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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Narration, Dialogue, and Plot Structure in Duncan's *The Path of a Star*, *The Imperialist* and *Set in Authority*

by

Susan Minsos

A THESIS

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(SIGNED) Susan S. Minsos

PERMANENT ADDRESS:

7139 Saskatchewan Ave.
Edmonton, Alberta
T6G 2A4

DATED April 25 1989

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled Narration, Dialogue, and Plot Structure in Duncan's The Path of a Star, The Imperialist and Set in Authority submitted by Susan Minsos in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Supervisor

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.....

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.....
External Examiner

Date April 19, 1989

to my family

ABSTRACT

The thesis examines Sara Jeannette Duncan's use of certain formal elements as they occur in three of her novels which were written while she lived in India--The Path of a Star (1899), The Imperialist (1904), and Set in Authority (1906). Formalist scrutiny of these works illuminates Duncan's artistic vision and supports the contention that the novels are whole and successful.

In the Introduction, I outline my methodology and briefly consider criticism of Duncan's novels to point out the usefulness of a formal study. In the remaining three chapters, I analyze the novels individually, observing the interplay of plot, dialogue and narrator as a function of the subtlety in the art of "showing" and "telling."

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I. INTRODUCTION

My purpose in analyzing three of Sara Jeannette Duncan's novels--The Path of a Star (1899), The Imperialist (1904), Set in Authority (1906)--is to assert that, according to certain conventions or fixed qualitative measures, these novels are "persuasive." By "persuasive," I mean their ability to "enlighten the understanding, please the imagination, move the passions, and influence the will."[1] Simply put, these novels are complex works which combine a way of showing and telling according to a particular pattern or design that not only relates, but also accounts for the significance of the story.

The conventions supplying my critical methodology range from the ancient dramatic concept that plot structure supersedes the function of character in instigating action[2] to the current idea that narrative

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[1] "If we are seeking, as the eighteenth-century rhetorician George Campbell put it, 'to enlighten the understanding, to please the imagination, to move the passions, or to influence the will,' we must adopt and adapt those strategies that will best achieve our end" (Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student 4).

[2] "A further proof is that novices in the art attain to finish of diction and precision of portraiture before they can construct the plot. It is the same of almost all the early poets," declares Aristotle (Poetics 23). Sara Duncan's A Social Departure pays close attention to "diction and portraiture" and no attention to plot structure. After she develops her skill as a novelist, she gives great attention to the plot structure.

study, differentiating in focalization between voice and levels of narrator involvement, underlines the importance of the storyteller. Somewhere between classic and modern lies the third formal matter, the last, but not least, convention constituting my methodology: the dramatic function and effect of extensive dialogue in narrative.

Each of the above--plot, narration, dialogue--supplies material enough for a full formal analysis; however, wishing to demonstrate the complexity of Duncan's novels, I have chosen these three technical elements for the sake of comparison: to observe that the narrator's style suits Duncan's extensive use of dialogue is to illustrate the richness of the text; to argue that the plot structure gives meaning in a way that the narrative voice does not is to argue that "showing" and "telling" are not merely the narrator's domain. The novel, as a work of art, has its own integrity: Set in Authority demands extensive analysis of plot structure whereas The Path of a Star welcomes narrative and dialogical study. I have not applied all three elements equally to each novel. The individual text, almost inviting its own methodology, determines the emphasis.

Considered in conjunction with, but artificially separate from, the language of the text, the plot, the

narrator, and the dialogue complete textual meaning by literally and figuratively drawing the readers' attention to the deliberate, although not necessarily self-conscious, act of creating fiction. Mapping the frequency of elements, such as proportion of dialogue, or complication of plot, or level of narrator's involvement in the story, illuminates structural patterns of significant complexity in each novel under consideration. I have submitted three Duncan novels to close formal scrutiny which, for all it covers, only begins to address the thematic complexities of these books. Furthermore, while opting to discuss the persuasive strategy of form and structure, I am aware and do regret that space restrictions prevent me from giving more attention than I do to Duncan's diction and imagery.[3]

A formal approach to Duncan's novels seems all the more justified when one realizes that a problem Duncan faced during a career encompassing the cultures of four nations was in her readers' apparently low expectations of her skill as a novelist. Conversely, what shrewd analysis could Duncan expect from a world, a time, and era that would review one of her books using the word

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[3]At the time Duncan writes Path of a Star, The Imperialist and Set in Authority, her Canadian contemporaries Sir Charles G. D. Roberts and Archibald Lampman are writing poetry characterized by extensive anthropomorphism. Duncan's imagery, also heavily anthropomorphic, seems to place her stylistically within the same context as the Confederation Poets.

"lassie" to describe a female character? On May 6, 1899, a masculine wag in The New York Times wrote about The Path of a Star's Laura Filbert: "The Salvation Army lass is beloved by a young gentleman of society," and "the young man sends his lassie home to England where she is to be educated..." (295).[4] Perhaps her lifestyle as a career-woman was prejudicial, acting against Duncan's being regarded a serious author; perhaps the extent of her life time exploits drew attention away from her novels, encouraging instead superficial contemplation of the woman; perhaps her living abroad removed her from a sense of belonging to the Canadian community of writers, a group that might have immediately welcomed her art, making a place for her in the national canon. Whatever the cause, anticipating not much, Duncan's readers over the years have not looked hard at the patterns and structures of her novels.

Charles Allan states that case more brutally than most, but his description of how women in Anglo-India pass their free time includes his assessment of Duncan's contribution to the world of letters:

> The memsahib had plenty of leisure time to

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[4]In 1983, Marion Fowler uses the term once again: "Alicia Livingstone nurses a secret love for Duff Lindsay, who in turn harbours an unrequited passion for the Salvation Army lass Laura Philbert [sic]" (Redney 232).

> devote to such pastimes as painting or reading--and a wealth of Anglo-Indian literature to draw upon at the club's library. If she dislikes satire, she could always turn to the romances of such forgotten novelists as Mrs. Croker and Mrs. Cotes, as well as to that formidable literary duo Maud Diver and Flora Annie Steel. (Raj: A Scrapbook of British India 86)

Reduced in international eyes to a "forgotten" writer of "romance," Duncan needs, rather ironically after all, Canadian readers to confirm her reputation as a novelist of high calibre.

To date, Thomas Tausky, author of articles ("The American Girls of William Dean Howells and Sara Jeannette Duncan" and "Duncan's Passage to India"), and two books, Sara Jeannette Duncan: Selected Journalism and Sara Jeannette Duncan: Novelist of Empire, editor and textual collator of Tecumseh Press's new edition of The Imperialist, has conducted a compelling and forceful campaign on Duncan's behalf. In the Preface to Sara Jeannette Duncan: Novelist of Empire, Tausky states his belief that Duncan's work deserves to be reprinted:

> The rediscovery of Sara Jeannette Duncan began about twenty-five years ago, and has accelerated in the past five years. Unfortunately, only one of her novels is currently available

> in a popular edition. I have therefore provided brief plot summaries along with critical analyses of the novels. Several of Miss Duncan's books deserve re-publication, and the revival of interest in her work will not be completed until that task is accomplished.

Since Tausky's book was published in 1980, Penguin has reprinted The Pool in the Desert (editor, Rosemary Sullivan). Both The Path of a Star and Set in Authority are out of print.[5]

Tausky's research has been an invaluable source of information, both in placing Duncan's work within an historical context and in showing the extent of her publication. In his book, Tausky refers directly to reviews and criticism in accounting for the reception critics gave Duncan's work when it was initially published. Without his considerable effort in tracking down and condensing Duncan's widely scattered and neglected material, any intensive criticism of specific novels would be simply premature.

Showing a spirit of co-operation in the enterprise, critics interested in the rehabilitation of Duncan's reputation gratefully link one person's research with

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[5] The Simple Adventures of a Memsahib, edited and with an Introduction by Thomas Tausky, was reprinted, 1986.

another's. Thus, in his preface, Tausky also commends the contribution of Rae Goodwin Storey's thesis: "A Descriptive Catalogue of Early Journalism by Sara Jeannette Duncan." The work they have done has revived interest in Duncan; certainly Storey and Tausky would place themselves among those whose recognition of the quality of her novels would praise Duncan's themes for their historical value.

Whatever the reason Duncan's novels have waited for their due critical attention (the youthful and opinionated columns of her early journalism, so helpful in opening her eyes to comparative cultures, may do her books a disservice in that readers look for the journalist in the novelist and not the other way around) no cogent argument has surfaced questioning the historical background of her Anglo-Indian or Canadian settings. Both S. Nagarajan's and Alfred G. Bailey's articles, each more or less non-committal regarding Duncan's skill as a novelist, give qualified tribute to her depiction of the turn-of-the-century period in Anglo-India and Canada respectively. Nagarajan's assessment of Duncan's Anglo-Indian novels (sounding remarkably like Claude Bissell's comments on The Imperialist[6]) represents a good example of the curiously apologetic praise these volumes have received:

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[6]See below, p. 96.

The work of the Canadian novelist, [sic] Sara Jeannette Duncan (1861-1922) is not generally known outside her own country, and even in Canada, all but one of the nearly two dozen books she wrote are out of print. Many of these novels deal with the life of the British in Indian-Anglo-Indian fiction as we may call these novels, after Bhupal Singh--and Canadian readers, unless they have special interests, are not naturally drawn to them. (Significantly, the novel that has been reprinted, The Imperialist, has a Canadian setting.) But that reason does not explain why historians of Anglo-Indian fiction also tend to overlook her. It is true she is a minor writer compared to Kipling or Forster, but that may be too drastic a criterion to invoke since it would extinguish the historical consideration of all Anglo-Indian fiction. Miss Duncan's work deserves our notice because we can see in it how some of the major features, issues, and personalities of the British Indian society and politics at the turn of the century appeared to an intelligent contemporary writer who was in a sense an outsider. Her work can also help in bringing home to us the feel of the period and its diversity, especially the

> diversity in the attitudes and relationships of the British and Indians amongst themselves and toward each other. She writes unevenly and is unsuccessful on the whole in presenting a coherent vision of Anglo-India, but at times she could write extremely competently, with great humour and sympathy ("The Anglo-Indian Novels of Sara Jeannette Duncan" 74).

While calling the Canadian "sensitive" and "intelligent," Nagarajan, in her analysis of Set in Authority and The Burnt Offering, appears to contradict her own generalization that Duncan "is unsuccessful on the whole in presenting a coherent vision of Anglo-India": Nagarajan actually refers to many correspondences between incidents or attitudes in Duncan's fiction and actual incidents or attitudes in documented history. In any event, one can only guess why someone might wish to turn to a Canadian writer of "incoherent vision" (instead of to English Kipling or Forster) for help "in bringing home to us the feel of the period."

Nagarajan defends her interest in Duncan by claiming "It was not only in her 'natural descriptions' that Miss Duncan could achieve, when she was writing at her best, a symbolic meaning, an 'objective correlative,' but in her characterizations also" (76). Like S. Nagarajan, Alfred Bailey, in "The Historical Setting of Sara Duncan's The Imperialist," commends

Duncan's ability to describe "the feel of the period." This time in Canada: "Readers old enough to remember the early years of the present century may well experience a pleasurable nostalgia on taking up [The Imperialist]" (205).[7] If Bailey finds her description of small-town Ontario nostalgic, he regards Duncan's pessimism about the imperialist movement as "realistic":

> The fact was that at the very time, one may guess, that Sara Jeannette Duncan was writing her novel, she would have been aware that such countries as Australia and Canada had moved so far along to a discrete nationalism, as to have rendered extremely unlikely a change of direction in such a way as to secure the adoption of a programme for effecting the political unification of the Empire. Furthermore the free-trade dogma was too tenaciously held in Britain to permit of the realization of an imperial zollverein, in

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[7]Physical characteristics of "the Plummer Place," which is the Murchisons' home in The Imperialist, appear to resemble Duncan's house on West St.; however, the narrator's description of the topography of the place, especially the house's proximity to the river, points to the area around Tutela Heights and the Bell Homestead. Alfred Bailey's description of the place "where Alexander Graham Bell lived, on Tutelo [sic] Heights overlooking the Grand River," could apply to the position of the Plummer Place in Elgin.

> spite of Joseph Chamberlain's resignation from the British cabinet in 1903 in order to pursue that goal with increased vigour and single-mindedness. He could not expect to be sustained in his endeavors by the Liberal Party which, after healing the breach in its ranks caused by differences of South African War policy, went on to victory in 1906 on a platform of domestic social reform. It was therefore realistic, and in accord with the trend of the times, especially in the years 1902 and 1903, for Sara Duncan to conclude her novel with the defeat of the 'imperialist' Lorne Murchison and the frustration of all his hopes for the realization of what had been the aims of the old Imperial Federation League and the less prestigious British Empire League that followed it. (209)

Thomas Tausky, Claude Bissell, S. Nagarajan, and Alfred Bailey find Duncan's version of events depicts the work of an "intelligent," "sensitive," "sympathetic," and "realistic" writer. If Duncan does have a "feel" for turn-of-the-century political and social setting, other readers can try to determine if Duncan's contribution to Canadian literature levels out at the plane of accomplishment reserved for writers of mere period pieces. The purpose of the thesis is to argue that

Duncan does have a complex artistic vision. While many of her novels deserve detailed attention, each of the texts analyzed herein--The Path of a Star, The Imperialist, Set in Authority--has been carefully chosen to illustrate structural and narratological patterns.

Having been introduced to Duncan's work through study of The Imperialist, I have taken seriously in my formal deliberations one of the most well-known lines of the latter volume: "The town of Elgin thus knew two controlling interests--the interest of politics and the interest of religion" (58). Coming from Brantford (Elgin), Sara Duncan, along with the majority of her compatriots in town, consistently demonstrates, both in her journalism and in her novels, a fascination with the two topics etiquette advisors caution persons to eschew in polite company. Although Duncan's narrator notes Elginites do not transcend the provincial limitations of either politics or religion, the strain of the exceptional, potentially threatening to the town, runs through certain families who will, sooner or later, produce a person wanting to grapple with international issues--a person such as Duncan herself.

However much Duncan understands politics and religion, many of her columns also reveal her two other favorite subjects: "Women's Rights" and the arts. Because she seeks no special favours for women, asks only that they see themselves as competitive human

beings, she does appear impatiently critical of and frustrated with the fact many women lack a winning, positive self-image. Writing for The Week, Duncan recounts her experience with such a negative attitude on one occasion when she was gathering statistics "upon which to devise a report as to their condition":

> 'I object,' said Miss X with severity, 'to appearing in anything before the Government. It is much too public for a lady; and I think you must excuse me. I suppose this has something to do with Women's Rights. I am very much opposed to Women's Rights.'
>
> I did excuse her....I had stumbled upon the great fact that militates against the success of women in any and every department of money-making--their ignorance of business methods, their dislike of the financial facts of their struggle with circumstances being known, and their natural shrinking from public gaze even 'in the aggregate.' This is all very foolish and very blind perhaps, but it is inalienable from woman's nature, and naturally accompanies the violation of that unwritten law that says woman shall not compete with man in the ways in which he earns his livelihood and should earn hers....Nothing could drag from them what it cost to live, or whether or

> not the time they lost through sickness was paid for. It was an insult that they should be asked. Men filled up such schedules every day, and thought nothing of it! Well, men might, but men did a great many things that women couldn't be expected to do, and wouldn't do under any circumstances. (January 20, 1887)

The curious double standard of the "voluntarily" oppressed shines through Duncan's observations: economically more deprived than men, some women, even in their impoverished state, believe they are intrinsically better than men and far too good, as "ladies," to reveal personal details about the extent of their poverty. Tallying a list of her accomplishments, readers know Duncan, fiercely competitive herself, requests no more of other women than she demands of herself. However irritated she becomes in the face of the counter-productive feminine attitude embodied by Miss X, Duncan does not abandon the feminine point of view in writing her novels. In each of the novels under consideration in the chapters ahead, Duncan uses the feminine voice, narrating from drawing-rooms on three continents, to speak ironically and to speak wisely.

With topics ranging from religion, politics, and "Women's Rights," Duncan never descends to a level too pragmatic to ignore what she thinks the lamentable state

of Canadian arts. In this connection, her favorite label and worry--courtesy of Matthew Arnold--seems to be the "Philistine."[8] Herself well read and educated, she asserts "we are the imported essence of British Philistinism, warranted to keep in any climate" (The Week, January 20, 1887); she claims she cannot understand why Canada lags behind America and Britain in the arts: "Mr. Whistler has been repeating in his epigrammatic way the somewhat well-established fact that 'art happens,' which sets one to wondering why it happens so infrequently in Canada" (The Week, January 20, 1887). Duncan opens this column devoted to Philistinism by offering her suggestion for remedy: "What we need in Canada...is a renaissance." Perhaps the type of renaissance to which Duncan refers might pattern itself on ideas of aestheticism discussed in Walter Pater's The Renaissance (1873).[9] Not suprisingly

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[8]In The Function of Criticism at the Present Time, Arnold writes, "So immersed are they in practical life, so accustomed to take all their notions from this life and its processes, that they are apt to think that truth and culture themselves can be reached by the processes of this life, and that it is an impertinent singularity to think of reaching them in any other. 'We are all terrae filii,' cries their eloquent advocate; 'all Philistines together. Away with the notion of proceeding by any other course than the course dear to the Philistines; let us have a social movement, let us organize and combine a party to pursue truth and new thought, let us call it the Liberal party...'" (461).

[9]"'Aestheticism' means, broadly, a devotion to beauty, and to beauty primarily as found in the arts and in whatever is attractive in the world around us," declares

in any event, the nature of the individual's sense of beauty forms the main subject of two Duncan novels, A Daughter of To-day (1895) and The Path of a Star, but the latter encompasses Duncan's other favorite subject, religion, as well as art and aestheticism.

If The Imperialist stands as one of Duncan's best-known novels, The Path of a Star is the opposite. When the latter book was published, some reviewers liked and even occasionally noted the connection between the two love stories (Hilda Howe-Stephen Arnold and Duff Lindsay-Laura Filbert). Others found "the book lacks a jolly character, a reckless hearty chap, who would relieve the strain of the commonplace" (The Canadian Magazine, November 1899). The same article, giving a near-perfect rendition of a Canadian Philistine's response to art, sternly and righteously chastises Sara Jeannette Duncan for

> going out of her way to paint the Salvation Army as an insipid, uncouth, harmless fraud, and she is most unjust. Had she examined the whole missionary system of all the churches she would have been able to paint the efforts of all in the same dismal gray. It is unfair

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[9](cont'd) R.V. Johnson in Aestheticism (1). Beauty, he says, is harder to define: even Walter Pater in the Preface to The Renaissance (1873) says beauty is relative.

> to select one church and let the others go free. The Christian world is spending millions of dollars every year in foolish, harmful foreign missionary work--and Sara Jeannette Duncan should have said so or left the Salvation Army's missionaries in Bentinck Street out of her consideration. (84-85)

This journalist, reading too literally to keep his job as reviewer and failing to note Duncan's structural use of contrast, misses The Path of a Star's serious criticism of all Christian sects. Suggesting that Duncan should "examine the whole missionary system," the reviewer cannot see Duncan has actually gone one better; away from its home territory, she examines orthodox Christianity by placing on opposite sides metaphysical passion and reason: the Salvation Army's soldier's charismatic passion faces the Anglican priest's cold reason. As discovered by the actor in the middle--philosophical Hilda Howe--neither sect, neither one based on passion nor one based on reason, satisfies the double nature of human beings, who function mainly as ambivalent creatures comprised of intuitive and rational processes.

Supporting my contention that The Path of a Star reveals that Duncan maintains her interest in religion, although not in Christian orthodoxy, are several references in both The Imperialist and Set in Authority

to protagonists whose church affiliation is expressed in equivocal terms. The Imperialist's Advena Murchison lightly but significantly tells Hugh Finlay, "If I were not a Presbyterian in Canada...I would be a Buddhist in Burma" (187). Eliot Arden, the humble, conscientious bureaucrat in Set in Authority, is accused of atheism: "Careless people gave him the old-fashioned name of atheist because he did not go to church and had been known to imply an irreverence for dogma" (27). In any event, with political, religious, feminist and aesthetic ideas hidden beneath the mantle of romantic situation, Duncan trips up at least one reviewer who is inclined to sum up The Path of a Star as a simple love story: "And thus four characters are made happy, two unhappy, and the reader contented or discontented according to his disposition" (the New York Times, May 6, 1899). The Path of a Star (issued in the United States as Hilda: A Story of Calcutta) raises for discussion a feminine, humanist[10] point of view that might render it a "tough proposition"[11] for introduction to the library shelves of fundamentalist Southern Ontario and Alberta high schools

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[10]Duncan appears to have no interest in metaphysics or orthodox theology. She is, however, very concerned about sociological and political issues, especially the role of women in society.

[11]See "M.E.R.," "Personal Glimpses," in which Duncan's niece writes about a day of shopping with her aunt.

in 1988, let alone in 1899. If in The Path of a Star Duncan's diction seems replete with "verbal posture-making" (The Athenaeum, September 1899), analysis of other formal elements such as character-contrast (illuminating differing ideologies), extensive dialogue, and extradiegetic-homodiegetic narration, provides us with reason enough to seriously consider the novel on a more sophisticated level than a simple love story.

The Path of a Star, most definitely not a novel about Anglo-Indian and Indian relations, drops people born and raised in one relatively cool culture into the lively, colorful, steamy midst of another world. To please her largest markets, Duncan makes her protagonist, Hilda Howe, an English actor; but for thematic purposes, Howe's nationality could be just as easily Canadian or American. One point to be addressed by critics is whether or not Duncan's book could have been written without the influence of mystical and devout Hindu, Brahman, Islamic, Buddhist, Jainist worshipers. What Duncan produces seems like drama-in-silhouette, a play about Christian dogma and institutions performed before a scrim faintly outlining literally millions of religiously inspired persons who do not happen to be Christians. In such a setting, it seems reasonable to suppose that Duncan can more easily challenge the uniqueness of Christian orthodoxy than say, for example, in Elgin where "religious fervour was not beautiful, or

dramatic or self-immolating; it was reasonable" (The Imperialist 55). The Path of a Star, often difficult to read, must have been even more difficult to write for a general audience. The fact that no one to date has chosen to discuss its underlying feminine humanism rather strangely commends the writer's popular success.[12] In any case The Path of a Star is Duncan's only novel that deals specifically with Christianity. Its feminine, humanist perspective is profound enough to cause one to assert that the point of view in The Imperialist and Set in Authority does not come from a narrow Presbyterian focus. Duncan, enough of an "Elginite" never to lose her interest in religion, allows India to expand the horizons of her mind, and, in 1904 writing The Imperialist, she does not think exactly like the young woman who expounds on her ideas with such self-assurance in the 1880s for The Week.

The Path of a Star having been analyzed, the increased angle of vision through which a reader can look at The Imperialist projects new light on that novel's female protagonist. For the better part of The Path of a Star, Hilda Howe, feminist, humanist philosopher, and actor, exists outside, far outside, both London's and Anglo-India's establishment; in her youth

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[12]With the exception of comments by Tausky and Fowler, I can find no contemporary assessment of The Path of a Star.

and adolescence, The Imperialist's Advena Murchison, a pale, shadowy figure compared to the alert and outspoken Howe, drifts back and forth over the Elgin establishment's border of propriety, being only partially caught on the powerful hook of the town's rigid conventions: "If she was a brand snatched from the burning, she sent up a little curl of reflection in a safe place, where she was not further interrupted" (39). In fact, Advena (perhaps ironically named for the "coming" of the new woman) Murchison, compared to Mamie Wick, Helen Browne, Ruth Pearce, Victoria Tring, Hilda Howe and a veritable host of Duncan's strong and forceful female protagonists, represents the least assertive and least likely to succeed.

For one thing, she has positively nothing to say for herself. Elgin's paternalism having oppressed Advena, her vitality is nearly squeezed out. By introducing Lorne's political aspirations and on the whole by successfully distracting readers from giving close scrutiny to Advena Murchison,[13] Duncan illustrates her point that Elgin society ignores women who function outside the homemaker's sphere. In

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[13]Several recent articles, such as Michael Peterman's "Humor and balance in The Imperialist: Sara Jeannette Duncan's "'Instinct of Presentation,'" Leon Slonim's "Character, Action and Theme in The Imperialist," and Francis Zichy's "A Portrait of the Idealist as Politician: The Individual and Society in The Imperialist," hardly mention Advena Murchison's name.

terms of the structure of the novel itself, to ignore Advena Murchison is to leave out half the book. Furthermore, in Chapter VII, Duncan's narrator clearly states that Elgin has two interests: politics and religion. If Lorne's story exemplifies matters political, Advena's concerns exemplify matters religious. Knowing that Duncan's earlier protagonist Hilda Howe turns her back on institutionalized Christianity, some may wonder if the Murchison-Finlay romance ends happily for Advena. Clara Thomas takes up the issue:

> There is a kind of void surrounding Duncan's portrait of Advena--her characterization and her destiny do not seem falsely contrived, but all too real. She has had many sisters in Canadian fiction and in life, women who were trained and talented beyond the scope that their destined role as wives and mothers could possibly bring them....For Advena, unlike Lorne, there can be no "splendid conviction of resource" and unlimited opportunity. (Mythologies 45)

Because most of her recorded thoughts are about Hugh Finlay, the reader can only ponder the dimensions of Advena's feelings of anger directed at "sunsets" which seem to her "the seal upon an act of violence" and "a

hateful reminder, in the midst of our delightful volitions, of how arbitrary every condition of life is" (71). Maybe Advena's anger indicates she has had an early presentiment about the choices in her life. Nevertheless, in giving some hope for progressive social enlightenment in small-town Ontario, and in attending to the religious side of Elgin's two overriding interests, Duncan allows Dr. Drummond's American-influenced Presbyterianism to mitigate Hugh Finlay's old-country code of chivalry, thereby paving the way for the Finlay-Murchison marriage. With rather a Huckleberry Finn[14] conclusion to her tale, Advena eventually will follow the sun, heading West to the territories with Finlay, who has accepted a post at the White Water Mission Station in Alberta.

By assuring us of Duncan's philosophical interest in religion, and by reinforcing our first impressions about the strength of its protagonist Hilda Howe, analysis of The Path of a Star increases the reader's angle of vision not only about Advena Murchison, but also about The Imperialist's overall structure. In The

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[14]"Lighting out for the Territory" presents a problematical finish for Huckleberry Finn as well as Advena Murchison. In "Mr. Eliot, Mr. Trilling, and Huckleberry Finn," Leo Marx accuses Clemens of not acknowledging "the truth his novel contained [sic]" (440). Marx claims Huck's "partial defeat is inevitable." It would seem that Advena's partial defeat is also inevitable.

Path of a Star, Duncan counterpoints two romances and defines each in terms of the other. The Imperialist, except for the addition of Chapter I, seems to be structured in nearly the same manner as its predecessor. Several readers have noticed that Duncan works through contrast,[15] but no one has analyzed why Chapter I of The Imperialist, obviously out of time-sequence with the chapters that follow, has special thematic significance. Perhaps one reason that critics have not given due attention to this Chapter lies in the fairly simple fact that the form of Duncan's novels needs to be examined.

In The Path of a Star and The Imperialist (sporadically and more sophisticatedly in Set in Authority), Duncan's narrator sketches out the situation and setting, and then Duncan follows narration with a dramatic illustration of the point at hand, generally presented in dialogue. After noting the way Duncan patterns dialogue and narration for their mutual support --dialogue shows what narration tells--one can look to Chapter I of The Imperialist, not merely as the exposition of the plot, but inclusively as both explanation and beginning of the conflict between two Murchisons and Elgin. Chapters II to XXXIII will serve to show the final product based on what Chapter I tells:

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[15]See, for example, Leon Slonim, "Character, Action, and Theme in The Imperialist," and Carole Gerson's, "Duncan's Web."

the recipe of how to make an imperialist. Narrated by a voice from within the community, The Imperialist is a thoughtful and well-crafted novel.

Once again writing close to the edge of developing news events that make tomorrow's history, Duncan produces Set in Authority, a novel which, like The Path of a Star and The Imperialist, documents current contentions, this time in Anglo-India. Set in Authority (1906) has a sister novel, The Burnt Offering (1909), separated by the publication of Cousin Cinderella (1908). In selecting the three novels under consideration, I have chosen Set in Authority instead of The Burnt Offering for two particular reasons: although well received by its reviewers, Set in Authority has been only lightly examined by readers since then, who have accorded the lion's share of attention to The Burnt Offering; in style, humor, and structure, Set in Authority (along with Cousin Cinderella) marks a watershed in Duncan's career as a novelist.[16]

Thomas Tausky, S. Nagarajan, and Misao Dean are three who consider, and then find reasonably credible, the historical context of Set in Authority and The Burnt Offering, although Tausky notes "the absence of a moderate nationalist like G.K. Gokhale, an Indian

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[16]In my opinion, "The tortured metaphor" (see The Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English 316) has almost completely disappeared from her novels by 1906.

Congress leader who exercised a considerable influence on Morley" ("Duncan's Passage to India," [46]). Writing also on The Burnt Offering, George Woodcock, in "The Changing Masks of Empire: Notes on Some Novels by Sara Jeannette Duncan," describes India's "political ferment" between 1905 and 1909:

> The Burnt Offering draws its life from the political ferment that arose when India was released in 1905 from the glacial bureaucratic peace of Lord Curzon's viceroyalty. In 1906 a Liberal government came to power in Westminster, intent on introducing reform that would hasten India on the road towards constitutional government. The Anglo-Indian community, led by the Viceroy, Lord Minto, was sceptical of the practicality of John Morley's reforms, which in the Indian Councils Act of 1909 introduced the elective principle into the selection of legislative councils; justification seemed to be given to this caution by the fact that between 1907 and 1910 the Bengali and Mahratta terrorists became powerful in the Indian independence movement and under Bal Ganghadur Tilak, challenged the moderates led by Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Gandhi's predecessor. Tilak was imprisoned for sedition in 1908, and a rash of terrorist

> attempts followed, including one on Minto's life. The British replied by restricting freedom of speech, press, and meeting and by other stringent emergency measures. (224)

Woodcock, with reservation, agrees with Tausky that "[i]n The Burnt Offering the moderate Congress adherents of G.K. Gokhale never appear" but notes "[a]t the same time the stress on Thakore and his fellow conspirators makes for a more dramatic book than the intrusion of moderate nationalism would have allowed" (226). Woodcock raises the valid concern that historians may too eagerly expect journalism, instead of novels, from the front lines.

The temptation to discuss the exciting events of The Burnt Offering in isolation from the more sedate action of Set in Authority may lead to offhand conclusions regarding Duncan's political views. Accordingly, as a challenge to preconceptions about Duncan's artistic vision, formal analysis of Set in Authority can be very helpful in understanding her moral and sociological points of view.

Set in Authority is a work of art whose plot raises a moral dilemma and how best to solve it. Several factions are given a chance to express their collective opinions on whether or not to hang Henry Morgan, private of the Fifth Barfordshires, convicted murderer of Gobind, the watchman. Always to Duncan's

greatest credit, each side makes a credible argument for justifying its principles.

What in the Path of a Star and The Imperialist points to Duncan's skill as a "playwright" becomes, in Set in Authority, a fact realized: characters' ideologies, cultures, and points of view illuminate their speech patterns (and speeches) with very little expository assistance on the narrator's part.[17] The characters function dramatically so well and completely that, in many cases, they overtake the narrator and begin to contribute to the storyline through their own narration: readers discover events and happenings from speeches made by characters rather than from discourse offered by the narrator.

However supremely functional and revealing are the characters' speeches, the plot complexity of Set in Authority transcends the other two elements under

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[17]Norman Page in The Language of Jane Austen, notes the importance of speech in Pride and Prejudice: "In the social world of this novel, where the characters belong to a leisured class, talk is a major occupation, often seeming to fill a place in their lives which for the less privileged would be taken up by earning their bread. Where the members of a society, and especially its female members, are virtually without prescribed duties--there are some scornful references to 'female accomplishments' and 'work' for Jane Austen's women characters usually means decorative needlework--conversation takes on a significance that it can hardly afford to possess in a working community" (25). His observation applied to speech in Duncan's Set in Authority reveals a similar significance: conversation is a major occupation.

discussion. Expanding, experimenting, finally pushing the show-and-tell technique to the limit, Duncan applies elements from The Path of a Star and The Imperialist to Set in Authority to demonstrate that plot structure will show what the narrator cannot tell. The controlling conflict in this novel comes from a confrontation between the old-time British morality and the new world of science.

Analysis of Set in Authority's plot structure extracts Duncan's significant and astute observations about contentious ideas in England and Europe. Creating an incident in India to exemplify the English dilemma, Duncan isolates Anthony Andover and Herbert Tring into representative[18] men whose characters eventually solidify into the somber protagonist and the cheery antagonist, respectively. Eliot Arden, Chief Commissioner of the Province of Ghoom, brushes against the ideologies of both men; he loves Ruth Pearce and his wife, but choosing the Andover philosophy of morality versus the Tring commitment to free love, Arden allows his affection for Pearce to dwindle away. For a brief time, during the rising action, Arden's integrity

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[18]Misao Dean makes the interesting assertion that "Duncan was sensitive to the (unintended) suggestion of irony inherent in Emerson's choice of the word 'representative' to designate men, who like Carlyle's heroes, are above their peers morally and intellectually" "Opinions and Notes," Canadian Literature (August 1983) 117-119.

confronts the Viceroy's intractability. The flames of their confrontation fan out quickly, leaving Ruth Pearce holding some amazing information about the legitimacy of the Morgan trial. Information, like scientific advancement and discovery, can become a tool of power; in this case it is a tool that Pearce opts not to wield over the head of the Viceroy.

Set in Authority represents a change in Duncan's art because it is her last imagistic book.[19] The novels that follow this one are more or less straightforward combinations of narrative discourse and dialogue. Her work becomes crisper and more obviously directed by plot; I cannot say whether or not the change comes for the better. That study (focusing on The Burnt Offering and The Consort) remains to be done. In The Path of a Star, The Imperialist, and Set in Authority, Duncan pays special attention to the sensuous pictures and minute details that produce "the feel" of the era and evoke the respective settings of Calcutta, Elgin, Pilaghur. In these novels, with a presence ever looming over and behind the actors, "place" itself shifts and lives and breathes with its own vitality.

