Book of Martyrs* is his reading text, as it was for others of Melville's heroes. He imbibes only historical fact:

> He hears little from his schoolmasters, the old chroniclers of the forest, but histories of Indian lying, Indian theft, Indian double-dealing, Indian fraud and perfidy, Indian want of conscience, Indian bloodthirstiness, Indian diabolism histories which, though of wild woods, are almost as full of things unangelic as the Newgate Calendar or the annals of Europe.[69]

The secret is out; it is the annals of "the consummate flower of civilization" which the judge has described, besides which the alleged cruelties of Indians appear almost like innocent games. He goes on to note that "Indian chiefs" are most to be hated. As for ordinary Indians, there are some who might be humanely kind, but who, because of leal bonds, "May be forced to do unkind biddings." The backwoodsman who loves his son, wisely intreats him, therefore, "Beware the Indian, kind or unkind." The virtues as well as the vices of the natural man are shadows cast by his total depravity. He is in error whether he is virtuous or not: secretly he hates the backwoodsman, and he is to be avoided as the scared doe avoids the hunter.

This study of the mechanics of duplicity has proceeded from a comparison of the "aesthetic" syllables of *Calabashes* with the "ethical" syllables of *Tabernacles*, to an analysis of how the aesthetic vehicle of the novel form is used to convey an ethical doctrine. Once Freeman's key is used to open the door, not only does Melville's persistent ethical concern seem thinly veiled, but also, a new unity and coherence is seen to invest Melville's works with a relatively small number of themes being treated in a variety of ways. It becomes evident, moreover, that Father Mapple's sermon and the dialectical postulates of *Clarel* are explicit revelations of an ethical concern which

is everywhere near the surface of his narratives. It is, in fact, possible to speak of Melville's aesthetic-ethical duplicity only in terms of an over-all view of his writings. The scattered *duplicit* passages which have been discussed by no means exhaust the subject, but are rather intended as suggestive guides by which the reader may be enabled to discover many more "terrestrial-celestial" passages; and perhaps, arrive at a fuller statement of the informing doctrines than has here been offered.

IV The Duplicity of Existence

It is in terms of the difference between poetry and reality that the duplicity of existence is to be discovered. In the first place,poetic action is occasional and short-lived, like the "all" feeling,[1] while reality is quotodien and perpetual. Secondly, every conception has a double face when the idea is conceived in terms of both categories simultaneously. For instance, poetically speaking it is very easy and pleasant to experience the cathartic "pleasure" of commiseration: the soul of the dilettante is filled with pleasure at the poetic protrayal of poverty. But let the same man meet poverty in the street, let him actually see it, and let him see it every day, and he will feel a strong revulsion. Poetic sympathy will at once be replaced by existential antipathy, and the familiar evasions will take place. Without developing the nature of these evasions, it may be said that they will consist largely of such non-personal responses as the wish to form a society for the aid and uplift of the poor. Melville's frequent satirical allusions to "societies" reveal his contempt for this sort of collective evasion of an individual response.[2] But it is not only the unpleasant aspects of reality which man can endure only by poetizing them; the same response occurs with respect to the loftiest conceptions. Kierkegaard writes pertinently on the duplicate aspect of the sublime in existence:

> Men are not on such intimate terms with the sublime that they can really believe in it. The contradiction therefore is this: this sublimity on the one hand; and on the other, the fact that this is daily life, quite literally daily life, in which it manifests itself. When the poet or the orator illustrates this sublimity, that is, represents it with the poet's aloofness from reality, people then are moved - but in reality, in the actuality of daily life, to perceive this sublimity in Copenhagen, in Amager market, in the midst of the week-day business life! Oh, when the poet or the orator does it, that lasts only an hour. Just for so long a time men are capable in a way of believing in this sublimity. But to behold it in reality every day... it is indeed a monstrous contradiction that the sublime has become the everyday thing.[3]

Under such circumstances, the poet who wishes to portray reality in its proper sense of duration, must employ a subtle craftiness; he cannot allow the reader to experience merely the transient cathartic "pleasure," but must somehow force or seduce the reader into a genuine confrontation with reality, in order to expose the thoughts of the reader's heart.

This conception makes it possible to describe the function of duplicity. In terms of the preceding chapters, it may be asked what use there could be in preaching the doctrine, when it is quite obvious, in terms of the nature of truth and the nature of man, that no one will accept the doctrine unless he already holds the doctrine. Melville is very explicit about a reader's reaction, when that reader comes across a treatise which "palpably illustrates to him the intrinsic incorrectness and non-excellence of both

the theory and the practice of his life." He will not understand what he has read, Melville says. In *Pierre* he writes:

> For in this case, to comprehend, is himself to condemn himself, which is always highly inconvenient and uncomfortable to a man. Again. If a man be told a thing wholly new, then - during the time of its first announcement to him - it is entirely impossible for him to comprehend it. For - absurd as it may seem - men are only made to comprehend things which they comprehended before (though but in the embryo, as it were). Things new it is impossible to make them comprehend, by merely talking to them about it.[4]

If merely talking to men, that is discoursing directly, will not achieve anything, then evidently an author must employ some other method. It may be seen, also, that the indirect method of discourse is not designed precisely to teach, but rather to force the reader into revealing himself to himself by the decision which he makes. Once again Kierkegaard may be quoted pertinently:

> Oh, it is so comfortable to be a listener or a transcriber when everything goes on so directly - but let these gentlemen who listen and transcribe be on their guard ... it is the thoughts of *their* hearts that shall be revealed.[5]

But the matter is brought even closer in an explanation of how this process operates; that is, how indirect communication operates upon the reader when the truth is communicated through a *duplex factum*.

> And this only the sign of contradiction can do: it draws attention to itself, and then it presents a contradiction....A contradiction placed directly in front of a man - if only one can get him to look upon it - is a mirror; while he is judging, what dwells within him must be revealed.

> It is a riddle, but while he is guessing, what dwells within him is revealed by how he guesses. The contradiction puts before him a choice, and while he is choosing, he himself is revealed.

Thus Kierkegaard's early critics could at first see only the aesthetic aspects of the *duplex factum*. As he himself says, these good perjured gentlemen had no presentiment that there was anything behind the poet. But when at last they were forced to recognize his serious ethical concern as revealed by the explicit "admission" that the author of the pseudonymous works was also the author of the "Edifying Discourses," silence fell upon these gentlemen, and they retreated from the phenomenon as worldly shrewdness always retreats from the incommensurable. It may be true of every writer that various interpretations can be placed upon his works, but it is especially true of anyone who employs the *duplex factum*. In fact, Melville's ambiguous, analogical and allegorical constructions have invited a great variety of interpretations, most of which probably reveal more about their authors than they do about Melville. In any case, the critic must be on guard, for it is the thoughts of *his* heart that are being revealed. The relevance or validity of an explicative criticism depends, then, not so much upon a correct reading, desirable and necessary as that must be, as upon the awareness that a maieutic communication imposes upon the reader the necessity precisely to recognize the duplicity. Melville has warned his reader that he must not take refuge in a refusal to comprehend.

It is evident that what ethical revelations the critic sees will depend upon the background which he brings to his investigation, as much as upon his critical acumen and integrity.

To say then, that the traditional Melville critics have failed either to see or to articulate the topic of Melville's pietistically orientated anarchism is not to accuse them either of ignorance or perversity, though perhaps of blindness; for in fact, as Melville has warned, this element can be seen only by that researcher who when he looks into the mirror of the *Ambiguities*, sees what engages his own ethical concern. If he stoutly maintains aesthetic neutrality, then he will not comprehend. This is not to say that any and every interpretation therefore has its own validity, as if the ethical facet of the *duplex factum* had less substance than the aesthetic facet. A critical application of the Kierkegaardian postulates with respect to the amgibuities and contradictions in maieutic literature does not excuse explicative relativism. Precisely the concrete terms in which Melville portrays life defend against mystical interpretations which are more or less divorced from real existence. Finally, in pursuing this inquiry into the existential doctrines resident in the *duplex factum*, it may be expected that a statement of the underlying tenets should precede their "discovery" in the works of an author; but instead, the method of approach

chosen has been to let the doctrine develop itself by presenting a collation and arrangement of experiential data from Melville's writings, a collation so constructed, of course, that the doctrine which was hidden and disguised, becomes manifestly explicit. The test of critical validity for such an approach must rest upon its internal coherence, and upon its referential relation to the whole of an author's work. In terms of the preceding groundwork, it will now be possible to proceed further into an examination of the posited aesthetic-ethical duplicity in the works of Melville, specifically in the category of existence.

There is no tenet of pietism more basic to the doctrine than the insistence of its professors that the elect existent must endure a life of isolation and suffering, with a painful silence imposed upon the possessor of the truth by the polemical opposition of the world. Kierkegaard's extraordinarily frequent references to *pious* and *piety* (a statistical fact unhappily overlooked by most of his early critics) is not nearly so significant a proof of his well-guarded secret, as his more persistent preöccupation with suffering, and his increasingly vicious polemic against the establishment, particularly against the established church. The serious man who embraces the Gospel ideals, which have always led to persecution and suffering, lodges his protest against those institutions which would pretend to create a socialized kingdom of equality on earth, thus

making the Gospel irrelevant. Amon N. Wilder writes on this topic:

> The American Adam will always have his periodic revulsions against two areas of authority, highly divergent as they are. One of these areas is that of an elaborate civilization, especially our contemporary industrial and technical civilization. The other area is that of institutional religion, especially in its imported forms.[6]

He sees in Melville this genuinely tragic Adam, "a streak of the untamed in him, a principle of rebellion." But this rebellion leads to isolation and suffering. Some of Melville's interpolations on the topic of "vital piety" have already been cited; but once again, a more persuasive demonstration of his concern is resident in his persistent preöccupation with unrelieved suffering, with the blackness of darkness, with the wisdom that is woe. Furthermore, probably more through "spiritual" than through "literary" influence, he employs the language of historical pietism, from its origin in the Johannine literature, to its more sophisticated expression in the later eschatologically based Christian anarchism. When he describes this world as full of darkness, depravity, falsehood, and lies, he is wholly in the tradition of John's gospel, and he uses the exact phraseology of Kierkegaard and Berdyaev, as has been documented.

The assumption underlying the pietistic kerygma is that Satan, the Adversary of the Old Testament, and the *diabolos* of the New, is the god of this world, as Nikholas Berdyaev says. Inasmuch as some of the critics have evidently been unaware of this tenet of Christian

pietism, they have seen certain facets of Melville's thought as tending in the direction of gnosticism. Thus Thomas Vargish has seen an element of gnostic mythos in *Moby Dick*.[7] It is not clear, however, how he would substantiate his thesis in terms of the rest of Melville's works. Newberry likewise sees *The Encantadas* in terms of a gnostic rejection of the physical world.[8] These views would appear to be honestly mistaken ones. A look at the total authorship reveals that a more consistent case can be made for the position that Melville's constitutional tendencies are in the direction of what has been called anarchical pietism. One expression of this is his frequent use of the phrase "this man-of-war world" in his early sea novels. A more direct expression of the doctrine occurs in Plinlimmon's bitter conclusion: "Whatever other worlds God is lord of, He is not the lord of this." A further revelation occurs in Father Mapple's description of Jonah as a man who wished to flee into "a land where God rules not, but only the captains of this world." An even more direct reference occurs in *The Encantadas*, where Melville says that the Creole had become "one of the princes of the power of the air." Some scriptural sources for this expression are: "The prince of this world shall be cast out" (John 12:31); "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me" (John 14:30); and Paul's reference to "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children

of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2). As he so often does, Melville has "quoted an enjambed précis of several texts, having partially forgotten and confused them, or in some cases probably deliberately altered them to suit his purpose.

It would not be so hard to take Father Mapple's position of being "a patriot only to heaven," if it were not for the fact that the elect existent must earn his living in the dominions of the *diabolos*. This doctrine is duplicitously conveyed in the record of the experiences of Israel Potter, the exile building the walls of the English Thebes; it is implied in the scattered references to Pip;[9] it is the express theme of Hunilla's ordeal; it is a frequent topic of dialogue in *Clarel;* it is the resident kerygma in the pamphlet, "Chronometricals and Horologicals"; but it is also resident in the sea-novels, in which the captain and officers of the ship appear to be regarded as lieutenants of "the prince of the power of the air" in a man-of-war world. These officers are wicked, in the eyes of Melville's young heroes, precisely in relation to their elevation of rank. Melville's comments on the "depraved fluid" which flows in the veins of South Sea royalty have already been cited.

It is now possible to see more clearly in what sense John Freeman sees Father Mapple's sermon as the key which unlocks the meaning of Melville's works, for this sermon is in the best tradition of anarchical pietism. The sermon

offers an explicit articulation of a doctrine which appears everywhere to underlie Melville's thought. In the category of existence, the theme emerges as the conflict between the individual and the established order, but it would be a mistake to suppose that this theme is simply evidence of Melville's romanticism. It will surely be conceded that for a romantic individual, the self is held in opposition to the non-self, and the ultimate authority for the self in action is the native and savage impression of the self itself. But this is not at all the theme of Mapple's sermon, in which the fundamental kerygma is that man and truth are in diametric, polar opposition, as expressed in Mapple's words:

> But all the things that God would have us to do are hard for us to do - remember that - and hence, he oftener commands us than endeavors to persuade. And if we obey God, we must disobey ourselves; and it is in this disobeying ourselves, wherein the hardness of obeying God consists.[10]

The position that Melville's dialectic of suffering is nothing more than romantic masochism is likewise untenable in terms of Mapple's sermon. There is another side to the madness and anguish and woe, as there is a teleological justification of the conduct of "God's True Princes of the Empire" which so often renders them liable to the charge of being "foretopmen in the Unprincipled," so narrow and infinite is their allegiance, so fadeless their fidelity. The narrator is entranced as the preacher goes on:

> He dropped and fell away from himself for a moment; then lifting his face to them again, showed a deep joy in his eyes, as he cried out with heavenly enthusiasm, - but oh! shipmates! on the starboard hand of every woe, there is a sure delight; and higher the top of that delight, than the bottom of the woe is deep. Is not the main truck higher than the kelson is low? Delight is to him - a far, far upward, and inward delight - who against the proud gods and commodores of this earth, ever stands forth his own inexorable self. Delight is to him whose strong arms yet support him, when the ship of this base, treacherous world has gone down beneath him. Delight is to him who gives no quarter in the truth, and kills, burns, and destroys all sin though he pluck it out from under the robes of senators and judges. Delight, top-gallant delight, is to him who acknowledges no law nor lord, but the Lord his God, and is only a patriot to heaven.

In the hour of death, says the preacher, this patriot only to heaven can say with his final breath:

> O Father - chiefly known to me by thy rod - mortal or immortal, here I die. I have striven to be Thine, more than to be this world's, or mine own. Yet this is nothing, I leave eternity to Thee; for what is man that he should live out the lifetime of his God?

It is remarkable how doctrinally orthodox this sermon is, right down to the pietistic aversion to the romantic theory of an immortal soul. If there is a reward, it is life on a renewed earth, rather than in some mystical nimbus. Whatever Melville's sources were, his preacher seems unusually familiar with the *ethos* of killing and burning in the name of truth. Pierre and Paul Jones operate upon his premise; however, most of Melville's heroes are pacificists, in the sense that they would not

take up a sword against the world. It is still true, nevertheless, that when it comes to discovering sin in high places, they too are ready to kill and burn, at any rate, in a figurative sense.

One of the phenomenal features of this doctrine is its apparent discontinuity in history; it appears from time to time without any superficially evident causation, although the adoption of the doctrine seems to stem from a predilection for the Johannine gospel, and a preöccupation with the eschatological revelation of John.[11] It may be more correct to say that the doctrine emerges from the impact of the Johannine literature upon young men of a certain sensitive temperament and aristocratic disposition. It must also be conceded that the offensiveness of the doctrine, and the historical, polemical opposition of constituted authority to it, is in no small part due to the temperament and disposition of its preachers, who in view of their avowed certain knowledge of their complicity with the divine, seem to lack nothing so much as humility. It is little wonder that the kerygma should arouse the violent opposition of the world, for the preachers always take such a violently polemical stand against the world.

The Melville literature does not contain a sympathetic and understanding explanation of Mapple's sermon, or its significance for an understanding of Melville's writings as a whole. For such an understanding, it is necessary to

turn to the Christian existentialists, Soren Kierkegaard and Nikholas Berdyaev. Kierkegaard discusses at considerable length the assumptions of pietism, and betrays his own pietistic inclinations in the process. In his *Journals* he has made a Melvillean revelation of the one-man denomination of which he is a member. He confesses:

> There is a god; his will is made known to me through my conscience and through Holy Scripture.[12]

This is rather amazingly like Mapple's "inexorable self" who is "only a patriot to heaven," acknowledging no law nor lord, and maintaining himself in opposition to the world's commodores and gods. Kierkegaard recognizes the offensiveness of the claim:

> One easily perceives, however, that in this case there is a quantitative reckoning in a direction towards the claim of being more than man, and this is what the established order is on the watch for.[13]

Christ, he says, was a teacher who insisted upon inwardness in contrast with all empty externalness, against what Wilder calls "aesthetic shrine religion."[14] But this claim causes a collision with constituted authority. Kierkegaard writes:

> Such is the collision which occurs again and again in Christendom; briefly expressed, it is the collision of pietism with the established order.[15]

He traces the history of this collision from Christ's quarrel with the Pharisees right down to his own day.

> However, then as always, the established order plumed itself upon being objective, and therefore higher than every individual, which means pure subjectivity. Now at this moment there is an individual who is unwilling to subordinate himself to the established order, or at least protests against its claim to be the truth, in fact, designates it as falsehood, declaring for his own part that he is the truth....then the collision takes place. The established order quite naturally raises the question; What then does this individual imagine he is, does he perhaps imagine that he is God, or that he has a direct relationship with God, or does he concede that he is a mere man?

He adds that every time a "genius with primitive force" makes the true inwardly vivid, then also, the established order will be offended in him. The establishment sees his preaching as blasphemy, because he declares to be falsehood precisely that which his society holds to be truth. But, of course, it is not really blasphemy at all. No, he says,

> the blasphemy is really a projection from the ungodly veneration of the established order as divine, an acoustic illusion which is occasioned by the fact that the established order says to itself in a hushed voice that it is divine.

Precisely this deification of the established order, this common acceptance of the axiom that whatever is, is Christian, he continues, constitutes the permanent revolt of this world against God. It is for this reason that "piety and godly fear must suffer in this world." Furthermore, "the mark of true piety, when it is not kept hidden, is precisely the fact that it goes ill with it in this world." But the established order wants to be regarded as

virtuous, and desires to terrify the rare individual by imputing to him the guilt of blasphemy. Thus a new light is cast upon Melville's admission to Hawthorne, "I have written a blasphemous book, but feel as spotless as a lamb."[16]

The conception that the established order is in constant and permanent revolt against truth, and that this leads to the inevitable collision with piety, is the kerygma of Father Mapple's sermon. Although it is a mark of pietism that it hides itself and keeps its secret, and even seeks to conform peripherally as far as possible, its tendency to subjectivity, if not to blatant egotism, always betrays it to the establishment, inasmuch as the establishment lays its claim to divinity by its insistence on what it fondly calls neutral objectivity,[17] but what is really a collective consensus instead of the private conscience of pietism. Like Mapple's Jonah, the pious pilgrim "will not confess himself suspected; but that itself is strong suspicion." The "anointed pilot-prophet, or speaker of true things" is bidden to sound "those unwelcome truths" in the ears of a wicked world. His task is to contradict the authority of the established order, "to preach truth to the face of falsehood." As Mapple recognizes, this places a double burden upon the preacher of the doctrine, a burden from which the silent sheep are spared.

> This shipmates, this is that other lesson; and woe to the pilot of the living God that slights it. Woe to him whom this world charms from gospel duty. Woe to him who seeks to pour oil upon the waters when God has brewed them into a gale! Woe to him who seeks to please rather than to appall.....