Sara Duncan's novels belong by right to Canadian

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[19] If "the tortured metaphor" disappears after Set in Authority, so also does the rich use of imagery and extensive descriptions of setting that characterize the three novels.

readers; furthermore, her works exist in the tradition of the rich and complex narrative. With her novels already of interest to literary historians and political scientists, she is a writer who will attract readers for years to come, among them feminist theorists, narratologists, and, because of her use of irony, deconstructionists. Through examination of narration, dialogue and plot structures, I hope the formal analysis of these volumes will be of positive assistance to others who are also trying to draw attention to the skill and artistry of this witty, philosophical, wise woman of Brantford.

In Redney: A Life of Sara Jeannette Duncan, Marion Fowler offers the provocative hypothesis that time spent in India limited, indeed damaged, Duncan's art:

> By choosing India as her permanent setting, Redney had unwittingly arrested her own growth towards wisdom and that unique vision of the world which every great novelist must have. She had condemned herself to be forever a competent journalist, nothing more, with a journalist's skills of accurately reporting scene and dialogue, but with no taut line. (234)

My contention is the opposite: I believe India opens Duncan's vision and improves her art. Whereas Fowler supposes "[e]very time [Duncan] looked out the windows of her Simla house [the Himalayas] imaged her art, and

her failure" (235), I submit that these three novels written in India illustrate Duncan's success as a novelist.

II. Hilda Howe: Natural Grasshopper

> As I have said, I hope the time is coming when not only the artist, but the common average man, who always has the standard of the arts in his power, will have the courage to apply it and reject the ideal grasshopper wherever he finds it, in science, in literature, in art, because it is not like a real grasshopper. But I will own that I think the time is yet far off, and that the people who have been brought up on the ideal grasshopper, the heroic grasshopper, the impassioned grasshopper, the self-devoted, adventureful, good old romantic card-board grasshopper, must die out before the simple, honest, and natural grasshopper can have a fair field. (Howells, "Truth in Fiction" 135)

Analysis of The Path of a Star indicates that Duncan's living in India may have affected her artistic vision in a manner analogous to the way in which Margaret Laurence's African period influenced her writing. In Laurence's "A Gourdful of Glory," a story set around Ghana's independence, the narrator holds the point of view of the native Ghanaians, particularly Mammii Ama. Mammii Ama, a woman of deep faith and deeper feelings, cannot argue, reason, or articulate why freedom is important to her, but she knows it is. In

this story, Laurence appears to recognize the strength and validity of intuitive power, as a method of apprehending knowledge. When Laurence later writes A Jest of God, Rachel Cameron, who is on the verge of hysteria because she over-rationalizes her every move, must learn to deal with her emotions to become a normal and balanced and free person. Ghanaian Mammii Ama, who functions intuitively, emphasizes Canadian Rachel's neurosis.

If, on the one hand, Laurence's Rachel Cameron, no longer neurotic, rejects the opinion of Dr. Raven, a man who believes Rachel is too "good" to become pregnant, on the other, Duncan's Hilda Howe, no longer unbalanced, has already rejected Stephen Arnold, a man who believes it is righteous to deny human emotions. India's sensuousness opened Duncan's mind in a way that anticipates Laurence's experience. Both Duncan and Laurence, each reared in a Presbyterian milieu, left home to live in cultures not as emotionally repressive as their own. In characterizing their female protagonists, Duncan and Laurence present women whose criticisms of relentless Presbyterian rationality are remarkably the same, and if India does not actually change Duncan, it gives her a free voice to express her criticism by allowing her to choose subjects she might not have been able to discuss in Brantford.

Aestheticism, asceticism, romantic idealism, and

two sects of Christianity are the subjects of The Path of a Star. Borrowing heavily from oral convention and complementing her characteristic drawingroom scene-sets with deliberate and careful plot design, Duncan expands and develops these four large issues through symmetry. The storyteller's voice is similar to several of Duncan's other voices who also sound a note from within the community. Dramatic dialogue which involves the better part of the novel is quite consistent with her technique of showing and telling. In Duncan's creation of protagonist Hilda Howe--eccentric, intelligent, witty, anti-establishment stage-star--I see the finest aspect of the novel: Hilda Howe, as credible as clever, emerges, to use Howells' analogy, like a natural not a card-board grasshopper.

If charted, the plot structure of The Path of a Star would resemble two parallel lines slanted upward, finishing with a coned peak on top. Ultra-establishment Hilda Howe, actor with the small Stanhope Company in Calcutta, India, introduces her friend Duff Lindsay to beautiful Salvation Army soldier, Laura Filbert. Duff Lindsay reciprocates Hilda's kindness, introducing the avant-garde Howe to his establishment friend Alicia Livingstone and her cousin, Stephen Arnold, an Anglican Priest.

Playing their love affairs out before the backdrop of Calcutta streets, Lindsay falls in love with Filbert;

Howe falls in love with Arnold. Despite the straightforward, chronological development of plot complication and the bloom of new love, The Path of a Star, deals not with falling in love, a common enough occurrence in novels, but with religion: the impulse to worship and the dogma of institutions that channel that impulse. As the plot reaches its turning point, protagonists Howe and Lindsay, begin to realize their mutual mistake of caring about Arnold and Filbert, respectively, having been fooled by desires the effects of which they do not properly consider. Deus ex machina, which Duncan will also employ in The Imperialist and Set in Authority to interrupt the natural flow of the plot (Stephen Arnold is killed and Laura Filbert marries another), ironically plucks Howe and Lindsay out of the course of tragedy. Using two love stories whose structures complement each other, Duncan writes about the reason-passion duality of English religious institutions, a problem magnified by India's mystery. By setting up the formal structure of contrast between the differing Arnold and Filbert ideologies, Duncan shows how Howe and Lindsay's innate aestheticism becomes perverted either by excessive will or by passion.

In the course of the novel, the aesthetic tautology--appreciation of art as beauty, beauty as art--overwhelms two sensitive characters: Hilda Howe and Stephen Arnold. Their mutual, basically emotional

response to beauty and art comes into conflict with Arnold's religious asceticism. Not surprisingly, then, to Stephen Arnold's dual personalities, one aesthetic and one ascetic, the narrator extensively and thoroughly attends.

During his six years in Calcutta, Arnold, a priest of the Clarke Mission--a celibate Anglican Order--"[holds] vastly...to fast days and flagellations, to the ministry of symbols, the use of rigours" (27). Sometime before his arrival in India, while studying at Oxford, Arnold has experienced an epiphany, a moment of insight into the nature of his own aesthetic soul. After this instant of self-recognition, instead of devoting himself to art, Arnold chooses to offer himself to the priesthood: "In the end he cast the artistic bias, the aesthetic point of view, as far from him as his will would carry, and walked away in another direction..." (26). Knowing he possesses "an aesthetic point of view" (26), Arnold has tried to live ascetically, a priest directed by the force of his will rather than the power of his emotions.[1]

Arnold's life appears to run according to its austere plan until he meets Hilda Howe, falls in love

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[1]Stephen Arnold's dilemma appears distinctly similar to the psychological problem facing James Joyce's Stephen Dedalus in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. The latter chooses to be a priest of art; Stephen Arnold takes the other path.

with her, and narrowly escapes sinning because she tempts him to break his vow of celibacy. Having been persuaded by his cousin Alicia Livingstone to come with them to see Hilda in a play, he agrees to attend Stanhope's acting company's production of "Patullo's" melodrama, The Offence of Galilee.[2] At the play, Arnold's ascetic inclinations confront a powerful emotional assault in the form of Hilda Howe's great acting talent. The narrator explains Patullo's play waxes ordinary: "It was to be a play evidently like any other play, the same coarse fibre, the same vivid and vulgar appeals" (63). Yet Hilda's portrayal of the Magdalene sweeps the priest to abnormal (for him) reaches of wonder and sentiment. At the end of the performance, he asks his chatting cousin, "Can you not be silent?" The narrator finishes the chapter saying that, although he snaps at Alicia, Arnold, as usual, retreats from emotion:

> He left the theatre and walked light-headedly across Chowringhee and out into the starlit empty darkness of the Maidan, where presently

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[2]The "play-within-a-play" technique deserves comment. In Hamlet, the players prick Claudius's conscience. In The Path of a Star, one of the players arouses Arnold's passion: he feels a "strange bond" (67) with the Magdalene. Barbara Walker, in her Encyclopedia of Women's Myths and Secrets, has extensively researched the changing meaning of Mary Magdalene's role in western society by noting how the Magdalene represents either the harlot or the virgin image of women.

> he stumbled on a wooden bench under a tree. There, after a little, sleep fell on his amazement, and he lay unconscious for an hour or two, while the breeze stole across the grass from the river and the mast-head lights watched beside the city. He awoke chilled and normal, and when he reached the Mission House in College Street his servant was surprised at the unusual irritation of a necessary rebuke. (70)

Recognition of Hilda's talent compounded by his spontaneous emotional response to her gift has made Stephen behave as a drunken man whose rationality has been seriously, but temporarily, impaired by the effects of his emotion. Still Arnold's asceticism survives this assault. Sometimes shakily, sometimes steadily, until the moment of his death, Arnold successfully casts away his artistic bias, a bias that has rendered him vulnerable to emotion and almost able to return Hilda Howe's love; his death is his "happiest moment" (305). On his deathbed, Arnold, content to surrender because he now escapes the temptation of marriage with Hilda, explains to her that marriage would have placed him "among the unfaithful" (305).

In Sara Jeannette Duncan: Novelist of Empire, Thomas Tausky declares, "Arnold's brand of spirituality is both dated and contemptible; one cannot imagine

anyone as passionate and strong-minded as Hilda tolerating him" (211). Tausky's justified, but anachronistic, reaction to "Arnold's brand of spirituality" reflects well on Tausky. Although he is perceptive about Arnold's "contemptible" behaviour, Tausky is wrong about "dated": Arnold's ascetic position regarding women and marriage fundamentally stands as strongly today among many religious men as it did in Duncan's day.[3]

As to Tausky's comment that one cannot imagine Hilda's tolerating Arnold, truly by the end of the text she cannot. Nevertheless, Duncan has carefully included reasons to excuse Hilda's initial attraction to Arnold. If ever one can explain why people are attracted to each other, the most powerful reason that brings Hilda and Stephen together lies in their basic appreciation of talent and beauty. In addition, each feels the other has an aesthetic bias which is something that most people they know do not have. In a greater thematic sense of what attracts people to other people or ideas, I can only say that Duncan frequently has her characters attracted to things that, put simply, are not good for them.

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[3]See Barbara Walker on "Sexism" in her text The Encyclopedia of Women's Myths and Secrets.

At the end of the book Howe is just as relieved at Arnold's death as Arnold himself appears to be. Over the course of the year as a novitiate in the Baker institution, Howe finds her all-encompassing love for Arnold has dwindled to pity. On the last occasion they meet, before a Cabuli money-lender stabs him, Howe silently expresses her feelings for Arnold in a new way: "She had a pathetic impression of the figure he made in his coarse gown and shoes. 'God's wayfarer,' she murmured. There was pity in her mind, infinite pity. Her thought had no other tinge" (296; my emphasis). Later, talking with Alicia about Duff Lindsay and Laura Filbert's impending marriage, Hilda complains, "There is not one of the elements that give people, when they commit the paramount stupidity of marrying, reason to hope that they may not be miserable" (298). This bitterness contrasts markedly with the narrator's description in chapter XV of Hilda's pleasure at discovering she is in love: "She seemed to find a joy in hesitating, to keep back the words as a miser might keep back gold. She let her secret escape through her eyes instead" (167). Changing her mind about loving Arnold (after Chapter XV), Howe recognizes her folly in becoming emotionally entangled with an Anglican priest.

Existing on a purely intellectual level, love eventually becomes a burden to Howe. As she loyally sits with and comforts the mortally wounded priest, her

thoughts to herself are not the words she utters to the man. To Arnold she whispers, "I would have married you." To herself, half-appalled at his death, half-relieved by her freedom, she thinks, "There he lay, a burden she would never bear, a burden that would be gone in the morning. There were moments when she cried out on Fate for doing her this kindness" (308; my emphasis). In the final analysis, Tausky is certainly correct about Arnold's character. Furthermore, Hilda Howe cannot tolerate Stephen Arnold's asceticism. Eventually Hilda Howe's love is reduced to the weaker side of compassion which is mere pity. In essence Howe and Arnold, inspired by their intense romantic imaginations, briefly share an aesthetic bond that sooner or later must break under its own stress. To use another analogy, their mutual love of beauty only satisfying their passionately spiritual, not human sexual desires (at least, not Howe's), weighs down heavily one side of the balances measuring their relationship.

The reason a relationship tips off-centre shows up best by contrast. Although the Howe-Arnold connection forms the major love-liaison in the novel, the foil which increases the brilliance of the former must be the Lindsay-Filbert romance. The characters involved, Duff Lindsay and Laura Filbert, have neither the sharp intelligence nor the developed aesthetic bias of Howe and Arnold; the container, not the contents, provides

the cause of his attraction (the reason for Laura's attraction to Lindsay may be only his persistence). When she is about to leave Hilda Howe's apartment after having tea with Hilda and Duff, Laura pauses in the sunshine. The light makes her seem an angelic vision, and the narrator describes what Lindsay sees in Laura Filbert:

> Just where the sun slanted into the room and made leaf-patterns on the floor she turned and stood for an instant in the full tide of it and it set all the loose tendrils of her pale yellow hair in a little flame, and gave the folds of the flesh-coloured sari that fell over her shoulder the texture of draperies so often depicted as celestial. (6)

Immediately Laura Filbert, that is Captain Filbert of the Salvation Army, a beautiful, pious and barefoot evangelist who prays for the poor in India, attracts Mr. Duff Lindsay of Calcutta, who prays for the chance to take care of her. However, Lindsay "with his robust sense of a right to exist on the old unmuddled fighting terms, to be a sane and decent animal, under civilized moral governance a miserable sinner" (25) is in no way seduced by her religion. He does not hear what her words are saying when she prays; he knows only that she speaks with a voice heavy with mind-altering passion:

> Then before they knew it, they were all down

> on their knees again and Laura was praying; and he was not aware of the meaning of a single word she said, only that her voice was threading itself in and out of his consciousness burdened with a passion that made it exquisite to him. Her appeal lifted itself in the end into song, low and sweet.[4] (35)

On the one hand, Duff Lindsay, "not aware of the meaning of a single word that she said, "foolishly" falls in love with the form of Laura Filbert; on the other, Hilda Howe, who indulges in "strenuous" talks (89) with Arnold, too romantically adores the intellect of the priest.[5]

Although eventually Lindsay and Howe are able to correct their mistakes (Howe returns to the London stage and Lindsay marries Alicia Livingstone), both are prepared to accept commitment even after they understand the folly of mutual attraction founded on a single quality, either sexual or rational. Fate intervenes and cancels their intentions: Laura Filbert meets Colonel Markin, S.A., on board the Coromandel and subsequently

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[4]See also Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby (1925). Nick frequently observes that the sound of Daisy's voice is a tool of seduction.

[5]If "voice" seduces Lindsay and Gatsby, "intellect" impresses The Path's Hilda Howe and Middlemarch's Dorothea Brooke. The latter believes she loves Casaubon, who is, in my opinion, an even less attractive figure than Stephen Arnold.

sends a telegram to Duff Lindsay which abruptly announces, "Do not expect me was married this morning to Colonel Markin S.A. We may not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers glory be to God Laura Markin."

Howe avoids marriage with S.A. (Stephen Arnold) as well. Arnold, as I mentioned earlier, suffers mortal injury when in the Burra Bazar, he is stabbed in the chest in "the root of the left lung" (302). In the last pages of the last chapter (also on the last day of her probation), Howe and Lindsay exchange their news: Lindsay tells Howe that Filbert has eloped; Howe tells Lindsay that Arnold is dead. Howe's reaction to Lindsay's situation provides the greatest proof of her own relief when she says "Then you--you also are delivered" (310). Until the deus ex machina plucks them up and out of their inevitable conclusions, Howe and Lindsay, surrounded by martyrs--some religious (Arnold, Filbert), some romantic (Livingstone)--are on the verge of joining their ranks; by a happy turn of plot they are spared their sense of duty and commitment.

In devotees who carry it to the extreme, aestheticism (appreciation, almost worship, of beauty) has the potential to create romantic idealism (see, for example, Duncan's A Daughter of To-Day); but, of course, not all romantic idealists are necessarily aesthetes. A romantic idealist is someone who believes in absolutes (such as Justice, Truth, Beauty, Taste) and the exis-

tence of a metaphysical ideal world (a neo-Platonist); someone who stresses feeling over reason; and someone who may exhibit signs of neurotic self-obsession. The Path's Duff Lindsay and The Imperialist's Lorne Murchison are as romantic as Conrad's Lord Jim. Believing in limitless possibilities, trusting in the ideal, the romantic imagination belongs naturally to youth. When persons no longer young carry to extreme a devotion to their ideals, they are in danger of becoming bitter romantics. Hawthorne's Young Goodman Brown and Stephen Arnold are examples of the latter. In The Path of a Star, the romantic idealists are the two who devote themselves to religion: Arnold and Filbert. Although Arnold unsuccessfully tries to suppress his feelings as well as his aesthetic bias, his fussing about the spiritual stain that could spoil his celibate record and soil his ascetic soul does make him appear an irritatingly self-interested absolutist. He does indeed qualify as a bitter romantic.

In the course of the narrative, protagonists Howe and Lindsay come perilously close to adopting the unhealthy, worshiping attitudes of the romantic idealists to whom they are dangerously attracted. In the first case, Arnold's aesthetic point of view spontaneously responds to the beauty of her talent; therefore, Hilda Howe misunderstands the mind and depth of Stephen Arnold. In the second case, Filbert--blonde,

pretty, vulnerable--reluctantly gives in to Lindsay's proposal of marriage; therefore, Duff Lindsay mistakes Laura Filbert's beauty of face for beauty of mind. Duff Lindsay's attraction to Filbert has made him almost as sweetly foolish as Middlemarch's Lydgate, who may "stand as an example of the fitful swerving of passion to which he was prone, together with the chivalrous kindness which helped make him morally lovable" (112).[6]

Although three philosophical concepts--aestheticism, asceticism, and romantic idealism--form the abstract heart and contrasting structure of this particular novel, it seems to me, in the matter of The Salvation Army and the "high" Anglican Church, the text provides some broad criticism of two areas: the asceticism of the Anglican Church and the corybantic nature of The Salvation Army (evangelical Methodism). In The Path of a Star the two characters who have joined these sects, perhaps because of their own personal inclinations or perhaps because of what the tenets of each sect teach them, appear to want to surrender their vitality to their churches. Because they provide an invitation to comment on larger issues, before addressing the text's general criticism of the above

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[6]The Imperialist's Finlay and Murchison are characterized by chivalry and kindness. Moreover, Duff Lindsay and Lorne Murchison make the same mistake in their love interests as Lydgate does with Rosamond Vincy: they succumb to fair faces that do not have fair minds.

institutions, I discuss Stephen Arnold and Laura Filbert's denial of life.

Arnold and Filbert's denial of life occurs in two specific places. In Chapter XIII, intending to do his best to prevent the marriage of Duff and Laura, Stephen Arnold visits Crooked Lane and the home of Captain Sand of the Salvation Army. There he tells Captain Sand he places himself at her "disposition" to prevent the Lindsay-Filbert marriage, "this catastrophe in a spiritual life so pure and devoted" (146). The narrator has already shrewdly observed, "[i]t may be wondered whether in any flight of venial imagination Arnold saw himself in a parallel situation with a lady. I am sure he did not" (142). In any event, despite his best efforts, Arnold cannot stop Lindsay's progress in love. In Chapter XIV, Filbert herself goes on a similar mission of mercy. Lindsay, suffering from a fever, is staying with the Livingstones. Alicia Livingstone finds Filbert in the hall outside Lindsay's room, and Filbert duly explains she has come to pray for Lindsay. Livingstone is shocked to learn that Filbert prays, not for his recovery, "Only that he should be given time to find Salvation and die in Jesus" (158). Filbert does not add, of course, that if Lindsay dies she will not have to agonize any longer over his marriage proposal. Arnold first, then Filbert, reveal their fears about human love and physical union by their nervousness about

marriage: in the name of the church they shy away from something which symbolizes both life-affirming fertility and social continuity.

Nothing more readily underlines Victorian England's sexual nervousness than the physical sensuousness of India.[7] Of all Duncan's Indian novels The Path of a Star least considers, on any plane, British/Indian intercourse. Yet Indian influence, subtle and powerful, infuses all life. The narrator describes Calcutta's Bentinck Street and pointedly contrasts The Salvation Army's tambourine music with the noise of the lusty vendors. Filbert's army performs and works in the heart of Calcutta. Arnold and Lindsay, strolling down Bentinck Street walk through "an open door under a vast white signboard dingily lettered 'The Salvation Army'" (28) to find Filbert addressing a multi-racial congregation with a voice that "seemed to travel from her without effort" (33). All of the main characters live

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[7] "Whichever of the great ports they came to, the women were left with an impression of an India bursting at the seams. After the swirling crowds, the confusion of colour, sound and smell, most found it a relief to get to the uncluttered European quarters, with their spacious bungalows and shady gardens, such a pleasant contrast, wrote Monica Lang in the 1920s, 'to the heat and dust and squalor of the city streets'. Europeans in India, they were to discover, showed their spiritual distance from the country in their physical surroundings. Whereas Indians lived jumbled promiscuously together in houses and tenements that were built to no clear pattern, their rulers lived serenely apart in bungalows (and sometimes in flats) which were laid out tidily in straight lines" (MacMillan 36-37).

in or frequent the poorest and roughest parts of Calcutta. In dramatic terms Arnold, the intellectual, and Filbert, the evangelist, act out their respective religious roles by turning Calcutta and India into a backdrop for their activities. Even though the novel's setting does not seem to intrude into the characters' consciousness (with the exception of Hilda Howe, most characters, in speech and thought, make noticeably few references to their environment), the very presence of India, not England, America, or Canada (the other settings of Duncan's novels), must introduce to them possibilities of behaviour that they simply would not consider elsewhere. The sensuousness of India--the mysticism, the heat, the colors, the smells, the crowds--underlines and emphasizes the repression of English people who live there. In other texts, Duncan extensively describes the emotional effects[8] that the fascinating, paradoxical elements of this exotic country have on Anglo-Indians. Furthermore, somewhat later than Duncan, E. M. Forster, in A Passage to India (1924), picks up a similar idea with the incident of Adela Quested and Dr. Aziz and the Marabar Caves. On the witness stand silently recalling the events that have

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[8]See, for example, The Simple Adventures of a Memsahib, The Other Side of the Latch, Vernon's Aunt, "The Pool in the Desert," Set in Authority, The Burnt Offering.

led up to Aziz' indictment on a rape charge, Quested remembers "she had thought of love just before she went in [to the cave], and had innocently asked Aziz what marriage was like and she supposed that her question had roused evil in him" (221). At the end of her testimony, Quested realizes that Aziz is not and cannot be guilty of the charge; however, she remains unable to explain what has happened to her in the cave. Forster provides no explicit answer for the reader, only the suggestion that something about India has triggered the release of a terrific emotional outburst in Quested, something so powerful she mistakes it for rape. Presumably in The Path of a Star Stephen Arnold, Anglican priest, cannot explain what has happened to him, either. How is it possible he loves an actress? And Laura Filbert--by any stretch of the imagination not a heavy thinker--how can she act against her self-avowed best interests and even for a moment consider marriage with Duff Lindsay? Once removed from India--sent to England "to be finished"--Laura comes to her senses and marries another officer in "The S.A." India challenges emotionally repressed types, such as Forster's Quested and Duncan's Arnold.

Arnold and Filbert's failure to affirm life which reflects negatively on them also invites criticism of the two sects with which they are affiliated. For one thing, Hilda Howe does not look kindly on many tenets of the Anglican church, such as the practice of retreat for

priests; however, neither does she sympathize with The Salvation Army's encouragement of frenzied, irrational faith. Of all the characters in The Path of a Star, Howe seems to have "the fullest, clearest view" (215) of every situation; she looks at herself and others "without flinching and without compromise" (215). For example Howe, not Alicia Livingstone, recognizes that Lindsay by loving Filbert has "fallen to the snare of beauty" (132). Not only does Howe possess considerable insight, she also exudes--in speech, in action, on stage--compelling vitality. Giving due respect to the sentiments of a sharp-tongued, intelligent, clear-thinking character in the novel, readers automatically note Hilda Howe's assessment of her peers. The text's implicit criticism of Laura Filbert and her religious sect begins immediately and sharply (Chapter 1, page 1, The Path of a Star). Howe's reaction to Filbert and then the former's relationship with Stephen Arnold are important in determining the novel's point of view expressed through the character of clear-headed Hilda Howe.

Laura Filbert, completely motivated by feeling, meets her match in the all too clever Hilda Howe. On one occasion early in the narrative, Howe greets Filbert, takes her hand and tries, unsuccessfully, to arouse some conscious response in her:

> She took Laura's hand as she spoke, and tried to keep it; but the hand was neutral, and she let it go. 'It is a hand,' she said to herself in one of those quick reflections that so-often visited her ready-made, 'that turns the merely inquiring mind away. Nothing but feeling could hold it.' (1; my emphasis)

The very amusing exchange that follows, Filbert all feeling and dull in the bargain and Howe all wit and not very compassionate, defines their differences. Not only are their characters and personalities intrinsically dissimilar, but they have also radically different philosophies. Filbert, who totally misunderstands Howe (the narrator describes Filbert's lack of wit as "a blankness...over the girl's face as a light cloud will cross the moon" [4]), kindly supposes that Howe cannot be very far from "the Kingdom of God and His righteousness" (4). Howe replies, "'I? Oh, I have my part in a Kingdom'"...then, "Miss Howe's eyes sought a red hibiscus flower that looked in at the window half drowned in sunlight, and the smile in them deepened" (4). Although Filbert simply does not comprehend anything Howe says or believes, readers can probably risk interpreting the significance of Howe's glance at the flower (since her glance acts in contrast to Filbert's unabashed and spontaneous hymn singing) as a philosophical declaration: whereas Jesus and celestial

spirits dwell in metaphysical kingdom of one, red hibiscus, flowers and the singing of birds populate the earthly domain of the other.

If Howe's toying with Filbert seems humorous, although slightly insensitive, Howe appears not in the least insensitive to the effect that Filbert has upon the "very impressionable" (48) Mr. Lindsay and the "very good" (101) Miss Livingstone. Lindsay's gratitude to Howe for introducing him to Filbert is "intense" (50). From Howe's description given to Alicia Livingstone of what the two of them (Howe and Lindsay) have witnessed in Wellesley Square, one understands his attraction:

> '...[Laura] stood poised on a coolie's basket in the midst of a rabble of all colours, like a fallen angel--I mean a dropped one. Light seemed to come from her, from her hair or her eyes or something. I almost expected to see her sail away over the palms into the sunset when it ended.' (49)

Livingstone is not unaffected by the description of Filbert either. Later in Chapter IX Howe corrects Livingstone's opinion of Filbert, which is "[s]he must be beautiful and good" (100):

> She's a lily, and she draws the kind of beauty that lilies have from her personal chastity and her religious enthusiasm. Touch those things and bruise them, as--as marriage would

> touch and bruise them--and she would be a mere fragment of stale vegetation. You want him to clasp that to his bosom for the rest of his life?' (100)

Of course the young woman would much rather Lindsay clasped her to his bosom than Filbert; Livingstone is, however, prepared to martyr herself to satisfy Duff Lindsay's desire for the Salvation Army girl. Howe sharply responds to Livingstone's attitude of the "sacred satisfaction of self-praise" (99):

> 'We are an intolerably self-sacrificing sex....They've taught us well, the men; it's a blood disease now, running everywhere in the female line. You may be sure it was a barbarian princess that hesitated between the lady and the tiger. A civilized one would have introduced the lady and given her a dot, and retired to the nearest convent. Bah! It's a deformity, like the dachshund's legs.' (99)

Time and time again Howe heaps disdain, not just on the sari-draped evangelist, but also on those (especially Livingstone and Lindsay) who appear incapable of withstanding Filbert's personal charisma. Howe objects not only to the young woman's unbounded passion and magnetism, but also to the lack of rudimentary rationality. Since Filbert is basically as charismatic

as her sect purports to be, I submit that the reader may extend Howe's criticism of Filbert's own small following as far as Duncan's implicit criticism of The Salvation Army's congregation itself. If Stephen Arnold can dissect Filbert's evangelical methodism ("Lindsay listened to [Arnold's] analysis of religious appeal to the emotions" [39]), Lindsay unfortunately cannot.

Unlike Filbert who runs on feelings, Stephen Arnold runs from them. Whatever ensuing grief she causes him, Howe is not sorry she expresses to Arnold her feelings of love. When Howe half-gravely and half-playfully demands that Arnold shall never go into retreat again, she cries,

> 'You shall not be hidden away like that. You shall not go alive into the tomb and leave me at the door. Because I cannot bear it.' (223)

Arnold's response to Howe's outburst--indeed, his answer to her declaration of love for him and her command to him to affirm life--is frightening:

> Arnold received the intelligence. It came in a vague grey monitory form, a cloud, a portent, a chill menace; but it came and he paled under it. He seemed to lean upon his hands, pressed one on each side of him to the seat of the sofa for support, and he looked in fixed silence at hers upon his knee. His face seemed to wither, new lines came upon it as

> the impression grew in him; and the glamour faded out of hers as she was sharply reminded, looking at him, that he had not traversed the waste with her, that she had kept her vigils alone. Yet it was all said and done, and there was no repentance in her. (223)

In Arnold her declaration of devotion evokes "a chill menace"; yet his shock at the news of her love cannot make Howe repent. Although for Arnold's sake, sometime later in the narrative, she tries to belong to the Anglican Nuns' Baker Institution, Howe, not naturally a martyr, appears at times not even a Christian.

Neither "going alive into the tomb" nor the Christian God of retribution particularly impresses Howe. Throughout the text, the narrator and Hilda herself associate the actress with primitive images: after Arnold stops the runaway "ticca-gharry" (83) by grabbing the reins of the horses, "the door flew open on the under side, and Hilda fell through, grasping at the dust of the road" (84); immediately after her accident, when Arnold accompanies Howe to her home at Number Three, Lal Bahari's Lane, "a fleck of the dust from the road still lay upon the warm bloom of her cheek" (88). The image of Howe, as dusty and dirty from her fall as she is clearly delighted to be with Arnold, affirms her connection with the substantial earth rather than the spiritual heavens. As Howe and Arnold walk to Lal

Bahari's Lane, the narrator describes the streets of "thronging people" and includes a reference to the ancient Hindu Goddess, Kali--"a blood-red, golden-tongued Kali" (88). Then, the narrator adds, "So they passed, worthy of a glance from that divinity who shapes our ends."[9] The reference to "that divinity" and the possibility that Kali may be the antecedent of the demonstrative adjective "that," suggest, in the lives of Arnold and Howe at least, the narrator believes blind fate controls their destiny more than Christian determinism.

Regarding fate, Howe and the narrator appear in accord. When Arnold lies dying, Howe makes three references to it: fate as "Atropos," Fate as benefactor, fate as a "wicked horrible chance." Looking at Sister Margaret who tends the mortally wounded priest, Howe asks herself, "Was she like one of the Fates?" (304). Howe then has "an impulse to push her away with the cry, 'It is not time yet-Atropos!'" (304). Also, in the final chapter, Hilda cries out on "Fate for doing her this kindness" (308). In her great confusion, which extends from her feelings of concern for Stephen to her sensations of relief for herself, Howe significantly, by omission, indicates that Anglicanism is not at all meaningful to her: she never prays for Arnold.

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[9] Hamlet (V, ii, 10).

In fact she chastises the priest for his belief that his God is punishing him because he loves Hilda Howe:

> 'My God is a jealous God,' Arnold said...
>
> 'No, indeed no! It was a wicked horrible chance! Don't charge your God with it.' (305)

Even as he is dying, Howe, appalled by its harshness, cannot help but once again challenge the tenets of Arnold's religion; her challenge, however, seems not to be made within the context of Anglicanism.

By the conclusion of the narrative, Hilda Howe has denied both Stephen Arnold and the Baker Sisters for the same reason: her own philosophy is more natural, more wholesome, more comforting, and in a way much older than theirs. The narrator best describes its unorthodox and unconventional nature at the end of Chapter XV when Alicia Livingstone and Hilda Howe quietly address the difficulties of their respective unrequited loves. Their compatability and conversation magnify the ease and understanding between them, perhaps because of a world view they share. Howe, knowing what love means to both women, sends Alicia upstairs to tend the sick Lindsay; Hilda encourages Alicia to take advantage of her position in order that the latter may replace Laura Filbert in Lindsay's estimation:

> [Hilda] put her arm about Alicia, and drew her out of the room to the foot of the stairs.

> They went in silence, saying nothing even when they parted, and Alicia, of her own accord, began to ascend. Half-way up she paused and looked down. Hilda turned to meet her glance, and something of primitive puissance passed, conscious, comprehended, between the eyes of the two women. (170)

Howe's philosophy, primitive and powerful, one understood by women, cannot meld with Arnold's nor the Baker Nuns' nor Anglicans' nor even, perhaps, Christians' view of glorifying misogyny through asceticism and spiritual transcendence (the origin of both asceticism and transcendence, ironically enough, is India; in The Path of a Star both ideas return to their birthplace with vigor thanks to the efforts of Christian missionaries).[10] Hilda loves life on earth. As Arnold peacefully dies, she herself experiences a re-affirmation:

> The jackals had wailed themselves out, and there was a long dark period when nothing but the sudden cry of a night bird in the hospital garden came between Hilda and the very vivid perception she had at that hour of the value and significance of the earthly lot. She

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[10] See in Hindu Myths, "Brahma And The Jealous Gods Create Evil Women": "Woman [is] the root of all evil in the misogynist, ascetic-oriented view of the orthodox Hindu" (36).

> lifted her head and listened to that, it seemed a comment. Suddenly, then, a harsh quarrelling of dogs--Christian dogs--arose in the distance and died away, and again there was night and silence. (308)

In the midst of Howe's revery about "the value and significance of the earthly lot" the jolting image of "the harsh quarrelling of dogs--Christian dogs--"comes as a two-fold revelation: Howe shows a definite aversion to bo the principles and the followers of Christianity; she expresses satisfaction with "the earthly lot" and in so doing avows her feminine humanism.

In Howe and the narrator's eyes the novel's two Christian sects produce "rank" (311) or "stale" (100) vegetation. Reduced to its most restrictive limits, the focus of both The Salvation Army and Anglicanism finally narrows on their belief in a perfect spiritual as opposed to material existence. This shared metaphysical attitude explains the concern that Arnold feels about the sanctity of Laura Filbert's calling. Beyond their shared belief in the supremacy of spirituality, the two sects to which Arnold and Filbert are affiliated have little in common, ostensibly because the basis of Anglicanism provides for a rational and ritualistic rather than emotional faith. Although their ecstasy can trigger sexual feelings which they do not particularly

want to direct to a human correspondent, Laura Filbert and other soldiers of The Salvation Army--all emotion, no thinking--work themselves into a corybantic state because they love Jesus. In contrast to the Army's vocal outpouring of devotion, nothing appears so austere, forbidding and (cold-bloodedly) rational as Arnold's ascetism and celibacy.

In The Path of a Star, Laura Filbert's celestial beauty and innocent sensuality attract Duff Lindsay like a moth to a flame; Stephen Arnold's recognition of her talent (in the theatrically remote reaches of Calcutta, his approval fulfills her need for proper and due recognition) and his understanding of the aesthetic point of view, attract Hilda Howe as well: another moth, same flame. In both cases, the flame burns the moths. Yet ironic circumstances will not allow the merely burned to perish--the narrator says both Howe and Lindsay live better lives than they would have, had they achieved the love of the people to whom they were once and first attracted. Readers take Hilda Howe's opinions seriously and must conclude the text subtly, but fairly severely, criticises the aescetic, anti-life, anti-feminine, and in one case, anti-rational principles held by two sects of the Christian church.

In handling the four major subjects of the novel, Duncan relies on a mixture of dialogue and narration, with emphasis heavily on the dialogue. In The Path of a

Star Duncan enjoys presenting many sides of an issue, even though she manages to make her own point of view fairly clear to her readers. Actually dialogue suits her purposes very well; dialogue gives the text an ideological richness. Moreover, if dialogue opens text to an infusion of different ideologies, dramatic irony controls the focus. In The Path of a Star, narration relies on oral rather than written conventions. This orality sometimes works very well for Duncan, but the voice is not really strong enough to make this technique quite as successful as it could be. Analysis of narrative and dialogue patterns in The Path of a Star shows that in this novel Duncan nearly finds what Henry James says His Honour and a Lady lacks, a "little line--bony structure and palpable, as it were, tense cord--on which to string the pearls of detail."[11]

Analyzing narrators and narration requires the assistance, if not the terminology, of linguistic or structuralist theorists;[12] nevertheless, one probably should not avoid discussing what is visually evident in

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[11]Duncan sent James a copy of His Honour, and a Lady: he commends her talent, but recommends a stronger plot line (The Letters of Henry James 354-56).

[12]Narratological terms (such as homodiegetic or autodiegetic) may appear incongruous when used with dramatic expressions. Nevertheless, the precision offered by narratology is helpful for analyzing the "novelistic" rather than the "dramatic" aspects of the text. For explanation of terms, see Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan's Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics.

the text, either. As a merely physical object, held and turned in the hands like a bracelet or a potato peeler, the book comprises the following characteristics: it is 311 pages long; it has twelve illustrations; it has thirty (XXX) chapters. These speculations do not lead anywhere until the casual observer notes that of the thirty, narration dominates dialogue in only nine chapters: III, V, XII, XIV, XVI, XX, XXI, XXIV, XXVII.

Each of the twenty-one preponderantly "dialogued" chapters usually follows a specific pattern: after the narrator describes setting and relates events which have occurred since the end of the narrative in the previous chapter, she records the characters' direct, present tense conversations to complete the rest of the current chapter. At the beginning of Chapter VI, for example, the narrator explains that Duff Lindsay's friend, Alicia Livingstone, "fought with her imagination in accounting for Lindsay's absence from the theatre on the first night of a notable presentation of Miss Hilda Howe" (71). The scene detailing the "notable presentation of Miss Hilda Howe" occurs in the chapter before. Now in Chapter VI the narrator supplies details explaining Lindsay's absence: at the Salvation Army headquarters he awaits opportunity to see and to speak with Laura Filbert. To this end, says the narrator, Lindsay follows Filbert into the darkness after the members of the congregation have left Bentinck Street. However, as

soon as the would-be lovers meet, once again the narrator surrenders her voice to theirs; consequently the rest of the chapter consists of Filbert and Lindsay's quoted conversation. Even the most casual examination of the novel reveals narration precedes dialogue, and this dominant pattern occurs in all but nine chapters.

A play, however naturalistic in language or subject matter or production, only imitates life. A novel that imitates a play creates rather a hybrid form based on an imitation of an imitation: the language and presentation of characters in the novel imitate the language and presentation of dramatic personae on stage which, in turn, imitate the language and circumstances of members of any community at any given time. Whatever one's opinion on the artistic merits of successive imitation, the result of such a theatrical structure for half of twenty-one chapters, at least, provides a pattern: for much of the time the narrator, pushed to the background by dialogue, only supplies information as needed to flesh out the action. The following provides a good example:

> Stephen kept an instant of nervous silence. 'May I ask?__' he began, formally.
>
> 'Oh, yes! It is almost an indecent thing to say of anyone so exquisitely self-contained, but your cousin is very much in love with Mr.

> Lindsay herself. It seems almost a liberty, doesn't it, to tell you such a thing about a member of your family?' she went on, at Arnold's blush; 'but you asked me you know. And she's making it her ecstatic agony to bring this precious union about...' (137)

In this small excerpt, Duncan's director-narrator is at work. The narrator records Arnold's nervousness; she notes that Arnold speaks "formally."

In contrast, Howe's entire response to Arnold is set down with almost no narratorial comment about the actress. The narrator has made a judgment; readers need to be told a nervous Arnold, who blushes, speaks "formally" instead of, say, "curiously" or "arrogantly." However, the narrator allows Howe's discourse to stand alone; Howe defines her own character by expression and diction. Howe's choice of modifiers, such as "exquisitely," and "ecstatic," shows her dramatic nature. Howe demonstrates impudence and intelligence when she declares "[i]t seems almost a liberty, doesn't it, to tell you such a thing about a member of your family?"

Time after time the narrator, who fills a role analogous to that of play director, supplies narratorial comment (stage directions) on, and about, the characters. As director-interpreter of lengthy "playscript" sections in The Path of a Star, Duncan's narrator blocks action and cites gestures. So extensive appears this

combination (dialogue with interpretive narration) that to list the pages where it occurs would be to cite more than half the book.[13]

Concentrating on the extradiegetic and homodiegetic[14] functions of the narrator in The Path of a Star, this chapter concludes by discussing Duncan's fondness for narrator-as-speaker (instead of writer); however, dialogue dominates too much of The Path of a Star to be only lightly examined.

Insofar as literary convention dictates the narrator can only quote exactly what she hears, whereas she must interpret what she sees, direct dialogue comes immediately from a character's voice to page without an intervening narrator's consciousness. The quotation mark convention signals, just the way naturalistic drama itself demands it, our willing suspension of disbelief. In novels we understand what the illusion demands of us: quotation marks mean direct speech, faithfully recorded. Always in the present tense, quoted (written) dialogue

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[13]Of course, readers then "see" each scene as director/narrator wants them to, although actors/characters still appear to dominate the action. One may well ask: how much does a director's interpretation affect a play's inherent nature? Specifically, how much does Olivier's production of Hamlet differ from Coe's? But, questions of interpretation aside, one would wrongly assume a produced play has no director, i.e., interpreter.

[14]"Extradiegetic" means that that narrator writes on a level above the characters' understanding; "homodiegetic" means that the narrator appears in some manifestation of herself.

repeats exactly what the character has just said. The character in the above speech quoted from The Path of a Star, one Hilda Howe, not writer/poet Duncan, and certainly not the narrator, speaks directly to Stephen Arnold, who in turn answers her. According to convention, someone has recorded their spoken exchange exactly.

When critics confront dialogue they can do one of two things: refuse to accept the illusion of direct speech because "no text of narrative fiction can show or imitate the action it conveys, since all such texts are made of language, and language signifies without imitating" (Rimmon-Kenan 108), or accept the illusion or "imitation" as transference of knowledge through "showing," and discuss characters as if they were real (a psychological approach). After agreeing to abide by dramatic conventions which allow the illusion set up by quotation marks, we look to dramatic irony to provide the text's point of view.

Although she never managed successfully to transfer her talents from text to stage, Duncan's talent as a writer may well be "in her ear": her ability to internalize (mimic) and then transcribe conversation. Of course, I do not wish to minimize the quality of many narrative and descriptive passages in her novels; even so, if consistency marks the difference between pure genius and mere skill, it can be said Duncan writes

dialogue uniformly well, with wit, confidence, and credibility. In the following quotation, direct speech not only creates the characters' voices but also reveals their perspectives. Moreover, because quoted speech is direct--in the present tense and conventionally set apart from the narrator--dialogue divorces characters' personal perspectives from the narrative voice or focus; consequently a multi-voiced novel results. Pertinent parts underlined in the passage illustrate how direct speech produces dramatic irony and then how the novel's many voices, working through dramatic irony, contribute to the text's feminine perspective.

In the following excerpt, Duff Lindsay, after confessing his love for Laura Filbert to Alicia Livingstone, asks the latter to help him marry Filbert. Alicia cautions:

> 'Don't make a mistake,' she said. 'Don't.' She thrust her hand for a fraction of an instant toward him, and then swiftly withdrew it, gathering herself together to meet what he might say.
>
> What he did say was simple and, easy to hear. 'That's what everybody will tell me; but I thought you might understand.' He tapped the toe of his boot with his stick as if he counted the strokes. She looked down and counted them too. 'Then you won't help me

to marry her?' he said, definitely, at last.

'What could I do?' She twisted her sapphire ring. 'Ask somebody else.'

'Don't expect me to believe there is nothing you could do. Go to her as my friend. It isn't such a monstrous thing to ask. Tell her any good you know of me. At the moment her imagination paints me in all the lurid colours of the lost.'

The face she turned on him was all little sharp white angles, and the cloud of fair hair above her temples stood out stiffly, suggesting Celine and the curling tongs. She did not lose her elegance; the poise of her chin and shoulders was quite perfect, but he thought she looked too amusedly at his difficulty. Her negative, too, was more unsympathetic than he had any reason to expect.

'No,' she said. 'It must be somebody else. Don't ask me. I shouldn't become involved--I might do harm.' She had surmounted her emotion; she was able to look at the matter with surprising clearness and decision. 'I should do harm,' she repeated.

'You don't count with her effect on you.'

'You can't possibly imagine her effect on me. I'm not a man.'

'But won't you take anything--about her--from me? You know I'm really not a fool--not even very impressionable.

'Oh no!' she said impatiently. 'No--of course not.'

'Pray why?'

'There are other things to reckon with.' She looked coldly beyond him out of the window. 'A man's intelligence when he is in love--how far can one count on it?' (my emphasis)

There was nothing but silence for that, or perhaps the murmured, 'I don't agree,' with which Lindsay met it. He rode down her logic with a simple appeal. 'Then after all,' he said, you're not my friend.'

It goaded her into something like an impertinence. 'After you have married her,' she said, 'you'll see.'

'You will be hers then,' he declared.

'I will be yours.' (94-95).

Two people, Livingstone and Lindsay, have a conversation whose meaning in some respects is clouded by knowledge one has that the other does not share. Although the news is not specifically given until later, the reader already suspects Alicia Livingstone loves Duff Lindsay, who, in turn, regards her merely as his very good

friend: "Lindsay liked to think that with him she was particularly simple and direct, that he was of those who freed her from the pretty consciousness, the elegant restraint that other people fixed on her" (18). The reader already knows Lindsay loves Filbert and guesses Livingstone, who fights "with her imagination in accounting for Lindsay's absence from the theatre," loves Lindsay. Dramatic irony controls the focus of the above conversation.

In specific terms, dramatic irony occurs because we have guessed how Livingstone feels about Lindsay. Her appeal to Lindsay, "Don't make a mistake" (exactly what he is doing), is more than something uttered for Lindsay's happiness; her happiness hinges on his behavior as well. His comment "I thought you might understand" indicates the extent to which he does not understand either her or, as we discover from his disastrous romance, women. Moreover, Livingstone's "You can't possibly imagine her effect on me. I'm not a man" refers not only directly to her response to meeting Filbert, but also implicitly to the novel's greater theme: male-dominated institutions do not appropriately deal with feminine responses. Indeed, points considered all together, the passage signals how Livingstone's understanding, that is her "surprising clearness and decision," grows as she speaks. In apprehension, Lindsay continues to fall behind. The narrator's

observation "Her negative too, was more unsympathetic than he had any reason to expect" indicates how far away Lindsay wanders from comprehending the pain the conversation gives Livingstone. His appeal "I'm really not a fool--not even very impressionable" contradicts the observation that Howe has made to Alicia earlier: "Mr. Lindsay is very impressionable" (48). Finally, Livingstone's provocative remark "A man's intelligence when he is in love--how far can anyone count on it?" challenges the basic masculine-feminine clash of consciousness erupting between them. Lindsay does not understand Livingstone's feminine perspective; for the sake of irony, Livingstone does indeed understand his. The dramatic irony created by Lindsay's misunderstanding of Livingstone's speech clearly complements the novel's idea that men basically misunderstand the feminine perspective. Because the novel's point of view has a consistently feminine focus, dramatic irony pervades the whole passage.

The reader, although aware of irony rising from Lindsay's remarks, also recognizes Lindsay brings to the conversation his masculine perspective. When a character speaks directly to another, his/her sex, education, language, nationality, culture, in fact, all learned systems and innate responses, color each spoken idea and expression, and if the character is not mere caricature, she or he then adds another full voice to

the novel, thereby making it what I have called multi-voiced. Alicia Livingstone has never revealed her feelings to him; why should Lindsay suspect that she loves him? Lindsay accuses her of not being his friend, and it must be said, from his point of view, Alicia does not seem the least bit friendly, refusing to help him in what would ordinarily be a relatively simple request: to promote his marriage. Even though readers know that Livingstone, because she is in love with Lindsay herself, believes she cannot do what he asks, the ensuing dramatic irony does not mitigate the importance of Lindsay's "voice." Without narrative mind-reading, Lindsay and Livingstone speak directly to each other: their differing perspectives act as barriers against or conduits of communication.

Presented by a dramatic mode (dialogue rather than indirect speech), "narrator-free" communication between "full-voiced" characters creates a multi-voiced novel in which characters, having either a masculine or feminine perspective, do make errors in judgment because of their respective ideologies. The masculine mistake made by Duff Lindsay results from his attraction to Laura Filbert's physical beauty at the price of simple reason; the feminine mistake, Hilda Howe's, occurs because Howe is drawn at the expense of passion to the Priest's intelligent aestheticism.

But other people and ideologies are also present.

Stephen Arnold, however much his views rub against the grain of the text's feminine focus, has another voice. And Laura Filbert yet another. I want to be careful not to suggest that in The Path of a Star characters "represent" an ideology; in fact, they have ideologies and Duncan's use of dramatic convention--large blocks of dialogue following narration--presents these characters and their ideologies without the assistance (through free indirect speech) of extensive narrative interpretation. The convention (quotation marks) which gives characters a direct voice in the text simultaneously pushes the narrator to a background function of stage director and, to some degree, interpreter of motivation.

Before returning to the function of narrator, I should like to sum up my impression of what large sections of dialogue in The Path of a Star suggest--simply, the thematic importance of dramatic irony and multi-voiced structure. First, fundamentally because of dramatic irony, during many extensive passages of bound direct speech Duncan is able to hold and maintain the focus of the novel. In fact, dramatic irony fulfils at least one of the narrator's functions. Out of context, in the passage I have quoted, the conversation of two characters does not help focalization. Problem: how can the writer use extensive dialogue and still insinuate point of view? If the narrator were detailing through indirect speech every action done and

every word spoken, the narrator would naturally elevate the reader's understanding over a particular character's insight; however, in absence of such technique, the writer, as she does here, may turn to an old and familiar dramatic device such as dramatic irony. In the same way an extradiegetic narrator controls "who speaks and who sees," dramatic irony--prior knowledge of a situation (Livingstone loves Lindsay)--effectively places the reader in a position superior to that of the characters and subtly channels the reader's sympathy toward one particular character.

Although dramatic irony keeps the narrative focus and point of view tightly controlled, a writer's rising to the difficult challenge of producing a multi-voiced narrative may come from that writer's own strong interest in the political (competitive) impulses of people. Political, in its broadest sense, means the struggle for dominance between differing basic ideologies, be they economic, religious, sexual, and so forth. Certainly in The Path of a Star Duncan has written once again a socio-political novel, rather than a Jamesian psychological probe. Psychological elements are present, of course, but issues complicating the narrative's plot arise from ideologies in conflict (religious and sexual politics). Religious differences doom the Lindsay-Filbert and Howe-Arnold romances; sexual politics and the narrative's feminine perspective

give the book its point of view. By allowing characters their own voices and by creating a multi-voiced structure Duncan deals with the touchy social topics of religion and women's ideology, themes still difficult to discuss eighty-nine years after the novel's publication.

The narrator's voice dominates the other thirty per cent of the text. Perhaps because she values the difference between showing and telling, Duncan makes the extradiegetic, homodiegetic, and self-conscious narrator of The Path of a Star seem not always reliable in or sure of her evaluation of a given complex situation. The narrative concludes with the narrator writing in the present tense, referring to people's lives continuing past the events of the story. The open-endedness of the conclusion raises the issue of comedy versus tragedy, in the sense that tragedy befalls individuals, whereas comedy salutes the species' survival. Stephen Arnold's violent death frees Hilda Howe: she returns to the theatre, narrowly missing being tragically chained to a vocation she has come to dislike thoroughly. Laura Filbert's hasty marriage to another member of The Salvation Army allows Lindsay to see Livingstone in a newer, and kindlier light and, as quickly recorded in the penultimate paragraph, they soon marry. The narrator happily notes, "It is much to Miss Hilda Howe's credit that amid the distractions of her most successful London season she never quite abandons these two to the

social joys that circle round the Ochterlony Monument and the arid scenic consolations of the Maidan" (311). All sorrow overcome, the characters in true comedic fashion live happily ever after[15] (except Arnold, who only dies happily).

The narrator demonstrates that her function as storyteller means giving all the pertinent details necessary for narrating the story in a certain fashion--a combination of showing and telling. Writing on a level above the characters' understanding, the narrator cites not only facts, but also thoughts. She knows, for example, what Hilda Howe says to herself upon shaking Laura Filbert's hand (1); she knows that when Alicia Livingstone observes Number Three, Lal Bahari's Lane, she looks at it "with irritation" (40); she knows Llewellyn Stanhope aspires "to be known as the pilot of stars, at least in the incipience of their courses" (58). On occasions too numerous to mention, the narrator confidently reveals the characters' private reflections.

Then periodically, like a medium with a loose

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[15]Northrop Frye: "Comedy usually moves toward a happy ending, and the normal response of the audience to a happy ending is 'this should be,' which sounds like a moral judgement. So it is, except that it is not moral in the restricted sense, but social....one feels that the social judgement against the absurd is closer to the comic norm than the moral judgement against the wicked." (Anatomy of Criticism 167-168).

connection to the otherworld, the homodiegetic narrator, this anonymous voice who from time to time calls herself "I," this member of the Calcutta Anglo community, falters and fails to receive the message. For example, for reasons other than enjoying the company of like-minded souls, why the priests of the Clarke Mission meet with the nuns of the Baker Institution, the narrator can only guess: "I am not aware that they held any other mutual duty or privilege" (276). More importantly, regarding Arnold's trip to see Captain Sand about the marriage of Filbert and Lindsay, the narrator shrugs away speculation, claiming it is "impossible for us to know how far Stephen envisaged the visit as a duty" (142). The narrator's fashion of giving direct information about characters' thoughts on the one hand and denying herself access to knowledge of motivation on the other serves two rhetorical functions. In the first place, telling makes the narrator sound strong and in control. In a novel this heavy with direct speech, Duncan's narrator wisely asserts herself by directly telling the reader about the thoughts and motivations of lesser persons in the story. In the second place, the narrator's mere speculation (written in the present tense) indicates her reluctance to offer carelessly a positive summary of those things too complex to reduce to simple statement (see, for example, the motivation behind Arnold's visit to Captain Sand).

Because of her confidence in making many other assertions, her contrasting uncertainty stands out sharply, demanding that the reader pay attention to and draw conclusions from what the narrative through dialogue is showing. The reader concludes (since the narrator pointedly refuses to do so) that Stephen Arnold must fear for himself and his priestly vocation because of his growing intimacy with Hilda Howe. The homodiegetic narrator's failure to explain and thereby reduce the complexity of Stephen Arnold's character challenges readers to attempt some independent assessment of the man's psyche and, extending that assessment, to analyze the narrative's themes.

Occasionally expressing a charming, almost coy uncertainty about her opinion at the same time as she reaffirms her position as a member of the community about which she writes, the narrator brings into the text thematically relevant images. On the evening that Stephen Arnold sees Hilda Howe's Magdalene in The Offence of Galilee, the narrator whimsically considers the Sphinx on the curtain, commenting, "I have sometimes fancied a trace of malignancy about her steady eyeballs" (69). She tempers her observation by adding, "but perhaps that is the accident or design of the scene-painter; it does not show in photographs." The narrator could have simply announced that Father Stephen Arnold soon will be involved in a situation which will

bring him both great pleasure and ultimately great pain. But this narrator's foreshadowing is more subtle: the image of the Sphinx, the one who "keeps watch over an ultimate meaning which must remain forever beyond the understanding of man" (Cirlot 104), portends events the narrator knows, but does not reveal.

Before the narrator begins her tale, the events about which she speaks are over; she does not chronicle or record events as they happen. To prove the narrator "knows and does not reveal" is to refer once again to the quotation describing the narrator's view of the sphinx: "I have sometimes fancied a trace of malignancy about her steady eyeballs, but perhaps that is the accident or design of the scene-painter; it does not show in photographs" (69). Writing in the present perfect tense and the simple present ("I have sometimes fancied" instead of "I had" and "it does not show in photographs" instead of "it did not"), the narrator makes the setting immediately exist in an historical present time-frame, very different from the time-past in which the fixed events occur. Suddenly, the narrator's voice lies within, yet apart from the narrative. Furthermore, the narrator who is consciously story-telling declares, "Perhaps, I have forgotten to say that Lindsay came to Calcutta out of an Aberdeenshire manse, and had a mother before whose name, while she lived, people wrote 'The Hon'" (28). The narrator refers in

the past tense to the events as they unfold; she refers to herself in the present (or present perfect: "I have forgotten") tense. Thus before she starts to tell her account of the story, the incidents are already history. The consciousness of the present tense "I" is discreet, but the reader must not doubt the narrator knows the outcome before she tells it. Indeed, past and present come together in the last paragraph. The narrator refers fleetingly to communicating with Hilda Howe: "[Howe] never mentions that experience more or directly or less ardently. But I fear the promise I have quoted is one that she makes too often" (311). Only at this point does Howe shift from her past-tense frame and join the narrator's historical present tense.

The whole narrative is fiction; no narrator already knows the story before she tells it. What possible purpose does an extradiegetic, homodiegetic narrator serve? As an extradiegetic voice, the narrator is "'above' or superior to the story he [sic] narrates" (Rimmon-Kenan, 94). For the reader who expects to be told what characters privately feel, no problem occurs from the extradiegetic nature of the narrator's function. When the voice and person of Laura Filbert first romantically alert Duff Lindsay, the narrator explains the potent attraction in the following way: "But the sensation Duff Lindsay tried to sit still under was not simple. It had the novelty, the shock, of a

plunge into the sea; behind his decorous countenance he gasped and blinked with unfamiliar sounds in his ears" (35). Through a drowning metaphor, the narrator does her best to describe Lindsay's tumble or dive into a pool of love. As readers, we accept this description because we expect the narrator to inform us about matters which the characters cannot express, simply because these notions are unutterable to them.

However, as a homodiegetic voice, the narrator is "one who takes part in [the narrative], at least in some manifestation of his [sic] 'self'" (95). In The Path of a Star, the homodiegetic narrator represents a dramatization of the narrator's self, or "I": she lives in Calcutta, has actually seen Bentinck Street and Number Three, Lal Bahari's Lane. In fact, it is "I," the narrator, who speaks to readers.

In many of her novels Duncan appears to want us to "listen" to, rather than read, the words of her narrator. In this book Orality and Literacy, Walter J. Ong describes why we sometimes think of readers as a book's "audience" (L. "audire," to hear): "To think of readers as a united group, we have to fall back on calling them an 'audience', as though they were in fact listeners" (74); to explain, he cites a good example of how we refer to the "voice" of a narrator or the way we often conventionally believe we listen to, rather than read, a text: "In Christianity, for example, the Bible

is read aloud at liturgical services. For God is thought of always as 'speaking' to human beings, not writing to them" (75). The idea of readers-as-audience occurs on the first page of The Path of a Star when the narrator addresses the reader(s) as "you": "You would have been aware at once that she was an actress" (1). Later, on the occasion of Lindsay's illness and recovery, the narrator says, "We may freely imagine that Mrs. Sand was informed" (171). To believe the narrator "says" anything, to think the narrator's references to "you" and "we" point to a collective audience (ergo, a listening group rather than a reading individual), means that, as readers who are encouraged by the narrator's addressing us, we adopt the conventions of orality and agree to listen to the story rather than simply read the text.

The narrator writing as if she were speaking to an audience constitutes one indication of "orality" in Duncan's work. Another indication of orality comes from the way Duncan's narrator describes the gestures accompanying speech; speech and gesture belong together. Basing the following statement on the work of Berkley Peabody, Ong says, "it should be noted that oral memory differs significantly from textual memory in that oral memory has a high somatic component....The oral word, as we have noted, never exists in a simply verbal context, as a written word does. Spoken words are always

modifications of a total, existential situation, which always engages the body" (67). Duncan's narrator consistently records not only the words and speech of the characters, but also the gestures, the body language of the speaker. For example, consider Alicia's speech, "'But sometimes I think I am not a wave at all, only a shell, to be stranded and left, always with the calling in my ears---' She seemed to have dropped altogether into reverie, and then looked up suddenly, laughing, because he could not understand" (202). The narrator also reports that "Molyneux impartially threw out his hand. 'I believe in it!' he exclaimed" (127). The gestures, dropping "into reverie," "laughing," "impartially [throwing] out his hand," transmit additional meaning that completes the verbal communication between each character, a total message which is, in turn, duly interpreted by the reader/audience. The reader/audience who is very familiar with the task of noticing gesture and speech together, needs, for interpretative reasons, the information about gestures that Duncan's narrator carefully supplies.

Nothing may seem unusual about the manner in which the narrator appears to talk to a collective audience or the way she presents speech and gesture. Taken together, the qualities of orality providing The Path of a Star's strengths also produce narrative weaknesses. Calling The Path of a Star "potentially one of Sara

Jeannette Duncan's most interesting novels" (203), Tausky later comments that, "there is a vast artistic gap between dialogue and narration." He objects to the intrusion of the narrative voice, especially during Howe's speculations on Arnold:

> The passage could have been effective if Hilda's reflections about Arnold had been presented through the character's own consciousness. Instead, the narrator steps obtrusively between the character and the reader ("I think...") and the passage sounds like affected gossip rather than the communication of genuine feeling. (209)

Tausky's assessment is apt. At times the narration would benefit from indirect speech, especially free indirect speech. Creating the difference, if there is any, between the "who speaks" and "who sees" in narration, free indirect speech is really a textual or written technique used for revealing the consciousness of characters. In The Path of a Star, the narrator appears to talk rather than write to the reader. As Tausky points out, free indirect speech (allowing reflection about Arnold to be presented through Howe's consciousness instead of the narrator's "I think") would occasionally provide better narrative focus. What happens, in this novel at least, is that the narrator becomes too conscious of her own voice as she tells the

story; furthermore, the narration as a whole suffers because her voice is simply not as well-developed as, for example, the voice telling The Simple Adventures of a Memsahib (1893).

There are positive aspects to Duncan's orality and the homodiegetic narration in The Path of a Star. If the artist's task is to show and not tell her themes, intrusive narration presents a critical problem; homodiegetic narration, intrusive by nature, invites the reader to recognize the consciousness of the narrator who will guess about a character's motivation, for which a positive assessment, she alleges, alludes her. When Lindsay and Livingstone are driving, the narrator says that "[Livingstone] asked Lindsay presently if he would mind driving to the market; she wanted some flowers for that night. I think she wanted some flowers for that hour" (175). The narrator's "I think" (present) challenges the truth of what Alicia Livingstone has just told Lindsay and imposes the narrator's historical present consciousness upon the story. In Duncan's texts, homodiegetic narration (specifically, imposition of the narrator's consciousness) has at least three positive effects on readers: readers like the storyteller--her wisdom, common sense and wit; they can challenge her reliability (not on facts, but opinion), and through critical response to her, rise above her, as it were, and come closer to sharing Duncan's plane of under-

standing; finally, they understand that the narrator, speaking, as she herself testifies, as a member of her community, gives them a glimpse into a larger world: Anglo-Indian Calcutta.

The homodiegetic narrator in The Path of a Star is what E. M. Forster might call a "flat" character. In terms of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Wallace Martin summarizes the function of the flat storyteller well: "If Huck were round, American literature would gain a slightly more interesting character but lose a world" (118). Correspondingly, events in The Path of a Star detail specific yet typical incidents in Anglo-India. The narrator puts not just the characters, but also the community into perspective. If as an aid to focalization, the narrator eschews indirect speech in favor of her own consciousness, the reader can forgive the intrusion and overlook the "gossipy" sound of the narrator's voice, simply because the personality behind the voice opens another dimension to the text. Furthermore, the narrator relays so many op ions through dialogue, her own voice doing exactly the same thing in narration seems not only acceptable, but logical. It is possible to argue that the basic orality of Duncan's narrative overcomes the lack of indirect speech. Free indirect speech may be a method of written focalization not truly in keeping with the homodiegetic narration in The Path of a Star. In one of Duncan's earlier novels,

The Simple Adventures of a Memsahib, the homodiegetic voice belongs to Mrs. Perth Macintyre; she relates the story of Helen Browne's life as a member of the Anglo-Indian community and records Browne's personality change from ingenuous English girl to George Browne's jaded wife. Thematically, the novel criticizes the arrogance of England's Indian foreign policy (planting a temporary community, one that cannot take root and grow, in the middle of India) as a major cause of cynicism in Anglo-India's civil service. Within this text speaks, certainly, one of Duncan's most successful homodiegetic narrators. Perhaps the narrator of The Path of a Star, looking back to the excellent effort of Mrs. Perth Macintyre's storytelling, should have introduced herself more fully, instead of fading away, eventually to become an anonymous member of the community.

A quotation from William Dean Howells which refers to his definition of the difference between "real" and "good old romantic card-board" (135) grasshoppers opens this chapter because his sentiments have the same ring as a line from the closing paragraph of The Path of a Star:

> [Howe's] own experience there is one of the things, I fancy, that make her fond of saying that the stage is the merest cardboard presentation, and that one day she means to leave it, to coax back to her bosom the life

> which is her heritage in the wider, simpler ways of the world. (311)

The allusion to "the merest cardboard presentation" could easily refer to Howells's analogy of the "cardboard grasshopper." The story in The Path of a Star Howe calls her "own experience." "Her own experience" with Anglican priest Stephen Arnold starts romantically and ends as a sharp lesson: romantic idealism, although wonderful in a way, fails in this world. This theme plays and replays throughout Duncan's work.

Ian Watt asserts that a whole new attitude in the way authors use names arises with the novel form:[15] "The early novelists, however, made an extremely significant break with tradition, and named their characters in such a way as to suggest that they were to be regarded as particular individuals in the contemporary social environment" (20). He goes on to say, after quoting such examples as "Heartfree, Allworthy and Square" (21) that the primary function of name "is to symbolize the fact that the character is to be regarded as though he were a particular person and not a type"

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[16]Says Ian Watt in The Rise of the Novel: "Not, as we have seen in Richardson's case, that there is no place in the novel for proper names that are in some way appropriate to the character concerned: but that this appropriateness must not be such as to impair the primary function of the name, which is to symbolize the fact that the character is to be regarded as though he were a particular person and not a type" (21).

(21). Nevertheless, for many novelists "naming" remains a method of adding richness to a character through allusion (for example, see novels by James, Hardy and Dickens).

Duncan is a socio-political writer;[17] and if her work were thrown under the scanning eye of a computer, it would show the frequency with which Duncan uses the word "type." Considering her interest in type, not surprisingly Duncan attends carefully to characters' names.[18]

The most obvious name signifying type is "Laura Filbert"; a filbert is a nut, a hazelnut. In Canada, an idiomatic expression describing a person of wildly unusual or so-called mad behaviour is "nutty"; Laura Filbert behaves "like a nut." Competing with Filbert for the affection of Duff Lindsay is Alicia Livingstone. Afraid to assert herself to win Lindsay, afraid to step beyond the borders of the establishment, Alicia's lifestyle turns her into a "living stone." And Stephen Arnold, what about him? Duncan refers frequently in her

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[17]Although her novels do contain characters of psychological complexity, Duncan uses plot (external events) to motivate action--the choice of action depends on the moral nature of the character.

[18]The same kind of naming occurs in The Imperialist: Lorne (Merchant's son) Murchison; Advena (new woman) Murchison; Octavius Milburn ("Roman" mill owner--Duncan calls the English, Romans, in The Burnt Offering), Dora (D'or) "of gold." By Set in Authority, name patterns are harder to trace.

journalism to Matthew Arnold and the word "Philistine" frequently creeps into her columns. What a tribute to Arnold's love of culture, to name the aesthetic and beauty-loving side of Stephen Arnold after that proponent of "sweetness and light." And "Stephen," which is the name of the first Christian martyr, seems an appropriate Christian, or baptismal name, for a man who gives up the joy of human love for his Christian principles. Duncan describes the epiphany which reveals two sides of the priest so aptly named Stephen Arnold:

> Then fell the flash by which he saw deeply concealed in his bosom, and disguised with a host of spiritual wrappings, what he uncompromisingly identified as the artistic bias, the aesthetic point of view. (26)

One might say Tausky's description of the priest as a "priggish creature" (210) describes the "Stephen," not the "Arnold," of the man.