Obviously, the appointed task of the pietistic preacher is to bring a gale against the establishment, to shake it, perhaps so that the daughters of Yillah will become aware that they are bound in chains by Hautia. It is perhaps so that the meek and the lame and the blind, whom C. L. R. James has denominated "meanest mariners, renegades and castaways," will recognize the transitoriness of the establishment, for all its claims to objectivity and permanence. This also predicates the ever-present eschatological concern of pietism, the repeated allusions to a future time when "the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of God." (Revelation 11:15). Thus the appeal of Melville's suffering heroes to an ultimate bar of judgement as in *Billy Budd* where the narrator consoles himself with the observation that "the Last Assizes shall acquit";[18] or Ethan Allan's oath that "the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress" would avenge him.[19] It does not occur to Melville's heroes to carry an appeal to senators and judges, who, in fact, are the guardians and perpetrators of injustice. Pietistic endurance, even when black, anarchical phantoms rise in the mind, is the only answer to the world's cruelty toward the individual.[20]

The duplicity of existence, then, culminates in the always inevitable collision of pietism with the established order. This subject must now be developed in terms of Melville's portrayal of his subjects in existence, rather than in terms of Mapple's sermon, for even such a polemical document as his sermon may be too much like poetry divorced from reality. In any case, no explanation of the sermon itself could serve to validate the position that the informing doctrine underlying Melville's works is this pietistic protodoxy. Perhaps a legitimate link between life and poetry can be found in some of Melville's letters. In a famous passage from one of these eloquent and overwhelming epistles, Melville reveals some of the "top-gallant delights" to be experienced in his eschatologically envisioned private elysium. He writes:

> If ever, my dear Hawthorne, in the eternal times that are to come, you and I shall sit down in Paradise, in some little shady corner by ourselves, and if we shall by any means be able to smuggle a basket of champagne there, and if we shall then cross our celestial legs in the celestial grass which is forever tropical, and strike our glasses and our heads together, till both musically ring in concert, - then, O my dear fellow mortal, how shall we pleasantly discourse of all the things manifold which now so distress us, - when all the earth shall be but a reminiscence yea, its final dissolution an antiquity.[21]

It is interesting to observe, first of all, that not even in his anticipation of the joys of the new earth does Melville expect any lazy serenity, but rather "deep,

earnest thought" directed toward what are presently his vital concerns, toward the manifold things which distress him now. His teleological conception is in terms of the life which he knows, but differing in that whereas he now sees only dimly, as through a veil, then his sight shall be clear. In view of such confessions as in the quoted letter, it is evident that for him truth is not merely a small, academic matter, but a topic of principal concern. Furthermore, the whole truth will then be luminously apparent, when the last assizes have swept away this world of lies, as Melville, Kierkegaard, and Berdyaev unite in calling it. Thus Melville habitually spurns immediacy, with its relative aesthetic postulates, inasmuch as he is situated absolutely teleologically; and his propensity to fix his gaze on the primal innocence of Eden, and on the justice of the last assizes, causes him to weigh the ambiguous demands of existence in the historical context in terms of eternity. His ethics are determined by his dream of the unspoiled, pristine past, and his vision of the perfect future times to come. It may be seen, then, that for him poetry and reality are not meant to be divorced; for his poetry is based so firmly upon fixed objective referential points which he obviously regards as historical ones.

To the extent that his ultimate reference points are constant and unchanging, his attitude to events is ethical. He weighs the claims of the realm of Caesar and the realm

of Spirit in the light of eternity. The truth that he is seeking is not the eternal truth, for this he already knows; the truth which is being sought is the truth in existence. Mother M. Denis Mahoney comments upon Melville's conception of truth:

> For Melville, truth was a word of the largest possible implications. To see the truth was to see the harmonious order of total cosmic experience. Through truth the opacity of daily events was made luminously intelligible to the perceiving mind.[22]

A major facet of this truth is that objective appearances are not to be trusted, and he that is deceived thereby is not wise. But the majority of men trust precisely their eyes. Thus a corollary of this truth is that a writer who wishes to preach it to the face of the prevailing falsehood, must pretend to be dealing with the immediate, thus appealing to the aesthetic man, while he is really concerned with the eternal, which demands ethical responsivity. However, the structuring hand of the poet will so order events that the usual opacity of daily events will be made luminously intelligible in the light of the "grand programme of Providence which was drawn up a long time ago," and made comprehensible in the light of the future "Last Assizes."

While it could be maintained that Melville's concern is equally evident in all of his major books, for purposes of treating the issue of his handling of the truth in existence, it will be useful to concentrate on only a few

areas of his authorship. It has already been noted that in *The Confidence Man*, he tests certain postulates of virtue in the arena of existence, and finds, depending upon the critics' point of view, either that the lore of heaven is impotent on earth, or that men, while they love to talk about truth and the pursuit of truth, are mortally afraid of it when it is a question of testing the truth in existence. The word *charity* itself becomes in the mouths of the love-mongers a hollow sound, "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."[23] Many reviewers and critics have agreed that *The Confidence Man* is not a novel; it may be, then, that it is a homily on the beatitudes. Its structure and its content confirm that the author is hardly concerned with character, at least in the literary sense; hardly at all with events; and with "plot" only in the sense that something does, after all, happen in the course of the recitation. What occurs, to use one of his title chapters as a clue, is that the cosmopolitan's hypothesis is ruptured. His relative ethicism breaks down on the ground of existence, and is seen to be mere sensationism; his postulate that virtue can be instilled into boys by education breaks down in the crucible of those experiences which the author adduces; and his fond hope that decisive choices can be made on the basis of humane optimism is repudiated by the barber's refusal to take down his "No Trust" sign. By contrast and relief, there is the backwoods-

man's cautious pessimism where men are concerned, and his courageous optimism where ventures into the unknown wilds are concerned. He maintains the truth of the counter-postulate, that evil arises from the heart of man, and that it is objectified in his institutions. His response in existence is that he moves ever westward, ahead of civilization. Presumably, after the six thousand years, the wandering Ishmael-Adam will reënter Paradise at the east gate, having gone once around the world. The sort of education which the backwoodsman passes on to his son will guarantee as far as is possible that he too will grow up to be strong in the primitive and courageous pietism of that "wild strain from the ancient stock" which has ever lived in hidden mountain fastnesses, as far away as possible from "this world of lies." The theologian Amos N. Wilder sees in the American writers of the twentieth century "a resurgence of the primitive sense of the sacred" not "corroded by the acids of modernity," an attitude which he says would have greatly surprised their grandfathers. Speaking specifically of Melville, he finds in his novels a portrait of the genuinely tragic Adam. He writes:

> Finally we have, already forecast in Melville, the genuinely tragic Adam, the one which we meet in contemporary literature. The portrait here is of innocence and naïveté unprepared for the deeper enigmas and shocks of the human condition.[24]

Strictly aesthetic factors, he asserts, cannot account for the recent resurgence in Melville. What does account for

this renewed interest is the modern crisis of culture, the dilemna of reason and imagination, "not merely as an academic matter, but as crux of our human knowing." There is in Melville's heroes, according to Wilder, "a streak of the untamed...a principle of rebellion." He adds:

> We suspect that the Almighty takes some special pleasure in this wild strain from the ancient stock. God must recurrently find himself bored with such mannered peoples as the French and the Chinese.[25]

Books such as Melville's, Wilder supposes, "call for a kind of criticism which transcends a narrow aestheticism."[26] Indeed they do, when the aesthetic vehicle of the novel has been so over-charged with ethical questions. In any case, the reader may find some new delight in Melville's backwoodsman, when he conceives that "the Almighty takes some special pleasure in this wild strain from the ancient stock." This does not turn *The Confidence Man* into a novel, nor increase its stature, in aesthetic terms, as a work of art, at any rate, not when art itself is construed in terms of the categories of aesthetic criticism. What might happen, however, is that the modern reader may read the book for other reasons altogether, and derive from it a "theological" pleasure, provided only that he does not suffer from an altogether too frequent academic inability to do so.[27] In summary, the "stealthy interpolation" of the episode of the backwoodsman into the sometimes banal catalogue of events on the Fidèle is one demonstration of what a poet may do with reality; that is to say, how

a poet may treat the truth in existence, rather than as a mere academic matter.

A similar structural technique occurs in *Pierre*, when the young hero of the novel finds a tract and reads it. Here Melville seems to have borrowed a device from his contemporary Russian novelists, of whom, however, he knew nothing. The pamphlet which Pierre discovers is presented to the reader as a chapter in itself. What the critic makes of this will reveal, as Kierkegaard has warned, not necessarily the relationship of the pamphlet to the meaning of the novel, but the critic's heart. In terms of the present thesis, the pamphlet must be seen as an explicit revelation of the ethical concern which has informed the author all the way through his book. Furthermore, as much as the better-known sermon of Father Mapple, the pamphlet seems to shed some light upon the whole of Melville's works. Not only the contents of the pamphlet itself, but the context in which "our young enthusiast, Pierre" found the printed sheet, attest to the central concern which prompted the author to "drop the guitar," and to discuss in explicit terms the problem of the truth in existence.

In the chapter, "The Journey and the Pamphlet," the author begins with a peroration on *Silence*. With respect to this subject, it must be added that the conclusion of the pamphlet is missing, so that Melville begins and ends with silence, thus complementing the Hamlet motif in *Pierre*. As has been noted, Melville frequently ends his most

tantalizing promises of an explicit revelation by asserting that he can go no further, or will quote no more, or by contending that the unspoken remainder is unknown to him.[28] While it has been almost uniformly supposed that the inability of the narrator to go on is predicated by the fact that the truth is ineffable, it has been demonstrated that Melville's narrators do not so regard it, but that they withhold the truth in the face of "this marble-hearted world" because it is dangerous to utter the truth. The reader may well wonder what deceptive ruse is about to be employed when in a tome of five hundred pages, an author suddenly feels moved to write a panegyric on silence! The chapter begins:

> All profound things, and emotions of things are preceded and attended by Silence. What a silence is that with which the pale bride precedes the responsive *I will* to the priest's solemn question, *Wilt thou have this man for thy husband?* In silence, too, the wedded hands are clasped. Yea, in silence the child Christ was born into the world. Silence is the general consecration of the universe. Silence is the invisible laying on of the Divine Pontiff's hands upon the world. Silence is at once the most harmless and the most awful thing in all nature. It speaks of the Reserved Forces of Fate. Silence is the only Voice of our God.
>
> Nor is this so august Silence confined to things simply touching or grand. Like the air, Silence permeates all things, and produces its magical power, as well during that pecular mood which prevails at a solitary's traveller's first setting forth on a journey, as at the unimaginable time when before the world was, Silence brooded on the face of the waters.
>
> No word was spoken by its inmates, as the coach bearing our young enthusiast, Pierre, and his mournful party, sped forth through the dim dawn into the deep midnight, which still occupied, unrepulsed, the hearts of the old woods through

> which the road wound, very shortly after quitting the village.[29]

It is upon entering this coach and sitting down, that Pierre's fingers touch some crumpled leaves of paper, whose contents are subsequently revealed to the reader. At this time, the reader is informed, Pierre's thoughts are dark and wild; there is "rebellion and horrid anarchy and infidelity in his soul." The wild thoughts have been triggered by a suggestion which the Evil One had propounded to Pierre's mind regarding "the possibility of the mere moonshine of all this self-renouncing enthusiasm." With no certain Church, monument, or Bible upon which to rest, Pierre is lost in thought; but his thoughts are not bodiless abstractions, the reader is informed; they are matters of existence, of life and of death. Melville describes very precisely the contradiction between poetry and reality, when he writes:

> So the difference between the priest and Pierre was herein: - with the priest it was a matter, whether certain bodiless thoughts of his were true or not true; but with Pierre it was a question whether certain vital acts of his were right or wrong. In this little nut lie germ-like the possible solution of some puzzling problems.[30]

Some men, he observes, avoid such problems for fear of making too much work for themselves. In any case, it is evident that the prolix speculations into the truth or falsehood of certain abstract propositions does not concern Melville any more than it does Pierre; the puzzling

problem is one of ethical conduct. Pierre finds that his ethical decisions, based upon his primitive, pietistic conception of filial duty, have led him into a headlong clash with every constituted authority; and it is in this situation that his soul finds refuge in a wild anarchism which would tear the veil from all idols.

At once it becomes evident that Melville's peroration on Silence may have been designed to lull the reader into relaxing his practical awareness. He may fold his hands comfortably on the stomach, while the eyes, drunk with sleep, gaze heavily for a moment toward the ceiling. Having been assured that all profound things are attended by silence, he may relax his polemical opposition to the truth about to be revealed in explicit detail. There is nothing the natural man loves to hear so much as that the truth cannot be known, that the eternal verities are ineffable, and that between man and truth lies silence. This is enough to still his abused conscience. It may be with a profound shock that immediately following this comforting reassurance, the reader finds himself taken behind the veil to confront some eternal verities which are all the more poignant because they are revealed through the medium of the spoken word. This the aesthete no longer fears, now that the Logos has been divested of divinity. Nevertheless,

the peroration on silence introduces a shockingly explicit dialectic on the truth in existence.

But the panegyric on Silence is itself not altogether silent on certain profound issues. It is filled with the usual Melvillean biblicisms, and ends with a virtual credo. In the context, the assertion that "in silence the child Christ was born into the world" seems vaguely condemnatory of the world which did not notice his birth. In the midst of the bourgeois bustle, the Divine Pontiff remains silent. It is almost a criticism. The pale bride of Christ, hidden in the mountains for fear that the "Church of Christ" will slay the last of her sons, trembles in the deep midnight. Having done with silence, having suffered madness and anguish in silence long enough, while he had to write "cake and ale" sea-stories for the entertainment of his genteel readers, Melville is about ready to articulate the ineffable. He goes about this directly, somewhat with the help of the mysterious pamphlet, and for a time somewhat forgetful of his narrative. Structually, the contents of the pamphlet seem to be confused with Pierre's meditations and wild heart-searchings. Part II of the chapter is extremely ambiguous in this respect, as the reader is not clearly apprised as to whether Pierre is thinking these thoughts, or whether the author is supplying them, or whether, as seems somewhat likely, Pierre is reading a preamble to the text of the pamphlet. Such an ambiguity

with respect to "point of view" is, moreover, common to many of Melville's novels. It appears that the preface on Silence (Part I) is followed by an introduction to the pamphlet (Part II); finally there is the pamphlet itself, with title-page and all (Part III). The introduction seems to be contributed by the intruding author in some moments of forgetfulness of his novel, a "literary technique" which Melville has used far too often for the aesthetic sensibilities of his reviewers. His anger does not emerge as excessive exuberance in this instance, but in an explicit revelation. He warns the reader before introducing the text, "At the worst, each person can now skip, or read and rail for himself." The most profound certainty for Melville is that the world will rail at the truth. If no other facet of his truth could be established, his letters and his interpolations in his novels make it clear that he supposes that the truth must be suppressed, unless the preacher is prepared to have the world rail at him, or laugh at him, or abandon him to die in the gutter.

In *Redburn* the narrator resists the impulse to quote his father's "Old Morocco" in the face of this "marble-hearted world." A great many inferences may be drawn from that novel regarding the author's opinion of the world; but his desperate financial need at that time, "damned by dollars" as he admits himself to be, forces him to repress the doctrine, which however, informs him with energy. He must,

in a word, be an artist; he must write about poverty and suffering, carefully maintaining the poetic distance from reality; and the critics come and say, "And so it ought to be according to the rules of aesthetics.[31] However, by the time he is writing *Pierre*, he is obviously sick and tired from the long repression of his principal concern, so that he resorts to placing a tract in the pages of his manuscript before sending it to the publisher; and the critics come and say, "This is the craziest fiction extant."[32] If it is true that Melville's works are a confusion of fact, fiction, and essay, and if "essay" is mistaken for "fiction," then the novel may seem crazy indeed. The whole book of *Pierre*, with all its references to insanity, emphasizes the "madness and anguish" of an author who can never "under no conceivable circumstances be frank with his readers." But in *Pierre* the author has apparently decided that the implicit hints, the "half-formed foetal suggestions" of *Moby Dick* are not enough. If Father Mapple's sermon is a key, as John Freeman has suggested, which will unlock the meaning of Melville, it seems that Melville himself thought that the reader must be given more than a key: he must have the door opened and be pushed through it. He may protest that he has been led into the craziest world extant in literature, but he will nevertheless have been led into a confrontation with "the most awful thing in nature," the truth unveiled at

first hand, without the comforting illusion which is normally provided by a proper aesthetically-determined poetic distance.[33]

In chapter XLI of *Pierre*, the whole question of the forced duplicity of existence is finally treated with a somewhat reckless abandonment of artistic canons. Melville is less concerned with art form than he has ever been, and decides to treat his subject in the style of the essay. Perhaps he has lost confidence that his self-appointed task of preaching truth to the face of false-hood can be fulfilled by means of the subtle suggestions of emotively charged language. Apparently he feels that, after all, the reading public may miss his principal concern; he seems to feel that the artistic novel cannot adequately carry the burden of his ethical concern. Hence a chapter which is an interpolation of a different order from Mapple's sermon. Father Mapple says exactly what we would expect a "Bible preacher" to say, and he says it in the language of the sailors and fishermen who are the main actors in the narrative.[34] The new philosophy of Plotinus Phinlimmon, however, is not what one would expect from a philosopher, and it is not what one has learned to expect from a novelist. The language of Father Mapple's sermon is the language of the men who go down to the sea in ships; there is no significant change of vocabulary, although

there is shift of style to the hortatory declamation of a man who speaks with authority. The sermon, in spite of its revelatory content, fits very well, even in aesthetic terms, into the context of *Moby Dick*. But the reasoned deliberateness of "Chronometricals and Horologicals" presents a change of style from the ordinary language of narrative discourse. If an aesthetic defence of Melville's art is required, it could be maintained that Pierre's perpetual meditations are in any case philosophical musings, and that Plinlimmon's tract is, aesthetically, an assertion of the seriousness of Pierre's *courageous* cerebrations.

It appears, however, that the author would care little for such a defence, inasmuch as he has decided to commit a sort of literary suicide. Of Pierre at his book, we read:

> His soul's ship foresaw the inevitable rocks, but resolved to sail on, and make a courageous shipwreck. Now he gave jeer for jeer, and taunted the apes that jibed him. With the soul of an atheist, he wrote down the godliest things; with the feeling of death and misery in him, he created forms of gladness and life. For the pangs in his heart, he put down hoots on the paper. And everything else he disguised under the conveniently adjustable drapery of all-stretchable philosophy.[35]

If this revelation of Pierre's mind is admitted as a description of Melville's attitude while writing *Pierre*, then the problem of the function of Plinlimmon's tract has already been largely answered. Whatever cannot be passed

off as narrative, is simply "disguised under the conveniently adjustable drapery of all-stretchable philosophy." Through the lips of another *persona*, the author has revealed his own awareness that a sort of suicide must be committed in a world where "God's truth is one thing and man's truth another." Plinlimmon writes:

> What man who carries a heavenly soul in him, has not groaned to perceive, that unless he committed a sort of suicide as to the practical things of this world, he can never hope to regulate his earthly conduct by that same heavenly soul? And yet by an infallible instinct he knows, that that monitor cannot be wrong in itself.[36]

Thus, like Pierre, who perceives himself "gifted with loftiness, merely that it might be dragged down to the mud," Melville resolves at last that he will make no further concessions to the canons of art or to the tastes of his genteel readers, who admired his "cake-and-ale" sea-stories. He has resolved to commit literary suicide. Ostensibly oblivious of every external discipline, he has not merely engaged in his usual "passionate identifications" with his literary *persona*, but he has deliberately reduced the distance between the teller and the tale to the point where Pierre's confessions about the agonies of writing appear to be the author's own confession. Pierre's words have been presumed by John Freeman to be Melville's own words on the subject; and Pierre's admissions of incipient madness have been seen as autobiographical

relevations on the part of the author.[37] Much more directly than Redburn, or even Ishmael, Pierre becomes a voice for the author, and Plinlimmon appears as an authority, allegedly as a mentor; but in effect, his pamphlet, with its preface and its introduction by the author of *Pierre*, appears to be the voice of Melville speaking as one with authority, and not as the scribes. From the point where the pamphlet is introduced, there are fragments of narrative, but the major portion of the remainder of the book is devoted to "Some Philosophical Remarks," to a discussion of "Literature in America," and to a revelation of Pierre's agony of creation. The author of "*Typee*, *Omoo*, etc.,"[38] has suddenly grown quite tired of writing "dishwater romances."