The last but not least name on this list of "types" belongs to Hilda Howe. Other than Henry James and Matthew Arnold, a man whose name has shown up most frequently in her columns is W.D. Howells. On one occasion Sara Jeannette Duncan writes very defensively about Howells's right to criticize great works of the canon:

> To the uncritical it might readily occur that Mr. Howells's principles should accord with

> his practice, however doubtful the opposite agreement might be; that the admiration displayed for the realistic school of fiction in his work might be reasonably expected to be duplicated in his literary criticism. But to many editors of "Current Literature" throughout the land this appears a most conceited manifestation of Mr. Howells's taste. Because he had the audacity to point out the defects of Dickens and Thackeray, or what would be their defects to a public of this generation, he is accused of greatly formulating the proposition that he writes better than Dickens or Thackeray. It is to be hoped that Mr. Howells will shortly discuss critically the style of Aristotle, that these gentlemen may have an opportunity of saying that he thinks his own methods immeasurably superior to Aristotle's. (The Week, April 22, 1886)

In view of Duncan's amusing defense of literature in general and of Howells specifically, what better name could Duncan bestow on the most spirited person in The Path of a Star than "Howe"--Hilda Howe. She is someone who has "the audacity to point out the defects" of Anglicanism and Wesleyan Methodism; she represents the kind of realist of whom Howells would likely approve. Losing her romantic idealism because of her involvement

with Arnold, Hilda Howe transcends "type" (Bohemian actor). Through "her own experience," the arch and cynical Howe, one who in Chapter 1, horribly, though wittily, mocks Laura Filbert, grows to the compassionate Howe who hesitates to withdraw her hand from Arnold's lifeless one because "it seemed an abandonment" (309). After her recognition that she has made a mistake with Arnold, Howe decides to leave the Baker Institution and return to the London stage. In tragedy, recognition usually precedes a turn for the worse. Says Aristotle, "The best form of recognition is coincident with a Reversal of Intention" (Poetics 24); although by Duncan's undercutting the romance of tragedy for ironic realism,[19] Howe's recognition, her change of fortune (ironically for the better), and her contentment deny readers the pleasure of what Aristotle calls "cathartic pity." Her progression from ignorance to knowledge makes her too dynamic to be just a type. Too complex to join the ranks of "Allworthy and Heartfree," Hilda Howe blossoms from a flat type ("You would have been aware at once that she was an actress" [1]) to a rounded personality. Because her fortune and her insight change, she changes. She stands out and above the other

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[19]Frye says "[t]he nearer the tragedy is to auto, the more closely associated the hero is with divinity; the nearer to irony, the more human the hero is and the more the catastrophe appears to be a social rather than cosmological event" (Anatomy of Criticism 284).

characters.

Marion Fowler claims "Simla didn't rejuvenate Redney's [Duncan's] art. The Path of a Star finds her still detached, playing with themes of thwarted love, heroic self-sacrifice and isolation" (232). However, the novel's sophisticated subject matter, multiplicity of ideologies and deft handling of dialogue testify to the complexity and quality of Duncan's art.

III. The Making of an Imperialist

> I have deliberately placed Sara Jeannette Duncan among high literary company, not because she is of the same stature as James, Howells, and George Eliot, but because she is an intelligent and sensitive writer who understood and admired her great contemporaries and tried to follow where they had led. (Bissell, Introduction, The Imperialist [(IX)])

It appears logical to argue deductively that if India frees Duncan from espousing the tenets of orthodox religion, she does not write The Imperialist from the point of view of a practising Presbyterian. As discussed in this chapter, the narrator of The Imperialist seems to be, nevertheless, as much of a Presbyterian as the Murchisons are; therefore, the distance between the narrator's and Duncan's own point of view may be substantially greater than many readers have supposed. No longer a Presbyterian, Duncan, in 1904, may be no longer an imperialist.

Tausky suggests that "[t]he alert reader of The Imperialist does not need to wait for the final pages of the novel in order to gain the impression that Sara favours imperialism" (N.o E. 161) and, with this assessment, Claude Bissell appears to agree.

This chapter's focus will centre on two evaluative comments Claude Bissell makes in his introduction to The Imperialist: first, Bissell quotes a "contemporary" who claims Duncan is "'an ardent Imperialist [who] held to the Idea with an emotional fervour which elevated it into a quasi-religious dogma'" (VII). Then, Bissell declares he puts Duncan in "high literary company, not because she is of the same stature as James, Howells, and George Eliot, but because she is an intelligent and sensitive writer..." (IX). Because they act as a buffer between reader and narrative, his introductory statements challenge the reader either to accept and support Bissell's sentiments, or to deny and dismiss both assertions: Duncan as minor writer; Duncan as "ardent Imperialist."[1] Patterns that emerge from plot examination and narrative analysis should free Duncan's art from the strictures of over-cautious Canadian critical evaluation. Furthermore, a close reading of The Imperialist and analysis of Duncan's skill earn for her descriptive terms more glowing than the vague assessment that she herself is "sensitive and intelligent." Thematic complexity defined through structural analysis will determine Duncan supports ideas no more "ardently" imperialistic in The Imperialist than

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[1]Claude Bissell's introduction is in The New Canadian Library's edition of The Imperialist. All references in this chapter will be from Tausky's edition.

they are in, say, An American Girl in London (1891) or Cousin Cinderella (1908). Starting my analysis by isolating (and summarizing) the two main plot structures and superimposing on each, the dramatic structure of Aristotelian tragedy to illustrate subtleties of plot inherent in Duncan's handling of conflict, crisis and recognition,[2] I will discuss the importance, to both the narrative and plot structure, of chapter 1. After sketching pertinent background, mainly the traditions of Liberalism and the influence of the Scottish common-sense tradition on small-town Ontario's attitudes, I then discuss the narrative voices of The Imperialist as if they belonged to three people: Mrs. Murchison, who tells about Elgin and society; Horace Williams, who tells about Elgin and politics; and an anonymous heterodiegetic narrator who tells about Advena Murchison and Hugh Finlay.

Two plots at the core of the novel, rising like wicker cones from Elgin's prosaic town-setting, emerge to dominate the narrative; interwoven in The Imperialist are the stories of Lorne and Advena Murchison.

The rise and fall of one pyramid charts the history

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[2] The Imperialist's structure functions hand in hand with irony: "the ironic drama is a vision of what in theology is called the fallen world, of simple humanity..." (Frye, Anatomy of Criticism 285).

of newly graduated Elginite lawyer, Lorne Murchison, who loves Dora Milburn and believes in the family of British nations.[3] After successfully defending Squire Ormiston's son, Walter, on a charge of grand theft, Lorne, with his "gravity and gentleness, his sympathy, his young angry irony" (83), attracts visiting prosecuting attorney, Henry Cruickshank, K. C., of Toronto, who invites Lorne to act as Secretary of the United Chambers of Commerce, Canada Trade and Communication deputation heading for London.

No particular event in London encourages him to re-think his position on imperialism (although he meets Alfred Hesketh who later affects his life) and when he returns home with prestige high from the trip, Lorne is nominated to replace Robert Farquharson--who because of illness is retiring from his seat in South Fox--as Federal Liberal candidate at a time when "the bye-election [will] have all the importance of an early test" (169). Hesketh, now newly arrived in Canada, tries to help Lorne's campaign but manages only to

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[3]Carl Berger observes, "While [imperialism] was conceived in a period of doubt and uncertainty, the cause of imperial unity did not evaporate with the restoration of self-confidence after the mid 1890s. Indeed it gathered strength and new adherents, broadened its appeal, and reaffirmed its principles. Its most fervent supporters came from the older areas of Ontario and the Maritimes, particularly from among the descendants of the United Empire Loyalists. By all accounts Toronto was the most imperialistic city in the Country" (The Sense of Power 5).

irritate, with his patronizing attitude, farmers such as Elmore Crow and his parents. With the exception of his final disastrous address at the opera-house to the electors of South Fox, Lorne compaigns well and is elected "to the Dominion House of Commons by a majority of seventy" (247).

Because of the small margin of victory, Walter Winter and the Conservatives challenge the result claiming "infringement in the electoral district of Moneida of certain provisions of the Ontario Elections Act with the knowledge and consent of the candidate" (248). Guilty of abusing their democratic privileges, a few chiefs on the reservation may have placed Squire Ormiston, who has backed Lorne, in the awkward position of appearing to buy votes. Ironically, considering their powerless status in Elgin, the behaviour of some natives causes the results of the election to become null and void. Dora Milburn, who eventually marries Hesketh, and the South Fox Liberal party organizers, who choose Carter to run in the next election, reject Lorne at the same time. Lorne becomes ill (believing Lorne's political rejection the cause, "Horace Williams, as his wife expressed it, was pretty nearly wild during its progress" [276]), but quickly recovers. Going briefly to Milwaukee (or Florida) to practice law, Lorne is summoned back to Canada to join Henry Cruickshank's firm in Toronto.

Following a linked, but separate plot structure, the narrator intermittently threads Advena Murchison's romance with Hugh Finlay throughout the strands of Lorne's story, and the plot line of the second pyramid outlines more or less the conventional romance: Advena Murchison, Lorne's older sister, becomes very attracted to Dr. Drummond's assistant, and in Knox Church "[w]hen she bowed her head it was he whom she heard in the language of his invocations; his doctrine rode, for her, on a spirit of wide and sweet philosophy; in his contemplation of the Deity she saw the man" (64).

Finlay and Murchison become companions until one day Finlay is reminded by a letter from Miss Kilbannon, his aunt in Scotland, of his commitment to marry Christie Cameron. Occupied by her "aesthetic ecstasy of self-torture" (188), Advena offers to help in any way she can, even to assist the couple in finding a house. Dr. Drummond points out to Finlay that both the young minister and Avena are acting ridiculously. Advena, much like her father, will not have a good word to say for herself (159), and so Drummond advises Finlay to write to Bross and explain to the ladies that he has fallen in love with Advena. Finlay will not comply, and, the ladies arrive in Elgin. After visiting the ladies, while Finlay is away, Advena intends "to offer herself up" (224), to sacrifice her happiness for the sake of her duty to Finlay's commitment. Advena finally

sees how silly the cold "cardboard farce" (162) of idealism has become in comparison to warm reality, and she knows if the Finlay-Cameron engagement be broken, Christie Cameron will not care: "'I have seen her; and oh! she won't care, Hugh--she won't care'" (257). Informing Advena he has accepted "the charge of the White Water Mission Station in Alberta" (258), Finlay will not give in. All seems lost until a twist of plot saves the day for the young lovers. By marrying Miss Cameron himself and freeing Finlay for the arms of Advena, Dr. Drummond turns romantic tragedy to ironic comedy.

By superimposing the dramatic pyramid on the two main structures--in conjunction with the basic conflicts which both originate and stimulate plot--the reader turns up crucial information about the characters themselves and the general themes of The Imperialist. Of the four or five possible conflicts, the protagonists Lorne and Advena Murchison find themselves struggling mainly against society. Of course, in one sense, as they mature from holding romantic notions of life's limitless possibilities to a more realistic understanding of "what is possible and what is not" (257), their struggles are within. However, if for the sake of argument one can agree with Aristotle that "plot is the soul" of drama (Poetics 23), one will also concede that Lorne and Advena's psychological processes (in terms of

the basic conflicts, their struggles within) need external forces acting upon them to make the young Murchisons change their attitudes regarding their ideals. Therefore, in this conflict between man and society, the antagonist is clearly the town of Elgin itself because, as the narrator explains, Lorne and Advena Murchison, having both "heart" and "imagination" differ from the standard or norm in the community.

Before the reader can appreciate the nature and the quality of their conflict with the town, a clear picture of the antagonist, Elgin, will give us a sense of Lorne and Advena's difficulties. Isolating the two plot structures illustrates that Elgin creates a harsher climate and makes a tougher antagonist for the "new" woman, Advena Murchison, than for her brother, the disappointed lawyer-politician.

Readers can appreciate the force of Elgin's strength as antagonist when they consider how the town sets limits on the expectations of its women. "Lorne came after Advena" (9), but the narrator, as she should do to mirror the age properly, always gives the seniority of first reference to the male: "Lorne and Advena"(7); indeed, the true seniority of Lorne's position becomes increasingly evident the more the narrator describes Elgin. While congratulating Lorne upon his graduation from "Law Schools" (20), Elgin--not that we are told at least--makes no particular mention

of the fact that Advena "justified her existence by taking the university course for women at Toronto, and afterward [taught] the English branches to the junior forms in the Collegiate Institute" (27). Lorne's budding influence as a lawyer and politician extends through the community at large, whereas Advena, through her studies and graduation, achieves the somewhat smaller distinction of being placed "arbitrarily outside the sphere of domestic criticism" (27). To disregard social respectability is largely to defy the rules of women, and, in this domain, Advena's early lessons in the family differ sharply from Lorne's. Lorne receives the family's universal approval: "the family had a bond of union in their respect for Lorne" (29); however, Advena, unlike domestically competent Abby, earns nothing but her mother's worried scorn because "she will never be fit for the management of a house" (27). The expectations of the two imaginative Murchisons are set in childhood: the family believes Lorne's destiny may land him at Queen's Park; probably Advena's will not even land her a man.

Elgin's "polite society" not only sets limits on the expectations of its young people, but also defines the expectations. Advena and Lorne occupy, by degree at least, different circles in the town: he ranges over the whole town and surrounding areas of Jordanville and Toronto; she, since the narrator mentions her occupation

as English teacher just once, exists only in the context of church and home environment. Despite Lorne's large circle of experience and Advena's smaller one, both Lorne and Advena become defined by the little conventions of Elgin: Lorne errs in his attraction to Dora, and Advena never really dares to emerge from the grip of Elgin's conventions to publicly express her dreams.

Elgin's standards at best confuse and at worst mislead Lorne and Advena. If John Murchison and his male contemporaries, with ideas based on common sense and the moral will, impose the tenets of politics, religion, trade and commerce on Elgin, all the nameless "Mistresses" legislate and administer its social conventions; disagreement among married women on tiny details of administering the "rules" keeps Elgin's society dynamic: "Six o'clock tea, and that the last meal in the day, was the rule in Elgin, and a good enough rule for Mrs. Murchison, who had no patience with the innovation of a late dinner recently adopted by some people who could keep neither their servants nor their digestions in consequence" (32). But the Milburn ladies follow a style more refined than the Murchisons. Modelled along English lines (the Milburns have "maids" not "girls") and passed down through the Filkin tradition, the "rules" Mrs. Milburn and her sister, Miss Filkin, apply to their household differ slightly from

those Lorne is used to, and viewing Dora in the light of "the little conventions that at once protected and revealed her" (51), Lorne shows a newly aroused interest in Dora, despite her "'English accent'" (43). The Milburns' "little conventions" imitate "Englishness." Lorne's attraction to Dora when she is surrounded by this false gentility produces, more than any other incident with the exception of his address to South Fox Liberals, the narrator's slightest suggestion of criticism concerning Lorne's poor judgment in being attracted by "that thinness of nostril, and slope of shoulder," to say nothing of his not minding the "affected broad 'a'" (43).

In contrast to the manufacturing Milburns' affectations, the narrator appears to prefer Lorne's family's conventions, decreed and practised by Mrs. Murchison, which fall into the needs of Elgin's retailers. Although in Chapters I-V, readers learn that details of the "little conventions" and "rules" of Elgin women differ from one house to another, on one subject, however, all the ladies of polite society agree: if males have constructed the philosophy of common sense in Elgin, females make sure, by seeing to their unflagging attendance at church, and by seeing to their home-making skills, that the seeds of the philosophy of "social respectability" grow in young ladies. Therefore, "[t]he

habit of church attendance was not only a basis of [social] respectability, but practically the only one: a person who was 'never known to put his head inside a church door' could not be more severely reprobated, by Mrs. Murchison at all events" (55).

At home, at church, despite minor disagreements of interpretation, the women of Elgin's "polite society" whip both male and female members into respectable shape. To defy convention in Elgin means to commit a social (maybe moral) sin, and although she does not do so, Advena, because "[s]he was out of the type" (39), draws perilously close--beginning with her mother's unhappiness with her--to becoming the butt of the town's disapproval: "[m]others of daughters sympathized in good set terms with Mrs. Murchison. 'If that girl were mine-' they would say and leave you with a stimulated notion of the value of corporal punishment" (39). Advena attends church but often not in the spirit of the thing. Like Duff Lindsay in The Path of a Star, she falls in love with Hugh Finlay because she is attracted to the man himself and "not his message" (64).

Time and time again, Advena, walking the fine line between Elgin's "little conventions" and her own inclinations, comes closer than Lorne to stepping beyond the boundaries of what the town considers acceptable. By believing little conventions of behaviour define character, Elgin's "polite society," following the

"little conventions" of either the Murchisons or the Milburns (never the Flannigans or the White Shells, and hardly ever the Wesleyans), sets false standards for two imaginative Murchisons. Lorne, loving Dora in her "English" surroundings, cannot see beyond her particular social conventions to the heart of the matter. Advena, wanting Finlay to back out of a false and foreign commitment, cannot make him see the folly of his position. Moreover, in the face of her own society's standards (set by other Scottish immigrants preceding Finlay), Advena cannot escape Finlay's ethical-religious convictions to set her own course; against the pragmatism of town politics, Lorne's imperialistic fervor will appear embarrassingly and nakedly emotional. Elgin, of course, is but a town, a mere community; nevertheless, the narrator characterizes the place as if it constitutes a unit, as if Elgin can think on its own with its own distinct personality. As Horace Williams says in conjunction with Lorne's success at law school, Elgin congratulates "herself." If The Imperialist were a medieval drama personifying virtue and vice, Elgin would play the shrew or scold come to life; Elgin acts the role of the female antagonist who stands firm, determined to have things done her way, who tries both to shape and limit those who have heart and imagination.

The narrator clearly defines the protagonists as having heart and imagination. One of Duncan's artistic

techniques which appears in each of the three texts under consideration is contrast: the presentation of subject matter, ideas and themes through the vehicle of mirror-reflection, or through putting certain persons, situations, and conclusions in the light of other persons, situations and conclusions. The narrator takes great pains in making sure readers draw parallels between Lorne and Advena Murchison and, within those parallels, as close readers discover, gyroscopically spin smaller circles. In Chapter I, the narrator twice pairs the two of them and remarks on the similarity of their inclinations and imaginations: "Lorne and Advena never had the quarter" to see the lacrosse games (7), and, "It is no great thing, a hat of any quality; but a small thing may ring dramatic on the right metal, and in the vivid idea of Lorne Murchison and his sister Advena a Robin Hood walked in every Independent Forester" (6). To make sure that we read this matter correctly, the narrator, once again in Chapter XI, reminds us "Imagination, one gathers, is a quality dispensed with of necessity in the practice of most professions, being that of which nature is, for some some reason most niggardly....and I have hinted it the property of at least two of the Murchisons" (82). From the beginning of the narrative to its conclusion, the narrator, linking the brother and sister in capacity and imagination, draws the two in exceptional proportions.

Elgin can be classed as an antagonist simply from the narrator's compelling observation that the Murchisons are too good for Elgin--that is, too good not in themselves, but in what they might produce. The narrator's adversarial judgment places "Murchison-potential" and "town-as-is" in conflict. What the Murchisons may produce, in fact, are people of imagination who will disregard the town's standards of behaviour. Chapters I-III describe in detail Elgin's particular stamp and the manner in which the Murchisons manage to make their imprint on the town, and, at the beginning of Chapter V, the narrator does state openly that in a "matter of quality, of spiritual and mental fabric" (38) the Murchisons "were too good for their environment" (38). What makes the Murchisons acceptable is the fact "[n]obody knew it at all in Elgin....They had produced nothing abnormal but they had to prove they weren't going to" (38). Stella Murchison, the narrator believes, will be a social success in Elgin (38); however, because of "their spiritual and mental fabric" Lorne and Advena do not belong in Elgin and eventually do not stay there. While she lives in Elgin, Advena inhabits the shadows; therefore, the narrator portrays her superficially, and all the while we know how Mrs. Murchison and the town feel about Advena, we never learn how Advena feels about them. Elgin, the antagonist, eager to produce "nice people" such as Dr. Henry and Dr.

Harry Johnson ("in the social estimates of Elgin the Johnsons were 'nice people'" [39]), relentlessly finds fault with Indians, railroaders, "new" women, and idealists.

Having identified the protagonists (Lorne and Advena, people with heart and imagination) and the antagonist (Elgin, especially the town's "polite society" whose "little conventions" prove inimical to the aspirations of special persons), the narrator records the course of the rising complication of conflict between Elgin and the two Murchisons.

Lorne's special qualities commend him to Messrs. Fulke and Warner, and Squire Ormiston's choice of that law firm to handle the high-profile defense of Walter Ormiston catapults Lorne into the public eye, or figuratively speaking, into Dora Milburn's eye. Lorne receives an invitation--Mrs. Milburn, At Home, Dancing--which has been extended, wryly notes Mrs. Murchison, on account of "that Ormiston case" (44). At the Milburns', the astute narrator sounds the first note of impending trouble for Lorne, who, by the end of the evening, will be romantically fascinated by Dora Milburn: "if Miss Milburn could have thought on a level with her looks, I, for one, would hesitate to take any liberty with her meditations" (48). The reader is to make no mistake about this man. For all his fine qualities, Lorne has a susceptible temperament; at this point we know he is

likely to be caught up in the magnetism of Dora Milburn's attractive superficiality, just as he has already been caught up in the imperialist's golden dream.

Events which further plot complication continue until the crisis occurs, and, for Lorne Murchison, the turning-point of the dramatic action--that is, the event which predicts the young man's change of fortune and leads the falling action to the plot's inevitable conclusion--happens during his speech to the electors of South Fox. Lorne's speech and the reaction of the Liberal organizers highlight not only the unpopularity of Lorne's vision, but also Duncan's genius at juxtaposing humor and pathos. When Lorne's address becomes "hopelessly adrift" and "almost rudderless" (236), "Bingham, Horace Williams and Mr. Farquharson applauded loudly. Their young man frowned a little and squared his chin. He was past hints of that kind" (237). Feelings of pity are almost universally extended to those who make fools of themselves in public; at the same time, the amusing image of people clapping loudly to signify the end of his speech, a signal which the candidate blithely ignores, inspires the kind of laughter that compounds and undercuts the pathos of the candidate's unfortunate position.

The falling action is accomplished quickly. Following the bye-election, Lorne is rejected first by

Elgin (within the town itself, Walter Winter "piled up a majority of three hundred" [247]; only the vote from the township at large gives Lorne a small majority); then by his party (Bingham tells him, "We can nominate you again all right, but we're afraid we can't get you the convention" [271]); then by Dora Milburn (to Lorne's incredulous "Dora is going to marry you?" Hesketh replies, complaining, "But I half expected you to congratulate me. I know she wrote to you this morning--you were one of the first" [274]). Events being too much for Lorne, he finds "merciful physical distraction" (276) in illness. Perhaps when he recovers, his mind has been cleansed by fever. In any event, after the speedy experience of "examining the problems of the United States with the half heart of the alien" (277), Lorne accepts partnership with Toronto's Henry Cruickshank.

Elgin, the antagonist, wins the battle. Keeping Lorne out of the community, Elgin, largely unruffled by those people who have heart and imagination, will continue to maintain her "little conventions" undisturbed by more passionate outbursts from Lorne Murchison. The dramatic turning-point, Lorne's inability to convince either members of his party or citizens of Elgin of the grandeur and the practicality of the imperialist vision should be a foregone conclusion for those readers who note the narrator's (and

perceptive Stella's) disapproval of Lorne's affection for Dora.[4] Lorne, a "giver," someone "who love[s] with all his imagination" (147), is attracted by "takers." Dora's father declares, "Dora took in a great deal more than she ever gave out" (43). England resembles Dora for the same reasons, and Lorne simply cannot, will not, see the truth behind the ideal. Believing he cares about England, Great Britain and Empire, Lorne denies his own country, the home he truly loves. But much earlier Elgin has denied Lorne too.

The narrator assures us "[i]n Elgin religious fervor was not beautiful or dramatic or self-immolating; it was reasonable" (60); however, Lorne's sister, Advena Murchison, beautifully, dramatically and, without the deus ex machina of Dr. Drummond's interference, self-immolatingly, loves the Reverend Hugh Finlay. This Murchison daughter is a shadowy figure, a character drawn artistically by the narrator to complement Advena's almost non-existent position of consequence in the community compared to the regard given to her brother. The exposition in Chapters II and III provides the underpinning of a story that, despite the so-called

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[4]Carl Berger agrees with Duncan's assessment of Lorne's situation: "The dream that danced in his imagination was that Canada would inherit the greatness and power of Britain....No wonder that Lorne was not understood by his English friend Hesketh, or for that matter, by those Canadians whose support he sought" (261).

happy ending, provides sadder reading than Lorne's temporary political setback. Clara Thomas comments that "Advena is an outsider in Elgin, as she will be an outsider in White Water, and the necessity Duncan felt to write in her romance did not exclude a residue of sadness in its telling. For Advena, unlike Lorne there can be no 'splendid conviction of resource' and unlimited opportunity" (45).

However short the falling action and denouement of the main plot structure, the narrator gives readers a glimpse into Lorne's future. Strengthened by home and town's approval and respect, and reaching unusual social heights by the time he is twenty-eight, Lorne over-extends himself. He does not marry Dora, neither does he hold the Liberal seat for South Fox, but when he decides to accept their offer and join Henry Cruickshank's law firm, one guesses he begins his career anew in Toronto on a better track than he originally imagined for himself. The subplot, Advena's story, ends abruptly because the god-from-the-machine twists her inevitable fate. When Advena, since a child always on the verge of her mother and society's approbation, comes to her senses about the nature of her dry, "friends only" relationship with Finlay, living in Elgin she can do absolutely nothing to save herself: "Before she had preferred an ideal to the desire of her heart; now it lay about her; her strenuous heart had pulled it down to

foolish ruin, and how should she lie abased with it and see him still erect and full of the deed they had to do?" (257) Because the narrator never informs us to the contrary, we assume Advena has no self-asserting expectations, and, until her situation pushes her to the edge of despair, she seems prepared to martyr herself for her ideal. When the falsity of her position comes clear, until Dr. Drummond assumes the mantle of a modern, and successful, Friar Laurence, Advena remains helpless. Never expecting to follow the path of a star (and still remain within family and establishment), this educated woman passively waits for the hand of pre-ordained fate to show itself. In fact, as a victim of Elgin's polite conventions, Advena cannot make and abide by any of her own decisions; consequently, only outside meddling will help save powerless Miss Murchison.

Dr. Drummond, the new Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, holding his American D.D. and likely holding some of John Watson's progressive ideas about the Social Gospel, has the power to interfere--by stopping Hugh Finlay's arranged marriage to Christie Cameron and marrying the lady himself--and save Advena. Previously, by smuggling a rose into Finlay's dressing room, Advena has effected the turning-point of her dramatic structure by attempting to persuade him they have been acting a charade, pretending to be friends

when really they are meant to be lovers; to her "astonishment" she is met with "the rigid lines of his face" (257) as Finlay denies the power of their love to overcome his previous commitment. It is incorrect to imagine Advena living like a "real" person beyond the scope of the text. Even so, because the story or narrative extends only to their young adulthood, the temptation to speculate on both Murchisons' successes in later life beyond the story lies implicitly in the text.

In The Imperialist Advena cannot turn to other women, those makers and keepers of the small rules, because she is not one of those types. Her only intellectual companion will be Finlay, "a passionate romantic" (63), a great believer in the supremacy of reasonable ideals over and above the petty concerns of individuals. Unable to persuade him to obey the strength of his passion for her, how will she be able to persuade him about anything at all? How will she live with a person who places so much value on idealism? The narrator has already described the basic nature of Advena's soon-to-be lifelong companion, and when we read his response to Dr. Drummond's news that he is free (by virtue of Drummond's accepted proposal of marriage to Miss Cameron), his first reaction is to think, not of his freedom to marry Advena, but of himself and his debt to Drummond. Hearing his response (already having noted the number of times he addresses her with "irritation"

[107, 137, 186]), we may tremble for Advena: "He stared in silence, occupied with his great debt; it was like him that that, and not his liberty, should be first in his mind" (263). And we may recall with tremendous trepidation for Advena's happiness the narrator's earlier words that not only express Finlay's ideas about women, but also describe the philosophy of his sect as well as his new community's attitude toward them:

> The things of first importance--what you could do with your energy and your brains to beat out some microscopic good for the world, and what you could see and feel and realize in it of value to yourself--left little room for the feminine consideration in Finlay's eyes; it was not a thing, simply, that existed there with any significance. Woman, in her more attractive presentment, was a daughter of the poets, with an esoteric, or perhaps only a symbolic, or perhaps a merely decorative function; in any case, a creature that required an initiation to perceive her--a process to which Finlay would have been as unwilling as he was unlikely to submit. Not that he was destitute of ideals about women--they would have formed in that case a strange exception to his general outlook--but he saw them on a plane detached and impersonal,

> concerned with the preservation of society, the maintenance of the home, the noble devotions of motherhood....woman had been known, historically, to be capable of lofty sentiments and fine actions: he would have been the last to withhold their due from women. But they were removed from the scope of his imagination, partly by the accidents I have mentioned and partly, no doubt, by a simple lack in him of the inclination to seek and to know them. (103-04)

The male attitude Finlay holds about women reflects, more or less, the way Mrs. Murchison and the ladies of Elgin see themselves: preservers of society, maintainers of the home, devoted mothers of noble sons and domestic daughters. Nothing Finlay does, nothing he says, would point to a change in his or the town's attitudes during the course of the narrative.

In fact, Dr. Drummond may have granted Advena a Midas wish. In this assessment, my speculation is indebted to The Path of a Star. Had Hilda Howe received what she early thinks is her heart's desire, she would have sacrificed, as she realizes later, the vitality of her life to an impossible ideal. Howe recognizes she does not wish to have Stephen Arnold's love because the priest feels and believes his passion or "love" appeals to his baser human instincts. Love for Advena stimu-

lates Finlay's passion, not his reason. Defined in Elizabethan terms, a marital relationship born from a lesser faculty than the one nearest the angels cannot meet the quality of the abstract love of honor and duty. Physical love for Advena must be sacrificed to feed Finlay's medieval interpretation of social morality. The narrator suggests that hope for young Lorne Murchison's success remains a possibility; no such narrative encouragement or expectation accompanies the romance culminating the Finlay-Murchison union.

Our interpretation of Advena's "future," depending as it does on the narrator's suggestions, remains as much of a shadow as Advena's character in the narrative. Advena does experience success Lorne fails to achieve: she realizes her hollow ideal has misled her "heart"; the narrator never reveals whether or not Lorne's heart, more loyal in a way than Advena's for the ideal, recognizes "what is possible and what is not" (257), and, after all, the importance of individuals and communities discovering "what is possible and what is not" is one of the text's major themes. Lorne foreshadows another Duncan character: Eliot Arden. Arden has Lorne's kind of "heart," but because he is older and more experienced knows what the humble heart must do without.

All in all, the way Duncan pairs Lorne and Advena in terms of their hearts and imaginations and then

interweaves the plot structures of their stories in separate, although nearly alternating chapters, suggests the protagonists share the same, or the same type of, ego. Lorne, instead of loving Dora Milburn, should have a romantic relationship with a woman who has the good qualities of Hugh Finlay; Advena, instead of living in the shadows preparing to martyr when she ought to assert herself, should occupy more than the domestic fringes of Elgin. Both Lorne and Advena have much to offer the town. They have heart and imagination, and eventually Advena, at least, has the capacity to understand the difference between a real and a cardboard grasshopper.

As thematically important as the sterling intrinsic natures of Lorne and Advena are, plot structure supersedes character in the final determination of meaning. Duncan, borrowing structures close to the classical description of tragedy, illustrates, what Aristotle's description in Poetics defines, the notion that while character makes the man or woman, only by their actions are they satisfied in life, or not:

> [9.] But most important of all is the structure of the incidents. For Tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality. [10.] Now character determines men's qualities, but it is by their actions that they are happy or

> the reverse. Dramatic action, therefore, is not with a view to the representation of character: character comes in as subsidiary to the actions...[17.] Character is that which reveals moral purpose, showing what kinds of things man chooses or avoids. (23)

While the narrative voice and the general humor and wit of the text all suggest comedy, Duncan's ironic use of tragedy's structure (with the late intervention of the deus ex machina to avoid catastrophe) deserves comment.

Reminded that the initial conflict exists between Lorne and Advena and Elgin, readers can observe that Elgin "wins the battle" because both Lorne and Advena leave the town. On the one hand, Duncan may be influenced by Thomas Hardy's type of naturalism[5] and the idea that forces beyond their control buffet characters about; on the other, Duncan may be making a point about the nature of a character's response to a particular situation. Furthermore, if "character reveals moral purpose," we are entitled to question the "moral purpose" of the antagonist, which is the town of Elgin itself. Irony saves Lorne and Advena from tragedy: Lorne's personal tragedy would be a career spent away

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[5]Hardy's naturalism places characters at the mercy of events (plot). Aristotle believes that character is a fixed quality until plot acts upon it.

from Canada, in either the United States or England; Advena's would be a life of spinsterhood incurred for the sake of someone else's shallow idealism. Henry Cruickshank and Dr. Drummond, in the very last minutes as it were, save the Murchisons from disappointment. However, The Imperialist illustrates a tragedy greater than the sum of the two individuals who are precipitously plucked from its jaws: Elgin loses those special people whom the Murchison strain has always threatened to produce, and finally does produce. The narrator believes Advena and Lorne are too good for Elgin, and it seems the whole novel illustrates this point; therein lies the tragedy. Elgin, not recognizing these special persons who will contribute to the town's enduring vitality, demands conformity and pragmatism from its citizens. The town simply cannot cope with men or women who do not fit the norm.

Although critics have discussed The Imperialist more than other works by Duncan, no one has wanted to give too much attention to the general importance of Chapter I.[6] This chapter provides the golden key to understanding not only Lorne and Advena Murchison but also Elginites; the narrator prepares, for our inspec-

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[6]Michael Peterman ("Honor and Balance in The Imperialist: Sara Jeannette Duncan's Instinct of Presentation") does say "The light-hearted attention to the holiday is by no means an irrelevant starting point."

tion, the garden in which an imperialist will grow.

Because the actual story of The Imperialist begins with Lorne Murchison's graduation as a lawyer--immediately followed by his part in the Ormiston case, his trip to London, and his subsequent seeking the Liberal seat for South Fox--the first chapter, including a segment about Murchison as a boy, seems totally set apart from the rest of the narrative; the narrator does not make anything of Mother Beggarlegs, or Queen Victoria either, after the introductory chapter. However, the first chapter does explain the source of Lorne Murchison's political idealism: a combination of something rooted in the very heart and mythology of the town and something deep and rare in the very heart of the young man. The same young mind that views Mother Beggarlegs as a witch sees Britain as wonderful flowering of all matters good, a never-never land. Although Murchison appears to recover from his fascination with Mother Beggarlegs, his imagination remains fixed on his beliefs of super-Britain.[7]

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[7]Berger criticizes the critics of Canadian imperialism: "According to this critique, imperialism did not grow out of the Canadian soil, but was imposed from outside by an overly zealous British Colonial Office. With a handful of exceptions, its only support within Canada came from misguided colonials who showed an obsequious deference to everything British and disparaged native things, and from recent immigrants who thought of England, not Canada, as their home. It was even suggested that their uncritical and slavish admiration for English culture was accountable for the

Chapter I introduces the reader to the town of Elgin celebrating Victoria Day on the twenty-fourth of May "such a day for Mother Beggarlegs!" (5). To the youngsters of Elgin, Mother Beggarlegs, seller of "gingerbread horses and large round gingerbread cookies, and brown sticky squares of what was known in all circles in Elgin as Taffy" (3), arrives at and leaves the marketplace on a "not improbable broomstick" (3). On one occasion, "when he was quite a little boy," sensitive Lorne Murchison, coming as he does from a capitalist family, politely asks Mother Beggarlegs "for gingerbread with the gilt on it" (4); being misunderstood by Mother Beggarlegs (who is not used to politeness), Lorne retreats, probably "hurling the usual taunt" at her. The narrator does not know for certain whether Lorne does taunt Mother Beggarlegs, but she hopes he does not "with the invincible optimism one has for the behaviour of lovable people" (4). Kind little Lorne Murchison, who not only speaks politely to Mother Beggarlegs but also shares pennies with his siblings so that they may join in the fun of the May 24th celebration with him, is emotionally susceptible to the influence of all the glory, hilarity and rhetoric of

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[7](cont'd) poor showing of Canadian literature and art" (9). With all due respect Berger's assessment of Canada's political climate, I believe Canadian literature and art were (and still are) suffering from their being judged by British or American conventions.

Victoria Day: with British music, British flag, English language, Robin Hoods (actually, the green felt hats and feathers worn by the Independent Order of Foresters inspire the latter notion), parades, bells and cannons, the whole town, and even the township, celebrates the event of "the date upon which Her Majesty really did come into the world" (4). Because the day dawns "more gloriously than other days," declares the narrator, "[t]ravelled persons, who had spent the anniversary there, were apt to come back with a poor opinion of its celebration in 'the old country'" (5). Not only travelled persons, but it seems that Elginites also regard the new country as a place with "more space" and "more enterprise" than the old country. It must come as a shock for an intelligent and sensitive child like Lorne Murchison to discover, after he becomes a man, his Elginite community waxes more pragmatic than idealistic. In any event, the May 24th celebration stirs in him tremendous emotional loyalty for a foreign, idealized federation of communities that simply does not exist. There is a Britain all right, unfortunately not the unified place Lorne imagines, as readers will discover when Lorne habitually refers to Britain and England as if the terms were interchangeable. Other members of Elgin, more prosaic than Lorne, understand the difference between the ideal and the real Britain. Upon his return from London, Murchison shares his opinions,

ideas he has had since a child, with Horace Williams about the "surprisingly unbiased" (127) London editors:

> It was only his impression, and perhaps it would not stand cynical inquiry; but he had a grateful conviction that the English Press occupied in the main a lofty and impartial ground of opinion, from which it desired only a view of the facts in their proportion. On his return he confided it to Horace Williams, who scoffed, and ran the national politics of the Express in the local interests of Fox County as hard as ever; but it had fallen in with Lorne's beautiful beliefs about England, and he clung to it for years. (125)

"Lorne's beautiful beliefs about England" start with his participation, as a youngster, in Elgin's customary celebration of Victoria Day on May 24th. Glorification of Queen Victoria as head of the British Empire and of England for producing Queen Victoria (thanks to Horace Williams for the expression) makes a subtle distinction between British and English that Elginite children can, and do, easily miss. Had the community celebrated some more local or national event, Murchison's imagination would have fallen into different lines, no doubt. In any case, chapter I shows, in a way the narrator never tells, how and why the imperialist has formed his idealistic vision.

Chapter I has nothing to do with the actual plot and everything to do with interpretation of the text. Chapter I does not fit into the action of the plot, but without it Elgin's responsibility for the way events turn out for Lorne and Advena would be buried instead of highlighted. The significance of Chapter I cannot be overstated: Elgin produces Lorne's imperialism and then condemns him for it. The most remarkable event that opens the narrative has a far-reaching effect on children who love the Victorian holiday.

Although other Chapters deal kindly with the senior Murchisons, Chapter I views the world through childish Elginite eyes. Celebrating May 24th means really nothing to Scottish Presbyterian, work-ethic-believer Mr. Murchison who, much to the children's sorrow, will not contribute a penny for the day's events: "Celebrate fiddlesticks! Go and make yourselves of some use" (11). On hearing this disappointing news, "Oliver hunched his shoulders and kicked at the nearest thing that had paint on it. Abby clung to the pump handle and sobbed aloud" (12). The purpose of this exchange is not to show what an unfeeling ogre John Murchison is, but to demonstrate clearly that, next to Christmas, and probably their own birthdays, May 24th is a special and important birthday occasion for children in Elgin. From the child's eyes, nothing can be so worth celebrating as a birthday; for adults, birthdays are often better forgotten. Elginites

place such importance on Victoria's birthday that, beginning with the way they mold their youngsters, they undermine the natural development and growth of both their children and community. Lest the reader doubt the effect of this celebration on the young minds, the narrator cautions adults about the impressionability of youth:

> Which shows the risks you run if you, a person of honest livelihood and solicited vote, adopt any portion of a habit not familiar to you, and go marching about with a banner and a band. Two children may be standing at the first street corner, to whom your respectability and your property may at once become illusion and your outlawry the delightful fact. (6)

Although when Duncan wrote The Imperialist she had no idea the aftermath of World War I would mark the official demise of the movement, she is prophetic in emphasizing the importance of the Victoria holiday, and probably Duncan would be shocked, though not amazed, to see how boisterously some Canadians still celebrate the same foreign event eighty-five years after the publication of her book simply because, as her narrator remarks, "these were times and regions far removed from the prescription that the anniversary 'should be observed'" (4). Mrs. Murchison, on the specific

birthday the narrator recalls, is peeling potatoes in the kitchen because the Murchisons have been "temporarily deprived of a 'girl'" (7). The narrator has already told us that the matter of Victoria's birthday, in the parent country, is of relative unimportance to Britishers, who most probably, like Mrs. Murchison, despite Victoria's birthday, continue with the day's tasks. The vast difference, made clear in Chapter I, between pragmatic parental and vulnerable childish attitudes remains a theme throughout the narrative.

Differences extend between the points of view of parent and child extends, by analogy, to the imperialist's view of Empire; Great Britain becomes the parent, and Canada (specifically Elgin), the child. Although the Murchison parents do figure largely in the narrative, as a whole the narrative is most concerned with the period of growth and development in the immediate post-adolescent period of Lorne and Advena Murchison; analogously, in the time-frame of the novel, imperialists claim Canada, still under Britain's thumb for external relations, is also entering a post-adolescent phase. As defined by G.M. Grant, George Parkin and G.T. Denison, the imperialist movement grows double-edged: on the one hand, without separating from the Empire, imperialists wish to rid Canada of commercial and military colonialism; on the other, they

want to fend off Americanism. Although it may not appear so to its critics, to its proponents the imperialist cause springs from pro-Canadian sentiment, pro-Canadian in that the idea was to allow the "youngsters" to assume their turn at the helm.[8] Lorne explains the family-analogy concept to Alfred Hesketh:

> 'Doesn't there come a time in the history of most families,' Lorne replied, 'when the old folks look to the sons and daughters to keep them in touch with the times? Why shouldn't a vigorous policy of Empire be conceived by its younger nations--who have the ultimate resources to carry it out?' (119)

Pro-Canadian and anti-American too. In his disastrous electoral address to South Fox, Murchison evokes, for his persuasive purposes, a negative parent-adolescent image when he refers to America "as the daughter who left the old stock to be the light woman among nations" (239). In its most limited sense, The Imperialist is about the family Murchison; in its extended sense, it applies the image of family to Great Britain and her colonies. The difference between the way the Murchisons senior and junior regard the Victoria day

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[8]For a description of loyalists, Grant, Parkin and Denison, see Berger's The Sense of Power. See also David Mills, The Idea of Loyalty in Upper Canada 1784 - 1850.

birthday celebration underlines the difference in attitude between the old country and the new, between children and parents.

If readers were to wonder why he becomes one, not whether or not Lorne Murchison remains an imperialist (or whether or not Duncan herself once "held to the 'Idea' with an emotional fervour"), they can look to Chapter I. There, we find what Lorne Murchison sees as a child: he watches Mother Beggarlegs, the eccentric gingerbread lady, the fabled witch, one who belongs to his community, treated with derision; he recognizes extra-communal, ethereal, Queen Victoria, Mother of the Empire, as the cause of a tremendous birthday celebration which includes the Fox County Cup and the Fox County championship lacrosse matches. Named after the Marquess of Lorne, the deputy of the throne, young Murchison hears his mother comment that the Marquess is the son-in-law of a "good woman" (10); furthermore, he belongs to a Liberal, Presbyterian family who takes the "matter of names seriously" (10). He learns early about his father's two minds: father's practical side calls the May 24th celebration "Nonsense"; but his sentimental side sympathizes, even taking Canada's ensuing economic deprivation into account, with Lorne's involvement in the movement. The narrator more fully explains his father's "two minds" much later in the narrative:

> Nevertheless Lorne found more satisfaction in

> talking imperialism with his father than with anyone else. While the practical half of John Murchison was characteristically alive to the difficulties involved, the sentimental half of him was ready at any time to give out cautious sparks of sympathy with the splendour of Wallingham's scheme; he liked the feeling that a son of his should hark back in his allegiance to the old land. There was a kind of chivalry in the placing of certain forms of beauty--political honour and public devotion, which blossomed best, it seemed, over there--above material ease and margin of the new country, and even above the grand chance it offered for a man to make his mark. (268)

In chapter I, the reader finds very important clues about the nature of an imperialist's childhood. In summation, Victoria's birthday celebration, the town's disdain for local personalities, his own name and his siblings' names, his family's interest in politics, the suggestion of his filial regard for his Presbyterian, semi-idealistic father, all these matters predict the future ideology of a sensitive, sentimental, idealistic young man who tends to make decisions guided by his "heart for the work" (4), rather than his mind for it. All combinations and permutations considered, one would be surprised, after reading Chapter I, had Lorne

Murchison's idealistic heart resisted the Canadian version of Wallingham's colonial policy.

Chapter I describes the garden-bed which produces an imperialist. With Horace Williams' congratulatory words in The Express following Lorne's call to the Ontario Bar, the closing sentence of Chapter II reinforces the truck-garden idea: "'This is doing it as well as it can be done. Elgin congratulates Mr. L. Murchison upon having produced these results, and herself upon having produced Mr. L. Murchison'" (21). As time passes, circumstances will compel Horace Williams to deal severely with the man Elgin has produced.

More than describing an emotional, filial connection to an idealised Britain, Chapter I introduces another, more insidious, form of local imperialism: the Scottish domination of the town. Since everyone loves an excuse to celebrate, even if the reason for celebration does not lend itself to close scrutiny, the whole town turns out for the May 24th event. If the narrator were not to inform readers in Chapter IV that Mr. and Mrs. Murchison are "indubitably of the elect" (33), the narrator's perspective would still make the same point. The narrator finds Lorne Murchison "lovable"; he is someone with "heart." Because she knows the boy and his family, her sympathies are with all of them. Seeing the world as if she were a

Murchison, the narrator stereotypes native people as "drunken Indians vociferous on their way to the lock-up." (The first line of chapter XXXI confirms Mrs. Murchison's prejudice: "You can never trust an Indian" [249]). If narrator-cum-Mrs. Murchison does not regard native people highly, she also thinks little of railroaders who have dirty faces at tea time:

> The social distinctions of Elgin may not be easily appreciated by people accustomed to the rough and ready standards of a world at the other end of the Grand Trunk; but it will be clear at a glance that nobody whose occupation prescribed a clean face could be expected to travel cheek by jowl, as a privilege, with persons who were habitually seen with smutty ones, barefaced smut, streaming out at the polite afternoon hour of six, jangling an empty dinner pail. So much we may decide, and leave it, reflecting as we go how simple and satisfactory, after all, are, the prejudices which can hold up such obvious justification. There was recently to be pointed out in England the heir to a dukedom who loved stoking, and got his face smutty by preference. He would have been deplorably subversive of accepted conventions in Elgin. (7)

Although the very amusing excerpt is long, I have quoted it to prove my hypothesis that the narrative voice, though archer in tone, often sounds like Mrs. Murchison and utters the opinions of persons in her social strata, that is, "polite society."

The narrator views Indians, railroaders, poor "shifty" Irish and finally "the girl," from the lofty heights of "the elect." There are young Flannigans and Finnigans who, without a quarter to see the lacrosse game, manage to sneak past the gate; whereas Lorne and Advena, who also rarely have a quarter, "witnessed few lacrosse matches" (7). "The girl" is actually a mill-worker who, when the mill closes, supplements her income and sustains existence by housekeeping; the Murchisons have little regard for her. As the narrator who sounds like Mrs. Murchison explains, "Let a new mill be opened, and it didn't matter what you paid her or how comfortable you made her, off she would go and you might think yourself lucky if she gave a week's warning" (7). From the smutty-faced to the vulnerable, because of the little power they wield within the community, the Presbyterian narrator waves them all aside. Within Elgin itself, the notion of imperialism--Scottish domination in politics, economics, education and religion--is already in practice.

Scottish success in Elgin is no anomaly. A.B. McKillop writes "the contribution of Scotland to

nineteenth-century Canadian life was immense....By the 1880s Scotland provided the dominant element in the Canadian business elite. Its influence on higher education was even more profound" (24). During this time, politics, religion and education are so intertwined that in trying to discuss a single matter, one really deals with all three; however, although in The Imperialist Duncan correctly presents all political issues as complex, aspects of the Liberal tradition do follow a recognizable thread.

Since Liberal policies were, on the whole, continentalist in the nineteenth century, reading The Imperialist a political historian must find Lorne Murchison's adoption of imperialism somewhat confusing. Although the federal Liberals in the twentieth century radiate success, in the century before, reformers had difficulty dislodging the vestiges of the old, infamous Family Compact. One of the ironies about Liberal candidate Lorne Murchison's great love of England is the fact that, in a political sense, harbingers of the party resisted the conservatism of Upper Canada's ruling oligarchy of United Empire Loyalists. In The Imperialist, too, the fact a Liberal espouses British preference causes mild concern on the part of fellow Liberals, even though it is not until Murchison's public speech that pragmatic members of the party become truly alarmed with the extent of Murchison's commitment to

"the Idea." In fact, "[a]s to the local party leaders, they had little more than a shrug for the subject. So far as they were concerned, there was no Empire and no Idea" (268). "[T]he Idea," as the narrator notes, grew from some mind in the Conservative Party:

> (Murchison) subscribed to the Toronto Post, the leading organ of the Tories, because of its fuller reports and more sympathetic treatment of the Idea, due to the fact that the Idea originated in a brain temporarily affiliated to the Conservative Party. If the departure to imperialist preference had any damage in it for Canadian interests, it would be for those which the Post made its special care; but the spirit of party draws the breath of expediency, and the Post flaunting the Union Jack every other day, put secondary manufactures aside for future discussion, and tickled the wheat-growers with the two-shilling advantage they were coming into at the hands of the English Conservatives, until Liberal leaders began to be a little anxious about a possible loss of wheat-growing votes. (267-68)

Duncan does many things to show Lorne and Advena Murchison are different from the rest of Elgin, and having Lorne Murchison follow an idea the others in his

party do not traditionally hold is another means of highlighting his difference; however, Duncan's comment that "the spirit of party draws the breath of expediency" must certainly be true in Canadian politics on matters of trade and commerce--true enough to make Lorne's stand, if unusual, at least plausible in a Liberal context.

The concept of Imperialism threw both parties into debate. In The Imperialist, even Dr. Henry Johnson, "whose Conservatism was supposed to be invincible" (204), after reading Ormiston's Parkin and lending to Ormiston his Goldwin Smith and then subscribing to the Times for six months, finally decides that he will vote for Lorne. If Liberals and Conservatives are more or less clear about their differences on internal policy, both parties frequently struggled with the difficulty of satisfying the different market demands of producers and manufacturers. Speculating on party differences and the tenure of Macdonald, Bruce Hutchison expresses the matter cogently:

> Whatever his private principles might be, Macdonald led the party of business. It represented especially the manufacturing interests of Toronto and Montreal and its policy was generally shaped to suit them. The Liberal Party also represented business, but mainly the exporting industries, and found its

> political base in the farm vote whose need was export markets.
>
> On that rough division the Conservatives were bound to become the party of high tariffs, the Liberals, of low. Both parties painted the issue of Protection versus Free Trade in black and white when, of course, it could never be settled except in mixed and changing tones of gray.
>
> The Conservatives were accepted and attacked as the party of the rich, respectable and privileged. The Liberals claimed to represent the underprivileged and exploited. In fact both shared a right-wing economic conservatism and a strict financial orthodoxy, as judged by modern standards. (22)

The narrator explains the same message in terms of South Fox:

> South Fox still declared itself with pride an unhealthy division for Conservatives; but new considerations had thrust themselves among Liberal counsels, and nobody yet knew what the country would say to them. The place was a "Grit" stronghold, but its steady growth as an industrial centre would give a new significance to the figures of the next returns. The Conservative was the manufacturers' party, and

> had been ever since the veteran Sir John Macdonald declared for a protective "National Policy," and placed the plain issue before the country which divided the industrial and agriculture interests. (168)

However, just in case the politically astute might still dismiss Lorne as a changeling, a strange boy, Conservative at heart, born or placed in the wrong Liberal family, readers should remember Lorne's burst of affection for farmers, traditionally Liberal supporters:

> A tenderness seized him for the farmers of Fox County, a throb of enthusiasm for the idea they represented, which had become for him suddenly moving and pictoral. At that moment his country came subjectively into his possession; great and helpless it came into his inheritance as it comes into the inheritance of every man who can take it, by deed of imagination and energy and love. (70)

The problem with Lorne Murchison is not that he is an odd kind of Liberal--with honest emotion, he supports the farmers of Fox County and looks at the market square, not at a boiler factory, as "the enduring heart of the new country" (70)--the problem with the man is his "heart" and the cavalier manner with which Elginites treat people who have great heart. With another hypothetical Chapter I, in which all Lorne's sentiment

and emotion are directed toward the celebration of a Canadian birthday, the novel might wear another title.

Scottish influence on nineteenth-century southern Ontario was most widely felt in areas of religion and education, which people regarded as a single exercise: in Protestant tradition, school and church are places of learning; therefore, it makes sense both institutions should teach along the same lines. As Scottish philosophy and attitudes appear to be the most dominant in the thinking of the small-town southern Ontario establishment, one should probably ask: What was this philosophy and how came it to be so?

Scots, traditionally feeling a strong sense of national identity, could hardly have been expected to arrive in a new country and take up English causes, and, if Lorne Murchison confuses Britain and England, most Scots do not.[9] Certainly, not all Scots were Liberals (witness the father of Confederation); even so these immigrants, Liberal or Conservative, tried to keep their Scottish identity. In one writer's opinion,

> Scots in Canada increasingly found themselves in an ambivalent position, both part of the dominant British culture and yet insistent on maintaining their own identity. It was

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[9]See Clara Thomas's article "Canadian Social Mythologies in Sara Jeannette Duncan's The Imperialist."

> largely because of their influence that the preponderant culture in Canada was British rather than English. (J.M. Bumsted, "Scots," The Canadian Encyclopedia 1662)

If Liberalism in the Murchison household presents one foregone conclusion--the narrator notes with wry humor the importance of people's names, and a child christened "Oliver Mowat" or "Alexander Mackenzie" must be a Liberal or consider himself "an unendurable paradox"--their possessing a Scottish "common sense" is another. "The specific form of philosophy dominant in Scotland in the early nineteenth century was that of Common Sense... It was an exportable commodity" (McKillop, A Disciplined Intelligence 25) and the old-world Scot responsible for turning common sense into a philosophy was the man who held the chair of Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow, Thomas Reid (1710-96).

In The Imperialist, Dr. Drummond, preacher at Knox Church, who prays every Sunday for "The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland" (15), would hardly consider himself in the export business, yet his friendship with John Murchison and his influence on and intimacy with the family's children has imbued the young Murchisons with something close to Reid's philosophy. The following is Reid's philosophy as McKillop explains it:

> In place of the Lockean notion of ideas as representative substitutes of an external

> reality, Reid turned to what might be termed an 'empiricism of the mind.' His, he claimed, was a 'realistic theory of perception,' which appealed directly to the data of consciousness. The great truths of mankind and the little truths of everyday existence, he insisted, were matters of common sense: they rest within 'the reach of common understanding.' This is why ordinary men's judgments on many matters are of equal weight with those of the trained philosopher. (26)

Reid believed people have different "senses" or "faculties," chief among which is the faculty giving people "an innate capacity to arrive at moral truth" (McKillop 27).

Despite what others of neither Scottish nor Presbyterian background might have called them pejoratively, combining their Calvinist sense of "election" with belief in their "innate capacity" to come to right moral decisions must have given Scottish ministers and educators a tremendous, indeed awesome, sense of their own value. Unfortunately, as McKillop contends, their "sense of their own value" becomes almost a fixed form in Canada: "In short, whereas Common Sense began in Scotland as a liberalizing, heterodox movement which could potentially undermine both Grace and Revelation, it could also be used as an

apologetic philosophy par excellence" (28).

In The Imperialist, although "Mr. Drummond had got his D.D. from an American University" (and prayed occasionally for the President of the neighbouring Republic [but then, perhaps only on the occurrence of assassinations] [15]), were he "real," the minister would surely know the names and ideas of Scottish-Canadian clergyman-philosophers. According to McKillop, the following men--Thomas McCulloch, John Strachan, Egerton Ryerson, William Lyall, James George--were only a few of the numbers who worked and taught "within the framework of Common Sense" (34) until 1870, when it "neared both the peak of its influence and the height of its vulnerability" (56). Since we know Lorne is christened sometime between 1878 and 1883 (the term of the Marquess of Lorne) and Wallingham (Joseph Chamberlain) is Colonial Secretary from 1895 to 1903, and since Dr. Drummond and John Murchison are friends and contemporaries, we can place Drummond's formative years at the time when the philosophy of Common Sense reigned supreme.

Indeed, when all else seems to have failed him, the narrator trusts that Lorne Murchison's common sense will keep him aware of the correct proportion of things:

> I cannot think that the sum of these depressions alone would have been enough to overshadow so buoyant a soul as Lorne

> Murchison's. The characteristics of him I have tried to convey were grafted on an excellent fund of common sense. (260)

Dr. Drummond can probably take some credit for Lorne's "excellent fund of common sense," since he "was as proud of [the Murchison children] as their parents could possibly be, regarding himself as in a much higher degree responsible for the formation of their characters and the promise of their talents" (33). From mind through mind, ideas exported from Scotland filter through the ranks until they come to rest in the heads of Elgin's youth.

If Lorne Murchison's "buoyant" nature is "grafted" on common sense, common sense itself is grafted on fundamental Calvinism. Greatly influenced by medieval concepts (especially the views of Augustine, crisply described by W.T. Jones as "hopelessly unbalanced,--a neurotic exaggeration of guilt and sin, an unhealthy otherworldiness, resulting in almost total neglect of those really serious social and political problems which it is the business of the philosopher to discuss" [290]), this sect of Protestantism, in "[t]he battle between Reason and Passion" (Tillyard 75), comes down heavily on the side of reason. Reflecting on their love of reason, Perry Miller speaks with admiration of the American Puritans' reverence for education and schooling:

> Puritanism, we have seen, had no intention of rejecting the intellectual heritage of antiquity and of the Renaissance. It insisted upon the absolute necessity for a learned ministry, and strove to educate the common man so that he could read the Bible and comprehend a learned discourse. (322)

The neo-Platonic "intellectual heritage of antiquity and the Renaissance" is based on belief "the brain was divided into a triple hierarchy....The highest contained the supreme human faculty, the reason, by which man is separated from the beast and allied to God and the angels, with its two parts, the understanding (or wit) and the will" (Tillyard 71). The importance of man's understanding and will (as opposed to his intuition and emotion [passion]); belief in the supremacy of divine will; belief in the depravity of man; belief in pre-destination, election, and free Grace; all are the tenets of Calvinism that arrived in America with the English Puritans, and in Canada with the Scottish Presbyterians. The nineteenth century Common Sense philosophy was simply an additional argument about the supremacy of reason and "moral" will over passion. McKillop quotes James George's first academic address at Queen's: "The fact that man is not born with perfect mental powers and must aspire to excellence is a sign, [George] had insisted in 1853, 'that he...is placed

under moral, rather than physical laws'" (41). Physical laws (in this case what we might call human nature) must bend to moral will and who more qualified than the Presbyterian or Calvinist members of the "elect" to determine morality?

Unfortunately, for all their positive qualities regarding personal industry, responsibility, and morality, as well as universal education, the tenets of basic Calvinism, dressed in the clothes of Common Sense, fashioned the seats of higher learning in nineteenth-century Canada, and education did not benefit very much from the mitigating effect of the Romantic Movement. Tillyard emphasizes the importance of the faculty of reason to Elizabethans by drawing, for comparison and assistance, on the Romantics' sense of the supremacy of feeling and spontaneity:

> To a modern nurtured on Wordsworthian theories of wise passiveness and generally inclined to believe in intuitions, the uncompromising exaltation of the understanding and the will can be displeasing. But to an Elizabethan the old Platonic and consistently orthodox opposition between the bestial and rational in man, between instinct and understanding, between appetite and will, was starkly real. (75)

To the English, who have experienced romanticism,

Tillyard can easily offer an apologia about the Elizabethans' attachment to reason above passion.

In Canada, during the time of The Imperialist, no apology would be necessary. One reason perhaps in Elgin that "the arts conspire to be absent" (55) may be because the philosophy of Elginites remains relatively untouched by wonder, originality, and expressiveness, characteristics that romantics espouse. At the turn of the century, the American romantic-transcendentalist movement has infected and, until the close of World War I, will continue to affect a few Canadian thinkers and poets. Elgin (Lorne and Advena Murchison excepted), as a whole, remains immune. While the Murchison strain produces two children superbly blessed with "heart" and "imagination," Elgin's celebration of Empire through the May 24th holiday, combined with the town's pragmatic application of Scottish "common sense," takes away more from these romantic children than it can ever return to them. Although one may argue common sense saves Advena's romance, the opposite is also most certainly true: Elgin needs, yet loses, Advena's and Lorne's imagination and heart. Duncan, like Howells, has no great sympathy for "cardboard" idealism, but as Chapter I illustrates, romanticism and youth are soulmates. Before Elgin as a community comes to terms with "what is possible and what is not," it also needs to suffer through pleasures of the youthful romantics' sense of

wonder and love of originality and belief that anything is possible or it will forever remain "accustomed comfortably to scan its own intelligible averages" (44). Elgin has turned its romantic children sour by forcing them to focus their sense of wonder on a foreign culture.

In this text, considering how twisted of idealism and romanticism affect all aspects of politics and religion. Defining The Imperialist only in terms of plot structure without help of narrative analysis leads to more complexity. Indeed, much of the novel's design arises from narration. Peter Allen, in his article "Narrative Uncertainty in Duncan's The Imperialist," although never really addressing the narrative uncertainty he claims is there, predicts The Imperialist's narrative will be an impediment to its widespread popularity:

> Whatever its historical significance and artistic merit, The Imperialist is not likely to win wide popularity, mainly because of the very considerable difficulties it presents its readers. Duncan's narrative voice is the chief puzzle. Although her subject is a provincial way of life, she herself as narrator is notably cosmopolitan, sophisticated, witty, complex, altogether hard to catch and hold. (42)

In the next and final segment of this chapter, close attention to narrative structure provides help in "catching" the narrator. The narrator carefully controls the novel's intricate design by counterpointing iterative telling and singulative showing. Furthermore, breaking down the narrator's voice from a composite into several voices will demonstrate how the narrator varies her tone according to the subjects she narrates. Some of the narrator's general characteristics will be discussed in terms of Wayne Booth's definitions of structural and stable irony.

As the narrator in The Path of a Star is extradiegetic, so is the narrator of The Imperialist. Each narrator occupies a level above the story she narrates, in that as narrator, to a degree "real" people cannot know themselves let alone each other, she understands characters' private reflections. At the beginning of Chapter XIV, for example, the narrator explains at length the views Finlay holds about women, views so complex that the reader is pleased to find Finlay capable of such depth of intention if not of thought. The extradiegetic narrator also explains "Lorne loved with all his imagination" (147); as readers, we certainly do not expect the observation of that fact to come from Lorne himself. Furthermore, the narrator self-consciously steers the course of our interest by keeping our attention clearly focused:

> But I am explaining now how little, not how much, the Cruickshank deputation, and especially Lorne Murchison, had the opportunity of feeling and learning in London, in order to show how wonderful it was that Lorne felt and learned so widely. That, what he absorbed and took back with him is, after all, what we have to do with; his actual adventures are of no great importance. (112)

Once again, as in The Path of a Star, extradiegetic is qualified by homodiegetic: although the narrator occupies a higher level of understanding than the story she narrates, she does participate in the story "at least in some manifestation of his [sic] 'self'" (Rimmon-Kenan 95). When, for example, the narrator points out that analyzing social principles in Elgin presents "an adventure of difficulty" (40), she adds that she too has been invited to the Milburns' party:

> I seem to have embarked, by way of getting to the Milburns' party--there is a party at the Millburns and some of us are going--upon an analysis of social principles in Elgin, an adventure of difficulty, as I have once or twice hinted, but one from which I cannot well extricate myself without at least leaving a clue or two more for the use of the curious. (40).

Occasionally, the narrator includes herself among contemporary Elginites, but, on the whole, most of her references draw attention to her double-sided character: storyteller and former Elginite.

In Chapter I the narrator sets the groundwork for the rest of the narrative by indicating she knows Elgin personally; she, just as Lorne Murchison did when he was a little boy, used to buy her gingerbread from Mother Beggarlegs: "so you bought your gingerbread, concealing, as it were, your weapons, paying your copper coins with a neutral nervous eye..." (13). The narrator, coyly not wishing to "invest Mother Beggarlegs with importance" (4) ("it was only the children, perhaps, who had the time and the inclination to speculate" about the gingerbread seller's "antecedents" [4]), needs to recall the memory of the old woman to help her set the date of the first chapter. "The date helps me" (4), declares the narrator, because May 24th is the day when Mother Beggarlegs does excellent business. In Chapter I the homodiegetic narrator performs a delicate balancing act, the effect of which readers keep with them for the remainder of the narrative. She manages to convey three things regarding her narration: she is an Elginite; she is writing down memories of Elgin (concentrating on the Murchisons); she is recounting, once, events which occur with frequency.

A large part of the design of The Imperialist lies

in Duncan's ability to combine successfully the "iterative" ("telling once what 'happened' n times" [Rimmon-Kenan 58]) with the "singulative" ("telling [or showing] once what happened once" [57]). Obviously, events which form the two dramatic structures and detail the young adult histories of Lorne and Advena Murchison are singulative in nature. These events "happen" once and are told or shown once, although some occurrences cause speculation among Elginites, who discuss the meaning of them from another point of view. This would be "repetitive," i.e., "telling n times what 'happened' once" [57]: for example, Dr. Drummond evaluates Advena and Hugh Finlay's relationship from his perspective, which differs from Finlay's. However, much more significant in the overall thematic sense than repetitive telling is the telling "once" of things which we know recur.

Indeed, events happening in Elgin (those which do not bear directly on the two dramatic structures) are usually iterative: Mother Beggarlegs always (my emphasis) makes money, puts the gilt on her gingerbread so to speak, on May 24th; "there was nearly always a lacrosse match on the Queen's birthday" (15); the Murchison children always run with abandon around the house and garden:

> [The house] was never half-lighted, and there was a passage in which fear dwelt--wild were

> the gallopades from attic to cellar in the early nightfall, when every young Murchison tore after every other, possessed, like cats, by a demoniac ecstasy of the gloaming. And the garden, with the autumn moon coming over the apple trees and the neglected asparagus thick for ambush...these were joys of the very fibre. (25-6)

If the Murchison children regularly run around house and garden, Octavius Milburn, described at length by the narrator at the opening of Chapter VI, appears so fixed in his ways readers can imagine that even his conversation is iterative, to say nothing of his habits and routine. Milburn is "fond of explaining...that he preferred a fair living under his own flag to a fortune under the Stars and Stripes" (51), and Milburn, presenting statistics to the Chamber of Commerce, "was fond of wearing...the national emblem in a little enamelled maple leaf" (52). From year to year, the unimaginative Milburn changes neither ideas nor topics of conversation. The antics of the Murchison children and Milburn's habits are simply not one-time happenings, but it is certainly not in the best interests of the novel to have the narrator repeat the telling of these incidents to illustrate their frequency. It follows that iterative telling, while avoiding repetition, gives readers a sense of the timelessness and continuity of

people in Elgin.