The duplicity of existence, which has been posited as being prefigured by the distance between poetry and reality, actually resides in the fact that man exists simultaneously in two worlds.[39] This is implied everywhere in Melville's works, but nowhere is it articulated as clearly as in *Pierre*. All of Melville's youthful adventurers become conscious of the ambiguity of existence with simultaneous reference to the realm of Caesar and the realm of Spirit, to use Berdyaev's distinction. No major novelist has written more explicitly on this subject than has Melville in the interpolation of Plinlimmon's tract. The author's madness and anguish, as it was expressed in *Pierre*, probably accounts for the eclipse

of his literary reputation in his own century and in his own country, where the kingdom of Caesar ruled triumphantly, supported as always by the pulpit, prolonging "in sacerdotal way, the Lower Empire's bastard sway," as Melville writes in *Clarel*. At the same time, the proselytes of the kingdom of Spirit hardly knew, like Israel Potter, how to "keep the vital nerve of the tap-root alive." In this situation, and with this resolution to commit a sort of suicide with respect to the practical things of the world, the author can suppress the doctrine no longer. Having broken out in exuberant excesses, the doctrine finally demands explicit articulation. Thus, as Pierre settles down into the coach, his fingers touch a "thin, tattered, dried-fish-like thing printed with blurred ink upon mean, sleazy paper." The reader must note two qualities of the paper: first of all, it bears the sign of the fish, and secondly, it has no objective attraction whatsoever to commend it. It is like the *incognito*, Shiloh, who has no form or comeliness that he should be desired, whose features and bearing and means of humble conveyance betray no evidence of the god within.[40] The pamphlet, so the author says, is a mere fragment of some "voluminous disquisition," the major part of which has been lost. Melville must have anticipated the "howls of derision" which greeted *Pierre* when it emerged in print. In his

somewhat unpoetic mood, he wrote not only "some of the craziest fiction extant," but also some of the most devastating philosophy since David Hume challenged the daughters of Sophia. Like Victor Hugo, who confessed that he had lifted all the petticoats, only to find nothing underneath, so Melville probes the royal chambers of the grand pyramid; he delves into the innermost room, and when the veil is lifted from the sarcophagus, it is seen to be empty.[41] Where then, Pierre seems to ask, is there a fixed and trustworthy anchor.[42]

Pierre's own dark and wild thoughts have convinced him that no stoical or philosophical defences can withstand the trial of real events, for "faith and philosophy are air, but events are brass." As a corrective to this bitter skepticism, what Mother M. D. Mahoney has called the "epistemological nihilism of Pierre,"[43] Plinlimmon's pamphlet turns up to present a rational explanation of the ambiguity of existence which every conscious existent, whoever has a heavenly soul in him, discovers in the course of his life. Pierre wonders what he can trust, if anything. He remembers the "divine inspiration of that hour when the heroic words burst from his heart," just after he had received Isabel's letter, and vowed that he would comfort her. But though the inspiration for his deed seemed unquestionably to be divine, he wonders how his conduct could be right, when it has left a trail of

corpses behind him. It is at this point that his fingers touch the sleazy pamphlet. Between the narrative and the pamphlet is an introduction offered to the reader by some hitherto unmentioned *persona;* or simply, by the author himself. Curious as the peroration on Silence was, the commentary on the "sleazy rag" is even more strange, full of startling contradictions and ambiguities. One thing, however, emerges clearly, and that is the clarity of Melville's conception of the two worlds of which Nathan C. Starr has spoken,[44] or the two kingdoms which Berdyaev has called the realm of Caesar and the realm of Spirit. At last Melville's preöccupation with the duplicity of existence for the human soul is fully revealed.

In chapter XXII, the author proposes to "lift the flower-curtain from before a tropical author, with some remarks on the transcendental flesh-brush philosophy." His conclusion is that a man might perish for all that the gods, nature, and humanity care. The soul is alone in the world. He describes the condition of the soul of man in this step-mother world:

> There now, do you see the soul. In its germ on all sides it is closely folded by the world, as the husk folds the tenderest fruit; then it is born from the world-husk, but still now outwardly clings to it;-still clamors for the support of its mother, the world, and its father, the Deity. But it shall yet learn to stand independent, though not without many a bitter wail, and many a miserable fall.[45]

But in a dialectical antithesis later in the same chapter, Pierre despairs of learning to walk alone, for "in tremend-

ous extremities human souls are like drowning men." They know that they are in peril, but this knowledge does not enable them one whit to alter their condition, so that "these drowning men do drown."[46] To such alternations of mood, Plinlimmon's pamphlet comes as a corrective. In the introduction, the author again recognizes the two realms in which man exists. He writes:

> Sooner or later in this life, the earnest, or enthusiastic youth comes to know and more or less appreciate this startling solecism: - That while, as the grand condition of acceptance to God, Christianity calls upon all men to renounce this world; yet by all odds the most Mammonish parts of this world - Europe and America - are owned by none but professed Christian nations who glory in the owning and seem to have some reason therefore.[47]

In other places he has revealed that this is the world into which the child Christ came in silence; this is the world in which Shiloh rode incognito among men, and in which "Our Blessed Saviour" was put to death as a malefactor. It is that world in which the pale bride of Christ lives in constant terror of the "Church of Christ." The solecism is indeed startling.

When Melville's earnest and enthusiastic youth becomes fully and consciously aware of this situation, his soul is filled with wonder. The author continues:

> This solecism once vividly and practically apparent; then comes the earnest reperusal of the Gospels; the intense self-absorption into that greatest real miracle of all religions, the Sermon on the Mount. From that divine mount, to all earnest, loving youths, flows an inexhaustible soul-melting stream of tenderness and lovingkindness; and they leap exultingly to their feet, to think that the founder of their holy religion gave utterance to sentences

> infinitely sweet and soothing as these; sentences which embody all the love of the past, and all the love which can be conceived in any conceivable future. Such emotions as that sermon raises in the enthusiastic heart; such emotions all youthful hearts refuse to ascribe to humanity as their origin. This is of God! cries the heart, and in that cry ceases all inquisition.

Melville's artistic lapse is a remarkable solecism as well, and if any modern precedent for it were to be found, it must be in the Russian authors, Dostoevsky and Tolstoi, who shared a preöccupation with the Sermon on the Mount, and the possibility of its pragmatic usefulness in the world. It must be noted that the exultant feeling which enraptures the enthusiastic heart of an earnest youth is not any form of "natural piety," as it is found among some Romantic writers, but the joy of Christian piety. The difference is that in Melville's case the heart finds the answer to its own questions, not from within, where is only midnight darkness and despair, and in any case, utter helplessness, but from without, from the very God whom the soul posits as its creator.[48] Thus it is in the realm of Spirit; or rather, so it would be, if that is all that there were to existence. There is tenderness to supply the heart of a tender and earnest youth, love to awaken all the fibres of his being, and peace for the inquiring heart, to end all inquisition. There is exultation for enthusiastic youths, and top-gallant delight for high-spirited travellers. On the Mount, the Prince uttered such soothing words.

But in the valley of the world's business, the same Shiloh declared that he had not come to bring peace, but a sword.[49] This startling ambiguity shocks the youth. Melville goes on:

> Now, with this fresh-read sermon in his soul, the youth again gazes abroad upon the world. Instantly, in an aggravation of the former solecism, an overpowering sense of the world's downright positive falsity comes over him; the world seems to be lie-saturated and soaking with lies. The sense of this thing is so overpowering, that at first the youth is apt to refuse the evidence of his own senses. He hears the evidence of his own senses....He hears good and wise people sincerely say: This world only seems to be saturated and soaking with lies; but in reality it does not so lie soaking and saturate; along with some lies, there is much truth in this world. But again he refers to his Bible, and there he reads most explicitly, that this world is unconditionally depraved and accursed; and that at all hazards men must come out of it. But why come out of it, if it be a True World and not a Lying World? Assuredly, then, this world is a lie.[50]

The foregoing is so deeply rooted in the pietistic tradition, and in general, so foreign to the Puritan tradition, that the author may have had an unnamed source. But it is not necessary to insist that there must have been a literary source. It is evident from what Melville tells the reader, that when the Sermon on the Mount strikes the responsive heart-strings of certain earnest, enthusiastic young men with a heavenly soul in them, they will react in similar ways. Thus we find in Kierkegaard, Melville, and Berdyaev, an amazing correspondence of thought and expression; although indeed, the expression in English translation is

somewhat conditioned by the familiar phraseology available for use in the context. One of scores of similar passages in Berdyaev's works must be offered for comparison and elucidation. In *The Beginning and the End*, he writes:

> Truth is not so much liberation and salvation in this world, as it is liberation and salvation from this world. Full acceptance of the truth of the Gospel, consent to its actual realization, would lead to the destruction of states, civilizations, societies organized according to the laws of this world - to the end of this world which in every way is opposite to Gospel Truth. Therefore men and nations have *corrected* the Gospel, filled it with 'truths of this world,' which were really pragmatic, because they were false and adapted to falsehood. The recognition and the confession of the truth is connected, not with usefulness and profit, but with risk and danger.[51]

If it were not otherwise identified, Berdyaev's passage could be mistaken for lines from Melville. In terms of the aesthetic categories, in fact, it would be possible conclusively to demonstrate that Melville's thought and style was influenced by the Russian prophet-philosopher. Kierkegaard's "influence" has already been noted. In any event, *Pierre, or the Ambiguities* is luminously unambiguous in one respect, and that is with regard to Melville's principal concern. His earnest youth is concerned with the vast gulf between the "lore of heaven" and the practical, daily operations of this world, soaking and saturate with lies as he conceives it to be. There is no problem at all about finding the truth; Melville's youthful heroes all

know exactly where to find the truth. They find it in their conscience and in Holy Scripture, in the Gospel, and more specifically, in the Sermon on the Mount. Any sort of prolix and speculative inquiry after truth they would recognize instantly as a fraud and an evasion of the truth. When the fraudulent posture of worldly shrewdness has momentarily confused the earnest youth, by offering pragmatic worldliness in the place of the impotent lore of heaven, then that earnest young man does not remain long deceived. He engages at once in "the earnest reperusal of the Gospels." He has something within him which prevents his eyes from being blinded by the socially corrected Gospel of bourgeois morality.

Berdyaev simplified the problem of discourse in such tangled ambiguities by coining such phrases as "The God of the Bible," the "God of Catholic Theology," and the "God of bourgeois morality," to refer, respectively to the Gospel, the sacerdotal fraud, and to the pragmatically corrected gospel of the world. Melville has not definitely or consistently identified these categories, but he seems to have such a division in mind. The first category he calls "the vital operations of true religion" in *Typee* (*Works* I, 267), and "evangelical piety" in *Pierre* (*Works* IX, 343), the "lore of heaven" in *Clarel* (*Works* XV, 135), and "chronometrical excellence" in *Pierre*, in the context of Plinlimmon's

pamphlet. The second category he does not accurately denominate, but he seems to have the "theological" correction in mind when he attacks missionary activities on the Marquesas Islands, and particularly in *Clarel*, where the dialogue is interrupted by the observation that the church supports the Lower Empire by its sacerdotal way (*Works* II, 80).[52] The third category is for him "this world of lies," in which the true title of its senators and judges ought to be "Devourers of Widows' Houses."[53] It is in terms of this "corrected" gospel that "worldliness succeeds in all labors" (*Works* XV, 205). The closest spiritual affinity exists between Melville and his Christian anarchist predecessors, as well as with his Christian existentialist contemporaries, particularly with respect to their unanimity that in this world, falsehood reigns and declares that it is the truth. It is precisely this situation which creates the ambiguities of existence, and virtually demands from the earnest youth a duplicity, such as that implied in another of Shiloh's sermons, "to be wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove." The only answer is "at all hazards to come out of....this world of lies," but that answer in itself involves an ambiguity, for the earnest youth must, as a matter of material necessity, continue to exist in the world, as Scripture says, in the world, but not of it. In that answer there lies also a puzzling question, for it is extremely difficult for an enthusiastic youth to

keep himself unspotted from the world, as Redburn proposes, even if that youth is willing to risk all hazards. The ambiguity cannot be resolved, for the truth in existence is simultaneous with existence in this lie-saturated world. It is noteworthy that Melville uncritically, and often no doubt unconsciously, has his youthful heroes turn to Scripture when they are in "tremendous extremities." He assumes that the truth is to be found there, and simply accepts that fact that there can be no experiential evidence of the efficacy of its kerygma. Father Mapple acknowledges no law nor lord, but the Lord his God, and that lord is evidently Berdyaev's "God of the Bible." Clarel weighs scripture against scripture with deliberate seriousness, but regards most other sources of information with a mild disdain. It must be remembered that Melville spent half his adult life on *Clarel*, a fact which surely supports the contention that his major concern is always in the same area. The puzzling problem is to separate the husks of worldly"corrections" from the pristine Ur-gospel.

With the ensuing discussion somewhat simplified by this suggested denomination of categories, it becomes possible to state the resident doctrine in Melville's works quite efficiently and simply. Plinlimmon attempts the reconciliation of the claims of the two worlds, not in an abstract synthesis of irreconciliable opposites, but with

a view to actual existence. The duplicity of existence lies in the fact that man, himself a synthesis of the finite and the infinite, finds himself living in two worlds simultaneously, in a world of natural and social necessity, and in a world of spirit. Moreover, in his social intercourse he finds himself caught between a world of depravity and lies, and the dream of primal innocence and pristine purity, as it is tantalizingly held forth in the Gospel. Every one of Melville's works can be seen in terms of its treatment of one of these areas of duplicit existence. In *Typee*, the narrator descends into a primitive valley of the world where the requirements for existence are easily met, and where it might be supposed that the spirit would flourish. But it turns out that an easy living makes people indolent; and instead of letting the spirit grow in all their many hours of leisure time, what happens is that a rigorous religious system is constructed. The narrator must pretend to comply with the priestly fraud, in order to survive at all. A similar sort of situation exists in *Omoo*. In *Mardi* begins the serious work of separating the truth from the "corrections," and it is evident that the pursuit of Yillah is complicated by the restrictions of Hautia, and confused by an assortment of flesh-brush philosophies. In *Redburn* and *White Jacket* the major area of concern appears to be the problem of maintaining one's integrity in a man-of-war world, where Caesar's autocratic decrees cannot be questioned even as much as on land. In these sea-novels the author is

also concerned with keeping the spirit alive in abject poverty. Not only the hard hearts which are in the world but also the exigencies of providing for the natural necessities, come near to crushing the high-spirited youths who go out into the world. The issue is one of reconciling the enthusiastic and primitive faith of well-bred young gentlemen, the very aristocracy of the commons, with the exigencies of existence in a world where there are storms, hunger, hard labor, natural longings, and sickness and weariness, not even to mention hard hearts. In *Israel Potter*, the captivity of the wandering Jew is outlined not so much in terms of political slavery, as in terms of a bitter fight against starvation. It is true that Israel's misery is compounded by his captivity in an alien land, but it is evident, given Melville's cosmogony, that every one of the "True Princes of the Empire" lives in an enemy world. Melville's heroes are commoners, albeit, like Bunyan, of the "kingly commons"; hence they must work for a living, dip their hands in the tar-pot and knead case with coarser characters when duty calls. By slow degrees and through acute suffering they make the keen transition from a care-free youth to a life of labor; they learn to repress the dream of innocence, and make such concessions as are necessary, even to helping the enemy build munitions to be used against their own people.

In *Clarel*, the author has evidently set himself the

task of separating truth from error by means of a dialectical symposium. He introduces every heretical and wordly correction imaginable, with a long array of characters maintaining the truth or falsehood of the various postulates. He seems to conclude that resignation is the way, and urges Clarel to keep his heart, though yet but ill-resigned; he urges Clarel to continue minding the issues of his heart. If there is any conclusion to *Clarel* which might be of usefulness to an earnest youth, it may be in the lines:

> But while ducks each lofty steed
> Behold how through the crucial pass
> Slips unabased the humble ass.[54]

Evidently the enthusiastic youths, the high-spirited rebels, must learn to bend;at the very least they must concede peripherally. In *The Encantadas*, the abandoned woman, Hunilla, who came from Sandy Payta (an obvious Mellvillean disguise for *Santa Pieta*), learns the lesson of pietistic endurance. That she is one of the dreadfully unfortunate "favorites of heaven" is clear. The woman, with her husband and her brother, is left upon the island by a sea captain who promises to return quickly. The sea takes the lives of her brother and husband when they wander offshore, and she begins in agonizing isolation to await the return of the captain and her dead at the same time. The reference to the scriptural promise that Christ would return, raising the dead from their sleep, is unmistakable. So

the woman of holy piety begins her vigil. Like the early church, she has been assured of the "soon return" of the captain who brought her to this burnt-out island at the centre of the world. In "delicious language" Melville recreates the passion that fills the heart of the woman. He writes:

> Day after day, week after week, she trod the cindery beach, till at length a double motive edged every eager glance. With equal longing she now looked for the living and the dead; the brother and the captain; alike vanished, never to return.[55]

From the double motive it may be legitimate to infer that she longs for Christ, "the elder brother of the saints," and "the pilot of the faithful." As the weeks pass with no sign of the ship, Hunilla begins to invent time schemes to relieve her distress. She needs certain time to stand on, she says, lest she go mad.

At this point in the story, the critic can do one of two things; he can discover that the story is all about one Agatha Robertson, who was likewise abandoned on an island; or he can infer from the passionate language of the story that there is a double meaning. Six times the author interrupts the story, protesting that he can go no further. This is not because the truth is ineffable, but because he does not wish to give infidels occasion to scoff. He writes:

> But no, I will not file this thing complete for scoffing souls to quote, and call it firm proof upon their side. The half shall here remain untold.[56]

Whatever the untold half may be, it will be dangerous for any

critic to pretend that he has discovered it, when the author insists that he will not reveal it. Once again, in an attempted explication, it is the critic's heart that is revealed. Hunilla's time-setting, and the language Melville uses in connection with the entire incident, appears to invest the story with the profoundest ethical significance in terms of a little episode in Melville's lifetime. In the story Melville skims over several date-setting schemes which appear akin to the attempts of men to set a time for the "end of the world." In Melville's day there was William Miller, who after long probings in the prophetic books of the Bible, announced March 21, 1844 as the end of time. When the expected event failed to materialize, the date was set 180 days later; and after a renewed disappointment, his band of followers withdrew from the public eye into pietistic retirement.[57] In his account of Hunilla's lonely vigil, Melville seems to be drawing upon sources which have hitherto been unrevealed. In any case, there is no question but that some profound ethical concern is motivating him. The dilemmna of the aliens who are waiting for the kingdoms of this world to come under their rightful head seems to be his subject. He seems also to be aware of the nature of time-setting, with its reference to past and future points of history, and the always insane despair that attends the disappointment of the time-setters. He writes:

> No wonder that her thoughts now wandered to the unreturning ship, and were beaten back again, the hope against hope so struggled in her soul that at

> length she desperately said: 'Not yet, not yet; my foolish heart runs on too fast.' She forced patience for some further weeks.... But to those whom earth's sure indraft draws, patience or impatience is the same. Hunilla now sought to settle precisely in her mind, to an hour, how long it was since the ship had sailed; and with the same precision, how long a space remained to pass. But this proved impossible. What present day or month it was she could not say. Time was her labyrinth, in which Hunilla was entirely lost.[58]

Certainly Melville here suggests a deeper meaning to his account than mere narrative, even to saying, "it is doubted whether it be good to blazon such." But then he observes that "Since those whom books will hurt will not be proof against events," and proceeds to tell more of the story of her date-setting exercises. When the dates for the return of the ships, based upon the time that the ship had been gone have all passed without event, she turns, as did the Millerites, to a more naturalistic calculation based upon the premise that human history is a span of exactly six thousand years. Thus she divides her reeds into six panels of equal length. Finally, after one hundred and eighty days, no further marks were seen, says the author. This interpolation indicates very strongly that Melville had at least heard of the "delay" which the Millerites preached in the summer of 1844. When every hope that the ship will return is gone, Melville again interrupts the narrative, lest he give scoffers the last word. Needless to say, landed churchgoers are always immensely relieved when one of these dates passes without a sign from the infinite. As for the mad

despair of the "saints" whose euporia of expectation collapses by degrees, as successive postponements avail them nothing, they have to learn not to place their trust in any objective reference whatsoever, not even in the sure word of prophecy. When all hope is past, and Hunilla ceases to set dates, she experiences the movement of "vital piety." She tells the captain of the rescue ship:

> Hunilla told us the calabash would sometimes, but not often, be half-filled overnight. It held six quarts perhaps, 'But,' said she,'we were used to thirst. At Sandy Payta, where I live, no shower from heaven ever fell; all the water there is brought on mules from the inland vales.'[59]

Thus Melville's "Princes of God" must live under conditions of parching drought for the longings of the soul, for in Santa Pieta, as in Judah, where "Clouds hang low but yield no rain,"[60] the pilgrim must bring his own water from the inland vales.