More important than the repetitive behaviour of individuals are the recurring events which make up customs of Elgin itself. In The Imperialist, from social principles to politics and religion, iterative vies heavily with singulative as the most pervasive type of "telling," and, together, iterative and singulative telling far outweigh present-tense "showing," which is the kind of showing inherent in dialogue. The Imperialist does not, in this regard, resemble The Path of a Star, a narrative marked by reliance on showing through nearly a playscript presentation. However, in The Imperialist, the manner in which the narrator combines iterative and singulative telling turns out to be a method that is subtle and, in general, organized, despite the lack of dialogue, not unlike The Path of a Star. Chapter by chapter, the latter has segments of introductory narration followed by direct speech; the former has blocks of iterative telling followed by a one-time event. The first three chapters of The Imperialist present good examples of this clever iterative-singulative technique which continues to reappear throughout the novel.

In Chapter I, readers understand the celebration of May 24th, bringing delight to all children in Elgin, comes annually. Such telling is iterative. Now, out of all the May 24ths that have come and gone, the narrator

recalls one special year in the history of the Murchison family, the year the children nearly could not make it to the celebration for want of funds, to illustrate in the particular what she has just described in the general. In Chapter II, the narrator once again describes the general and then illustrates the general through the specific. This time the narrator tells us about the friendship, attitudes, and habits of John Murchison and Dr. Drummond; readers are told the latter's sermons always follow the same pattern: "Thus before a congregation that always stood in the old days, had the minister every Sunday morning for thirty years besought the Almighty, with ardour and humility, on behalf of the Royal Family" (15). We are also informed about the former's consistent exhibition of "the shyness of an artist in his commercial success" (17), a characteristic which on this particular occasion renders the senior Murchison reluctant even to mention his son's impending law career. Once again, after she has described something that happens frequently, the narrator, to illustrate her observations, follows the iterative by citing an event which happens on one specific occasion. Consequently, when the narrator does use dialogue, it is usually employed in the specific (singulative) incidents, incidents which further the complications of the plot as much as they demonstrate the accuracy of the narrator's previous assessment of

the general nature of things in Elgin. The pattern continues. On the one hand, Chapter III, dealing with the Plummer Place and the general character of the children, is iterative; on the other, Chapter IV, describing one particular time Dr. Drummond comes for tea (and, in the course of events, introducing the Ormiston case as well as Horace and Mrs. Williams), is both singulative (a happening) and illustrative (gives an example of the town's interest in politics). Squire Ormiston is not merely the father of a young man in trouble; he is also a long-time Conservative whose own father was "a well-known Family Compact man" (35). Chapter VII opens with a description of the importance, through time, of politics and religion in Elgin and concludes with a single, one-time "religious" event, which is the arrival of Rev. Hugh Finlay in Elgin. Through her narrator's counterpointing of iterative telling and singulative showing, Duncan creates sense of pattern and order.

Peter Allen's comment that "[a]lthough her subject is a provincial way of life, she herself as narrator is notably cosmopolitan, sophisticated, witty, complex" gives rise to a variety of questions. Letting pass for the moment the one about Duncan's subject, readers, on digesting Allen's remarks, may wonder: 1. Is Duncan "herself" really the narrator? 2. Is the narrator cosmopolitan? If so, what is cosmopolitan? 3. Are

people in small towns (provincials) unsophisticated, dense, simple? It seems to me that answers to the above questions read as follows: 1. No. Duncan herself is not the narrator of The Imperialist any more than Jane Austen "herself" is the narrator of Emma. 2 and 3. If cosmopolitan means that the narrator comes from outside rather than from within the community, then the answer again is no. The narrator of The Imperialist tells us she is an Elginite; after all, she has been invited to the Milburns' party. If by cosmopolitan, Allen means worldly and witty in her choice of language, the narrator is no more worldly than the Murchisons, Dr. Drummond or even Horace Williams, all of whom sound reasonably intelligent and relatively sophisticated when they speak. To deal at length with the answers to the questions raised by Allen's comments is also to discuss the function of stable and structural irony.

The narrator, the self-conscious storyteller, does not hide her power to control the manner in which the story is told. If she wishes to "[skip] about a good deal" (10), she does. If she does not want to help out the newspapers in their reporting, she will not: "It is not my duty to report the trial for any newspaper" (78). Keeping in mind the narrator's awareness of her function as storyteller pins down points of her character. She knows and sympathizes with the Murchisons, especially Mrs. Murchison. Listen to the narrator on the occasion

of the Murchisons being temporarily deprived of a "girl":

> Let a new mill be opened, and it didn't matter what you paid her or how comfortable you made her, off she would go, and you might think yourself lucky if she gave a week's warning. Hard times shut down the mills and brought her back again; but periods of prosperity were apt to find the ladies of Elgin where I am compelled to introduce Mrs. Murchison--in the kitchen. (8)

First of all, one should note this excerpt does not come to us courtesy the consciousness of Mrs. Murchison; it comes from the narrator who sounds like Mrs. Murchison. Because the sentiments expressed in the above statement are extremely insensitive regarding both the title ("girl") and occupation of the young woman in question--on this occasion, Lobelia--Duncan uses the narrator to set up an ironic situation. The narrator merely expresses the point of view of the Presbyterian merchant class in the town, and readers must certainly believe the narrator herself is not being sarcastic here, any more than Mrs. Murchison, who could easily express the same sentiments, would be sarcastic in referring to her domestic worker as "girl." Although sarcasm, a form of irony, is not the correct label for the narrator's remarks, the excerpt just quoted does exhibit what Wayne

Booth calls "stable irony": the narrator offers a position, the meaning of which the reader re-evaluates and rereads (A Rhetoric of Irony 47-86). The author may not, but the narrator expects us to feel sorry for Mrs. Murchison's "domestic crises"; we may well (depending on our economic politics) feel sorry for Mrs. Murchison, but we also notice that neither the narrator nor Mrs. Murchison (and, following Mrs. Murchison's lead, none of the smaller Murchisons) understands the financial position of a young millworker who is subject to layoffs. If the narrator and Mrs. Murchison have the same negative views about the "girl" and also about Advena, and if Advena is a protagonist clearly applauded by readers, to say "the first person voice is probably Duncan herself" (Gerson 79) not only does Duncan an appalling disservice, but also misses her criticism of the Murchisons, especially Mrs. Murchison.

Duncan sets up the same kind of "stable irony" when the narrator describes Advena:

> I tell you that to be left by Mrs. Murchison with a day's preserving, be it cherries or strawberries, damsons or pears, was a mark of confidence not easy to obtain. Advena never had it. Advena, indeed, might have married and removed no prop from the family economy. (32)

The rest of the passage which I have just quoted falls

under the definition of free indirect speech and is narrated through the thoughts of Mrs. Murchison:

> When you have seen your daughter reach and pass the age of twenty-five without having learned properly to make her own bed, you know without being told that she will never be fit for the management of a house--don't you? Very well then. (27)

In this gentle condemnation of Advena, once again, the narrator supports the views of Mrs. Murchison and even commends the latter's ability as a home-maker. It matters not, either to Mrs. Murchison or the narrator, that Advena's dreaminess marks a special and imaginative person. But Advena's intelligence and imagination do matter to readers who ironically undercut the narrator's position and interpret Advena's story in light of events that happen to her and her brother. To say Duncan and the narrator always see Advena in the same light is to make a speculation that will not stand close scrutiny. To note that Duncan and the narrator do not hold the same view of Advena is to recognize stable irony.

The narrator remarks on the level of development of the Indian, opining "he had taken on the sign of civilization at the level which he occupied" (249); the same kind of thing can be said of the narrator of The Imperialist, who takes on the views and language of Elgin at the level she occupies. When Mrs. Murchison's

"friend" narrates, sentiment does not fall in line behind Advena, who is "out of the type." "Once as a little girl she had taken a papoose from a drunken squaw and brought it home for her mother to adopt. Mrs. Murchison's reception of the suggested duty may be imagined, also the comments of acquaintances--a trick like that!" (39) The racial prejudice of Mrs. Murchison and her acquaintances is not shared by Advena; we are meant to sympathize with Advena, not Mrs. Murchison.

If on one side the snobbish narrator believes Advena's compassion is misguided, on the other, the narrator, in tune with Lorne's mother's and the town's general sympathy for the man, can be more generous, indeed too generous, in evaluating Lorne's circumstances. Regarding the deputation, the narrator suggests "Cruickshank was the biggest and the best of them; but even Cruickshank submitted the common formulas; submitted them and submitted to them" (114). Bigger than the biggest and better than the best, bigger and better than Cruickshank, according to the narrator's opinion, is Elgin's own Lorne, the virtues of whom the narrator extolls: "Only Lorne Murchison among them looked higher and further; only he was alive to the inrush of the essential; he only lifted up his heart" (114). Once again, because of the narrator's overstatement, we are dealing with stable irony. Whereas the narrator assumes a position that seriously under-

rates Advena, she frequently praises Lorne without reservation and heavily overrates him. The narrator's pattern comes clear: she, the voice of Elgin, generally disapproves of Advena's bookishness and heartily approves of Lorne's potential. Therefore, irony occurs because the narrator belongs to the town, not because she looks down on it.[10]

In conjunction with her tendency to undervalue Advena and overpraise Lorne, the narrator assumes other positions in Elgin through a voice that complements character and town. When the narrator writes about the town as a whole as if it were an individual, her comments are funny, not because she sneers at the place, but because she blithely accepts the town's peculiarities of caste as part of the process of blending and rebuilding: "Any process of blending implies confusion to begin with; we are here at the making of a nation" (41). Part and parcel with the serious business of nation-making comes the "apotheosis of the bank clerk," whose position in the town is so clearly superior to others that "[y]oung doctors and lawyers simply didn't think of competing." The narrator

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[10]The same difficulty occurs in Stephen Leacock's Sunshine Sketches. Is the narrator of the sketches a sophisticated person being sarcastic, or is the narrator a "country bumpkin" being straightforward? In my opinion, Leacock's humor works more successfully if the reader views the narrator as a country bumpkin.

explains the young male bank clerk has reached such social ascendancy, reference to his profession becomes a "byword on the lips of envious persons and small boys....'D'ye take me for a bank clurk?' [is] a form of repudiation among corner loafers as forcible as it [is] unjustified" (40). On this occasion, Duncan's narrator sounds like Leacock's narrator on the subject of the inhabitants of Mariposa and, in particular, one citizen named Peter Pupkin. In The Imperialist the narrator often sounds very serious, but her naivety is amusing; she is not being sarcastic, but she creates an ironic position because of her ingenuous assertions.

One main difference between Leacock and Duncan's narrative styles lies in characterization. In Leacock, characters are not often conscious of their own wit; in Duncan, many characters are witty and know it. Horace Williams, for example, has a good sense of humor. Angry at his wife, Minnie Williams, for her indiscretion in discussing the Ormiston case, Williams laments his wife's ability to leak information without bringing any in to his paper: "Mrs. Williams was too prone to indiscretion in the matter of letting news slip prematurely; and as to its capture, her husband would often confess, with private humour, that Minnie wasn't much of a mouser" (35).

Not only witty, but also pragmatic, Horace Williams exhibits good "common sense." Running the Elgin Express

with a temperate hand, Williams knows better than the editor of The Mercury about the folly of courting libel suits by reporting hard dealings of the bank: "Mr. Williams remarked, there was no use in dwelling on the unpopularity of the bank, that didn't need pointing out; folks down Moneida way could put any newspaper wise on the number of mortgages foreclosed and the rate of secondary loans extracted by the bank in those parts" (75). It is also Mr. Williams who gives Lorne the most practical advice on economics: "There ain't any sort of ultimate truth in the finest economic position, my son; not any at all" (92). When Lorne becomes ill after his party rejects him, Horace Williams feels terrible about Lorne's "political disappointment" and "publishe[s] a daily bulletin" (276) on Lorne's health. Horace Williams is singled out because of his humor, his open-mindedness, his concern, and because the narrator, who can often sound like a "friend" of Mrs. Murchison, does, on one important occasion, sound like a "friend" of Horace Williams.[11]

The occasion to which I refer is the time of Lorne's speech in the opera-house given before the electors of South Fox. The situation is both funny and

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[11]Horace Williams in The Imperialist and Alfred Earle in Set in Authority offer their respective texts wise words on politics and economics. Duncan remains steady in her respect for newspaper people.

sad, and, in this instance, the narrator's voice does not exaggerate nor minimize Lorne's situation. The "friend" of Horace Williams who narrates this chapter as Horace would is funny, pragmatic, and concerned. The humor of the piece exists in the imagery evoked by the response of party members who simultaneously want to support Lorne and to shut him up. The pragmatism of the Williams type shows when the narrator quite rightly recognizes that Lorne's speech runs away from acceptable party positions. The narrator expresses concern for Lorne's lack of control, just as some readers may be concerned about Lorne's ultra-imperialism, which will certainly not impress the farmers of Fox County. The farmers have already been subjected to Hesketh's rhetoric on the subject in his declaration during the campaign that arrangements of trade between nations can be effected "'[b]y the mutual esteem, the inherent integrity, and the willing compromise of the British race'" (199). With the exception of something as nebulous as attitude, Hesketh, the man who may know a "dook" (200) in the old country, and Lorne Murchison, the man who feels such tenderness for his home town, sound identical. The final words of the chapter belong to a very upset Horace Williams: "'He had as soft a snap,' returned Horace Williams on the brink of tears--'as soft a snap as anybody ever had in this town. And he's monkeyed it all away. All away'" (240).

Missing from this chapter is the narrator who assumes a fixed position that sets up an ironic condition (underrating Advena or overrating Lorne or assuming the wisdom of social divisions within Elgin's society). This chapter, narrated, as it were "on the level," comes from a mind that shares the philosophy and point of view of someone kind and sensible, a person like Horace Williams who has been a reasonable figure throughout the story.

Within the parameters set out for it, the voice of The Imperialist is consistent. The narrator's voice must exhibit only one qualification: it must come from Elgin! Condemnation, however gentle, of Advena reflects only one Elginite characteristic that the narrator exhibits. The narrator and Elgin also agree on these items: loyalty to Lorne, praise of his character, belief in his future and doubts about imperialism. On account of Lorne's idealism, sensitive Elginites, such as Horace Williams, suffer tremendously over the pity of the young lawyer's downfall. The narrator never "looks down" on the story, nor is the narrator more cosmopolitan, sophisticated, or witty than Elginites, many of whom are very witty people--as witty often, as they are often naive. Proof of how Duncan herself feels about Brantford (Elgin) certainly cannot come from the statements directly expressed by The Imperialist's narrator. Only through understanding and recognition of the function of stable irony can the reader catch

glimpses of the authorial point of view.

I have not addressed two sections of the narrative with regard to "voice": these are the Murchison-Finlay, Murchison-Milburn romances. Duncan reverts, in the telling of these romances, to methods which characterize narration in The Path of a Star: dialogue with explanatory comment in the form of stage directions, mostly description. In the narrative of these romances there are still amusing lines such as "[Advena would] gaze humbly through tears at her own face in the glass, loving it on his behalf" (108) that let you know you are reading Duncan, but the narrator is not nearly so much in evidence as a "particular voice"--an Elginite setting up an ironic position--as she is in the parts of the novel whose subject is politics or religion.[12]

Narrative which faithfully follows a pattern presents the reader with a key to understanding the so-called complexities of the narrative voice. Aside from the fact that the narrator of The Imperialist is homodiegetic, the narrator tailors her voice, while still expressing the viewpoint of Elginites, to accommodate the subject. Through stable irony set up by the narrator, some aspects of Elgin appear quaint, or funny, or dogmatic; some, less ironically handled, are

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[12]See, for example, Catherine Sheldrick Ross, "Calling Back the Ghost of the Old Time Heroine: Duncan, Montgomery, Atwood, Laurence and Munro."

serious. The personal business of Lorne and Advena Murchison, matters which are in the main private affairs, are told by a narrator who does not push forward her own personality.

Duncan's novel The Imperialist could just as well have been called The Making of an Imperialist. At the very least, it is hardly, as Fowler calls it, "a long, lyrical love letter, addressed to Redney's family, to her home town, to her country" (251). On the contrary, the novel illustrates why those Elginites who possess heart and imagination and even genius must eventually leave the town. The town's betrayal of its youth begins early, with the 24th of May.

The real purpose of this analysis is to contest Claude Bissell's assertions that Duncan is an ardent imperialist and a second-rate writer. As an ardent imperialist in her youth, who better than she to explain why and how such sentiments grow in the heart of a Canadian. If Duncan were a second-rate writer joining the company of Eliot, James, and Howells only because of her sensitivity, her appeal would be limited indeed. The greatest tribute to Duncan comes from the fact her novels continue to withstand and inspire renewed critical attention.

IV. Set in Authority: World Games

i) The first duty of a Political Officer is to cultivate direct, friendly, personal relations with the Ruling Princes and Chiefs with whom he works.

vi) He should leave well alone; the best work of a Political Officer is very often what has been left undone.

Notes from the Manual of Instructions to Officers of the Foreign and Political Department, 1924 (cited in Allen and Dwivedi, Lives of the Indian Princes 245).

True to and consistent with Duncan's art, Set in Authority presents a political rather than a psychological point of view: in the book, what people do in society is ultimately more important than what they think about it. More than illustrating universal themes and national and international political issues--something it certainly does --the novel once again raises several of Duncan's favorite subjects: the hardships faced by Englishwomen in India and the shoddy treatment given the Anglo-Indian official community by the British government. However, despite its political subject, the novel is not without human interest, and the mystery at the heart of the story supports a common

observation, "what goes around comes around": Herbert Tring who "has made away with himself" (11) turns up as Henry Morgan, private in the Fifth Barfordshires and convicted murderer of Gobind, "the watchman." The plot involving Morgan's trial and Tring's disappearance is a complicated series of events following a deliberate, convoluted (the novel was serialized in the weekly edition of the London Times [Tausky 241]), but relentless path. Allowing the reader to examine the multi-faceted problem of morality and duty, Duncan writes about a problem arising from use and abuse of power in the form of British paramountcy. [1]

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[1]The following explanation of "paramountcy" is found in Lives of the Indian Princes:

> With the arrival of the British in India this ancient concept of kingship received its first serious body-blow. British imperial rule in India, established initially by the East India Company and then in 1858 assumed by the British Crown, froze the borders of innumerable Indian kingdoms, large and small, giving their rulers a security of tenure that their predecessors had never enjoyed. The price was British paramountcy, by which the raja became answerable not to his praja [people] but to the British Raj in the person of the Viceroy. In this process the Indian kings were demoted to "Princes and Native chiefs" and their kingdoms became Princely or Native states" (12). Further, the British view of the Princes was neatly encapsulated by the supreme champion of paramountcy in India, Lord Curzon, when he extolled their virtues at a princely gathering in Jaipur in 1902:
>
> > 'Amid the levelling tendencies of the age and the inevitable monotony of government conducted upon scientific lines, [Princes] keep alive the traditions and customs, they sustain the virility, and they save from extinction the picturesqueness of ancient and noble races...Above all, I realize, more perhaps in Rajputana than anywhere else, that

Of the three novels considered in this thesis, Set in Authority is Duncan's most complex: its scope of action, its number of characters, and its hard questions and puzzling paradoxes of morality are much more complex than the religious and political themes in The Path of a Star and The Imperialist. There is, however, a line of connection and progression through the three works.

The line from The Path of a Star to Set in Authority is drawn through modern philosophy. In The Path of a Star, the protagonist Hilda Howe criticises and, in fact, dismisses the spiritual and moral authority offered by two sects of orthodox Christianity, whose patriarchal tenets erect powerful, intangible barriers between male and female consciousnesses. Hilda Howe, the speaker for The Path's female consciousness, snaps out smart retorts with a tone not unlike the "journalist's" voice of her creator. We court the intentional fallacy when we speculate that an author directly connects herself with or reflects one of her characters, yet it is true that neither Hilda Howe nor her creator has patience with the dogma of religion (The

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1 (cont'd) they constitute a school of manners, valuable to the Indian and not less valuable to the European, showing in the person of their chiefs that illustrious lineage has not ceased to plant noble and chivalrous ideas...with the loss of which, if ever they be allowed to disappear, Indian society will go to pieces like a dismantled vessel in a storm.' (18)

Imperialist's Advena Murchison is willing to marry a minister, but even she admits to being not in the least impressed with Hugh Finlay's theology). If we can suppose that Duncan, modelling Howe partially upon herself, has suffered through her own "dark night of the soul" (Howe's night occurs when Stephen Arnold dies), then we may imagine that Duncan eventually struggles with a philosophical dilemma akin to the one expressed by existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre in 1957:

> The existentialist...thinks it very distressing that God does not exist, because all possibility of finding values in a heaven of ideas disappears along with Him; there can no longer be an a priori Good, since there is no infinite and perfect consciousness to think it. Nowhere is it written that the Good exists, that we must be honest, that we must not lie; because the fact is we are on a plane where there are only men. (Existentialism and Human Emotions 22)

By the time she writes Set in Authority, Duncan does face something close to what will later be described by Sartre as the existentialist problem: if "man is free, man is freedom...," and if "we are alone with no excuses" (23), according to what values can we conduct ourselves?

Addressing in her richest text the difficult

question of morality and conduct in a potentially "Godless" society, Duncan presents Set in Authority's Eliot Arden as the existential man, one who treats "justice" as a human, not a heavenly construct. Instead of finding answers in absolutes and fixed values, Arden relies on his education and his experience to help him judge how best to pick his way carefully through a potentially explosive situation. As a servant of the crown who must both answer to his superiors and protect his charges, Arden carries a double load. Sartre describes the existentialist's burden: "And when we say a man is responsible for himself, we do not only mean that he is responsible for his own individuality, but that he is responsible for all men" (16). Eliot Arden is no ordinary romantic hero and his protege, Ruth Pearce, is exceptional only because she is a medical doctor during a period not conducive to women's education. Yet, heroically, both characters choose to submit their egos to forces that will preserve order; they (and Duncan) believe that without order in society, the poorest justice will give way to no justice at all.

The Imperialist is a novel about adolescence; Set in Authority is a treatise on mature choices. Eliot Arden holds many of the same enthusiasms as Lorne Murchison: they understand idealism; they involve themselves in politics; they admire the British Parliamentary system. Both men are "lovable." The real

difference between their points of view is a function of age: Murchison must temper his idealism, learn what is possible and what is not, whereas Arden, the middle-aged administrator, already knows what the humble heart must do without. Because "to learn" suggests action and process, whereas "to know" indicates condition or state-of-being, Duncan sets Murchison in the role of youthful protagonist, and only uses Arden to illustrate the moral conduct of a wise and dutiful civil servant. Deftly managing to push the young protagonists of Set in Authority very far into the background, Duncan appears to concentrate on the social philosophy of Eliot Arden, the mature administrator of the Province of Ghoom, India.[2]

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[2]The events surrounding the British withdrawal from India (described by John Cotton in Lives of the Indian Princes) closely parallel Duncan's assessment of Eliot Arden's situation in 1906:

> In February 1947 the new British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, announced that the transfer of power would take place not later than June 1948. He also announced the appointment of a new Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten of Burma, specifically charged with executing the task. This was devastating news to both the rulers and the officers of the Indian Political Service. "The mood was one of astonishment," declares John Cotton:
>
> 'The general feeling had been that when the war came to an end, all the schemes for democratic advancement in India which had been placed in abeyance would be revived and we could persuade the Princes to put their houses in order. We had thought there would be an interval during which we could achieve this long-term scheme. There was a mood of helplessness among my colleagues in the Political

Because Set in Authority is out of print, a story summary is included. Mrs. Justice Lenox congratulates Lady Pamela Thame on the appointment of the latter's son, Anthony Andover, to the position of Viceroy of India. (Anthony Andover, Herbert Tring, and Justice

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[2](cont'd) Department, who had the future welfare of the Indian States at heart, because it couldn't be done in that time. All the promises, all the agreements made over the years since India had become a part of the British Empire, were set at nought at a stroke of the pen.'

Cotton was one of those who attended the Conference of Residents and Political officers called by Lord Mountbatten soon after his arrival in India:

'I watched with dismay, sitting against the wall. The Viceroy presided, supported by advisors he had brought out from England, and I listened while these experienced [Anglo-Indian] Political Officers were told--whatever their objections and whatever protests they had heard from individual Princes--that time was short, that there would be no opportunity to solve the manifest problems of the Princes who were relying on the treaty relations of the Crown towards them, and that all these matters would be dispensed with in the hope that the successor government would do their best to care for the Princes. It was a very sober occasion. I think a lot of Residents gathered round the table were aghast at what they were hearing. A number of them, and notably Sir Conrad Corfield, attempted to tell the Viceroy that certain matters could not be overlooked and the Princes deserved better treatment, but all the Viceroy could say to that was, 'Look, I have been sent out here to preside at the conferment of Independence on India. It has been decided that the sooner this is done the better, and if there are any problems, then they must be settled after Independence, because there isn't time to deal with all these matters. So you can leave here and tell the rulers that the die is cast.' (317)

Lenox do not "appear" in the novel.) Lady Thame, proud of her son's Liberal background, feels he is well-qualified for the job, but Andover's sister Lavinia feels that Anthony is not very lovable. Victoria Tring, the Thames' cousin and Anthony's "intended," worries that Andover, in particular, and the English, in general, are either hypocrites or anomalies, and she wants to reserve judgment on Andover's appointment. In any event, Victoria Tring has problems of her own. Her brother, Herbert Tring, is missing. Claiming to have seen Tring in San Francisco, an Irishman by the name of James Kelly has volunteered, for a "small" sum, to find Herbert. Herbert's mother, Deirdre, Bohemian free-thinker as she is, will not pay Kelly herself (she leaves the question of money to Victoria and Lavinia Thame), but loves to listen to the Irishman and analyze his republican sentiments.

In Anglo-India, the new Viceroy is received with mixed views. The army, headed by Colonel Vetchley, believes the Viceroy will be too liberal; Eliot Arden, Chief Commissioner of Ghoom, is happy to receive Andover because he remembers with pleasure their school days. Another person who welcomes the Viceroy is idealistic Dr. Ruth Pearce. She is a close friend of the Ardens, especially his, and someone who holds a special position in Pilaghur since she is a medical doctor.

Limited interaction occurs between native and Anglo-

Indian Pilaghur. Hiria, Pearce's ayah, and Sir Ahmed Hossein, the Viceroy's newly appointed Muslim District Judge, are the characters who represent the native community. On the one hand, Hiria tells Pearce the story of Private Morgan's arrest for the murder of Gobind, "the watchman": Morgan has allegedly shot Gobind because the little Hindu cut off the nose of his wife, Junia (Junia is also alleged to be Morgan's lover). On the other, Hossein presides over Morgan's trial and gives the Private a relatively light sentence of two years, believing that the Englishman acted in self-defence. Not free from paradox themselves, Hiria and Hossein find the British rulers both frightening and benevolent.

The narrator periodically brings the story back to Herbert Tring, whom Kelly has chased (according to Kelly) as far as either Alaska or the Yukon (both places are mentioned). Kelly, reporting to the Trings that Herbert has a wife and child, declares he will need more money, of course. Fascinated by the thought that she may be a grandmother, Deirdre Tring sends Kelly what he claims he needs.

The Viceroy decides he is unhappy with his new native judge's light sentence for Morgan. He needs an excuse to reopen the case; cause for appeal is provided by young Charles Cox, newly appointed Assistant Magistrate. Cox hears from his munshi, Azful Aziz,

that, although Gobind begged for mercy, Morgan deliberately shot him in the head. Cox passes his information to Arden, who duly turns it over to the Viceroy. Against Eliot Arden's good counsel, the Viceroy pushes to have the Morgan case reopened. The Viceroy is determined that the English will hang one of their own for murdering a native, and Private Morgan seems to offer the perfect case in point. Mr. Justice Lenox, an old friend of the Thame family, presides over the re-trial, and duly sentences Morgan to be hanged. Pilaghur and London are astounded. Few at home or in Anglo-India approve of the Viceroy's interference. Ruth Pearce and Eliot Arden's friendship falls apart because of the incident. Not only does Arden lose Pearce, but he loses his wife Jessica also; she dies in Heidelberg while attending their son.

In the meantime, Pearce has adopted Morgan's cause. After visiting Morgan in jail, Pearce offers to take his letter to London and promises to give it to his sister. She feels all the more bound to carry out Morgan's request when she learns that Morgan has committed suicide to avoid a public hanging. Sometime after Morgan's death, Pearce, while in Calcutta, spots Gobind at the bazaar. She is horrified to learn from Hiria and Gobind that Azful Aziz has plotted with Surat, Gobind's son, to commit an act of vengeance against the English for events that occurred during the Sepoy rebellion.

Pearce notifies Arden about her discovery, but he cannot change the fact of Morgan's death and decides to deal with the police corruption only.

Pearce returns to London with Morgan's letter. She receives another shock when she discovers that the letter she is carrying is addressed to Victoria Tring, fiancee of Anthony Andover. If Victoria Tring is Henry Morgan's sister, the missing Herbert Tring has been found, not in America (or Alaska or the Yukon), but in Pilaghur. Herbert Tring is the wrongly-convicted Private Henry Morgan, now unfortunately dead. Once as morally fixed in her principles as the Viceroy himself, Pearce now faces the existential dilemma: she must choose between two distinctly different courses of action. She can either deliver the letter and expose this example of justice as well as the British "moral sense" for the shams they are, or destroy it and accept all the imperfections of this particular case for the sake of the greater good of society--"the greater good of society" involving the preservation of some social order.

Duncan makes the timbre of Ruth Pearce's moral conscience perfectly clear throughout the story. There are moments when Pearce appears to be the rigidly-principled Viceroy's alter-ego. Had Pearce not been influenced by Arden, she would have delivered Tring's letter for the sake of her good English conscience, and

damned in the process, as the Viceroy has already done in the Morgan case, the consequences of her action. Her reasoning, paraphrased, would have reflected the catechism of the morally self-righteous: who knows who might be killed or suffer on account of my decision, and as long as my own slate is clean, who cares? The new, humbler Pearce cannot cleanse her conscience with a single, morally right deed. As Arden has done, she must choose for humankind as well as for herself. Because she burns the letter that would have revealed the real identity of Henry Morgan, Pearce chooses to honor the social and political order of the time, even though, as presented in Set in Authority, the system in India stands most precariously. It is a falsely conceived structure founded on imperialistic, neo-platonic absolutes: absolute faith in the English moral sense and in the accompanying right of English socio-political paramountcy.[3] Duncan's belief in the efficacy of order and progress has been well-documented in her

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[3]Duncan might have approved Gandhi's passive methods and anti-colonial sentiments:

"The system that had allowed the Princes to continue in power was 'perhaps the greatest blot on British rule in India,' according to Mahatma Gandhi: 'The existence of this gigantic autocracy is the greatest disproof of British democracy and is a credit neither to the Princes nor to the unhappy people who have to live under this undiluted autocracy. It is no credit to the Princes that they allow themselves powers which no human being, conscious of his dignity, should possess. It is no credit to the people who have mutely suffered the loss of elementary human freedom.'" (Allen 18)

journalism, but nowhere in her early novels does Duncan appear as close to the edge of despair about the feasibility of the principles of liberalism[4] as she is in Set in Authority.

However startling the conclusion, Duncan discreetly has prepared her readers for the inevitable outcome of the plot. Henry Morgan is really Herbert Tring, who is the Viceroy's fiancee's brother and his own half-cousin. Perhaps some readers feel justified in assuming that Herbert lives in San Francisco, as sister Victoria and mother Deirdre Tring hope and believe. Yet the narrator has warned us not to be led into easy explanation of Herbert's whereabouts: our knowing the tremendous sum of money Kelly claims he needs to track down Herbert Tring casts a large shadow over the American theory.

Furthermore, those readers who know The Path of a Star and The Imperialist realize that Duncan's first chapters are not to be taken lightly. What the narrator cannot tell, Duncan shows: half-cousins Anthony Andover and Herbert Tring are in serious conflict in chapter I. Classic plot structure insists that resolution should come through crisis (the moment when one side wins, conflict ceases, and the inevitable is clear); therefore, the Tring figure is bound by the contiguous events

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[4]For a description of Duncan's Canadian liberalism see Paul Litt's article on Duncan, "The Cultivation of Progress: Sara Jeannette Duncan's Social Thought."

of plot to appear and provoke the Englishness of his English cousin, one more time, before conflict is resolved. Duncan adds an emotional moment to the plot's tragic force when additional information confirms Tring's innocence of murder, but the innocence of Tring is not at issue. The game of government is.

In illustrating the game of government, the plot of Set in Authority shows the complexity of issues while it keeps the main conflict simple. The text obliquely refers to the works of Darwin, Marx, Freud, Frazer, Nietzsche, and to how the new mathematics and science are unsettling European thought by questioning the old absolutes and introducing the beginning of modern relativism.[5] The dilemma, believes Duncan, occurs because, in playing the Empire game, England must rely on the traditional British belief in a biologically inherited moral sense.[6] According to Duncan, England

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[5]Sanford Schwartz in "'This Invented World': Abstraction and Experience at the Turn of the Century," notes that mathematicians were in the forefront of changing perceptions: "At first the appearance of non-Euclidean geometry aroused interest solely among mathematicians. But in the late nineteenth century, philosophers and scientists became increasingly concerned about the correspondence between conceptual system and external reality, and at that point the epistemological problem raised by non-Euclidean geometrics began to attract a good deal of attention: How can there be more than one coherent system for organizing physical space?" (The Matrix of Modernism 15).

[6]While Europe trembled before the altar of modernism, Canada's response was stalwart in its resistance to

cannot welcome new scientific ideas into the old game of Empire without seriously and negatively affecting her colonies.

Every blink and sigh of the home government in England sends shock waves through India. In Set in Authority the English fact in India seems to be producing an increasingly unpopular situation: Azful Aziz and Ganeshi Lal want England out; Lady Thame has no patience with English aggression, sympathizing only with "the aims of civilization." In a positive sense, the English conquerors have brought to India civil and criminal laws and codes, virtues we see at work throughout Henry Morgan's first trial; they have brought a unifying language, the effect of which we see in the easy communication among persons of different religions and races. But the English are also "predators." Through force they have added India to Empire.