Here as always, Melville is thinking about the wisdom that is woe, while he is writing about something else. Any reader who has himself been lost in William Miller's "labyrinth of time" will "leap exultingly to his feet" at his first reading of *Hunilla*. But even if no such background exists, it is surely evident that Melville is far more concerned with the question of "holy piety" in existence, than he is with his narrative. If any confirmation is needed, it is provided by the concluding lines of the story, in a last look at Hunilla. The narrator observes:

> There was something which seemed strangely haughty in her air; and yet it was the air of woe....The last seen of Hunilla she was passing into Payta town, riding upon a small gray ass; and before her on the ass's shoulders, she eyed the jointed workings of the beast's armorial cross.[61]

Deep haughtiness no doubt at the certainty of her election, in view of having been accounted to suffer, and yet a mortal woe at the immediate sufferings, with all hope of reward infinitely suspended. It may be that the reader is asked to read the story with one eye on the "jointed workings of the beast's armorial cross." The story must also be read in the light of the entire works of Melville, not without reference to *Clarel*, where the same theme of "the end of time" is treated at length. Finally, as the "enchanted islands" are a sort of hell at the centre of the universe, the story is such an accurate description of the situation of any man with a heavenly chronometer in him, that *The Encantadas* illuminates the author's other works.

Melville's characters may be seen, then, as extensions of himself. His own responses to existence in "this world of lies" are of various sorts. At times he feels a proud submission to the Lord his God; in another mood he can find solace in himself alone; at all times, he is not far from blaspheming the gods of this world; but in moments of religious quiet, he accedes to the doctrine of *gelassenheit*. These are the modes of pietistic anarchism.

It has been noted how Redburn and White Jacket feel a dark anarchical rage rise in their throats when they are treated unfairly, or when they witness man's inhumanity to man. Yet they do not think of leading a revolt, but rather resign themselves to their fate. It would seem that they have learned from Berdyaev what anarchism is. It is not anarchy or revolution, or disobedience, or even passive resistance; except of course, in matters of vital import, in which case there is not merely passive, but absolute resistance. Berdyaev's description of this anarchism appears to fit Melville's "high-spirited rebels" perfectly. He writes:

> It is a great mistake to identify anarchism with anarchy. Anarchism is not against order, agreement, harmony, but against authority, violence, the realm of Caesar. Anarchy is chaos and disharmony, i.e. deformity. Anarchism is the ideal of a free harmony, determined from within, i.e. the victory of the kingdom of God over that of Caesar.[62]

Berdyaev's posture toward constituted authority is that the subject ought to obey his overlords, while at the same time he rigorously denies their authority. This is a virtual explication of Ishmael's stance in the opening stages of *Moby Dick*, when he begs the angel Gabriel's indulgence for his obedience to Captain Ahab. Israel Potter likewise serves the English, ostensibly with an undivided heart; but he will not say "Sir" to the English gentlemen, although he thereby involves himself in great difficulty and in life-long misery. His is also a clear case of obeying, but denying

the authority of the command. Such is the duplicity of existence.

What may go on in the heart of the pietistic anarchist is perfectly illustrated by Ethan Allen's blasphemies of the English lords, and his appeal to "the great Jehovah and the Continental Congress." Melville simply could not resist writing, "You Turks never saw a Christian before!" There is no madness and anguish in that expression, but top-gallant delight. It is really in the finest spirit of Christian anarchism, coupled with evangelical piety, and enforced, as is often the case (as for John Huss and Ethan Allen), by patriotic fervor. Gradually the character of the true princes emerges; and Melville may be seen from first to last as a religious author in the long tradition of evangelical pietism, earning, as did his spiritual forebears, a reputation for clever deception, as he obeys the injunction to be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove. But the profoundest insight into the heart of the anarchist is in *Pierre*. Here the confessions and revelations of an earnest youth are explicitly linked to his inwardness, as his spirit exists in collision with the world. There is also in *Pierre* the reasoned statement of the duplicity of existence as it is treated by Plinlimmon.

In Plinlimmon's pamphlet, the author not only adds to the wealth of details about the character of the "True Princes of the Empire" which has been revealed in his other writings, but he also deals explicitly with the nature of the col-

lision of pietism with the world. The text begins:

> It seems to me, in my visions, that there is a certain most rare order of human souls, which if carefully carried in the body will almost always and everywhere give Heaven's own Truth, with some small grains of variance. For peculiarly coming from God, the sole source of that heavenly truth, and the great Greenwich hill and tower from which the universal meridians are far out into infinity reckoned; such souls seem as London sea-chronometers (*Greek*, time-namers) which as the London ship floats past Greenwich down the Thames, are accurately adjusted by Greenwich time, and if heedfully kept, will still give that same time, even though carried to the Azores.[63]

He then goes on to concede that if this chronometer is carried to remote lands such as China, there may be slight variations, but even these may be "materially corrected" by "direct comparison with their great standard." The relation of this to Pierre's "earnest reperusal of the Gospels" is evident. The world, like the *Pequod* and the *Fidèle*, is a ship on its passage out, and amid the mutability and ambiguity of all events, frequent chronometrical checks are vitally necessary. The chronometrical checks, moreover, may very well be related to the fact that the *Pequod* left Nantucket on Christmas Day, while the *Fidèle* departed for the heart of America "at sunrise on a first of April," the day on which the world was allegedly created, but also, for modern men, "April Fool's" day.

But the Heavenly Chronometer, in a world of which God is not the lord, will always contradict the local horologes. All the clocks in the dominions of the "prince of the power of the air" are diametrically opposed to the "original Heaven's time." He writes:

> Now in an artificial world like ours, the soul of man is further removed from its God and the Heavenly Truth, than the chronometer carried to China is from Greenwich. And, as that chronometer, if at all accurate, will pronounce it to be 12 o'clock high-noon when the China local watches say, perhaps, it is 12 o'clock midnight; so the chronometric soul, if in this world true to its great Greenwich in the other, will always, in its so-called intuitions of right and wrong, be contradicting the mere local standards and watchmaker's brains of this earth.[64]

Within the philosophy of Plinlimmon, there is again a duplicity of language, for in explicit terms he ought to have quoted Scripture outright, and said that the wisdom of God is foolishness with men, and that conversely God laughs at the wisdom of men.[65] The case with such rare souls living in this world, is that they can never under any conceivable circumstances, speak plainly to the world, for this would enrage men, rather than draw them into the net. However, Melville leaves no doubt about the implications of his discourse about watches. He goes on:

> Bacon's brains were mere watchmaker's brains; but Christ was a chronometer; and the most exquisitely adjusted and exact one, and the least affected by all terrestrial jarrings, of any that have ever come to us. And the reason why his teachings seemed folly to the Jews, was because he carried that Heaven's time in Jerusalem, while the Jews carried Jerusalem time there. Did he not expressly say - My wisdom (time) is not of this world?[66]

Here is the explicit revelation. All his talk about heavenly time is to be interpreted as talk about the heavenly wisdom as revealed in the Gospels. But it is still the same today, he avers:

> But whatever is really peculiar in the wisdom of Christ seems precisely the same folly today as it did 1850 years ago, because, in all that time his bequeathed chronometer has still preserved its original Heaven's time, and the general Jerusalem of this world has likewise carefully preserved its own.[67]

It is evident, then, why the "True Princes of the Empire," secretly carrying celestial chronometers in a hidden pocket, come into such dire collisions with the world as Melville's youthful heroes do.

Precisely in this fact lies the duplicity of existence. The heavenly wisdom demands one course of conduct, and the whole world, deifying its prized objectivity by means of the sacerdotal fraud, demands allegiance to another sory of "wisdom," which is, with reference to chronometers, such that it calls midday, midnight. It calls falsehood, truth; and the truth it calls blasphemy. Now a man who would in China regulate his activities by the Greenwich chronometers, he goes on to expound, "would be guilty of all manner of absurdities." It is this situation which elevates Israel Potter to the rank of "foretopman in the Unprincipled." Again he says explicitly:

> And thus, though the earthly wisdom of man be heavenly folly to God; so also, conversely, is the heavenly wisdom of God an earthly folly to man. Literally, speaking, this is so.[68]

Pierre has virtually gone mad in trying to map out a suitable course of conduct in such a world. Hunilla staggers about

in a trance, in a dazed quietism. Israel Potter scarcely keeps "the vital nerve of the tap-root alive." Ishmael escapes with his life to tell the tale. Ungar staunchly maintains "the perilous outposts of the sane." This is the wisdom that is woe and the woe that is madness. Not only does Pierre go mad in his resolute pursuit of chronometrical excellence, but Melville himself becomes touched by the wind of the wings of madness.

Thus there is no longer any question of discovering Melville's truth. He has made that glaringly explicit. But the question of the status of the truth in existence is still unresolved. Plotinus Plinlimmon offers a "temporary Scaffold to the Portal" of a new philosophy which is designed to resolve the problem of existence in such a world where Shiloh is condemned as a malefactor, while sin itself elevates senators and judges to high rank, as Father Mapple implies. Plinlimmon's solution is startling:

> Nor does the God at the heavenly Greenwich expect common men to keep Greenwich wisdom in this remote Chinese world of ours; because such a thing were unprofitable for them here, and, indeed, a falsification of Himself, inasmuch as in that case. China time would be identical with Greenwich time, which would make Greenwich time wrong.

The author seems here to discount the value of any sort of theocratic innovation or reformation which would attempt to operate on heavenly time, for through time and usage, every such "reformation" inevitable falls out of time with chronometrical excellence, and becomes itself a part of the world in which it at first tried to stake a separate claim.

"He who finding in himself a chronometrical soul, "the philosopher goes on to say, "seeks practically to force that heavenly time upon the earth, in such an attempt can never succeed." Apparently Melville's *ecclesia* consists of single individuals. But the woes of isolation are hard to endure.

It may seem then, that common men can do no better than to obey Caesar, for all the alleged Greenwich chronometers on earth are wrong, so that a man is best advised to follow Chinese time when in China, as this will at any rate free him from committing painfully embarrassing and absurd acts.[69] But the pamphleteer raises a question:

> But why then does God now and then send a heavenly chronometer (as a meteor stone) into the world, uselessly as it would seem, to give the lie to all the world's time-keepers. Because he is unwilling to leave man without some occasional testimony to this! - that though man's Chinese notions of things may answer well enough here, they are by no means universally applicable, and that the central Greenwich in which he dwells goes by a somewhat different method from this world.[70]

Here is the recognition that even the common man lives in two worlds and that he can entirely suppress the claims of the realm of Spirit only by becoming something less than a man. It will be noted also that Melville recognizes no continuity of the "truth" in history; from time to time, there are born men with a heavenly soul in them; they come like meteors, and there is nothing they could learn from

their spiritual forbears, except that it goes ill with the truth in this world, something which in any case they will soon discover. As for the truth itself, it cannot be handed down from father to son; neither can it be communicated by the "laying on of hands," nor transmitted by a sacerdotal act. Melville is probably more constant and consistent with respect to his belief in a special act of divine election, that he is with respect to any other facet of his truth.

Plinlimmon has posited that God hardly expects common men to live by Greenwich time. There is in any case a "meridional correspondence" between Greenwich time and Chinese time. Though the two are opposite, they are related, one might say, in the fact of their polar dissimilarity. Furthermore, to some extent, the local horologes sometimes reflect a likeness to the chronometer. He says:

> For in their wickedness, downright wicked men sin as much against their own horologes, as against the heavenly chronometer. That this is so, their spontaneous liability to remorse does plainly evince.

This conceit shows, in his opinion, that the highest heavenly righteousness is not only impossible, but out of place in a world like this. Has the hidden author behind Plinlimmon lost his faith, as so many of the critics have suggested? Not at all; he has merely found a *modus vivendi*. This he describes:

> In short, this chronometrical and horological conceit, in sum, seems to teach this: - That in things terrestrial (horological) a man must not be governed by ideas celestial (chronometrical);

This is perhaps a restatement of "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's. Plinlimmon postulates that a "virtuous expediency" seems to be the highest attainable earthly excellence. When these common men go to heaven, he continues, it will be quite another thing. There they will have no trouble obeying the Sermon on the Mount. The master of duplicity turns to a bold irony:

> There, they can freely turn the left cheek, because there the right cheek will never be smitten. There they can freely give all to the poor, for there will be no poor to give to.[71]

Once begun, Plinlimmon indulges in ironic barbs against those dogmatical teachers who would urge the common man to attain chronometrical excellence in this world, "on pain of eternal wrath."

If any man charge, he protests, that this doctrine is impious, he will appeal to the history of 1800 years to show that the maxims of Christ have not diminished violence, wrong, and iniquity one whit.[72] Regarded in a purely earthly light, he says, "the chronometrical gratuitous return of good for evil" has been found, "horologically" false, because it is entirely impracticable. So Pierre, "one more erratic and non-conforming Apostle," finds how truly impotent the lore of heaven is. He may from time to time correct his

horologe by an "earnest reperusal of the Gospels," but this will worsen his condition in the world, and not ameliorate it. But Plinlimmon has outlined the philosophy of the hale Russian prophet, Berdyaev, who, perceiving that man lives into two worlds, between the claims of the realm of Spirit and the realm of Caesar, likewise came to the conclusion that it is best to obey Caesar, provided only that one does not admit Caesar's authority. Berdyaev seems to describe Pierre's dilemma when he writes:

> There is no criterion of truth outside the witness of truth itself, and it is wrong to seek absolute guarantees, which always demean the truth. Such is the consciousness of man, at the borderline between two worlds.[73]

In this state of tension, Pierre becomes an authentic existent. He can say, "I suffer, therefore I am." He finds that "with every ascession of the personal divine to him" further disaster comes upon him. Pierre, says the author, "has ringed himself in with the grief of Eternity." In this world, the truth was crucified, and things have not changed after the 1800 years.

Thus in his madness and anguish Pierre writes. He writes two books at the same time, as a good duplicit author must. He says of his labors; in the process of which "the primitive elementalizing of the strange stuff ...upheaved and upgushed in his soul" that both his time and his life are involved. The reference to an upgushing of some "primitive elemental stuff" accords with Lerner's view of the

protodoxy, when it is suppressed, becoming emotion and being expressed. There are then two books; one is the book of the doctrine, the more important book, but it is not written. The other is an infinitely inferior thing which demands only ink and is designed only for the aesthetic taste of genteel readers. He describes his two books as follows:

> Two books are being writ; of which the world shall only see one, and that the bungled one. The larger book and the infinitely better, is for Pierre's own private shelf. That it is, whose unfathomable cravings drink his blood; the other only demands his ink. But circumstances have so decreed, that the one cannot be composed on the paper, but only as the other is writ down in his soul. And the one of the soul is elephantinely sluggish, and will not budge at a breath. Thus Pierre is fastened on by two leeches; - how then can the life of Pierre last? Lo! he is fitting himself for the highest life, by thinning his blood and collapsing his heart. He is learning how to live, by rehearsing the part of death.[74]

Thus explicitly at last the author speaks of the *duplex factum* in his authorship. It appears that once the key has been found, the duplicit aspect of Melville's writings is everywhere evident. He might well have said with Kierkegaard, "Some day when my lover comes, my secret will be known, as a woman yields her coyness with relation to the true lover."

N O T E S
and
B I B L I O G R A P H Y

NOTES ON THE INTRODUCTION

The pagination for all references to Melville's writings is that of the Constable edition [London, 1923] of *The Complete Works of Herman Melville*, except where specifically cited as being from other editions.

1 The term *duplicity* is meant to be construed etymologically, first of all, in the sense of twofold; mechanically, in the sense of two parts of a fabricated structure operating simultaneously; and in terms of literary function, as a deception practiced upon the reader by pretending to entertain one set of feelings while acting under the influence of another. In this study the term is also used in the extended sense contributed by such synonymous terms as *doppelgang*, *zweideutigkeit* and *doppelsinnigkeit*. "Aesthetic-ethical duplicity" is consistently used in this dissertation to designate not only the concurrence of aesthetic and ethical elements in a passage, but to point to Melville's posited procedure of employing the aesthetic elements of language and literature in order to seduce the reader into a concern for the ethical.

2 Every Duyckinck, "Melville's *Moby Dick; or The Whale*," in Hershel Parker, *The Recognition of Herman Melville*, p.39.

3 Charles Gordon Greene, "Review of *Pierre*," in Parker, *Recognition*, p.49.

4 Frederick S. Cozzens, "Review of *White Jacket*," in Parker, *Recognition*, p.30. This "unctuous toying with verbal double-meanings," writes Cozzens, goes far to indicate, "that if the author had lived in the 'City of *Brotherly Love*,'' (church-burners, firemen-fighters, assassins, and rowdies, excuse the implied exceptions!) he might, with a little proper instruction, have become as celebrated as 'a Philadelphia lawyer,' that preëminent model of a pun-hunter." The linking of Melville with church-burners and firemen-fighters probably anticipates Melville's identification in this dissertation as an anarchist, while *philadelphia* evokes images of Melville's "Moravian pietism."

5 Anonymous ("Sir Nathaniel"), "Herman Melville" in Parker, *Recognition*, p.71.

NOTES ON INTRODUCTION

6
Klaus Ensslen, *Melvilles Erzählungen*, p.46.

7
Hans Helmcke, *Die Funktion des Ich-Erzählers in Herman Melvilles Roman "Moby Dick,"* p.45 et passim.

8
Klaus Lanzinger, *Herman Melville*, p.80.

9
Soren Kierkegaard, *The Present Age*, p.43. "Morality is character, character is that which is engraved (κεχαραγμένος) but the sand and the sea have no character and neither has abstract intelligence, for character is really inwardness."

10
The Works of Herman Melville XIV, 168 (Hereafter cited as *Works*.)

11
Pierre, p.289. "An overpowering sense of the world's downright positive falsity comes over him; the world seems to lie saturated and soaking with lies....he refers to his Bible, and there he reads most explicitly, that this world is unconditionally depraved and accursed."

12
Miguel de Unamuno, *The Agony of Christianity*, p.24. He translates Pauls's τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα ἠγώνισμαι (2 Timothy 4:7): "lived his good agony" (p.77).

13
Melville suggests in the dialectics of *Clarel* that all spiritual phenomena may be based ultimately upon the material. (*Works* XV, 269) Cf. Paul Brodtkorb's *The White Whale*, p.30 et passim. Perhaps the clearest statement of the materialistic viewpoint is Milton R. Stern's revelation: "Despite Melville's confusion of transcendentalism and pantheism, his objection to cosmic idealism remains. He rejects any reading of the universe which implies moral or spiritual equation. As pitiful as man's resources are, as limited as his identity, as weak as his visual nerve, they are all he has. By re-ordering his history with an earthly orientation, he must make them work for him." (*The Fine Hammered Steel of Herman Melville*, p.17.) Stern is precisely correct in asserting that Melville does not see any gods in nature, but curiously overlooks that with a nerve other than the optic, Melville sees very clearly a fixed spiritual truth

entirely outside of the world of nature, and entirely free of natural necessity.

14 The *docetist* position is that the Bible is great literature, and that Christ was a great teacher. Kierkegaard simply abominated these docetic assumptions; and the evidence is that Melville considered "unchristian" Solomon to be the teacher, but Christ a "blessed Redeemer."

15 *The Confidence Man*, p.299. The confidence man's ultimatum, "either-or," calls to mind at once Kierkegaard's book *Either/Or*, and his insistence that outside of a radical act of faith in God, life is merely froth. Cf. George Price's observation: "He said that outside of a radical encounter with God, man simply did not *exist*." (*The Narrow Pass*, p.217.)

16 *Pierre*, p.237. "Wherefore have Gloom and Grief been celebrated of old as the selectest chamberlains to knowledge? Wherefore is it, that not to know Gloom and Grief is not to know aught that an heroic man should learn?" Cf. Fyodor Dostoevsky, "Suffering is the sole origin of consciousness."

17 Lynn White, Jr., "On Intellectual Gloom," *American Scholar* (Spring 1966), 223-226.

18 Amos N. Wilder, *Theology and Modern Literature*, p.2.

19 See Frederick Ferré, *Language, Logic and God*, passim.

20 *The Letters of Herman Melville*, p.133. (Hereafter cited as *Letters*.)

21 Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity*, p.126. "Oh, it is so comfortable to be a listener or a transcriber when everything goes on so directly - but let these gentlemen who listen and transcribe be on their guard....it is the thoughts of *their* hearts that shall be revealed."

22 Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p.121. The leap of faith when the self flexes itself in ethical choice he calls a μεταβάσις εἰs 'άλλο γένος, a transplantation into another kind of being.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I

1 *Mardi*, p. 374.

2 J. Middleton Murry, *The Problem of Style*, p.73. He elaborates; "The essential quality of pure thought (as far as I understand it at all) is that it should lend iteslf to complete expression by symbols, which have a constant and invariable value. Words, as we all know, are not symbols of this kind; they are inconstant and variable; ...The thought that plays a part in literature is systematized emotion; emotion becomes habitual till it attains the dignity of conviction."

3 Emil Staiger, "Time and the Poetic Imagination" in *The Critical Moment*, p. 134.

4 F. R. Leavis, "Research in English" in *The Critical Moment*, p.94.

5 In reply to the charge that *Moby Dick* was marred as a work of art by its excessive exuberance, Melville replied, "As to that exuberance which you allege against the work, it is the exuberance of that prime staple - vitality." (*Letters*, p. 290)

6 S. L. Bethell, *Literary Criticism*, p. 87. "The poet, after all, is called a creator only by courtesy; he sings for the same cause that the birds sing, because he is made that way." This statement at once calls to mind Kierkegaard's description of the poet in the Diapsalmata: "What is a poet? A poet is an unhappy being whose heart is torn by secret sufferings, and whose lips are so strangely formed that when the sighs and the cries escape them, they sound like beautiful music." (*Either/Or* I, 19)

7 The story related is from a mimeographed introduction to Esperanto published by the Esperanto Association of North America, Fort Lee, New Jersey. The lines which Guerard heard being read were from Goethe's *Wandrers Nachtlied:*

> Über allen Gipfeln
> Ist Ruh,
> In allen Wipfeln
> Spürest du
> Kaum einen Hauch;
> Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.
> Warte nur, balde
> Ruhest du auch.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I

8 Jean-Jacques Mayoux, *Melville par Lui-même*, p.22.

9 George Steiner, "Humane Literacy" in *The Critical Moment*, p.30. "To read well is to take great risks. It is to make vulnerable our identity, our self-possession. In the early stages of epilepsy occurs a characteristic dream (Dostoevsky tells of it). One is somehow lifted free of one's own body; looking back one sees oneself and feels a sudden maddening fear; another presence is entering into one's own person, and there is no avenue of return. Feeling this fear, the mind gropes to a sharp awakening." He comments upon the task of a humane criticism: "It is the task of literary criticism to help us read as total human beings, by example of precision, fear and delight. Compared to the act of creation, that task is secondary. But it has never counted more. Without it, creation itself may fall upon silence." Melville speaks also of being lifted out of oneself. "Appalling is the soul of man! Better might one be pushed off into the material spaces beyond the uttermost orbit of our sun, than once feel himself fairly afloat in himself!" (*Pierre*, p. 396)

10 It will be useful at this point to consider Kierkegaard's description of the transition areas between the various stages of existence. He writes: "There are thus three spheres of existence: the aesthetic, the ethical, the religious. Two boundary zones correspond to these three: irony, constituting the boundary between the aesthetic and the ethical; humor, as the boundary that separates the ethical from the religious." (*Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 448)

11 *Pierre*, p. 43. "Hosannahs to this world!" he exclaims, "so beautiful itself, and the vestibule to more." In *Mardi* there are many more such psalms. His references to the Tekana (*Mardi*, p. 81), the Shekinah (378 , and in the first draft of *Billy Budd*), the Rio Sacramento (52), and Paradise, betray his persistently impinging principal concern.

12 *Redburn*, p. 84.

13 Ibid, 147.

14 Murry, *The Problem of Style*, p. 122.

15 Ibid, 126.

16 *Redburn*, p.321."Ah! there's the mistake! Though my organ is as full of melody as a hive is of bees, yet no organ can make music in unmusical breasts; no more than my native winds can, when they breathe upon a harp without chords."

17 S. L. Bethell, *Literary Criticism*. His concluding chapter, "The English Tradition," is an almost plagiaristic duplication of Murry's concluding chapter. "The English Bible and the Grand Style," in *The Problem of Style*. He also quotes the text: And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day. His comments thereon look embarrassingly like a borrowing. He writes: "Two thousand years of Christian civilization bend our minds to these words; we cannot resist them. Now can we refuse to them the title of great style. All that we have, as critics of literature, to remember, is that style of this kind is possible only when the appeal is to a habit of feeling and thought peculiar to religion." In his instroduction to *Paradise Lost*, in the New Cambridge Edition of *Milton's Complete Poetical Works*, Harris Francis Fletcher quotes a paragraph from Moody which elaborates the nature of the "anglohebraic mind." He writes, "*Paradise Lost* did in a remarkable way seize and draw together the imaginative elements of British thought. The Bible was in Milton's day the very centre and substance of that thought. It was for many years almost the only book accessible to the nation at large, and that too at a time when intellectual curiosity was profoundly stirred by the impulses of the renaissance. The stories of the Bible, its cosmogony, its chronology, its imagery, had sunk into the tissue of English thought like a rich and sombre dye." (p.141) Nathalia Wright, in her *Melville's Use of the Bible*, has shown how true this statement was of Melville. The Bible, she writes, lay at the deepest level of Melville's consciousness, inasmuch as it was the only book with which he was well acquainted before his twenty-fifth birthday. Melville is the Milton of America. Howard P. Vincent sees him justifying the ways of God to man, as much as did Milton. (*The Trying out of "Moby Dick,"* p.70)

18 Nathan C. Starr, *The Dynamics of Literature*, p. 93.

19 Ibid, 10.

20 Richmond Y. Hathorn, *Tragedy, Myth & Mystery*, p. 93.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I

21 *Pierre*, p. 294. The subject of "terrestrial-celestial" existence will be fully treated in the concluding chapter on the duplicity of existence as portrayed in Melville's works.

22 Starr, *The Dynamics of Literature*, p. 24.

23 Ibid, 26.

24 Merlin Bowen, *The Long Encounter*, p. 43.

25 *Letters*, p. 129.

26 M. D. Mahoney, *Clarel: An Investigation of Spiritual Crisis*, p. 15.

27 *Moby Dick*, LXX.

28 *Redburn*, p.242.The biblical-classical confusion in "some angel might descend and turn the waters of the dock into an elixir" is very typical of Melville. The scriptural allusion is to John 5:2-9. Amos N. Wilder sees in the literature of twentieth century America a religious mode of response to the world, and he describes Melville as a forerunner of the religious novelists of the present century. Melville's pairing of Bethesda's pool with elixir, he would see as a typical poetic union of Jerusalem-Athens, David-Sybil, Christ-Dionysius, Zion-Bohemia, Jordan-Helicon. (*Theology and Modern Literature*, p. 23 et passim) In *Mardi* Melville describes the link in his own inimitable way: "Dreams! dreams! golden dreams! endless and golden, as the flowery prairies that stretch away from the Rio Sacramento, in whose waters Danae's shower was woven." (*Mardi*, p. 52)

29 *Moby Dick*, CXXXV.

30 John P. Pritchard, *Literary Wise Men of Gotham*, p. 132.

31 W. K. Wimsatt, *Explication as Criticism*, p. viii. It is interesting to compare George Steiner's observation: "And it is precisely the objectivity, the moral neutrality in which the sciences rejoice and attain their brilliant community of effort, that bars them from final relevance." (*The Critical Moment*, p. 25)

32 Wimsatt's insistence that poetry must have at least a minimal reference to outside reality raises the question of what might be included in "outside reality." Is it really necessary that there should be a referential nexus with *things*, or is it also admissible to include "the workings of the mind"? (Lerner, *The Truest Poetry*, p. 5) It is surely evident that the poet's affective cognition of reality is very much a personal matter, just as much as the reader's affectional cognition of what the poet has to say is a personal mattter, dependent upon the mental framework which comprises the reader's world. The problem of what is meant by "outside reality" is not confined to the discussions of literary men. In his *Philosophy of Physics* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1936), Dr. Max Planck, winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics for his work on quantum theory, has some interesting things to say about "outside reality" with respect, in this case, to the microcosm. He writes: "By an event, physics means a certain merely intellectual process." (p. 53) But can the subjective uncertainty not be removed or minimized by using finely calibrated instruments? His answer is, "Every measurement brings about a fresh causal interference ....It is customary for this reason to speak of the causal work of the measuring instrument employed, by which it is meant that the inaccuracy is due at any rate in part to the fact that the magnitude to be measured is connected by some kind of law with the means by which it is measured." (p. 68) Thus a direct study of external reality is altogether impossible. In view of the fact that they are made of the same atoms as the external bodies which they are supposed to measure, "the measuring instruments are not merely passive recipients registering the rays impinging upon them; they play an active part in the event of measuring, and exert a causal influence upon its result." (p. 103) If such is the case with cold steel, what inferences can be drawn from the event of the human intellect appraising external reality, such as reading the works of an emotion-inducing poet? Those literary men who yearn for scientific exactitude might well heed the fact that science also yearns...for poetic intuition! "Science does not mean an idle resting upon a body of certain knowledge; it means unresting endeavor and continually progressing development towards an aim which the poetic intuition may apprehend, but which the intellect can never fully grasp." (p.83)

33 Karl Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, p.55.

34 Richard Hoggart writes in "Why I Value Literature" (*The Critical Moment*, p. 31 ff.), "I value literature because of the way, the peculiar way, in which it explores, re-creates and seeks meaning in human experience....because in it men look at life with all the vulnerability,

honesty, and penetration they can command, and dramatize their insights by means of a unique relationship with language .... The ebb and flow of his imaginative power within the work may reveal attitudes and assumptions hidden from the writer himself: never trust the teller: trust the tale!"

35 Soren Kierkegaard, *Either/Or* I, 65.

36 Ibid, 68.

37 Ibid, 85.

38 Kierkegaard, *The Present Age*, p. 19.

39 Ibid, 89, in the section, "On the Difference between a Genius and an Apostle."

40 *Redburn*, p.41. Such an appeal to the common experience of ordinary humanity admirably fulfills the desideratum of "concreteness."

41 *Israel Potter*, p.14. The distinctively human attribute of man is not reason, nor even, precisely speech; it is the ability to cry. Miguel de Unamuno writes: "More often I have seen a cat reason than laugh or weep. Perhaps it weeps or laughs inwardly, but then perhaps also inwardly, the crab resolves equations of the second degree." (Laurence Michel and Richard B. Sewall, ed., *Tragedy: Modern Essays in Criticism*, p. 2)

42 *Letters*, p. 83.

43 *Works* XIII, 276. See also Merton M. Sealts, Jr., "Herman Melville's 'I and My Chimney'," *American Literature* XIII (May 1941) 142-51. Sealts posits that "the chimney is the heart and soul of Herman Melville," and that the "chimney's" questionable soundness relates to Melville's concern about "his own hereditary liability to madness." (Sealts' article also appears in Parker's *The Recognition of Herman Melville*, p. 237)

44 *Israel Potter*, p. 219.

45 Robinson Jeffers, "Shine Perishing Republic," in *Roan Stallion, Tamar, and Other Poems* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1925), p. 95. Some of the lines are:

"But for my children, I would have them keep
their distance from the thickening centre;
corruption never has been compulsory,
when the cities lie at the monster's feet,
there are left the mountains."

46 Kierkegaard, *The Present Age*, p. 96. "The man who is called, ought, according to divine ordinance, to use his divine authority in order to be rid of all the impertinent people who will not obey, but want to reason." In the *Attack* he remarks that whenever the man of the Instant comes, a "genial company of twaddlers" are ready to serve the cause. In his *Journals* he writes: "All those who have been exceptional, who have lived sparsely scattered through time, each of them have delivered their judgement on *man*. According to the report of one, man is an animal; according to another, he is a hypocrite; according to another, he is a liar, etc. Perhaps I shall not hit it off least happily, when I say: man is a twaddler, and that with the help of speech." (*Journals*, p.250) Melville's contribution is, "Man is a money-making animal." (*Moby Dick*, XCII)

47 Consider, for instance, the repeated analogies in the Gospels: the kingdom of heaven is like a woman who lost a penny, like a good man who went on a journey, like a man who sold all that he had, like a man who invited guests to a wedding, like a man who planted a vineyard, etc. The use of analogy always replaces direct discourse.

48 Jean-Jacques Mayoux, *Melville par Lui-même*, p. 49.

49 The quoted phrases are largely from *Pierre*. "There is a dark mad mystery in some human hearts....We think we are not human; we become as immortal bachelors and gods; but again, like the Greek gods themselves, prone we descend to earth; glad to be uxorious once more, glad to hide these god-like heads within the bosoms made of too-seducing clay." (*Pierre*,p. 252) Kierkegaard complains that when the young man confesses his spiritual turmoil to the priest, he is given the advice, "Go to Juliana, she can drive such thoughts away." (*Attack*, p. 145) In the same place he writes, "And possibly it is true, as both poets and prose writers have affirmed, that in these soft arms one forgets the world's alarms; but the question is whether there is not also something else one can only too easily forget in these soft arms - namely, what Christianity is." In *Redburn*, the youthful adventurer takes a vow of celibacy, because he has to leave three

pretty English damsels behind. In *Mardi*, as Mayoux has noted, the infantile dream of sexual heroism rescues Yillah from her tormentor, but then leaves her untouched; in *Typee* the narrator goes canoeing with the naked Fayaway, but apparently remains celibate, engaging merely in what Mayoux calls an interminable *canotage*. Love is profane, Melville suggests elsewhere, precisely because it mortally reaches heaven through a woman, who, however, is not eternal, but made of clay. Thus is is that "cradled in the twin-born softness of her breasts" a man may easily forget the eternal. In his conception of Paradise restored, Melville sees man as no longer susceptible to feminine blandishments, with "The rib restored to Adam's side / And man made whole as man began." (*Works* XV, 145) Pierre muses, "Youth is hot, and temptation strong... a smile is the chosen vehicle of all ambiguities.... When we would deceive we smile." (*Pierre*, p. 116, 117) Clarel learns that "Eve can no more be divorced from sex than a rose from the soil." (*Works* XV, 148) Finally, if the syllables of YILLAH are given Semitic import, she may be seen in terms of the scriptural woman hiding in the wilderness, the true church.

50 Mayoux, *Melville par Lui-même*, p. 53.

51 C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life*, p. 70 ff. In his opinion, even perverted sex furnishes such evidence. The Russian philosopher, Nikholas Berdyaev, writes: "Love lies in another plane of being than that in which the human race lives and orders its existence....Love will submit to no setting in order. In love there is no perspective of adjusting life in this world. In love there is the fatal seed of perdition in this world; the tragic loss of youth." Sexual lust, however, he considers to be tragic for personality as it brings a man prone to the earth, to use Melville's words. But even so, sexual passion can sometimes be transformed by love into something ennobling. (*Christian Existentialism*, p. 92 ff.) Like Kierkegaard himself, Pierre finds that the passion of love loosens him from the ties of friends, family and race.

52 Kierkegaard, *The Point of View*, p.62. "And now only one thing more. When some day my lover comes, he will easily perceive that at the time I was regarded as ironical, the irony was by no means to be found where the 'highly esteemed public' thought .... He will perceive that the irony lay precisely in the fact that within this aesthetic author, under this worldly appearance, was concealed the religious author, who

just at that time was consuming quite as much religiousness as commonly suffices for the provision of an entire household ... My lover will perceive how it all fitted to a nicety, how my existence-relationship was transformed in precise correspondence with the requirement of my productivity."

53 *Letters*, p. 106.

54 Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Dream of a Queer Fellow*, p. 30.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II

1 *Letters*, p. 127.

2 Lawrence Lerner, *The Truest Poetry*, p. 65.

3 Frederick C. Crews, *The Pooh Perplex*, p. 54 (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1965).

4 Soren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 236.

5 Kierkegaard, *The Point of View*, p. 155. Elsewhere he writes, "It is the requirement of this age that one must bawl systematically and crow world-historically." (*Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 163) But woe to that man, he warns, who forgets what it is to be a man, to be himself.

6 *Journals of Kierkegaard*, p. 251.

7 Kierkegaard, *Attack upon Christendom*, p. 127.

8 Ibid, 217.

9 *Journals of Kierkegaard*, p. 202.

10 *Attack upon Christendom*, p. 286.

11 In the introduction to *Training in Christianity* (p. ix), Dr. Walter Lowrie bewails the gross affront perpetrated against Kierkegaard by certain German editors who published the *Attack* in an anticlerical interest, and the *Diary of the Seducer* in a salacious interest, while at the same time suppressing the fact that both were written in a profoundly Christian interest. Benjamin J. Nelson affirms that "even when his delighted readers supposed he was engaged in captivating their senses and flattering their vanities, he was already fishing for their souls." (*Point of View*, p. x) Edward Waggenknecht comments on the extant Melville criticism: "As for the vision of life which Melville used literature to express, I do not believe that we even yet possess the data we should need to expound it fully. This much, however, seems clear: Melville was rediscovered in the futilitarian era, and disillusioned moderns have often used him as a vehicle for the expression of their own disappointment in life. Much Melville criticism, in other words, is merely autobiographical." (*Cavalcade of*

the American Novel, p. 74)

12 The reference is to Percival's *A Reading of "Moby Dick"*. Considerable evidence could be adduced that Percival got his "insights" not from Kierkegaard, but from a Kierkegaard Anthology edited by Lee M. Hollander, and possibly from the editorial comments of Frederick Sontag. In any case, Percival appears to have no presentiment of the profoundly Christian basis of Kierkegaard's polemic; he seems, moreover, not even to have been aware of the *Edifying Discourses* and *The Point of View*.

13 *Attack upon Christendom*, p. 118.

14 William S. Gleim, *The Meaning of "Moby Dick"*, p.1.

15 *Moby Dick*, XLV.

16 *Moby Dick*, CXXXIV.

17 Sidney P. Moss, "*Cock-A-Doodle-Doo!* and some Legends in Melville Scholarship," *American Literature*, XL (March 1968), 192-210. The author speaks of using Melville's "exultant masterpiece" as his "Ariadne's thread into the labyrinth of Melville scholarship."

18 *Letters*, p. 70.

19 *Moby Dick*, LV.

20 *Moby Dick*, LXXXVII.

21 *Moby Dick*, CIII.

22 *Kierkegaard Anthology* (ed. Bretall), p.9.

23 *Works* VIII, 63. The microscope and telescope, says William Blake, "alter / The ratio of the Spectator's Organs / But leave Objects untouched." (*The Complete Writings of William Blake*, p. 516 ["Milton," Plate 29, ll. 17-18], London: Oxford University Press, 1966.)

24 *Moby Dick*, XLI.

25 *Letters*, p.96. Kierkegaard expresses a similar anguish: "But to have to be silent when one is so deeply concerned!" (*Stages on Life's Way*, p. 241)

26 *Letters*, p. 127. In the same letter Melville writes, "Though I wrote the Gospels in this century, I should die in the gutter." About this complaint Geoffrey Stone makes the terribly bourgeois comment: ".... overlooking that these writers of the gospels died in worse places." (*Herman Melville*, p. 189) It is uncertain what the comparative *worse* might mean for someone who does not exist in the categories in which he thinks.

27 In Kierkegaard's single known reference to Shaftesbury, he mentions this facet of the essay, "An Essay on Freedom, Wit, and Humour," in the statement,"A principle propounded by Lord Shaftesbury, which makes laughter a test of truth." (*Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 458)

28 *Works* XV, 31.

29 *Pierre*, p. 471.

30 *Pierre*, p. 472.

31 *Moby Dick*, XCVI.

32 While the undeveloped man lives in aesthetic immediacy, "there is a Catskill eagle in some souls" which must soar into the sunny spaces and the blackest gorges. Kierkegaard writes: "The ethical is a correlative to individuality, and that to such a degree that each individual apprehends the ethical essentially only in himself, because the ethical is his complicity with God." (*Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 138)

33 *Letters*, p. 132.