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[6](cont'd) waves of new thought; many Canadians shared the views of scientists William Daw and Daniel Wilson in their reaction to Charles Darwin. McKillop explains that Dawson and Wilson objected to Darwin's putting forth conclusions not properly substantiated with evidence, and, says McKillop, "they believed that these conclusions went beyond the scope of legitimate scientific inquiry" (101). Although Darwin was only one of the scientific theorists effecting attitude changes in the 19th Century, his theories quickly caught fire in the public field, and the Canadian response to Darwinism was, as McKillop points out, fairly vocal, and derogatory. In any event, Duncan herself transcends the mind-fix of Canadians such as Dawson and Wilson; as Set in Authority illustrates she does not resist modernism as much as she tries to find a means to live with it.

Yet Set in Authority points out that the English also want to show how civilized they are, and the country sends fine people to India to administer its charge. Good administration of its colonies causes people at home to become confused about the nature of their country.[7] Lady Thame blithely forgets that responsibility for India has not been thrust upon a modest and reluctant Liberal England, but taken by an aggressive, imperialist Empire-builder. Eager to see the new mannerly mode of English civilization applied in India, Lady Thame and her peers dismiss the very existence of the English citizens sent out to India to keep the jewel polished.

In Set in Authority Whigs and Tories argue the specifics of policy, while in India, civil and military agents sustain the imperialistic occupation. From matters of the occupation to the application of justice, what plays out in India starts in England. Duncan uses a classic structure to prepare for the resolution of plot in strictly English (never Anglo-Indian) terms. In Set in Authority, the shifting rules of London's imperialist game are set in England and Europe. As far as Duncan is concerned, India is the jewel in the crown carried on the head of the Anglo-Indian pawn.

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[7]Margaret MacMillan describes the irony in the fact that some of their Indian subjects considered their rulers to be at one with the Untouchables (58).

Set in Authority, although mindful of Indian subjugation, does not challenge past deeds, only current ones. For Duncan the English presence in India is a fact: no amount of wishful thinking or historical analysis will alter yesterday's events. As in The Imperialist, Duncan peers into a future she cannot know. Clearly illustrating the hypocrisy of the English moral sense, Duncan gloomily forces herself to come on side with it because the violence of an Indian revolution would create simply too much misery in a country already coping with tribalism, poverty, over-population and climate. To satisfactorily contain the labyrinth of plot, the dramatic form of Set in Authority invites readers to analyze dialogue and interpret characters' motivations, to trust or distrust the narrator's and/or characters' opinions, and to recognize the nature and quality of the character's personal and official relationships. When considering plot in conjunction with dialogue, the reader pieces together, in a text rampant with irony, the novel's theme: poor judgment, even hypocrisy, lies inherent in rigid idealism,[8]

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[8]Adherence to "rigid idealism" is a fault common to Lorne Murchison, Stephen Arnold, and Anthony Andover. Murchison clings past reason to his belief in an idealized Britain; Arnold, denying his essential humanity, holds fast to his belief in the righteousness (and rightness) of celibacy. As we will see, Anthony Andover, the worst of the three, idealises his own conscience.

especially in the ethics of those lacking both heart and imagination or those who are not "lovable." In Set in Authority, if there exists a greater good for Anglo-Indian society at large, it appears best served, as Dr. Ruth Pearce finally discovers, by "leaving well alone." In the criticism which is to follow, two formal matters, plot and dialogue, are analyzed to illustrate the conflict between a traditional British (an anomaly) and a modern European world view.

For the purpose of creating an expository overview of the novel's subjects and themes, chapter I of Set in Authority fans out almost as far as chapter I of The Imperialist. By the time chapter I is over, Duncan has introduced, in the broadest sense, all the subjects and themes the novel will explore. The first scene opens in Lady's Thame's drawing-room in London where she and her two daughters, Frances and Lavinia, entertain Mrs. Lawrence Lenox, resident of Anglo-India, wife of "a very clever rising man, a judge somewhere out there" (8) on the occasion of Mrs. Thame's son's recent appointment--"Anthony Andover, fourth Baron Thame, [is] to be Viceroy and Governor-General in India" (5). Mrs. Lenox, "whose eye... flew uncontrollably to the door" (4) in the hope that Lord Thame would enter, prophetically and pathetically assures Lady Thame (who, for her part, would "be glad to see Anthony take hold of that problem of race antagonism") that "'[t]he natives aren't every-

thing in India" (7). To Frances, Mrs. Lenox seems "like an Anglo-Indian lady in a book" (9); Lavinia adds to her sister's assessment: "they prattle on just to show how silly they can be; and then they set their teeth and perform miracles of self-sacrifice" (9). In the course of their conversation, the ladies discuss Andover's inherent suitability for the role of Viceroy:

> 'Anthony comes honestly by his extraordinary interest in India,' continued Lady Thame. 'My father spent years there looking into the religions of the people--he translated some of the Vedas...My husband, too, was always wildly interested in Orientals. Anything black. Adored them....' (6)

Duncan, sharp and witty, makes Lord Thame, the father, appear like an interior-designer-cum-collector. Not so amusing as her assessment of Anthony's qualifications rings out Lady Thame's patronizing and lofty attitude toward "the destinies of one-sixth of the human race" (15). And even more chilling is the thought that Lady Thame shares her views with many others of her station; in fact, she refers to a conversation she has had with the Prime Minister, George Craybrooke, during which Craybrooke reports to her "that things are so critical out there, what with over-population and famine and the Amir getting so above himself, that they simply could not afford to send anyone but a first class man" (7).

It is possible that Lady Thame, and her son, Anthony Andover, and the Prime Minister, George Craybrooke, all share the same fairly self-righteous, racist, "moral" point of view. Being "interested," even "wildly interested in Orientals. Anything black," reflects a paternalistic and patronizing attitude on the part of the English that bodes ill for someone during Lord Thame's term as Viceroy. The final two matters of discussion the ladies introduce in chapter I concern the puzzling "nay" to Anthony Andover's marriage proposal given by the woman in his life, his half-cousin Victoria Tring, and, as well, the mysterious disappearance of Victoria's brother, Herbert Tring (also Andover's half-cousin). The Andover-Tring romance gives the sisters cause for speculation. Lavinia explains, "I shouldn't call Anthony a--well, a very easily lovable person myself. You see, he doesn't think of anything but the aims of civilisation" (10).

In the course of this relatively short chapter, Duncan introduces, if not all the characters, at least all of Set in Authority's main subjects and themes: the attitudes of a close-knit "old-boy," interrelated English upper-class; the suffering and sacrifice of Anglo-Indian women; the insignificance of the Anglo-Indian official to the people "at home"; the mystery and speculation surrounding the motivations of an Apollonian

Andover and a Dionysian Tring,[9] neither of whom the reader meets. From these subjects, aided by plot and dialogue, Duncan explores the themes of paramountcy, power, idealism, hypocrisy and morality, all within the context of "the aims of civilisation."

It will be necessary to approach each chapter of Set in Authority with the same attention to detail devoted to chapter I to show how all the ensuing action both echoes and substantiates the matters and themes of the initial scenes. With the narrator's point of view concerned far more with people's public than private voices and with conflict based on a situation which pits "man" against "man," not "man" against "himself", in Set in Authority plot acts as both personal motivator and public instigator. There are three complications: the appointment of Anthony Andover, Lord Thame, as Viceroy and Governor General of India; the disappearance of Herbert Tring; the murder of Gobind, a native watchman, by Henry Morgan, a "British private soldier" (68). Although the narrator describes images of three societies, London, Anglo-Indian Pilaghur, and native

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[9] In "The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music," Friedrich Nietzsche talks about Apollo as the "fair illusion": Apollo himself may be regarded as the marvellous divine image of the "principum individuationis," whose looks and gestures radiate the full delight, wisdom, and beauty of "illusion" (297). Tring, of course, represents a force that can disturb the illusion.

Pilaghur, not until events provide causes for action (and reaction) do the latent divisions in all the above-mentioned societies erupt into external conflict. Until the murder of Gobind and the Viceroy's subsequent determination to appeal the sentence given to the accused by Sir Ahmed Hossein, a native judge, the residents of the two Pilaghurs manage a quiet, if uneasy, coexistence. Following the murder and during the trial, Anglo-Indian residents, native residents and English aristocrats find themselves variously, sometimes viciously, at odds. After Duncan introduces into the plot the complications of an Englishman's murdering a native and the Viceroy's intervention in the administration of local justice, conflict radiates throughout the communities involved.

However, before simmering friction bursts into physical confrontation, Duncan, carefully introducing two different modes of thinking in the form of Thame and Tring, starts conflict from the material in the exposition. Basing their conclusions on information gathered from what "people thought" and a direct description offered by the narrator (19), readers soon learn enough about the mysterious Herbert Tring to begin to see him in sharp contrast to his equally mysterious cousin, Anthony Andover. In terms of what the narrator calls "the moral sense," the two have parted company at birth. "[Herbert Tring] had justified his father's

scientific contempt for the moral sense by coming into the world as far as possible divested of it" (19), whereas Anthony Andover, Lord Thame, is so well versed in the moral sense that he can recognize it in others. Summing up Thame's proposal of marriage to Victoria Tring, the narrator notes "this by itself was proof enough that she was completely equipped with the moral sense; Lord Thame could never have been deceived" (19).

The "moral sense" was not confined to Great Britain. Duncan's youth spent in Brantford would have made her familiar with it, because in Canada during the last quarter of the nineteenth century the existence of "the moral sense" of "man" was, on the whole, difficult for Canadian philosophers to surrender. The pendulum of debate ranged wide, from Goldwin Smith's "pessimistic essay" (McKillop 158) "The Prospect of a Moral Interregnum," to W.D. LeSueur's "Materialism and Positivism," through to the development of John Watson's moral Idealism ("[a complete philosophical system] which could, [Watson] was convinced, resolve the problems faced by the Common Sense school without denying the fundamental moral nature of man [sic]" [182]). Clark Murray, a "popular" professor at McGill, attempted to reconcile (according to McKillop) "the idealist and empiricist views of psychology" and later "applied this psychology to notions of 'the moral consciousness,' 'the supreme Law of Duty' and 'Habit'" (202). At the heart

of almost every nineteenth-century Canadian intellectual debate, either scientific or metaphysical, was the hope of and belief in man's biological possession of "the moral sense."[10]

When Duncan's narrator tells readers that Herbert Tring's father did not believe in the innate existence of "the moral sense," many Canadian readers of this novel in 1906, following the precepts of leading Canadian philosophers, would have been shocked by the views of the senior Tring. Ironically, the narrator tells us outright how "bad" Herbert Tring is, and then spends the rest of the novel showing us the many limitations of Lord

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[10]See Carl Berger's The Sense of Power and A.B. McKillop's A Disciplined Intelligence. See also A.B. McKillop's Countours of Canadian Thought for accounts of the Canadian intellectual climate at the turn of the century: "Altogether, such criticism had important effects upon several of the Protestant churches in Canada. It caused their leadership to submit their creeds to critical questioning at a time when many of their adherents were convinced that an emphasis on 'faith' was needed to combat the influences of materialism and the values it tended to instil. Because of the impact of science and historical criticism upon society, these churches were increasingly forced to defend themselves on grounds that tended to undermine faith in a transcendent God: that is, that they were not inconsistent with 'Reason,' and that they, too, could be made 'relevant.' Most important of all, however, was the fact that as the century progressed and the various debates on theology and sources of morality continued, people seemed to be looking increasingly away from the churches as a pillar upon which to base the new social order. As one theologian noted: 'Many to-day are ready to dismiss religion as a form of culture that has been left behind in the march of the race. It is a survival, we are told...[sic] The field it claims has been taken by science'" (119).

Thames moral vision and questioning his right to possess "the moral sense."

Indeed, in Set in Authority Duncan holds up to scrutiny the whole dilemma of the biological Anglo-Saxon conscience. Set in Authority challenges the idea that any community or person has, as a birthright, ownership of "the moral sense." If, on one hand, Herbert Tring "was too young and perhaps too simply bad to demonstrate more than an axiom of natural science" (19), on the other hand, his half-cousin Lord Thame, the man whom "it would have been illogical and un-English not to admire...so completely did he realize a national ideal" (20), demonstrates the arrogance of one who has a rarified ability to recognize "the moral sense" in and for others. Herbert Tring is entirely too lovable for his own good; he does, after all, bring rather a medieval courtly manner to Calcutta, shooting Gobind over a lady's honor after her husband has cut off her nose. In actions, passionate Tring seems to be the ghostly, cold-blooded Thame's ghostlier mirror image.[11] Significantly, at the end of the novel, the power of those who possess "the moral sense" in its purest form dominates those few, the like of Herbert Tring and his

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[11]According to Nietzsche, the challenge (to order) comes from the Dionysiac man: "Truth once seen, man is aware everywhere of the ghostly absurdity of existence...: nausea invades him" (299).

late scientist-father, who challenge the existence of such a resourceful human faculty. Quite brilliant in planning plot strategy, Duncan never allows readers to meet Anthony Andover or Herbert Tring (Henry Morgan); their excuses, reasons, quirks cannot and do not interfere with our assessment of what they do and how they act because they are not characters who speak in the text. Although Anglo-Indian residents Eliot Arden and Ruth Pearce carry the plot to its conclusion, the narrator, during the exposition, introduces the two who both allegorize and polarize Set in Authority's conflict of two ideologies: Herbert Tring, man of science, has no fixed values; Anthony Andover, the quintessential Englishman, has the "moral" sense. The novel is founded on one major irony: even if the moral sense is a grand illusion, it does sustain an ordered community, something that science cannot offer to society.

Duncan divides the exposition into two parts and, after introducing the English contingent, the narrator then sketches the two Pilaghurs in India's Province of Ghoom and finally acknowledges, through the presence of their wives, the existence of both the officials and residents of Anglo-India. In chapter II, Lady Thame has admonished Victoria Tring for her criticism of Andover's proofs for his intended book:

> 'Well, I don't at all agree with you, Victoria. He thinks, of course that the only

> legitimate conquest is the soil, and that we have no permanent business except where we can take root. But the finer, wider, higher conclusion of the book is that England should govern, and does govern by moral force.'
>
> Miss Tring did not pursue the matter. 'They call us hypocrites in Europe,' she said, 'but we aren't hypocrites--we're only anomalies.' (15)

Whether or not the English are hypocrites or anomalies, the narrator does address the aura of depression that hovers over Anglo-Indian Pilaghur, reinforcing Lord Thame's conviction that immigrants, whatever their official capacity, need "to take root." Noting the cheerless atmosphere, the narrator can do no more than speculate on the cause:

> Most of the other houses like the Chief Commissioner's are cream-coloured, but some are pink and some are yellow; there are even blue ones. I cannot conceive whey they do not give Pilaghur a more cheerful appearance than it has. Perhaps it is because they stand, behind their cactus hedges and their hibiscus bushes, so remote from one another; they insist upon their approaches, they will have their atmosphere, and do not justify either. Or perhaps Pilaghur is depressed because it

has, properly speaking, no shops. (23)

Personifying the houses and wondering why the residences are unhappy, the narrator sounds doubtful, even naive. Duncan's sentiments are not, however, directed at the houses, but at the isolated Anglo-Indians, bureaucrats and military types who have no independent source of income and no self-initiated commerce. With nothing more personal to give the land except the best and most productive years of their lives and with no achievement to take home to England for its greater glory, the Anglo-Indians serve a peculiar master.

After the initial complication, the narrator introduces Eliot Arden, the one male whose reputation and character the narrator describes at length. He becomes, after Thame and Tring, the third man to add ideological complications to the plot. With phrases that link the evaluation of Arden's exceptional qualities to minds other than her own, the narrator uses expressions such as "it was noted" (26), "but persons...said" (27), "And everybody approved..." (28) to give the impression of consensus as well as commendation. The narrator notes that Arden "had been known to imply an irreverence for dogma" not because he does not believe in some divinity, but because "he was shy of cheapening his intuitions for [careless people's] instruction" (27). Loath to instruct others on the basis of his own "intuitions" and beliefs, Arden, the

narrator claims, carries a strain of idealism: "Perhaps it was his nature to idealize anything that he had to do" (31). Arden's reputation extends even into the area of his relationship with His Excellency, the Viceroy. On the occasion of the Viceroy's visit to Ghoom "[e]ach night the two separated in the small hours, and each day the Chief Commissioner kindled into something more and more different from the rather silent, generally acquiescent, indwelling Arden of whom a fanciful person might say that his only solace lay in his dreams" (32). Eliot Arden, just as strongly as another of Duncan's idealists, Lorne Murchison, ingests inspiration from the British system:

> [The Viceroy] is the shadow of the King, but the substance of kingship is curiously and pathetically his; and his sovereignty is most real with those who again represent him...in lonely places which the Viceroy's foot never presses and his eye never sees, men of his own race find in his person the authority for the purpose of their whole lives. He is the judge of all they do, and the symbol by which they do it. Reward and censure are in his hand, and he stands for whatever there is in the task of men that is sweeter than praise and more bitter than blame. (33)

Such sentimental eloquence, although not expressed by

Arden, expresses him. And strong sentiments, advises the narrator, "should be read through the isolation and monotony, the ever-lowering vitality, the tyranny of the sun and the prison of the land in which it grows" (33). The phrase "men of his own race" echoes timid Mrs. Lenox's suggestion to Lady Thame: "The natives aren't everything in India, you know" (7). In any case, the general report on Arden's reputation soon gives way to the narrator's revelations about the heart of the man, revelations which, in turn, will lead the reader to make assumptions about the Commissioner's motivation concerning events and decisions that lie ahead. Although the narrator makes it clear that the Viceroy appears to respect and admire Arden, the quality of the Arden-Andover relationship remains more or less untested because readers never actually meet the Viceroy. The most important effect of Duncan's lengthy description of Arden is to establish the narrator's and his peers' respect for The Commissioner.

Ironically, Arden's integrity infuses the plot with its most powerful ideology, but its least effective complication. Without Arden, the one male character who is "real" to us, without his idealism and his humanity and compassion to muddle up the meaning of "the moral sense," the novel, reduced to satire only, would still have its initial complication. For in relation to plot, although much more central to the action than the other

two men, Arden contributes less than the mysterious Englishmen in moving events to their inevitable conclusion. Arden functions as a specific illustration of what happens to individual Anglo-Indian officials when they are visited with legislation from the Viceroy with "the moral sense." Arden is not a protagonist of the main plot. He is passive: he is unable to resist, let alone dominate his superior official, the Viceroy.

In adding to the plot's complication, chapter V, beginning a "good many people were dining with the Ardens" (34), contributes little; in enriching theme, this digressive segment, which includes the desire of the narrator--"I would like to write pages about her; but there were other ladies at the party" (35), celebrates the hardihood of Anglo-Indian women. In relation to Aristotle's recommendations about plot; not much good can be said of desultory sections which interrupt the rising action. Rhetorically, however, chapter V fares better. Already, in chapter IV, the narrator has drawn attention to the lack of Anglo-Indian feminine identity:

> Oftener it was said, 'So the Ardens get Ghoom, So the Ardens go to Ghoom.' I suppose nobody in England would say, 'So the Fitzalberts have got the Colonial Office.'...People will tell you that when the O'Haras were Commander-in-Chief the phrase had no idle significance,

> though generally, of course, it has. It carries, however, a sense of the value, in India, of the sparser feminine, and identifies ladies, however casually, with what their husbands have to do. (28)

In describing Mrs. Arden (chapter IV), the narrator points out the difficulties of being "the sparser feminine" when wives cannot even maintain the integral family unit: "and there could have been no more pathetic illustration of the sad Indian choice between husband and children than [Mrs. Arden] offered when the boys had to be sent home" (29). For women, "the sad Indian choice" submits really no choice at all. Mrs. Biscuit, Mrs. Lamb, Mrs. Lemon, ladies who have no first names, women whose last names evoke the image of edible products, troop bravely to Anglo-India to further their husbands' careers and make the best of life in a rootless community unable to accommodate the education of their children.

These powerless women, who have no control over their own destinies, have no political influence in Anglo-India. In order to pursue single-mindedly her political subject about the rightness of the Viceroy's decision to interfere in the machinations of local justice, Duncan could have easily dismissed the wives. Thus a dilemma: on one hand, to ignore the presence of Anglo-Indian women would be to overlook a significant

number of persons; on the other, to have any official's wife instigate political action would be to distort the picture of the general condition of this group of people. The narrator accounts for the presence and courage of Anglo-Indian women (especially Jessica Arden); however, the author credits them with even less power than Arden himself has to affect plot. As "the use and abuse of power" presents one of the most contentious issues raised in Set in Authority, and because action stimulates action, the narrator's inclusion of a group who occupy a space outside the central dramatic plot provides a sympathetic illustration of the oppression of this Anglo-Indian group denied even the solace of child-rearing.

Rhetorically and expcsitorily, chapter V has its own importance. Introducing "demi-offical" Dr. Ruth Pearce, a woman of "no quotable position" (34), and bachelor Colonel Vetchley, Commander of the Barfordshires, a man "much wedded to his opinions" (34), the narrator creates a forum by which to vent the popular opinion of the Viceroy. The military opinion of Thame, expressed by Colonel Vetchley, is not good: "'Personally,' said Colonel Vetchley, 'I can't stick him'" (37). Although Arden admonishes him that the "state of things between the natives of this country and the army wasn't ideal before he came" (37), Vetchley continues to complain, giving his version of pre-Thame

days:

> 'Tommy was a better man than the native, and the native jolly well knew it and kept his place--got soundly kicked if he didn't, and served him right. And mind you, in the end it was better for the native.' (38)

Miss Pearce quietly intervenes, commenting that "[o]ur notion of our proper relations with these people does change, doesn't it, as time goes on" (38). The fact that they are nearly powerless in decision-making does not prevent military and civil personnel from discussing current affairs.

The conversation wavers from one extreme to the other until it becomes clear that military and civil interests, which are far apart in many respects, share some common ground: military officers (the enforcers) and civil officials (the administrators) have limited validity to their points of view. Vetchley's words make him appear rough, arrogant, racist, but, if nothing else, he is concerned about "Tommy" and "Tommy's" function in India. In maintaining peace and British paramountcy--whether Lady Thame and those who believe in "moral force" (14) would relish the thought of it or not--English "Tommies" and the military play a vital role. In chapter VI, Alfred Earle, editor of the Prospect, "gently" reminds Lady Thame that military concerns precede civil administration: "We return to

the purely predatory, and continue to salve our consciences by giving our lives to administer the trust we have taken" [(56)]. Judging from their reaction to Vetchley's brusque nature and notwithstanding the importance of the military presence in India, his colleagues find his outspoken, harsh views outdated. "Listening" to this Colonel may give the reader the uneasy sensation that any administrative act reasserting the military's power over the natives would be a step back to the charged atmosphere of the 1850s and the Sepoy Rebellion.

Arden, stating his administrative position, defends the Viceroy against the charge of being "too much of a politician" (41):

> 'Whether [the Viceroy's] right or wrong in this idea that the British soldier in India can be reformed by Resolutions in the Gazette we shall know better fifty years hence than we do now. Opinion about everything changes and moves--he may be in the forefront of it, and we in the discomfort of dragging after. But there shouldn't be two views, then or now, about his motive.' (42)

If Vetchley voices a position too extreme, Arden defends the Viceroy against an almost irrelevant charge: politician. Despite the noble or shabby motivation that impels a ruler's political act, people immediately

affected by that act will have to cope with the deed itself, not the causes of it. Nevertheless, there are very unpopular days ahead for the Viceroy. Arden's assessment of the man will be recalled in the Viceroy's favor.

Whether or not Andover is a politican, each faction in Anglo-India wants to comment on him. To give many characters a chance to speak, events of chapters IV through VI move at a measured, even slow, pace. The subject of chapters V and VI springs from the same source: what is the Anglo-Indian and what is the English assessment of the Viceroy? Sentiments about Lord Thame, in both places more or less equivocal, or, to use the language of modern polls, "soft," demand an event to confirm opposing opinions enough to cause open confrontation.

After this slow pace, the narrator turns to an event which moves the action ahead, because, however contrived, a dramatic plot needs a major complication or an "exciting force" to add suspense and remove the lid of reserve covering simmering conflict. Although Tausky (241) may feel it belongs more properly to melodrama than to the structure of the novel, suspense, a legitimate dramatic device, both engages and ensures the reader's interest. When an author cleverly controls the rising level of the plot's suspense by not allowing catastrophes to occur too early in the action, she

directs, even manipulates, the emotional response of readers.[12]

In chapter VII, the narrator introduces the event which constitutes the exciting force of the plot. Chapter I prepares us for the catastrophe: Anthony Andover and Herbert Tring are half-cousins in conflict, and Andover's moral rigidity is shown to be as much of a personal flaw as Herbert Tring's "badness." After discovering that Andover has in fact condemned his half-cousin Tring to death, readers are surprised, yet have not been unprepared. Nevertheless, knowing the identity of Herbert Tring, also known as Henry Morgan, causes us to ponder all the ironies and ramifications of Tring's already strange situation that Duncan further complicates with his indictment for murder. What readers know about Herbert Tring as Henry Morgan needs further consideration. The "murder of a man and the death of a woman, both natives" (68) adds to the deepening conflict between the Viceroy and the residents of Anglo-Indian Pilaghur.

The narrator, throughout chapters I to VI, gives bits of information regarding Tring's whereabouts and

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[12]The highest point of interest in a dramatic structure is not the turning point or crisis. The crisis resolves the conflicts, but emotion builds until the final catastrophe. There may be some lessening of suspense after the crisis, but emotional detachment is generally counter-productive. Of course, Aristotelian theory precedes the Brechtian notion of epic alienation.

conveys a strong impression of Tring's free-spiritedness and affability; his sister and cousin share positive feelings about Herbert. Lavinia, Anthony Andover's sister, sounds suspiciously as if she may be in love with the man. An Irishman, named Kelly, in England on some "Irish-American business" (50), persuades Deirdre Tring that her son lives in San Francisco and now prepares to leave for the Yukon. There, Kelly, will "undertake to find him" (50). Mrs. Tring, who is a wild, eccentric person, "hugely interested in Kelly" (51) because "she says she is getting for the first time a conception of the Celt under republican institutions" (51), will not, according to Victoria Tring, finance Kelly's trip: "she simply won't pay" (51), Kelly convinces the Trings of his veracity by showing them "letters from Herbert" (51) and, Victoria, who "more than anyone was held by her brother's charm" (19), unsuccessfully tries to find the money to pay Kelly through her own limited resources. Lavinia Thame, Herbert and Victoria's half-cousin, offers to "[make] up the amount" (52). The reader may suspect that Kelly dupes the Trings into believing that Herbert has made off with himself to America. In any case, to understand the ramifications of the exciting force, at some point the reader must take what is known about Tring and apply it to the character of Henry Morgan, accused murderer of Gobind.

The exciting force is an external incident or event which causes a response from a character(s): "Character is that which reveals moral purpose, showing what kinds of things a man chooses or avoids" (Poetics 23). We may apply to Morgan's character what we know about Tring. Andover and Morgan (Tring) are discussed in absentia, by the persons who do speak in the text. Henry Morgan comes not, as the narrator indicates, "from a particularly obnoxious caste of the ruling race" (68), but from the English upper class. Unlike Tommy, who, according to his "betters," knows little about the ways of civility, manners, and, most importantly, morality, Morgan-Tring has been reared among those to whom much has been given, and of whom much is expected. Indeed, the case of Gobind's murder may be less a straightforward incident of "Tommy" abusing the locals than an explosive collision of cultures, and Tring's passionate outburst could easily be misunderstood by people who do not share the English chivalric tradition.[13] According to Hiria's account, Junia, Gobind's young wife, has flirted with soldiers, and one soldier, after watching the routine Gobind followed going to work, has visited

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[13]Margaret MacMillan: "Indians, whether Hindu or Muslim, treated their own women badly by British standards. A woman who bore sons was doing her duty; one who had nothing but daughters was a failure. Female infanticide, indeed, was a popular method of birth control" (59).

Junia many times:

> 'but the last time--they are digging around the house of Gobind for the new water pipes, and the ground is all ooltapoolta there--coming out, he lit a match. Which was a foolish thing...but, doubtless, being a white soldier, at that hour he was drunk. Ari! Three people saw, and one was the son of Gobind by the other wife, and ran to him next day with the shame.' (64)

Gobind and the son do not find the soldier, but they do find a "cheroot...not yet cold" (65). Up to this point, Tring and Junia appear to have seriously offended both British and Indian nineteenth-century morality. On the one hand, of all European imperialists, the English had the reputation of being the most finicky, not about adultery, but about inter-racial affairs; on the other, of all the Empire's "conquered" races, the Indian (Hindu or Muslim) male most suffered from the Orientals' monumental capacity for "shame" (64). Junia, owned by and owing obedience to Gobind, behaves as if her body is her own, an unthinkable position to assume in light of the tenets of her culture. "I make good anuff; make yourself" (63) is Junia's reputed response to Gobind's whining "Why you don' make my food?" (63). In having the audacity to encourage a relationship with Tring, Junia surreptitiously challenges Gobind's authority over

her. Caught, her punishment could be death, although "always now the Government gives the hanging for killing the unfaithful ones" (65). Hiria reports "'[b]ut Gobind said, 'on this account she shall have a little trouble as the custom is,' and he and Surat tied her in the bed and cut off her nose'" (65). "Chuckling" at Junia's plight, Hiria also observes, "without the nose ring, who can marry?" (65).

Although Dr. Ruth Pearce gives no comment on the details of Hiria's story, because the government has already outlawed "sati" as well as "the killing of the unfaithful ones," it is not anachronistic to assume English men (and Canadian women) of the period would frown on the cruel practice of cutting off an "unfaithful" woman's nose. Hiria approves of Gobind's deed, but even she explains Gobind's murder as an act of passion: when Morgan-Tring "'sees the noseless one, and in one breath--what fear, miss-sahib, in such a thing--quick he takes off his gun and shoots Gobind! How angry are the gorahs when they are angry'" (65). The image of "charming" Tring, a man much loved by sister Victoria, and half-cousin, Lavinia, does not rest uncomfortably with the action committed by an outraged Morgan.

After she describes the shooting, Hiria cites some of the peculiar details surrounding the incident: Surat, Gobind's son, takes three days to report the crime to the police; Junia, "also dead--from fright"

(66), lies with Gobind. The "three days" will bear an importance in Ruth Pearce's life she cannot now begin to suspect; however, Junia's death, aside from the dramatic convenience of her inability to testify in the case, requires neither official investigation nor narratorial comment. Readers alone ponder the fate of Junia; the narrator rarely mentions the woman again. Late-nineteenth-century cultural differences of opinion regarding acceptable male attitudes to and treatment of women are matters which relate directly to the specific incitement causing Morgan to attempt murder. Cultural differences, however, become details merely, of no consequence in the official consideration of Henry Morgan's case. Unfortunately for them, Harry Morgan and Junia are ahead of their time.

Dr. Pearce offers no particular judgment about Morgan's behaviour or the actions of the police; nevertheless, the conflict is an English problem, completely. An incident which divides a community or family and sets relative against relative creates a more pathetic situation than an incident which merely divides enemies:

> Actions capable of [terror and pity] must happen between persons who are either friends or enemies or indifferent to each other. If an enemy kills an enemy, there is nothing to excite pity either in the act or the

> intention,--except so far as the suffering in itself is pitiful. So again with the indifferent persons. But when the tragic incident occurs between those who are near and dear to one another--if, for example a brother kills or intends to kill a brother, a son his father, amother her son, a son his mother, or any other deed of this kind is done--these are the situations to be looked for by the poet. (Poetics 27)

By showing Anglo-India's internal conflict on the question of proper official action to take in the Morgan case, Duncan foreshadows the even greater tragic conflicts which are to follow in the wake of this particular issue: Eliot Arden and Anthony Andover, as close as brothers during their university days, will oppose each other; Eliot Arden and Ruth Pearce, lovers in an "intellectual" rather than physical sense, will separate; Anthony Andover and Herbert Tring, blood relatives and intended brothers-in-law, will "fight" to the death.

Following the plot's exciting incident, which is the murder of Gobind by an Englishman, in chapter VIII, lines of conflict come into focus and there are two extreme points of view: the military and the liberal. Colonel Vetchley fears for the military's effectiveness in quelling insurrection; Charles Cox, "a young

assistant magistrate newly arrived from England" (71), fears that apathy and pragmatism will replace official policy. In native Pilaghur's response to Morgan's arrest, nothing stuns villagers more than the vision of a manacled soldier. Although it cannot be possible that that rough character, Colonel Vetchley, is correct to assume that a soldier may "soundly" kick the native, neither can it be correct that government should do everything in its power to make the army (acting on an imperialistic nation's behalf) appear vulnerable and weak. Unhelpful, the narrator walks both sides of the argument. By claiming "[e]vil and wrong were plain" (68), the narrator offers Morgan's defence no comforting words nor mitigating circumstances. Instead, she lists atrocities the English committed against the native:

> The Storey case, where a tea-planter had used his revolver on rioting coolies; the White case, in which a young merchant of Calcutta had kicked a punkhapuller with a diseased spleen, and the man dropped dead; the Mir Bux case of a native forest-ranger, damaged so that he died, by a shooting party of three soldiers to whom he had forbidden certain tracts....(68)

Now comes the Morgan case which, the narrator asserts, "might be supposed a subject of vivid concern in both Pilaghurs" (69). Counterpointing the native reaction to

"evil and wrong-doing" comes a hint of another kind of response. In native Pilaghur,

> little caste-companies of servants talked it over as they ate to-gether: one or two gossiping women, like Hiria, carried the tale. They deplored the murder in the conventional way; but the thing that touched their imaginations was the taking of the soldier by European constables and regimental escort. The crime was quickly accepted and passed into the book of fate, the women lingering to point the end of an erring sister; but the spectacle of the 'gorah' in handcuffs--that was a tamasha--they all wished they had seen that. (69)

Hiria, in giving her account of the incident to Dr. Pearce, emphasizes the same point:

> 'I also, returning from the washerman--he is now three days late with your honour's muslim dress with the chicken work, and it was necessary to give abuse--I also saw. This way they fastened him,' Hiria dropped the brush and crossed her hands behind her, 'tight with iron--what name?--padlocks, and here, and here, and here,' she touched her ankles. (61)

"[L]ittle caste-companies of servants" and even Hiria herself watch the English with cautionary interest. The

natives fully understand that the ruling race has a problem within its own ranks; nothing could possibly be more interesting, or more encouraging.