34 Speaking of the priests of Christendom, Kierkegaard writes, "Their métier is to invert the whole situation, so that what a man likes becomes religion." The priests of *Typee* likewise "know just the sort of information wanted, and furnish it to any extent." In *Clarel*, Melville writes: "But there's dimission civil / And Jesus is the indulgent God." (*Works* XV, 21)

35 In the Encantadas, "no heavenly rain has ever fallen." In Judah, "There clouds hang low but yield no rain." (*Works* XV, 157) Clarel discovers that Palestine is a blasted and a wasted land; and Melville wonders at the effects of "the terrible embrace of the Deity." He describes the land of Judah:

> 'Tis horror absolute - severe
> Dead, livid, honeycombed, dumb, fell
> A caked, depopulated hell;
> So here, men here adore this ground
> Which doom hath smitten. 'Tis a land
> Direful yet holy - blest tho' banned.
>
> (*Works* XIV, 217)

36 *Attack upon Christendom*, p. 279. As "characterlessness is pleasing to this world," the preacher of truth will hear the cry, "Away with that man; he is not fit to live." Nikholas Berdyaev concurs, adding: "Full acceptance of the truth of the Gospel ... would lead to the destruction ... of this world." (*Christian Existentialism*, p. 165) Melville sees that unless a man commits a "practical sort of suicide" to the things of this world, he cannot maintain his personal integrity. (*Pierre*, p. 294)See p.36 above for this quotation in context.

37 *Moby Dick*, XCVI.

38 *The Melville Log* II, 529.

39 Melville apparently sees futurity in terms of the divine election to life, or else annihilation and oblivion. The doctrine of hell was repugnant to Melville, "an insult to any sane man"(*Moby Dick*, XVI); "an idea first born on an undigested apple-dumpling."(*Moby Dick*, XVII) He seems to console himself, in the event of his failure as a man, with the Judaeo-Christian doctrine of annihilation, as expressed in Scripture by "They shall be as though they had not been." In this he follows the tradition of orthodox pietism, as Berdyaev describes it: "Christianity is opposed to the spiritualist doctrine of the immortality of the soul; it believes in the resurrection of the integral man." (*Christian Existentialism*, p. 259)

40 *Pierre*, p. 471. "All things that think, or move, or lie still, seemed as created to mock and torment him. He seemed gifted with loftiness, merely that it might be dragged down to the mud. Still, the profound willful-

ness in him would not give up. Against the breaking heart and the bursting head, against all the dismal lassitude, and deathful faintness and sleeplessness, and whirlingness, and craziness, still he like a demi-god bore up."

41 *The Melville Log* II, 529.

42 Melville's heroes do enjoy the domestic amenities, but choose to renounce and forsake them in an ascetic interest, as does Israel Potter, that "wandering Jew" enduring existence in a hostile Gentile world. The Nantucketer who "goes down to the sea in ships," leaves the comforts of home, "For years he knows not the land; so that when he comes to it at last, it smells like another world." (*Moby Dick*, XIV)

43 *Moby Dick*, XXIII.

44 *Pierre*, p. 483.

45 *Moby Dick*,XXIII. In *Clarel: An Investigation of Spiritual Crisis*, Mother M. D. Mahoney sees Bulkington as an important symbol of Melville's awareness that asceticism and renunciation are the prerequisites to the vision of truth. To answer Clarel's question, "Whose is the eye that sees aright," she says that to see "aright" a man must be willing to forsake all comforts, as does Ishmael when he ships on the Pequod, "quite content if the world is ready to board and lodge me"(*Moby Dick*, XVI). This is the ethical response of the man of character to the existential imperative.

46 *Works* XIV, 121.

47 Merlin Bowen, *The Long Encounter*, p. 28. (The internal quotation is from *Moby Dick*,XVI.) Melville had some germinal seeds dropped into his soul by Emerson's *Essays*, particularly by "Self-Reliance," in which he duly noted such passages as: "Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato and Milton is that they set at naught books and traditions, and spoke not what men, but what *they* thought." (*The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* II, 45)

48 Nathalia Wright, *Melville's Use of the Bible*. Melville writes, however, "Until I was twenty-five, I had no development at all. From my twenty-fifth year I date

my life." (*Letters*, p. 130) For a study of the general impact of the Bible upon early America see Joseph Gaer and Ben Siegel, *The Puritan Heritage: America's Roots in the Bible.*

49 Wright, for example, pp. 4, 17, 19, 129.

50 Lawrence Thompson, *Melville's Quarrel with God*, p.136.

51 *Letters*, p. 130.

52 *Works* XIII, 45. On p. 47 he writes, "Dark sayings are these, some will say, But why? It is because they somewhat savour of Holy Writ in its phrase 'mysteries of iniquity'!" The original manuscript read: "It is because they somewhat savour of Holy Writ in its phrase 'mysteries of iniquity'?" If they do, such savour was foreign from my intention, for little will it commend these pages to many a reader of today." (*Billy Budd*, p.175 [Toronto: Popular Library, 1951]) The sailors aboard the *Highlander* dislike the grave matron, Mrs. O'Brien, and hate her large old quarto Bible; "they had a bitter grudge against her book." (*Redburn*, p. 346)

53 *Moby Dick*,XXVI. "If, then, to meanest mariners, and renegades and castaways, I shall hereafter ascribe high qualities, though dark; weave round them tragic graces; if even the most mournful, perchance the most abased, among them all, shall at times lift himself to the exalted mounts; if I shall touch that workman's arm with some ethereal light; if I shall set a rainbow over his disastrous set of sun; then against all mortal critics, bear me out in it, thou just Spirit of Equality, which hast spread one royal mantle of humanity over all my kind! Bear me out in it, thou great democratic God! who didst not refuse to the swart convict, Bunyan, the pale poetic pearl."

54 *Works* XIV, 48.

55 When the man of the Instant comes, writes Kierkegaard, "he will find there before him a genial company of twaddlers who under the name of seriousness lie around and bungle things by wanting to serve the cause." When the true man refuses to have anything to do with

them, they will accuse him of not being serious. But the man of the Instant will do things his own way: "He must be as coarse-mouthed with them as possible." Then the crowd will rave against his frightful pride. But what says the fire-chief, the man who has come to set fire on the earth. "Rid me of these damn people with their pitchers and squirts, and if they won't yield to fair words, smear them a few over the back, so that we may be free of them and get down to work." (*Attack upon Christendom*, p. 193)

56 *The Melville Log* II, 586. Other examples of complaints about Melville's language, his lack of taste, and poor social judgement, may be found on pp. 511, 523. Melville defends himself in a letter to Hawthorne: "With no son of man do I stand upon any etiquette or ceremony, except the Christian ones of charity and honesty." (*Letters*, p. 126)

57 *Israel Potter*, p. 192. For a provocative collation of Melville's "indiscretions," see Edward H. Rosenberry, *Melville and the Comic Spirit*.

58 *Letters*, p. 97. On board the *Highlander*, Redburn observes in his mind's eye, "the literati, theatrical stars, foreign princes, and gentlemen of leisure and fortune, who generally talked gossip, politics, and nonsense across the table ..."(*Redburn*, p. 136). When he considers how sleek packet-ships are sometimes turned into reeking whalers, he thinks, "*Sic transit gloria mundi*."

59 St. Thomas à Kempis, *Imitatio Christi*, p. 4 (New York: Books Incorporated, n.d.) Kierkegaard writes: "It is the imitation of Christ that must now be introduced - and I must be what I am, in being different from others." (*Journals*, p.216) In his copy of Emerson's *The Solitudes of Nature and of Man*, Melville underlined: "The most social men are the least intellectual. 'He is very unsocial,' is almost equivalent to saying, 'He is a man of great qualities'." (*Log* II, 720)

60 *Moby Dick*,XXXIII.The genuine marks of nobility, the titles and insignia of the "choice hidden handful" Kierkegaard delineates: "... one of the glorious ones, the genuine saints, whose worth therefore is not attested by the spurious marks of profit, stars, and titles, but by the genuine marks of poverty, abasement, ill-treatment, persecution." (*Attack upon Christendom*,

p.24) Such a saint is Pierre. "For Pierre is a warrior too; life his campaign, and three fierce allies, Woe and Scorn and Want, his foes. The wide world is banded against him; for lo you! he holds up the standard of Right, and swears by the Eternal and True!" (*Pierre*,p. 377). The world will hate you, Christ warned his disciples; and the nature of this hatred Melville reveals, among other places, in "The Town-Ho's Story." The narrator says: "Now, as you well know, it is not seldom the case in this conventional world of ours - watery or otherwise; that when a person placed in command over his fellowmen finds one of them to be very significantly his superior in general pride of manhood, straightway against that man he conceives an unconquerable dislike and bitterness." (*Moby Dick*, LIV) In terms of these criteria, Melville's "True Princes of the Empire" are Israel, Pip, Hunilla, Pierre, Ishmael, Redburn, White Jacket, Billy Budd, and the "wilful boy" of Mardi (*Mardi*, pp.8-30), all of whom nobly bear the insignia of true nobility.

61 *The Melville Log II*, 714.

62 *Typee*, p. 23.

63 *Israel Potter*, p. 81.

64 Peter F. Drucker, "The Unfashionable Kierkegaard," *Tragedy: Modern Essays in Criticism*, p. 236. "All honor to the human race," writes Kierkegaard, "But thou, O saviour of the world, thou didst entertain too lowly a notion of the human race, failing to foresee the sublime heights to which, perfectible as it is, it can attain by an effort steadily pursued!" (*Attack upon Christendom*, p. 105)

65 *Pierre*, p. 276. In *Mardi*, Babbalanja advances his "kangaroo" theory, adducing evidence that man descended from the kangaroos. (*Mardi*, p. 218) Media asks, "Do you not imagine that you may do harm by disseminating these sophisms of yours; which like your devil theory, would seem to relieve all Mardi from moral accountability?" (*Mardi*, p. 158)

66 Henry Nash Smith, "The Image of Society in *Moby Dick*," *Centennial Essays*, p. 66. "Not only," he writes, "are political and economic forms wicked; they are irredeemable. It does not occur to Melville that

institutions might be improved. He has nothing in common with the social reformer."

67 Kierkegaard, *Either / Or* I, 19.

68 Hugh W. Hetherington, "Early Reviews of *Moby Dick*," *Centennial Essays*, p. 89. He cites a large number of reviews, many of which bear out Kierkegaard's prophetic words to a remarkable degree.

69 *Letters*, p. 290.

70 *Attack upon Christendom*, p. 201.

71 Henry A. Murray, "In nomine Diaboli," *Centennial Essays*, p. 8.

72 Frederic I. Carpenter, *American Literature and the Dream*, p. 73. "Melville had the misfortune to live during the most peaceful of all the civilized centuries, but to think in terms of Armageddon. He conceived the world as a man-of-war...Melville prophesied disaster to a century which expected the millenium."

73 In *The Confidence Man*, Melville writes that the "Indian-hater" hated Indians like he hated snakes. (*The Confidence Man*, p.186.) But it is only by "hating" men; that is, by arousing them out of their stupid complacency (What Kierkegaard calls twaddling, nincompoopism, mediocrity." *Attack*, p. 108) that one can really love them. They must be aroused to a vital concern about their relationship to the eternal. Official Christianity, which Melville satirizes in every novel he wrote, tries to tranquillize men with its "nauseating, syrupy sweets": therefore, however, the priests do not "love" men, but really hate them. William E. Sedgewick writes, "Perhaps the angry satirist, and not the man who blandly dismisses him, is the true believer in his kind." (*Herman Melville: The Tragedy of Mind*, p. 192)

74 "Cock-A-Doodle-Doo," *Works* XIII, 168. "Glory be to God in the highest," sings the cock. "Why, this is equal to hearing the great bell of St. Paul's rung at a coronation!" (pp. 148, 149)

NOTES ON CHAPTER II

75 *Moby Dick,* XCVI.

76 *Attack upon Christendom,* p. 266.

77 C. L. James, *Mariners, Renegades, and Castaways,* p. 10. In *Clarel,* Melville writes: "Your arts advance in faith's decay / You are but drilling the new Hun / Whose growl even now can some dismay." (*Works* XV, 244) Melville is canonically prophetical when he writes that mediation between science and faith is vain, as each truce but covers faith's retreat. (XV, 83) You cannot harmonize Moses and Comte, Renan and Paul. (XV, 84) "While Comte engaged in the prolix dialectics of doubt," writes Kierkegaard, "Moses retained the wonder of youth, and overleaped the intervening causes to arrive at God." (*Edifying Discourses,* p. 99) Melville goes on to say that the Protestant "civil dimission" will result in a new dark age, in which men will shun to name a God, use the Greek myths as equivalent to Scripture, and forego all recognition of evil. (XV, 245) The higher criticism has infected all the theologies: "Zion like Rome is Niebuhrized." Both priest and infidel grasp at a succession of myths, while "at settled hearts they wonder most." (XV, 23) Of Ungar, the man of "jeremiad spells," they think, "He's wise; too vehemently wise." (XV, 254) The only hope for the world in this condition is that men shall once again heed what they still "labially confess," that man must be "born anew." (XV,252) Melville has dropped the guitar!

78 "Hawthorne and His Mosses," *Works* XIII, 131.

79 *Attack upon Christendom,* p. 248. The knavishness to which he refers is the tendency of prudence to reason when it is asked to obey. This "twaddle" elicits his most scathing attack.

80 Berdyaev, *Christian Existentialism,* p. 166. "And the proclamation of the truth is the end of this world of lies."

81 *Works* XIII, 137.

82 *The Point of View,* p. 17.

83 *Attack upon Christendom,* p. 241 . See also note 60 above.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II

84 *Works* XIII, 124.

85 *Pierre*, p. 471.

86 *Works* XIII, 132-133.

87 Berdyaev, *Christian Existentialism*, p. 110.

88 Merlin Bowen, *The Long Encounter*, p. 2

89 Ibid, 43.

90 *Moby Dick*, CXIV.

91 M. D. Mahoney, *Clarel: An Investigation of Spiritual Crisis*, p. 14.

92 There is a hint of Melville's recognition of the tension between the inner integrity of spirit, and the outward concessions to necessity in some lines from *Moby Dick*. He writes, "That immaculate manliness we feel within ourselves, so far within us, that it remains intact, though all the outer character seem gone ..." (*Moby Dick*, XXVI).

NOTES ON CHAPTER III

1 Soren Kierkegaard, *Repetition*, p. 11. He describes himself also as "an author who writes...in order to be misunderstood." (p.24) It is interesting to compare, for similarity and contrast, the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Is it so bad then to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood. " (*The Complete Works* II, 58)

2 Merlin Bowen, *The Long Encounter*, p. 2. See p. 130 above.

3 Lawrence Lerner, *The Truest Poetry*, p. 4.

4 Ibid, 65. His opening words refer to the "dulce et utile" view of poetry expressed by Lucretius in *De Rerum Natura* I, 936-942:

> Veluti pueris absinthia taetra medentes
> cum dare conantur, prius oras pocula circum
> contingrunt mellis dulci flavoque liquore,
> ut puerorum aetas improvida ludifectur
> labrorum tenus, interea perpotet amarum
> absinthi leticem deceptaque non capiatur,
> sed potius tali pacto recreata valescat.

5 Genesis 5:6.

6 James Guetti, *The Limits of Metaphor*, p.2. (Subsequent references to Guetti refer to the chapter, "The Languages of *Moby Dick*.") It must be remembered that while for the mystic, words are insufficient to describe the glory he has seen, and while for the humanistic positivist, words are imperfect symbols for reality, in the Judaeo-Christian trandition words are dynamic and real. Thus God spoke, and the world was; he commanded, and it stood fast; and God said, Let there be light, and there was light. "Call me Ishmael," writes Melville, and the character stands on deck. It is with regard to this "hebraic" element in modern American literature, that Amos N. Wilder warns that a humanistic cricism is simply inadequate. (*Theology and Modern Literature*, p. 63 ff.)

7 John Freeman, *Herman Melville*, p. 119. Howard P. Vincent also comments upon the vital significance of this sermon: "Philosophically, *Moby Dick* remains closed

NOTES ON CHAPTER III

to us until we understand Father Mapple's sermon on Jonah and the whale. With this key Melville unlocked the novel....No less than John Milton, Father Mapple seeks in his sermon to justify the ways of God to man." (*The Trying Out of "Moby Dick,"* p. 70)

8 The initial letters of ᾿Ιησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτήρ (Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Saviour) produce the word ιχθῦς (ichthus = fish), whence the symbol of the fish became a sort of password for primitive Christians. If the reader supposed that this reference was to *Moby Dick*, well and good; this is the method of duplicity. Some extant "readings" of *Moby Dick* might well be either authenticated or else invalidated if they were prefaced by a collation of scriptural, talmudic and patristic commentaries on *leviathan*.

9 Guetti, p. 12.

10 *Redburn*, p.370. In *Pierre*, however, the author proposes to tear aside all veils. "Be naught concealed in this book of sacred truth." (*Pierre*, p.151) In *Moby Dick*, "Glimpses do ye seem to see of that mortally intolerable truth." (*Moby Dick*, XXIII)

11 Guetti p. 29.

12 Ibid, 26. Elucidative are Kierkegaard's works: "Silence is the essence of inwardness, of the inner life. Mere gossip anticipates real talk, and to express what is still in thought weakens action by forestalling. But someone who can really talk, because he knows how to remain silent, will not talk about a variety of things, but about one thing only, and he will know when to talk and when to remain silent." (*The Present Age*, p.69) Guetti has overlooked the fact that the essentials, while they may well be known, cannot be expressed in public. It will be observed that whenever Melville talks his way up to the ethico-religious, he falls silent. However, "certain signals....give telegraphic notice of the religious," as Kierkegaard says.

13 Kierkegaard, *Attack upon Christendom*, p.277. "The sort of men who now live cannot stand anything so strong as the Christianity of the New Testament; they would die of it or lose their minds."

NOTES ON CHAPTER III

14 Guetti, p. 44.

15 Charles L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language*, p.33. Cf. Frederick Ferré's statement: "Convictional language, furthermore, refers to 'all the reality there is,' not just to some aspect of reality as does the indicative language of the sciences." (*Language, Logic and God*, p. 138)

16 *Israel Potter*, p. 151.

17 *Moby Dick*, I .

18 *Works* XIII, 124. See p.125 above.

19 Not only the exigencies of biological survival, but also the natural gregarious propensities of men drive the "true Princes of the Empire" to join the social circle. Only gradually and with great bitterness of spirit do they ultimately accept their isolation and separation from the herd. "Oh, in the days of youth," writes Kierkegaard, "it is of all torments the most frightful, the most intense, not to be like others .... always, as soon as one would make the venture, to be reminded of the fetters, the isolating peculiarity .... With the years, it is true, this pain diminishes more and more, as more and more one becomes spirit; it causes no pain that one is not like the others." (*Attack*, p.285) Melville writes that there is "no misanthrope like a boy disappointed."(*Redburn*, p.10) In his grief, Pierre finds that he is rejected even by the cat. (*Pierre*, p. 163) The narrator in *Typee* complains, "There was no one with whom I could freely converse; no one who could sympathize with my sufferings." (*Typee*, p.310) Melville's "glorious ones" are uniformly friendless and misunderstood; or like Redburn and White Jacket, manage to find a single confidante like themselves. The concerned Clarel is another isolato:

> They all had left him, one by one.
> Was it because he open threw
> The inmost to the outmost view?
>
> (*Works* XIV, 321)

NOTES ON CHAPTER III

20 *Israel Potter*, p. 182. Israel manages to survive on the alien ship for a time by "promiscuously circulating."

21 Abraham S. Klein writes of the exiles of his race in "Sonnets Semitic." (*Canadian Anthology*, Toronto: W. J. Gage & Co. Ltd., 1950)

> Now we will suffer loss of memory
> We will forget the things we must eschew
> We will eat ham despite our tribe's tabu,
> Ham buttered ... on fast days ... publicly;
> Null then and void, the kike nativity.
>
> Our recompense?... Emancipation day!
> We will find friends where once we found but foe.
> Impugning epithets will glance astray,
> To gentile parties we will proudly go
> And Christians, anecdoting us, will say:
> 'Mr. and Mrs. Klein, the Jews, you know.'

22 *Letters*, p. 130. "I read Solomon more and more, and every time see deeper and deeper and unspeakable meanings in him."

23 *Israel Potter*, p. 192.

24 In *Moby Dick*, Stubb interrupts Cook's sermon, "Why damn your eyes, you musn't swear that way when you're preaching. That's no way to convert sinners, cook!" (*Moby Dick*, LXIV) It may be, however, that swearing is the only way in which the "virtuous" can be aroused from their conceit.

25 *Israel Potter*, p. 77. Christ's words are recorded in Matthew 10:16. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

26 *Israel Potter*, p. 199. Cf. Dostoevsky's, "Suffering is the sole origin of consciousness." Suffering sentivizes a man in order for him to receive spiritual impressions, as may be inferred from *Clarel:*

> Indeed each wakeful night and fast
> (That keeps and feeds what clay would clutch)
> With thrills which he did still outlast,

NOTES ON CHAPTER III

His fibres made so fine in end
That though in trials fate can lend
Firm to withstand, strong to contend;
Sensitive he to a spirit's touch.

(*Works* XV, 137)

A similar *telos* is implied by the chorus lines of Melville's poem, "The Bench of Boors" (*Works* XVI, 268): "A wakeful brain / Elaborates pain. / Thought's ampler bound / But chill is found. / Thought's eager sight / Aches - overbright!" Also to be noted is the ironic inversion and its implications in one of his letters: "For my part I love sleepy fellows, and the more ignorant the better. Damn your wide awake and knowing chaps! As for sleepiness, it is one of the noblest qualities of humanity." (*Letters*, p. 231)

27 *Israel Potter*, p. 111.

28 God disposes things in such a way, writes Kierkegaard, "that those whom he loves and who love him, must suffer dreadfully in this world." (*Attack*, p.225) As Melville's reference to "the terrible embrace of the deity" has precipitated so much critical misunderstanding, Kierkegaard's own sermon on Jonah may not only complement Father Mapple's sermon, but clarify what "the embrace of the deity" means. He writes: "Think of the prophet Jonah. Such a severely tried and tormented man has the modest wish to rest awhile under the shade of a tree. He finds this tree, this shade; it was so grateful a relief to him that presumably he wished he might hold on to his refreshment, feared that it might te taken from him. He scores a hit! God the Almighty at once fixes his attention upon this tree; a worm is commanded to sap its root." (*Attack*, p. 157)

29 *Works* XV, 47.

30 *Works* XIV, 101. The same evidence confirms the princes of this world that God is against Judah. But Melville significantly sees some "strangeness in her lot" besides the curse. (*Works* XV, 217)

31 Leviticus 23:39-43 and Deuteronomy 16:13-15. Melville's treatment is a contextual parody. Such statements as

"I verily believe the firstborn of every litter perished before the setting of the sun" allude so directly to scriptural sources that other, more indirect, allusions may be authenticated by it. (*Typee*, p. 214)

32 *Typee*, p.250. Again Kierkegaard offers a pertinent clarification: "The Christianity of the priests, by the aid of religion, is directed to cementing families more and more egotistically together, and to arranging family festivities, beautiful family festivities .... excursions to the Deer Park, etc." (*Attack* p. 222) "Their métier is to invert the whole situation, so that what man likes becomes religion..." (p.221).

33 *Typee*, p.267. The natives evince a "want of vital piety." (p. 291) There seems little doubt that Melville has America in mind when he writes: "In truth, I regard the Typees as a backslidden generation. They are sunk in religious sloth, and require a religious revival. A long prosperity of bread-fruit and cocoa-nuts has rendered them remiss in the performance of their higher obligations. The wood-rot malady is spreading among the idols - the fruit upon their altars is becoming offensive - the temples themselves need re-thatching - the tatooed clergy are altogether too light-hearted and lazy - and their flocks are going astray." (p. 264) With regard to the impact of "official" Christianity, cf. Kierkegaard's brutal assessment of the benefits which Christendom brought to Denmark: "The change is this, that the whorehouse remains exactly what it was in paganism, lewdness in the same proportion, but it has become a 'Christian' whorehouse." (*Attack*, p. 164) Cf. also Emerson's assessment of Christianity "entrenched in establishments and forms," lacking the vigor of wild virtue: "For every Stoic was a Stoic; but in Christendom where is the Christian?" (*The Complete Works* II, 85)

34 *Typee*, p.254. Cf. Redburn's observation, "But there is no shame in some sea-captains, who only blush after the third bottle." (*Redburn*, 174)

35 John Freeman, Howard P. Vincent, and others, have recognized to some extent Melville's profoundly Christian bias; but they seem to have misunderstood

the peculiar mentality of this primitive "Christian" heresy. Vincent writes, however, "The individualism of Father Mapple is Christian, insisting that the personal will must submit to the will of God; personal self must be submerged in the divine self." (*The Trying Out of "Moby Dick"*, p. 72) Thus Vincent has a presentiment of what lies behind the poet; and his insight seems to be limited only by his lack of awareness of the historical tradition of pietistic anarchism, or what is sometimes now called Christian existentialism.

36 Leviticus 3:17. The levitical injunction expressly prescribes that "the blood is to be spilled upon the ground." Melville is probably taking "wicked" delight in his deliberate inversion. See also note 31 above.

37 *Moby Dick*, LXV.

38 Ishmael's musings about the wickedness of eating whalesteak by the light of whale-oil may well be a "duplicit" reflection upon the eminently humane levitical injunction: "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk." (Exodus 23:19 and Deuteronomy 14:21)

39 Cf. Melville's "It will be more tolerant ... I say, in the day of judgement ..." (*Moby Dick*, LXV), with the scriptural, "But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable ... at the judgement, than for you." (Luke 10:12,14)

40 *Typee*, p. 213.

41 The cannibalism (See note 37 above) may have an indirect reference to "devouring the flesh of the glorious ones," the practice of the priests, who live off the avails of the suffering of the saints, whom the priest does not follow, but "uses" to make a career. Thus he is "an educated, a cultivated... abominable" cannibal. (*Attack*, p. 268)

42 *Typee*, p. 320.

43 Walter Kauffman, in his introduction to *The Present Age*, writes: "Kierkegaard is safely dead and therefore had the right to be as nasty as he pleased and to make fun of the professors of his day and the foibles of his age. He can even count on the applause of

those, a hundred years later, who walk in the footsteps not of Kierkegaard, but of the men at whom he laughed." (p. 24) "The present age," writes Kierkegaard, "leaves everything standing, but cunningly empties it of significance." (p. 42) Kauffman comments on this betrayal: "To be sure, it is not literally with a kiss that Christ is betrayed in the present age; today one betrays with an interpretation ... Kierkegaard is fine, says the present age, provided only that he is cut and dried a little, milked of his unpleasant venom, and - in one word - bowdlerized. But in the present age one no longer literally changes texts; instead, to say it once more, one betrays with interpretations ...*Sancta simplicitas!* The present-day Judases no longer know what they betray, any more than they know what they like .... Of course, one is sure of one's likes and dislikes - much surer than one might be if one really knew the texts .... A writer who so persistently distinguished between what he called an aesthetic approach and what we might call an existential approach should not be approached and discussed on the aesthetic plane, as he usually is." (pp. 12, 15, 17)

44 John Freeman, *Herman Melville*, p. 23. "How closely he is following his own lost youth and his own fierce aspirations it is impossible to determine now, nor how much of exaggeration there is in the statement that Pierre 'felt the pyramidical scorn of the genuine loftiness for the whole infinite company of infinitesimal critics'!"

45 Ibid, 26. The quotation is from *Typee*, p. 40. All of Melville's "high-spirited" travellers are the products of such a "natural" election. He writes, "Nature intended a rare and original development in Pierre" (Pierre, p.16), and spends an entire chapter in describing his careful upbringing, until "in Pierre was the complete polished steel of the gentleman, girded with Religion's silken sash." Cf. also White Jacket's friend, the poet Lemsford (*White Jacket*, p. 49 ff.), and Redburn.

46 Ibid, 39.

47 Ibid, 40. The internal quotation is from *White Jacket*, p. 287.

48 Ibid, 119.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III

49 Ibid, 120. Freeman's recognition of the dramatic significance of Pip's rôle is interesting. It will not do to dismiss Pip with the description, "a little negro lad, five feet, hang-dog look, and cowardly." More perceptive is the commentary of C. L. R. James: "Pip plays no great part in the book, as the Pips play no great part in the world. But his importance is in the mind of his creator!" (*Mariners, Renegades, and Castaways*, p. 66)

50 Ibid, 120. Perhaps Melville's "duplicit" advice to the literary dillettantes is found in, "I recommend all adventurous youths who abandon vessels in romantic islands during the rainy season to provide themselves with umbrellas!"(*Typee*, p.63) The explicit translation of this advice may be in a letter to Sarah Huyler Morewood, with regard to *Moby Dick:* "Warn all gentle and fastidious people from so much as peeping into the book - on risk of a lumbago & sciatics." (*Letters*, p. 138)

51 Nathan C. Starr, *The Dynamics of Literature*, p. 36.

52 Hans Helmcke, *Die Funktion des Ich-Erzählers in Herman Melvilles Roman "Moby Dick*, p. 54. Italics supplied for emphasis.

53 Revelation 10:10. "And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey, and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter."

54 Helmcke, p. 56.

55 Merlin Bowen, *The Long Encounter*, p. 43. See p.38 above.

56 See p. 83 above. That man whose worldly shrewdness has enabled him to avoid suffering will sink into unconsciousness, will cease to "exist." Kierkegaard describes him: "more than once he has asked the parson whether there really was such an immortality, whether one would really recognize oneself again - which indeed must have for him a singular interest, since he has no self!" (*Fear and Trembling*, p. 190)

NOTES ON CHAPTER III

57 Nathalia Wright, "*Moby Dick*" Jonah's Whale or Job's Whale," *American Literature* XXXVII (May 1965), 190-195.

58 Melville refers pejoratively to Niebuhr (Barthold Georg, 1776 - 1831), one of the innovators of the higher criticism. He writes in *Clarel:* "Zion like Rome is Niebuhrized." (*Works* XIV, 136) In the same place he speaks of "hegelized Jews" (146). Writing in his Journals on the geographical and spiritual barrenness of Patmos, he concludes with, "Heartily wish Renan and Strauss to the dogs." (*The Melville Log* II, 551) His reference is to David Friedrich Strauss (1808 - 1874), a pioneer in the "demythologizing" of the New Testament. Ernest Renan (1823 - 92) was the author of *Vie de Jésus*, a French version of Strauss' *Leben Jesu,* both books being prolix and speculative inquiries into the "historical Jesus." (q.v. Paul Althaus, *The So-Called Kerygma and the Historical Jesus,* [London, 1959]). Elsewhere Melville describes those prophets who claim to have heard a voice from silence: "Plato, and Spinoza, and Goethe, and many more belong to this guild of self-impostors... whose vile brogue still the more bestreaks the stripedness of their Greek or German neoplatonical originals." Pierre anathemizes the same crew: "Ye chattering apes of Spinoza and Plato, who once did all but delude me that night was day, and pain only a tickle." (*Pierre,* pp.290,421) The church "Prolongs in sacerdotal way / The lower Empire's bastard sway." (*Works* XV, 280) In *Clarel,* Comte is also branded as an enemy of the faith. (*Works* XV, 83) It is interesting to compare Kierkegaard's single reference to Comte: "While Comte engaged in the prolix dialectics of doubt, Moses retained the wonder of youth, and overleaped the intervening causes to arrive at God." (*Edifying Discourses,* p. 99) Melville curses Renan and Strauss precisely because they have destroyed for him, and for modern men, the possibility of "childish wonder." It can be seen with what "gods" Melville has a quarrel.

59 *Israel Potter,* p.8.

60 *Pierre,* p. 89. "Ay, Pierre, now indeed art thou hurt with a wound never to be completely healed, but in heaven; for thee, the before undisturbed moral beauty of the world is forever fled; for thee, thy sacred father is no more a saint; all brightness hath gone

from thy hills, and all peace from thy plains; and now, now for the first time, Truth rolls a black billow through thy soul." Cf. Kierkegaard's description of truth as "a breach, the very deepest and most incurable breach with the world." (*Attack*, p.17)

61 *The Confidence Man*, p. 169. "Some boys know not virtue only for the same reason they know not French; it was never taught them."

62 R.M. Hare, *Freedom and Reason*, p. 92. There is a curious precis of Hare's statement in *The Confidence Man*: "Prove all the vials; trust those which are true." (*Works* XIII, 109) Melville is parodying Paul's words in Scripture: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (I Thessalonians 5:21)

63 George C. Kerner, *The Revolution in Ethical Theory*, p.54. Although Kerner does not fully describe an emotive-cognitive simultaneity in the act of comprehending meaning, he is fully aware of the interrelationship of mind and feelings, both in the process of formulating an ethical postulate, and in the process of responding ethically (that is, by choosing) to a moral imperative. Richard Hoggart writes: "Obviously, we can learn morally even if evil appears to triumph. 'Moral impact' does not mean a direct ethical prompting but the effect of literature upon the temper with which we face experience." (*The Critical Moment*, p. 37) Melville's "confidence man" will, in any case, not admit a merely intellectual assent; he forces a choice. "You ought to elect," he says, "either ... or." Faced with this existential imperative, the barber gives a very human answer, "Sir, you must excuse me, I have a family." (*The Confidence Man*, p.306)

64 *Pierre*, p.143. Pierre tells the "silver-keyed parson," who is very much another Derwent (*Clarel*, passim): "But a hint from heaven assures me now, that thou hast no earnest and world-disdaining counsel for me now. I must seek it direct from God himself, who, I now know, never delegates his holiest admonishings." (*Pierre*, p. 230) Not only is this statement an explicit extension of Father Mapple's sermon; it is also an important testimonial to the "mentality" of pietistic anarchism.

65 George Price, *The Narrow Pass*, p.129. See also Price's

footnote, Appendix II, no. 104 (p. 145): "It is incorrect to assume that Kierkegaard sought to destroy abstract reasoning in the interest of some sort of 'subjective appropriation.' To assume this latter is to assume precisely what he repudiated."

66 Ibid, 128.

67 *The Confidence Man*, p. 192. Some attributes of the woodsman could be read out of Emerson's essay, "Self-Reliance" (*The Complete Works* II, 45) There is nevertheless a profound distinction between Emerson's self-reliant man, and Melville's "patriot only to heaven." The distinction is between terrestrial virtue and celestial "chronometrical excellence."

68 Ibid, 196.

69 Ibid, 195. The allegory is self-revealing, as the description of Indian perfidy and bloodthirstiness is directly related to the history of "Christian" Europe. Moreover, the double-talk creates a comparison: the perfidy and cruelty of Christendom is worse than anything which ever happened in the pagan world.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV

1 *Letters*, p. 131. "What nonsense!" writes Melville to Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Here is a fellow with a raging toothache. 'My dear boy,' Goethe says to him, 'you are sorely afflicted with that tooth; but you must *live in the all*, and then you will be happy'!" In a postscript he adds: "This 'all' feeling, though, there is some truth in it. You must often have felt it, lying on the grass on a warm summer's day. Your legs seem to send out shoots into the earth. Your hair feels like leaves upon your head. This is the *all* feeling. But what plays the mischief with the truth is that men will insist upon the universal application of a temporary feeling or opinion."

2 There are many satirical comments upon "societies" in Melville's works. In *Moby Dick* he arraigns the Secretary of the Society for the Suppression of Cruelty to Ganders, for signing the circulars with a goose quill. (*Moby Dick*, LXV) The *Neversink*, and other men-of-war, rely on the disposition of their crewmen to contribute to "pious enterprises" such as the "African Colonisation Society." (*White Jacket*, p.197) The "swindler" promotes the "World's Charity Society." (*The Confidence Man*, p. 50) His Wall Street methods will convert China in six months. Melville's view of "societies" in general may well be expressed by Emerson's comments in "Self-Reliance": "I tell thee, thou foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the dollar to ... the thousand-fold Relief Societies; - though I confess with shame I sometimes succumb and give the dollar, it is a wicked dollar, which by and by I shall have the manhood to withhold." (*The Collected Works* II, 52) A note adds that "Of his 'own poor' and his own causes. Mr. Emerson was mindful, and his hand was free."

3 Soren Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity*, p. 63.

4 *Pierre*, p. 291.

5 *Training in Christianity*, p. 126.

6 Amos N. Wilder, *Theology and Modern Literature*, p.34.

7 Thomas Vargish, "Gnostic Mythos in *Moby Dick*," PMLA LXXXI (June 1966), 272-277.

8 I. Newberry, "*The Encantadas:* Melville's *Inferno,*" *American Literature* XXXVIII (March 1966), 49-68. It appears, however, that Melville's own view may be expressed in some lines from *Clarel:* "Nay, nay: Ah, God, keep far from me / Cursed Manes and the Manichee!" (*Works* XV, 280)

9 Something of the inversion of values in this world of "armed and crested lies" is indicated by the narrator's comments about Pip in *Moby Dick.* "Pip, though over tender-hearted, was at bottom very bright" (*Moby Dick,* XCIII); "a whale would sell for thirty times what you would in Alabama" (Ibid,XCIII);"O Pip, thy wretched laugh, thy idle but unresting eye; all thy strange mummeries not unmeaningly blended with the black tragedy of the melancholy ship, and mocked it!"(Ibid, CXIII); "He saw God's foot upon the treadle of the loom, and spoke it; and therefore his shipmates called him mad. So man's insanity is heaven's sense; and wandering from all mortal reason, man comes at last to that celestial thought, which, to reason, is absurd and frantic"(Ibid,XCIII); "Poor Alabama boy! On the grim Pequod's forecastle, ye shall ere long see him, beating his tambourine; prelusive of the eternal time, when sent for, to the great quarter-deck on high, he was bid strike in with angels, and beat his tambourine in glory; called a coward here, hailed a hero there!" (Ibid, XXVII)

10 *Moby Dick,* IX. The doctrine of obedience, as expressed in Father Mapple's sermon, is in the pietistic tradition. Like Sophocles' Antigone, the "patriot to heaven" will "stumble against Law enthroned," because, as Antigone says, "I honored those things to which honor truly belongs." She too has no law nor lord but the Lord her God, as she expresses in the lines:

> That order did not come from God. Justice
> That dwells with the gods below, knows no such law.
> I did not think your edicts strong enough
> To overrule the unwritten, unalterable laws
> Of God and heaven, you being only a man.
> They are not of yesterday or today, but everlasting
> Though where they came from none of us can tell.

(*Antigone* I, 451 ff.) It is evident that to any constituted earthly authority, such a posture must appear to be anarchical and intolerable.

11 Berdyaev writes: "Peter was the apostle of the average

level of humanity. In him is the spirit of involution, of condescension. But Christ's beloved disciple was John, and from him comes the mystical tradition. The mystical church, which because of man's low estate has not yet been fully revealed, is the Johannine church." (*Christian Existentialism*, p. 246) This gospel is eschatologically based, Berdyaev affirms. "Christianity remains something messianic; it awaits the second coming of the Messiah and the messianic kingdom. But Catholic theology resists all attempts to introduce the messianic idea into Christianity, for fear of prophetism. Primitive Christianity was indisputable eschatologically-minded." (p. 256)

12 Kierkegaard, *Journals*, p.203. In the margin of his Bible, Melville underscored Romans 14:22, "Hast thou faith, have it to thyself before God" and commented in the margin, "The only kind of Faith - one's own." (*The Melville Log* II, 627)

13 Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity*, p. 86.

14 Amos N. Wilder, *Theology and Modern Literature*, p.22. "When religion is assigned to a shrine and poetry to a pedestal, they console themselves by becoming confederates. Shrine religion becomes aestheticism. Pedestal art takes on a pseudosanctity."

15 *Training in Christianity*, p. 87.

16 *Letters*, p. 142.

17 Kierkegaard writes; "Morality is character; character is that which is engraved (κεχαραγμένος); but the sand and the sea have no character and neither has abstract intelligence, for character is really inwardness." (*The Present Age*, p. 43) Nikholas Berdyaev is even more explicit about the characterlessness of objective neutrality. He writes: "But the devil, the prince of this world, hides himself in the neutral." (*Christian Existentialism*, p. 193)

18 *Works* XIII, 87.

19 *Israel Potter*, p. 193.

20 Redburn describes the despair of isolation: "For the scent and savor of poverty was upon me, and they all cast toward me their evil eyes and cold, suspicious glances, as I sat apart, though among them. I felt that desperation and recklessness of poverty which only a pauper knows.... The devil in me then mounted up from my soul and spread over my frame." (*Redburn*, pp. 13-15) He confesses to demoniac feelings, but marches grimly on.

21 *Letters*, p. 128.

22 M. D. Mahoney, *Clarel: An Investigation of Spiritual Crisis*, p. 4.

23 Cf. 1 Corinthians 13:1, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." Christ brought the message of the divine ʼαγάπη, Melville writes in *Clarel*, but:

> Oh, men
> Made earth inhuman; yes, a den
> Worse for Christ's coming since his love
> (Perverted) did but venom prove.
>
> (*Works* XV, 254)

24 Wilder, p.33.

25 Ibid, 34.

26 Ibid, 53. "Teachers trained in humanistic method," he writes, "are ill-prepared to deal with the Hebraic-Christian presuppositions wherever they appear...." (p.2)

27 Henry A. Murray admits that the "trained disability" which he acquired in Academia makes it difficult for him to approach a book like *Moby Dick* with its extravagant vigor. (*Centennial Essays*, p. 4)

28 *Pierre*, p. 300. "But here the pamphlet was torn, and came to a most untidy termination." In the *Encantadas* there are several instances of the story

being interrupted, only to be resumed again. "And now follows-. Against my own purposes a pause descends upon me here. One knows not whether nature doth not impose some secrecy upon him who has been privy to certain things. At least it is to be doubted whether it be good to blazon such." (*Works* X, 229) "Ask me not, señor," Hunilla replies to the captain's questions. (228) And again "But no, I will not file this thing complete for scoffing souls to quote." (229) In *Redburn* the narrator intersperses talk about a "Holy Guide Book" and "noble monuments that remain though pyramids crumble" with the exclamation: "No! by my father's sacred memory, and all sacred privacies of fond family reminiscences, I will not! I will not quote thee, Old Morocco, before the cold face of the marble-hearted world; for your antiquities would only be skipped and dishonored by shallow-minded readers." (*Redburn*, p. 191]

29 *Pierre*, p. 284.

30 *Pierre*, p.286. Pertinent is Emerson's comment on art: "A true announcement of the law of creation if a man were found worthy to declare it, would carry art up into the kingdom of nature, and destroy its separate and contrasted existence." (*The Complete Works* II, 365)

31 From Kierkegaard's "What is a Poet?" in the *Diapsalmata*. (*Either/Or* I, 19) See p. 115 above for the quotation in context.

32 In his review of *Pierre*, Charles Gordon Greene writes, "*Pierre* or *The Ambiguities* is, perhaps the craziest fiction extant." (Parker, *The Recognition of Herman Melville*, p. 49)

33 Melville's design in thus seducing the reader may well be expressed by a passage from *Moby Dick:* "How vain and foolish, then, thought I, for timid untravelled man to try to comprehend aright this wondrous whale, by merely poring over his dead attenuated skeleton, stretched in this peaceful wood. No, only in the heart of quickest perils; only when within the eddyings of his angry flukes; only on the profound, unbounded

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV

sea, can the fully invested whale be truly and livingly found out." (*Moby Dick*, CIII)

34 A good demonstration of the "simplistic" procedure is found in Paul's sermon as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15, a condensation of the entire *kerygma* of what Ishmael calls in *Moby Dick*, "the first Congregational Church ...the same Ancient Catholic Church....the great and Everlasting First Congregation." (*Moby Dick*, XVIII)

35 *Pierre*, p. 294.

36 Ibid, 297.

37 John Freeman, *Herman Melville*, p. 70. He qualifies this "madness" to distinguish it from insanity: "It was not the isolation of the insane, as has been suggested, for the insane do not quietly pursue an employment such as Melville pursued, and preserve the spiritual qualities as he preserved them."

38 *Letters*, p. 70. "My romance, I assure you, is no dishwater nor its model borrowed from the Circulating Library."

39 Most men, indeed, live only in aesthetic immediacy; but Melville and his heroes, "men like you and me and some others," as he wrote to Hawthorne, "forming a chain of God's posts around the world" are evidently different. (*Letters*, p. 132) Compare his description of Toby in *Typee:* "Toby, like myself, had evidently moved in a different sphere of life, and his conversation at times betrayed this, although he was anxious to conceal it." The knight of faith, Kierkegaard distinguishes from the man of this world, who lives by pragmatic prudence. " We should not care to ask advice from him, for he is an alien and a stranger, who has no acquaintance with and maintains no connection with that remote country about which we ask." (*Edifying Discourses*, p.113)

40 *Works* XIII, 124. [Passage quoted on p. 125 above.]

41 *Pierre*, p.397. "By vast pains we mine into the pyramid; by horrible gropings we come to the central room; with joy we espy the sarcophagus; but we lift the lid - and no body is there! - appallingly vacant

as vast is the soul of a man."

42 *Moby Dick*, CXIV. "Where lies the final harbor, whence we unmoor no more." (See p.132 above for this quotation in context.) The attainment of finality is, however, eschatologically deferred. For the present, "in landlessness alone resides highest truth." (*Moby Dick*, XXIII)

43 M. D. Mahoney, *Clarel: An Investigation of Spiritual Crisis*, p. 22.

44 Starr, *The Dynamics of Literature*, p. 26. See p. 37 above.

45 *Pierre*, p. 412.

46 Ibid, 423.

47 Ibid, 289. Dr. K. H. Sundermann writes, "Melville scheidet scharf zwischen der ursprünglichen Lehre Christi, dem Urchristentums einerseits, und dem geschichtlich gewordenen Christentum seiner Tage anderseits." (*Herman Melvilles Gedankengut*, p.17)

48 W. H. Auden, *The Living Thoughts of Kierkegaard*, p. 14. Melville seems to distrust intuition, imagination, and other internal resources. In *Clarel* he writes:

> Thy wings, Imagination, span
> Ideal truth in fable's seat:
> The thing implied is one with man,
> His pentralia of retreat -
> The heart with labyrinths replete."
>
> (*Works* XV, 316)

49 Matthew 10:34. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I am not come to send peace, but a sword."

50 *Pierre*, p.289. For a collation of references from Melville, Berdyaev and Kierkegaard on "this world of lies," see pp. 122, 123, and ch. II, note 80 above. Cf. also Babbalanja's assertion, "I but

fight against the armed and crested lies of Mardi, that like a host assail me." (*Mardi*, p. 128)

51 Nikholas Berdyaev, *Christian Existentialism*, p. 165.

52 Pietistic *gelassenheit*, or submission, as distinguished from open warfare against falsehood is enjoined by the fact that in this world the truth is so enmeshed with fraud. (*Works* XIV, 118) A " sad perversion" has affected not only primitive Christianity, but later "reforms." (*Works* XV, 216)

53 *Pierre*, p.347. Melville revels in Carlylean invective as he creates an imaginary title for a German prince: "Hereditary Lord of the backyard of Crantz Jacobi; Undoubted Proprietor by Seizure of the bedstead of the late Widow van Lorn; Heir Apparent to the Bankrupt Bakery of Fletz and Flitz; Residuary Legatee of the Confiscated Pin Money of the Late Dowager Dunker; etc. etc. etc." By contrast, the "allies" of the "fool of truth" are "Woe, Scorn, and Want." (377)

54 *Works* XV, 47.

55 "The Encantadas," in *Works* X, 225.

56 Ibid, 229.

57 The details of William Miller's calculations can be found in Uriah Smith's *Daniel and the Revelation* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press, n.d. Numerous editions available.); and in Ellen G. White's *Great Controversy* (Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1957). The question remains as to whether Melville had ever so much as heard of William Miller. There is a good deal of indirect evidence to suggest that he had. First of all, *Clarel* contains numerous parallels to the concern of Hunilla, and with a more direct relationship to Miller. Melville may have been

thinking of Miller when he wrote: "Clarel the mentor frequent heard / The time for Christ's return allot" (*Works* XIV, 41); or when he described "the flitting, tract-dispensing man" who was not chartered by any founded mission: "Deep read was he in seers devout / The which forecast Christ's second prime / And on his slates would cipher out / The mystic dates and dates sublime / And Time and Times and half a Time / Expound he could and more reveal." (XIV, 35) This sound amazingly like Miller's constant topic, and also describes his methods, as he roamed around New England (1824 - 1844) with his time-charts and tracts. In the years 1840-1844, the "Adventists" attracted a great deal of press attention, and with his persistent eschatological concern, Melville would no doubt have noticed such news items. There are other parallels between *Clarel* and *The Encantadas* which confirm his interest in the subject of the "second advent." Melville writes of "beguiling faith" which makes man hope against hope, wondering "What chance or craft / Upset the promise to return?" (*Works* XIV, 57) He asks, "Does the delay serve a purpose?' When Ruth is buried her hand is left exposed, "That so the bridegroom may not miss / To kiss it first when soon he comes." (XV, 286) *Clarel* also contains a discussion of scores of time prophecies which formed part of the calculations of William Miller, such as the 42 months, the three and a half times, the 1260 days; all of which seem to be coterminous, but with only uncertain references as to their beginning. (Cf. Hunilla's concern with the time of the departure of the vessel.) William Miller found his beginning in Daniel 9:25, "from the going forth of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem...." and thus concluded that the prophetic days ended on March 21, 1844. But there was no sign from the infinite, to use a familiar Kierkegaardian phrase. Miller announced a miscalculation, and predicted the end 180 days later. After that, there were no more attempts at date-setting. The parallels between *The Encantadas* and *Clarel* strain the idea that Melville's phrases have only a co-incidental relation to William Miller. In terms of his spiritual cast and temperament, Melville may very well have "been privy" (*Works* X, 226) to Miller's prophetism, and shared a secret sympathy for the saints who came down from the mount of expectation with their white robes somewhat soiled, and their

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV

hearts maddened, to endure abuse from the public press. He may have had them in mind when he wrote: "Humanity, thou strong thing, I worship thee, not in the laurelled victor, but in this vanquished one." (*Works* X, 227) In *Redburn*, Melville mentions a Seventh Day Baptist who must pursue "the Lord's work" while a sick child lingers at home (*Redburn*, p. 548); this is a possible reference to Miller's successor, Ellen G. White. Most of the early Millerites had previously been Seventh Day Baptists. (William G. McLoughlin mentions William Miller's ministry in "Pietism and the American Character," *American Quarterly* XVII [Summer 1965], 163-186.) Finally, Hawthorne mentions "good Father Miller" and his prophecies a number of times in *Mosses from an Old Manse*, and although no direct evidence is at hand, in their crossing and recrossing of many deserts, in their "ontological heroics" (*Letters*, p. 133), the two men may well have discussed Miller's calculations and final disappointment. It may be that this is "the half which shall here remain untold."

58 *Works* X, 226.

59 Ibid, 235.

60 *Works* XV, 217. Judah is very much like the Enchanted Islands, which are sanctified by Hunilla's futile "pious search." Norfolk Isle, says the narrator, "has become a spot made sacred by the strangest trials of humanity." (*Works* X, 219)

61 *Works* X, 231. "There was something which seemed strangely haughty in her air, and yet it was the air of woe."

62 Nikholas Berdyaev, *Christian Existentialism*, p.277. This casts some light upon Melville's radical republicanism. On the one hand he lauds a ruthless democracy (*Moby Dick*,XXVI), while on the other hand, he inveighs against the inherent and fundamental "evil" of democracy. (*Works* XV, 240)

63 *Pierre*, p. 293.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV

64 Ibid, 294. Berdyaev concurs that the Chinese clocks say it is midday when in actuality it is midnight. "All modern history with its rationalism, its positivism, its believe in science, has been a period of night, rather than of day - the sun of the world has darkened, the light from above has gone out; all the light that was, has been artificial and indirect." The world calls this midnight darkness "the age of enlightenment," and rightly so, for the author of the "enlightenment" is no doubt Lucifer, the "light-maker." But "if this be light," writes Melville in *Clarel*, then "darkness is divine." (*Works* XV, 245)

65 1 Corinthians 3:19. "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

66 *Pierre*, p.294. In a letter to Hawthorne he writes: "The reason the mass of men fear God, and *at bottom dislike* Him, is because they rather distrust His heart, and fancy Him all brain like a watch." (*Letters* p. 129)

67 *Pierre*, p.295. The heavenly wisdom is "precisely the same folly today" because "Man's heart is what it used to be." (*Works* XV, 282)

68 Ibid. He alludes to the text in note 65 above; and also to 1 Corinthians 1:25, "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men." Cf. also, "So man's insanity is heaven's sense." (*Moby Dick*, XCIII)

69 In *Typee* he writes, "When at Rome do as the Romans do, I held to be so good a proverb, that being in Typee I made a point of doing as the Typees did." (*Typee*, p.306) In any case, "Clear Truth is for salamander giants only." (*Moby Dick*, LXXVI)

70 *Pierre*, p.296. Evidently Melville regards himself as such a chronometer, as may be adduced from his phrasing of a letter to Hawthorne: "the like of which men like you and me and some others, forming a chain of God's posts round the world." (*Letters*, p. 132)

71 *Pierre*, p.299. Explicitly, then, chronometrical excellence must be posited as an ideal for existence

under present conditions, for the Sermon on the Mount would be meaningless with reference to a perfect world. In his copy of Emerson's *Essays*, Melville underlined the words: "The good, compared to the evil which he sees, is as his own good to his own evil." He commented in the margin, "To annihilate all this nonsense read the Sermon on the Mount, and consider what it implies." (*The Melville Log* II, 648) What the sermon evidently implied for Melville was that chronometrical excellence had to be upheld in a world where all the local horologes were wrong.

72 *Pierre*, p. 300.

73 Nikholas Berdyaev, *Christian Existentialism*, p. 168.

74 *Pierre*, p.424. The unwritten book might be entitled *The Delectable Mountains* (p. 476), while the other is *Enceladus*. W. H. Auden seems to describe Pierre's attitude to his own book: "Art to the elect is no longer a religious ritual, but an immoral sham, useful only as a fraudulent but pragmatically effective method of making the ignorant masses conform to the law of virtue which they do not understand." (*The Living Thoughts of Kierkegaard*, p. 13) From his publisher, Pierre receives an interesting note: "Sir, You are a swindler. Upon the pretense of writing a popular novel for us you have been receiving cash advances from us, while passing through our presses the sheets of a blasphemous rhapsody.... Send not another sheet to us." Pierre places the letter under his heel and solemnly declares, "No longer do I hold terms with aught." (*Pierre*, p. 498)

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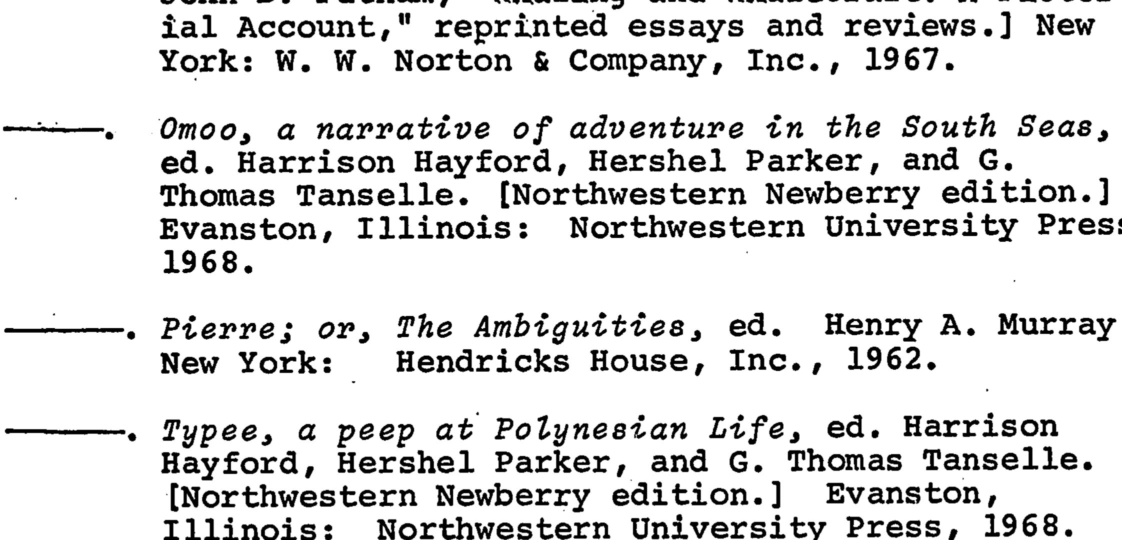

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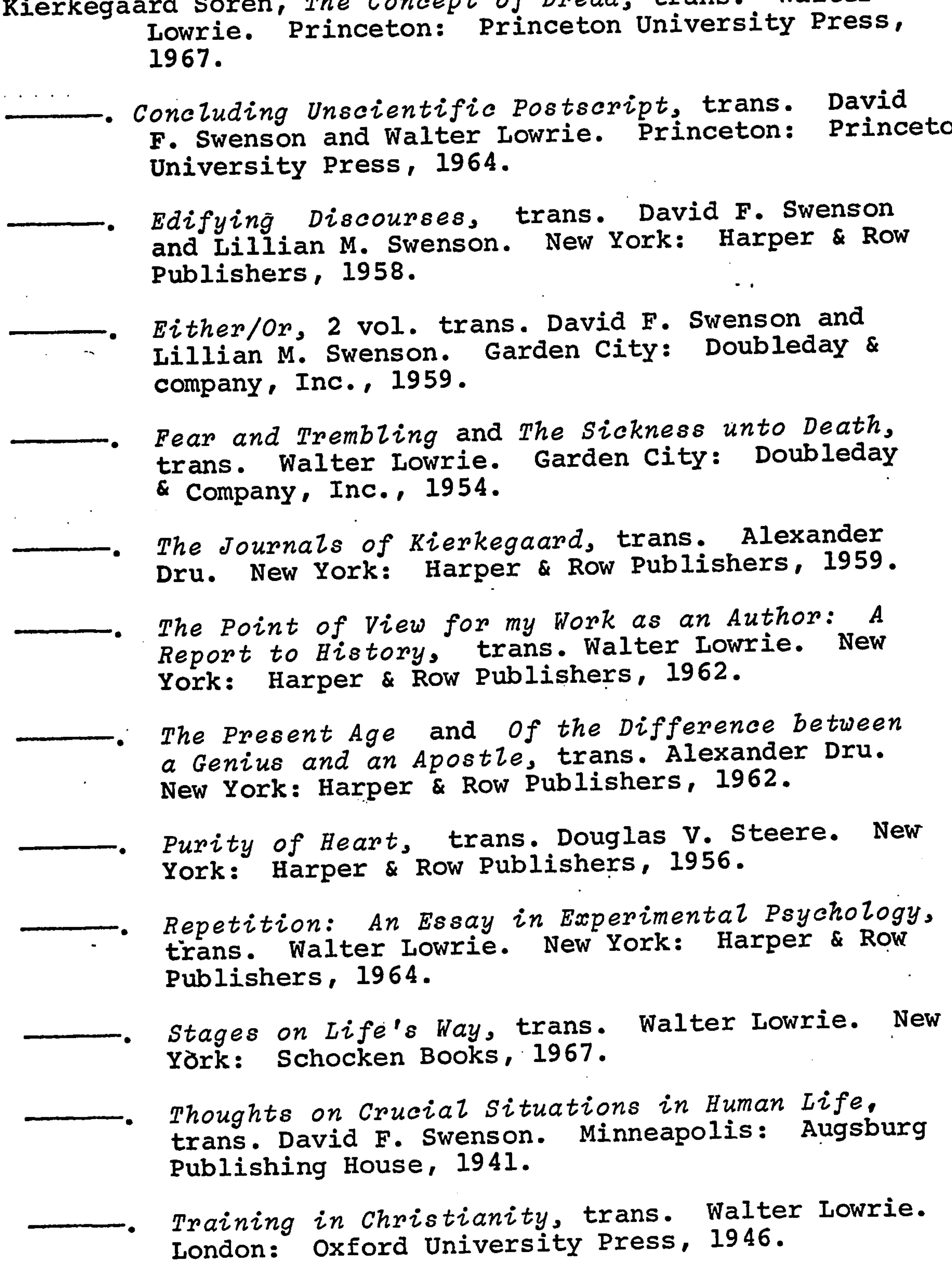

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