Where do the Anglo-Indians stand on the issue of Henry Morgan? Strike the two extreme opinions--on the right, Vetchley, on the left, Cox--and the reader arrives at the middle ground occupied by Arden, who himself is painfully aware of the diverse opinions on the case in military and official Pilaghurs.

Chapter IX serves as an example of Duncan's ability to "show" something greater than her narrator tells. Events of this chapter, continuing the rising action with the appointment of "a Mahomedan civilian" (73), Sir Ahmed Hossein, as District and Sessions Judge, determine exactly why Eliot Arden transcends his countrymen, Vetchley, Cox, and Andover, in diplomacy. In a political sense, Duncan's narrator never directly assigns him the middle ground, nor does she explain that Arden commands the bridge spanning not only the Cox and Vetchley extremes, but also the differing points of view of the two Pilaghurs. Furthermore, Arden's strength comes not from political, but from religious and spiritual understanding.

Following chapter III, the narrator has been casually commenting on Arden's particular capacity to assume the post as Chief Commissioner of Ghoom. Arden, with an "irreverence for dogma" (27), has made himself

an expert (although "there is no recognized official channel for conveying information about the Upanishads to anybody" [28]) on the foundation of modern Hindu philosophy which, most casually put, subscribes to the theosophist doctrine that there exists a universal soul or being to which individual souls will be reunited after the illusion of time and space are conquered. Leaving the constraints of purely Christian dogma and opening his mind to the beliefs of other cultures, Arden represents the single man at Mrs. Lemon's garden party to whom Hossein can respond emotionally as well as intellectually:

> These among whom [Hossein] had come were not his people; his ways were not their ways nor his thought their thoughts. Yet he had to take his place and find comfort among them. The drift and change in the tide of events had brought him there, and he had to make the best appeal he could. In every eye he saw the barrier of race, forbidding natural motions. He would commend himself, but could not do it from the heart; he was forced to take the task upon the high and sterile ground of pure intelligence. (74)

Since "the high and sterile ground of pure intelligence" supplies the meanest level of acceptable access necessary for co-operation among individuals and states,

Arden's arrival breaks through the reserve of Hossein's formal behavior and lightens the weight of the judge's social task. Indeed, "the high and sterile ground of pure intelligence"--so often the retreat of the English as demonstrated by the folk at the Lemon's party, who are "as polite as any regulation could require" (74)--worries the emotional Hossein who, "with glistening eyes" (75), greets Arden: "Ah--my friend!" Once again, Arden is the model man. Neither paramountcy, nor good administration has accomplished what friendship has achieved. Arden, greeting Hossein as "friend," has made the greatest step in the text toward healing racial animosity.

Anxious to introduce Hossein to another who "understands," Arden directs the gentleman not to his wife, Jessica Arden, but to Dr. Ruth Pearce. Through Hossein's astute observation of Arden's absorption in watching Ruth Pearce, readers understand that Arden loves the doctor: "[Arden] remained for a moment or so outside their talk, until a word of it reached and wakened him" (77). The word that awakens him is "Pythagoras" from the sentence: "And the reason we know now there was Greek foolishness...is that two thousand years ago we believed Pythagoras" (77). One explanation for Hossein's oblique reference to Pythagoras is in W.T. Jones' A History of Western Philosophy:

> Instead of using wine to intoxicate, the

> Pythagoreans used music to purify the soul, and their emphasis was constantly on a way of life rather than simply on the performance of certain rites. They were deeply concerned about the well-being of the soul which they conceived to be immortal and which they believed to pass through a cycle of births appearing on earth in various guises depending on the kind of life it led in a previous existence. For them the end of life, the moral goal, was to obtain release from the cycle of birth and death. (52)

Hossein's vague remark regarding "Greek foolishness" clouds the meaning of the whole sentence; also, the reference to "we" adds difficulty. Does "we" refer to Muslims, Hindus, or Indians in general? Or, does "we" refer to Dr. Pearce and Hossein in terms of many shared concepts at the root of both Oriental and Occidental religious development? No doubt, the narrator does not intend readers to make much of Hossein's line: in dramatic terms, a "throw-away." Nonetheless, to illustrate her belief in process and change, Duncan gives the reader three conversational clues about the special philosophical relationship among these people: first, the Pythagorean reference;[14] second, from his own

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[14]See for further explanation, E.M.W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture, "The Chain of Being."

knowledge of Hinduism and Islam ("[t]hese things are not written in the Koran" [79]), Arden's puzzlement about the Muslim Hossein's mentioning "planes of other people" and "the life current of all things" (79); and third, Hossein's answer, "But sir, to which of us in the East is left his religion?" The clues lie not so much in what Hossein, Pearce, and Arden say, but in the mutual understanding, wisdom, and humility of the speakers, who themselves view life as a process, not as a form. For such people, rigid absolutes and inflexible dogma often retard the citizen's desire for a community's natural and self-determining evolution. Duncan's belief in process and change sustains the hope, however slim in Set in Authority, of any affirmative relationship existing between the Anglo-Indian and Indian peoples, and Pearce's admonition to Vetchley comes to mind once again: "Our notion of our proper relations with these people does change, doesn't it, as time goes on" (38). If Muslim Ahmed Hossein can absorb the tenets of Hinduism, surely English people can shed some of their prejudices about natives.

Chapters X through XIII, while contributing to the still rising action and the tying of complication's knot, extensively record reactions in London and Pilaghur to the Thame administration, the Morgan case, and the appointment to the judiciary of Sir Ahmed Hossein. Until the major events fall into place by

chapter X, the narrator has kept the plot's concentration limited, on the one hand to political conversations among Lady Thame's social circle in London and, on the other, to general exchanges of opinion at the Ardens' and Lemons' parties in Anglo-Indian Pilaghur. Now the effects of the Morgan case and of the judicial appointment of Sir Ahmed Hossein reverberate through the lowest levels of Anglo-India all the way up to the drawing-rooms of London.

The lowest level of concern is in direct contrast with the highest. Chapter X introduces the regiment, and individual soldiers such as Thomas Ames, Truthful James Symes, Flynn "the Mugger," Young James Moon. But first, the narrator classifies the camp as a whole: "The Barfords were an average regiment with an average record" (82). As an example of "the average," they have "the usual superficial dislike and contempt for the people," who, in turn, regard the soldiers similarly:

> [The English soldiers] were a keen sporting lot, and not one of them held the wild peacock sacred, or in his heart respected the regulation that forbade the shooting of it....the "gorah" was a man without authority, without money, who frequently extracted that for which he would not pay, a person of no understanding and much offence. They were therefore contumacious to every demand,

> sullenly, sometimes actively, hostile to everything in uniform; and the Barfords were so occupied with the full-tongued expression of their scorn and indignation that they altogether failed to measure how much they themselves were disliked. (83)

In this chapter, the narrator draws full attention to the fact that England holds India by military occupation. Everyone England sends to India to assume temporary residency (temporary may be as long as thirty years), whether military or political personnel, goes there with the first, indeed the only, purpose of making sure this possession stays under the umbrella of the British Empire. Peace and good government merely aid the primary directive.

With the two exceptions of Charles Cox and Eliot Arden, official Pilaghur is as much against Ahmed Hossein's call to the bar as it is wary about the Viceroy's interfering in the Morgan case. Naturally, many people from their armchairs "at home" in England fail to understand the intensity of racial friction, most obvious at the lowest levels of Indian society. Those people who believe Englishmen of the upper classes should "govern by moral force" (14) may be shocked to hear the regiment's racist and crude expressions: "the general feeling both in the canteen and the 'A.T.A.' was that it was sanguinary rotten luck that the case should

come before a sanguinary black nigger" (85).

Judiciously as the narrator describes the relationship between soldiers and natives, the men of the regiment speak on their own behalf. Rough more than cruel, they nervously await Morgan's fate as if they, as a group, were as guilty as he, because "individual offence generally means in a regiment, corporate discipline" (84).

Therein lies a problem: the difference between military and civil offence. To Ganeshi Lal, a wealthy Indian merchant ever on the alert for discrimination, "a touchstone for inter-racial justice is one thing, a mere crime is another" (70). If the courts find Morgan guilty of the crime with which he has been charged and punish him accordingly, his offence remains singular and individual; if, by appealing his sentence, the Viceroy wishes to make an example of Morgan, then the military goes on trial at a time when, as Frayley Sanbourne in London explains, the effect might be the same as "playing with petrol and matches" (101). Circumstances offer the Viceroy reason to pass over the affair: "the prisoner waived his right to be tried by the superior court, had elected in fact to be tried as a native....the case would come after all before Sir Ahmed Hossein, in Pilaghur, with a jury" (92). The Viceroy, if he appeals the sentence given by an Indian judge, will ironically assert, in the name of inter-racial

justice, British paramountcy in India which is the supreme power that makes a complete mockery of his intention to apply what his mother Lady Thame calls "equal treatment for black and white and no caste privilege" (101). Determined to hang an Englishman, any Englishman, for committing an offence against a native, the Viceroy puts his whole army on trial over one man's act of passion.

While conflict threatens to erupt into violence all around them, Arden and Hossein reach out to each other in friendship. By the end of chapter XIII, readers know Hossein has sentenced Henry Morgan, who has been found guilty of culpable homicide, to two years hard labour. Pleased by the sentence, Anglo-Indian Pilaghur votes Sir Ahmed (nominated by Arden and seconded by Pearce) into the Pilaghur Club, but only Arden, who holds a party in Hossein's honor, has the courage to put at stake his own reputation and prestige to welcome a native judge into their Anglo midst. In conjunction with Arden's dinner-party, one little incident, deftly inserted into all the excitement, embodies the spirit of understanding existing between the two men: Hossein, sometime before the party, removes a scorpion from Arden's collar; however, Ahmed, because of his respect for life, to Arden's amazement, does not kill the menacing creature. That gesture and the welcome Arden gives to cement Hossein's acceptance into Anglo-India, symbolize the

compassionate regard these two men share in their philosophical approach to the world. Finally, it is most important to note that, until chapter XIV, Arden commands his post with the integrity and authority befitting a man who has the Viceroy's respect; he stands firm against popular opinion that would remove Hossein, not only from the judiciary, but also from Anglo-Indian Pilaghur. Arden's reputation as a just and fair-minded administrator, extending into the separate realms of two Pilaghurs, allows him, all the while assiduously applying subtle, careful diplomacy, to push and tug the societies closer together.

Tying the knot around plot and theme, chapter XIV ends the rising complication, and throughout the remaining chapters, the falling action that follows the crisis, or turning-point, takes as much time to unwind as the complication has needed to build up. The crisis occurs because "His Excellency, the Viceroy [is] extremely dissatisfied with the verdict and the sentence in the Morgan case" (125). The Viceroy's open dissatisfaction with the Courts shocks two nations, and even Eliot Arden pitches his stand against "the shadow of the king." Recalling that Duncan has planted the original seeds of conflict in chapter I, and considering that Tring and Morgan are the same fellow, the reader now witnesses the beginning of Thame's rather Pyrrhic triumph over his half-cousin. Eliot Arden's reluctance

and, ultimately, his refusal to co-operate with the Viceroy's desire to launch an appeal throw only small blocks of resistance in the path of the inevitable. The tragic force (the Viceroy's dissatisfaction coming from his moral sense) which impels the downturn of events and pushes them to their culmination in unavoidable though ironic, catastrophe has to do. with the Shakespearean concept of "something fundamental" (129) in the Viceroy's character, as much as Desdemona's murder, notwithstanding Iago's incitement, has to do with "something fundamental" in Othello.[15] Arden has always insisted that the Viceroy's decisions are not politically motivated. The Commissioner, now a Portia, argues with Ruth Pearce against the Viceroy's position, declaring,

> 'It's his idea, I think, if he can get hold of the white murderer of a black man, to hang him.'
>
> 'And you think he should not be hanged?'
>
> 'Not by any Viceroy, with any intention of setting up forever, at such a creature's expense, the lofty integrity of British rule. If his judge hangs him, well and good. But when all is said and done, the high-water mark

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[15]Whereas the exciting force comes in the form of an external event (plot), the tragic force lies within (the moral choices made by the characters).

> of British justice is found in the courts. If it is tempered with mercy here and expediency there, that is because it is human, or perhaps because it is divine. But for heaven's sake let's leave it to its appointed medium. God knows there is enough.' (129).

Arden well knows the Viceroy has the power "to add to the pain and discipline of the world." By having the mysterious and god-like Apollonian protagonist and the rebellious and passionate Dionysian antagonist absent throughout, Duncan creates the ironic turning-point in Set in Authority, a turning-point which, without a plodding plot analysis, could erroneously appear to lie wholly in the story of Eliot Arden and Ruth Pearce.

Certainly, their relationship forms a subplot, but one that really does not lead anywhere, simply because Pearce and Arden eventually become reduced to pawns in a much larger world game. Eliot Arden's refusal to co-operate with the Viceroy only makes the latter more adamant and determined to succeed. However, after Arden decides to oppose the Viceroy, his fortunes do begin to suffer a reversal.[16] First, Ruth Pearce, given the opportunity to declare her feelings for Arden, cannot

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16 First Arden, and later Tring suffer a reversal of fortune, which should be reserved, according to Aristotle, for the Viceroy whose "frailty" these men "hide" with their obedience and silence.

bring herself to violate her moral sense. She "loved the man, and must rebuke him. Being as she was" (134). Next, little Jessica Arden leaves India to tend her son in Heidelberg. She never returns. Starting Arden's troubles, chapter XIV also marks the end of empathy. From now on, characters seem unable to communicate with each other; they do not understand, or perhaps they simply mis-understand, the intentions behind the simplest actions of their peers. The Viceroy should be the one to feel the pain and endure the consequences of his decisions; however, in the political and social world, others must suffer for him for the sake of order.

The plot's turning-point having been reached, Duncan sets in motion its unravelling. One might expect that to justify Arden's stand against the Viceroy, Duncan would include hints of unrest of the kind she describes in The Burnt Offering, when she bases her subplot on the activities of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the Indian nationalist leader (1856-1920) who advocated violent opposition to British rule. Instead, Duncan presents at length the crumbling morale within Anglo-India. The harsh living conditions, British empire-building, native hostility, and of course, the Viceroy, the government, the people "at home," all finally produce a dispiritedness among Anglo-Indians of the kind Duncan has written about already in The Simple Adventures of a Memsahib. The unravelling plot of the

last half of Set in Authority still twists and turns with the effects of conspiracy. One of the most remarkable things about the falling action concerns the tale's greatest conspiracy, the conspiracy of silence, conducted by a solitary figure, Ruth Pearce.

Reversal of fortune affects more than Arden and Tring. Chapters XI, XVI and XVII take us to familiar settings, places of former conviviality, and show us how matters have changed. In XV, Mrs. Arden leaves India to be with her son, Teddy, who is ill. Arden, vastly underestimating his attachment to her, feels only the slightest surge of tenderness at her departure. In chapter XVI, Colonel Vetchley and the Regiment wish to hold a dinner in Arden's honor; Faulkner explains to Arden, "They mean to toast you in recognition of your recent uncompromising attitude toward tyranny, I understand" (142). When Arden expresses his astonishment at the impropriety, Faulkner adds, "A regiment is a corporate ass." Hindmost part of "corporate ass" or not, Vetchley proves himself not nearly subtle enough to understand Arden's motivation. In chapter XVI, Dr. Pearce confronts Charles Cox on his attitude about the Morgan case. He has turned up new evidence, Cox claims, based on the word of Afzul Aziz; Gobind begged for mercy, kissed Morgan's feet and "the brute shot him through the head deliberately." Cox declares the Viceroy's action in trying to overturn the case,

"heroic": "'and I believe the Chief will come round'" said Cox sanguinely" (146). Firmly disagreeing with Cox on both points, but especially the latter, Pearce reveals "something fundamental" about her moral nature in her answer: "'I know he will not,' she said. 'When a decision like that crystallises with him into a matter of conscience he simply can't come round'" (146). Pearce is Arden's "soul-mate," but even she does not grasp that Arden's fixed principles will fall before his stronger belief in unity, peace, evolution.

Although chapter XVIII briefly carries readers back to England for more snippets of news of Herbert Tring (now reputed, according to Kelly, to have a wife and baby), and it establishes a plot connection between Dr. Pearce and a minor character, Mrs. Sannaway, chapter XIX continues to detail the effects of disillusion and conspiracy. The narrator enters a curious plea in defense of the Viceroy, a plea that will go far to characterize and explain the plot's ironic catastrophe.

Once again, Cox and Vetchley take up their familiar positions opposite each other, and, once again, they underline the difference between the civil and military ideas of best approach to India. Emotionally overcome when a "regiment passe[s] him in the street" (157), Cox has "an instant's regret that he hadn't gone in for Sandhurst" (157). Two minutes' conversation on shooting and bridge with young Lascelles at the Mess convinces

Cox "that his choice of the Indian Civil was not to be regretted after all" (159). Since some regiments have just returned from Somaliland, their accounts of battle draw attention to the intensity during this period of British expansionism and imperialism. Even so, according to the accounts given by the soldiers, fighting for the King offers Tommy a better chance than the one given to the faithful fighting for the Mullah, especially after a group retreat. "Sapper" explains that

> 'unwisely [the Somalis] made for the Mullah's camp, see? The Mullah, being a little out of sorts I dare say, said, 'Hello, what are you doing here?' and had them all executed on the spot.' (163)

To further suggest the difference (in degree) between native and Tommy, the army's tough, outspoken Colonel Vetchley, himself a good old sport, presents British and native attitudes on their mutually favorite sport: shooting. Speaking with "horrified earnestness" (166) to Mr. Poynder Biscuit, Vetchley's self-righteousness does not mitigate the disgusting picture he describes:

> 'Six years ago, when we were stationed in Calcutta, [Kala Jong] asked me to a shoot. As we started we were given to understand that we were to shoot everything--does, butchas, everything, every head we saw--to beat

> Dharmsala's bag of the week before...The absolute truth. When it came to getting does, Devine and I put up our rifles--wouldn't even stand up to it. Did no good. Those fellows went on with their slaughter. Afterwards on one island we counted nineteen wild buffalo, left lying, females and all--hadn't taken a horn or a skin. Sickening.' (167)

Although not nearly as worldly and compassionate as Sir Ahmed Hossein, and not really as eager and "heroic" (160) as Charles Cox, Vetchley and Sapper demonstrate that the English Army, in its own eyes at least, owns a slightly more sophisticated attitude to life and nature than many Muslim commanders and sporting Princes.

Then, because Vetchley remains vocally and staunchly opposed to the Viceroy and his decision to retry Morgan, Mr. Biscuit utters an evocative remark: "His Excellency is a little disposed to be what might be called visionary" (166). This sentiment echoes an earlier response given to Vetchley by Arden himself: "Opinion about everything changes and moves--he may be in the forefront of it and we in the discomfort of dragging after" (42). Suddenly, a new (if not exactly new, then stronger) note--a suggestion that the Viceroy's position is defensible--sounds in the universal Anglo-Indian noisy condemnation of the Viceroy's action. Although Duncan insists the

Viceroy's deed should be seen as it affects a specific group of Anglo-Indians, she does use the term "visionary" to describe the Viceroy. Both Biscuit and Arden mildly assert that time will judge the rightness or wrongness of the Viceroy's action; in the latter half of the twentieth-century, many Western persons and nations continue to believe, whether or not the concept springs from a biological faculty called "the moral sense," that the democratic ideal of equality before the law represents a laudable goal.

For the Anglo-Indian, however, the issue of quality before the law has created a serious problem. The graciousness and sympathy that Anglo-Indians, for the first fourteen chapters of Set in Authority, have extended to each other, continues to erode: women no longer give their parties; men in the military and civil services no longer speak quite as cordially to each other at the Pilaghur Club. This unhappy situation is aggravated when Eliot Arden faces yet another adversary in Ruth Pearce. It seems that Mr. Charles Cox, in a burst of duty, has forwarded information to the Chief Commissioner, information which Arden duly passes to his superiors, concerning additional evidence in the Morgan case. Although the evidence, coming through the auspices of Afzul Aziz, appears suspect, new details may give the Viceroy the opening he needs to have the case retried. The possibility causes Pearce to cry "wildly":

"But there can be no retrial. You have pledged your conscience, your authority, yourself, against it" (173). Arden's dignifed response correctly frames the issue when he replies, "I have placed my opinion on record against it; and I have not changed my opinion" (173). The narrator describes the potential between these two intelligent characters for a more personal exchange, but once again, Pearce's "moral sense"-- she is now the Viceroy's alter-ego--blocks the road because "loving him unlawfully he must be the more transcendently worthy" (170). The narrator explains Arden could have overpowered her objections had he tried, but the poor man feels his mere opinion on, rather than pledge, to the Morgan case makes him not morally strong enough to suit the integrity of Ruth Pearce:

> 'Behind the kindness of your regard,' he said, 'I see the charnel-house where you will be presently tearing me to pieces.'
>
> 'Shall I?' she said. 'I dare say. But it will be something new. I have always torn things to pieces, my whole world sometimes. It is my bane--it spoils my life. But so far, not you. So far I have felt differently about you. Otherwise how could we go on? Your ideals were my bread of life, and--I thought--mine were yours: Wasn't that happiness enough for us both?'

> 'It was a fool's paradise,' he told her; 'but I see that I have turned myself out.' (175)

Obviously, the love relationship, and even the friendship, will not withstand their inability to communicate to each other what they feel, beyond idealism. Each scene after the turning-point illustrates the disintegration of goodwill in Anglo India.

Pearce tells him she "intends to ask for leave immediately" having "always wanted the M.D. of London" (175). Arden imagines she wishes to leave because of his views. Because of misunderstandings, they break their friendship. The Viceroy's intention to have his way creates a multitude of insidious little disagreements that filter through the ranks of the military and civil officers to finally settle on the heads of Arden and Pearce. To complete the disintegration, chapter XXI details the nastiness to which Anglo-Indian residents, who have lost control of their affairs, have stooped.

The final phase of the plot and the last effects of conspiracy begin in chapter XXII. For all intents and purposes, Arden's part in the action is now finished: he has dutifully served plot and theme by acting as an illustration of how the ripple effect of power tosses aside administrators. The Viceroy summons Eliot Arden to Calcutta and persuades his Chief Commissioner of Ghoom to change his mind on the inadvisability of

retrying Morgan. The narrator goes to great pains to defend Arden's capitulation, declaring that few others will appreciate this man's sterling qualities. An administrator whose change of heart will be perceived variously, but not kindly, by Pilaghur, Arden has recognized a greater duty:

> Lord Thame's assault on the views of his Chief Commissioner--involved damage to Arden's dignity, to his sense of propriety, and to long-settled convictions on certain questions, not to count his belief in his own experience and so small a matter as his popularity. Perhaps these considerations, once they fully appeared to Arden's mind, rather helped the Viceroy's appeal; and perhaps Lord Thame knew they would. A smaller man might have fortified himself with such things. Eliot Arden, the moment he believed himself depending on them, was capable of making a present of them to the enemy. (191)

The Viceroy, sure of himself, knows his course. Arden, the idealist, fast coming "to the point in life when the eager heart has learned how much it must do without" (195), behaves as the model civil servant must, by submitting his ego and his heart to the will of an ego much greater and to the desire of a heart much tougher.

Arden's own "heart"[17] has reached middle age "so wise it has grown, and so humble" (195). Arden is a mere bureaucrat, the monkey-in-the-middle of a game that does not involve his constituency among the dominant players. Civil officials in Anglo-India are not their communities' strategists or policy-makers, therefore, Eliot Arden is not a protagonist of the main plot. He is merely an illustration of the civil servant's dilemma: wisdom with no voice.

The Viceroy and Ruth Pearce impose themselves on Arden's conscience, simultaneously, but in opposition. Pearce, through a letter, condemns any move on Arden's part to give in to the Viceroy: "Simply said, it came to this, that she could not--and would not if she could--withstand the shock of another disappointment in him" (194). According to the narrator, Pearce's letter is not without consolation; however, Arden fails to see hope and resigns himself to the end of their relationship.

Duncan often uses the technique of allowing a failed love relationship to underline the emotional trauma of a political incident. In The Imperialist, double-disappointment for Lorne Murchison occurs when he loses Dora Milburn's and the party's support at the same

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[17]Lorne's Murchison's "heart" in The Imperialist is neither "wise" nor "humble."

time. Duncan consciously strives, at certain points in her novels, to evoke an emotional response which stems from the "unutterable," the capacity humans have for caring about ideas as well as each other. When one person cares more than, or less than, another, or if one person hurts another, the "feeling" of betrayal aroused by human incompatibility translates into a fact supremely difficult for a narrator to describe. How much more difficult to describe the emotions aroused by political betrayal!

Linking political and romantic together, Duncan counterpoints the situations to produce the reader's heightened awareness of the extent and quality of a character's personal devastation. A few critics estimate any love story, devalued by the cloying emotion in some Victorian and modern romances, no better than "sentimental" currency (see for example, Marion Fowler's assessment of Set in Authority 271). However, both the romance genre and romantic convictions have valid thematic uses. The Viceroy's extraction of Arden's co-operation, in light of Pearce's rejection of Arden's position, looks a harsher deed than it would have appeared in the closet of Thame and Arden's private deliberations. Arden suffers the loss of friendship, family and abstract idealism, all at once. In any event, by the end of chapter XXII, with the exception of one or two minor appearances, Arden slips away from the

plot and the subplot, and in chapter XXIV the narrator explains Arden's fading importance:

> He was set aside as a person no longer concerned with the matter; and in what he had done he was treated as the agent of circumstances. He was not given the dignity of an accomplice, nor was he thought deserving of censure. In these pretty ways will fate sometimes make her compliment to the bureaucrat. (206)

With Arden's integrity no longer complicating civil and judicial issues, the narrator changes her tone: nothing she says makes the narrator sound as generous-minded and benevolent as she has been about Arden. But because the workings of plot are intricate, Eliot Arden leaves not without legacy: when she faces the decision of her life, Ruth Pearce remembers his wisdom, humility, and experience. When Pearce must choose between her conscience and social order, she picks the latter.

Chapter XXXIII which is conspicuously lighter in tone than the previous chapter, records response in England to Thame's position. With the outstanding exception of Lady Thame (the latter pleased "Anthony stood a fair chance of immolation for a principle at last" [(199)]), many others in government seem inclined to agree with Alfred Earle, editor of The Prospect, who sarcastically congratulates Thame "upon his courage in

adding the intolerable to the burdens of his administration" (199). Mrs. Tring, the poor private's mother, ironically cries that Henry Morgan "ought to be hanged" (202).

"What they thought in London was a matter of great indifference in India" begins chapter XXIV. While London debates the case, in India, Justice Lenox, husband of little Mrs. Lenox who has been introduced in the first chapter, and, as readers recall, an old friend of the Thame family, presides over the retrial of Henry Morgan. This time, "[i]n the case of the Emperor versus Henry Morgan, the jury had brought in the verdict of wilful murder, and the prisoner had been sentenced to be hanged" (210).

Setting the lighter tone in preparation for an "ironic catastrophe" (deus ex machina prevents the inevitable), the narrator cannot resist amusing us with her parting-shot aimed at poor Henry Morgan-Herbert Tring: "if the verdict was surprising, the sentence was amazing. It seemed a sentence that took advantage of the verdict--to go one better. The prisoner fainted under it, no doubt from sheer astonishment" (210). Despite the excitment of Anglo-India at this turn of events, the narrator's voice, judging by its tone, no longer adds sympathy to the chorus.

It appears obvious to readers now that, however unpopular the man, the Viceroy will rule India after his

own fashion. The Viceroy, steadfastly refusing to exercise the Crown's prerogative, keeps turning down various officials' appeals for clemency. Placing her deeds behind her convictions, Dr. Ruth Pearce shows up at the Calcutta jail to comfort the prisoner and assure him of her crusade to save him. Because the narrator has consistently reinforced the idea of Lord Thame's immutability, the direction of the plot's falling action, begun in chapter XIV, dramatically indicates the resolution of the Thame-Morgan conflict will inevitably explode in disaster.[18] Now prepared by the narrator's shift to a lighter, more amused tone, readers expect irony of situation may occur. But the ironic catastrophe (disaster averted) arising from an Andover conflict is actually all the more appalling because Andover refuses clemency to his half-cousin and the brother of his fiancee.

In setting up the plot, Duncan makes every event ironic: people are not whom they are expected to be, nor where they are expected to be; events have not happened as people say they have; Muslims think like Hindus, and Christians, whatever their muddled reasons, think that "paramountcy" and "equality" are compatible ideas.

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[18]Answering Aristotle's first demand of tragedy that the "circumstances which strike us as terrible or pitiful" (27) should occur between brothers...," the Viceroy's dogged behavior is both ironic and horrible.

Indeed, pockets of chaos burst open everywhere. In such confusion, psychological and individual tragedy invokes an intensity perhaps inappropriate in an ironic sociological novel because, confusion and animosity notwithstanding, the Anglo-Indian community does survive the Morgan affair after all: actual revolution is an event still far in the future. In the text, there is no army mutiny, nor is there a native uprising. In keeping with ironic events, Duncan's giving the Viceroy double impunity makes a thematic statement about her opinion of the greater chaos that would ensue were Thame publicly shown to be wrong.

Duncan inserts chapter XXV to complement chapter V; both celebrate the energy and fortitude of Anglo-Indian women. Sent from Teddy's side in Heidelberg, Jessica Arden's letters to her husband sound with "pleasant familiarity, the little melody she had played so often. But the last page or two of the last letter, he read twice" (218). Jessica Arden, "doing Nietzsche," apologises to her husband because she cannot read or understand the "horrid" (219) man; her German, although "brushed up by being in Heidelberg and having to order everything...was not quite yet equal to philosophy" (218). This chapter's contribution, primarily thematic, reinforces two ideas: the spirit and pathos of Jessica Arden and her peers; the unreadiness of many English to accept, in the aftermath of Darwin, a Nietzschean,

world-view.

Through all her novels, Duncan remains faithfully attentive to women and their place in society. Always interested in types, but not stereotypes, she analyzes and illustrates situations from a feminine viewpoint: women and art, women and power, women and religion and, of course, women and men. Jessica Cowper Arden, constantly trying intellectually and physcially "to keep up" with her husband, Eliot, places herself in competition with him. Readers may feel the pathos of the following as Arden recalls Jessica's trying to translate Omar Khayyam:

> [Arden] did indeed remember Thugganugger and that brazen June and their struggles to save Herbie--he did indeed. And the poor little scholar who sat so late with grammar and dictionary under the cloud of insects that swarmed round the lamp and fell on the curling page, until she literally cried with the heat and weariness, and he had to take the books away, and assure her that Persian could never make her more to him than she was then. (219)

Naturally, anyone tired and weary to the point of tears makes a pathetic sight. Furthermore, her frustration at not keeping pace with Arden's intelligence, her working in the suffocating heat of Indian summer, produce for Jessica Arden a way of life that is far cry from her

sisters of the English landed gentry, whose lives are spent enjoying high tea in their moderate-climed English gardens. Arden's tribute to her is clear:

> If she hadn't kept step she had kept up. Indeed she had kept up every mile of the way; and the way had been no primrose path. Months of camping, shifting, changing, years of bad climates, loneliness, of desert and jungle--everything a woman should not have. And never to be persuaded to leave him, until she had to go home with the boys. The Hills were for women who were not so keen on keeping up. Through the pain in his heart he felt the truth, that she had always been there, near him there, keeping up. (220)

Duncan equates Jessica Arden (and Mrs. Lemon, Mrs. Biscuit, Mrs. Lamb, Mrs. Lenox) with the feminine form of foot-soldier, a person not to be confused with the author's concept of a leader, female or male. In Arden's opinion, women should not have to endure what his wife has borne for his sake, and news of Mrs. Arden's death from heart failure hurts Arden "most miserably" (221), largely because he as well as the rest of the male administrators in Anglo-India (to say nothing of the government at home) has taken her contribution to his career for granted, has failed to either recognize or commend her for her courage and stamina.

In chapter I, Lavinia Thame mentions Anglo-Indian women in the context of "miracles of self-sacrifice"; in chapter XXV, Duncan, as she is want to do, supports the general contention with an example.

Throughout her novels, Duncan never treats literature or art lightly; nor should readers take lightly the literary references that appear in Set in Authority. Jessica Arden, just before her death, has difficulty understanding Nietzsche; she previously has had trouble with "Omar Khayyam" (218). Although the works of Nietzsche and Omar Khayyam might prove interesting material for the Trings, philosophical encouragement to "carpe diem" and joyfully face despair may be as difficult for English Arden to grasp as Persian and German are for her to read. In a thematically symbolic act, Jessica Arden rejects Nietzsche, "man of new thought," as Ruth Pearce will reject Tring, "man of science," when she fails to deliver his letter. If Jessica Arden cannot understand the modernism and relativism of the new philosophy, which owes its origins to science, Ruth Pearce understands it all too well.

The door being closed on the Ardens, the narrator, to bring the plot closer to its conclusion, turns to Sir Ahmed Hossein and the Thame-Tring relatives in England. At the end of this chapter, readers understand that whatever Anthony Andover has done in India, he has certainly acted according to the neo-Platonic form of

"Englishman."

Unlike his half-cousin Herbert Tring, Lord Thame is no modern man, but he is no politician either. He represents, on a personal level, what the English are internationally. Back in London, with "the country...on the eve of a general election," the nation's quicksilver temper has been lost momentarily over the Morgan case:

> As the Viceroy's attitude became more clearly understood, his action suffered every distortion. He emerged a despot, who had torn Morgan from the courts to make an example of at his own pleasure. His name was bracketed with those of Roman Emperors, and he was warned that modern civilisation had no office for even a just tyrant. He was held up as the systematic persecuter of the army, a fanatic, an inquisitor; he was invited to come home and be hounded from public life. (226)

So excited is reaction to the case that the Under-Secretary for India, Frayley Sambourne, threatens the Government may "usurp the functions of the Anthony's conscience this time" (232), and, over Thame's head, grant clemency to Henry Morgan. Anthony Andover's unpopularity reaches such heights with his own party that readers may recall Colonel Vetchley's charge, soundly refuted by Arden, that "Thame is too much of a politician" (41) to run India. Arden's opinion, which

events have proven correct, shows in fact that Thame is not at all much of a politican: an angry Prime Minister, trying to woo the public vote, will not likely offer political patronage to one who makes the mistake of arousing sentiment against a vulnerable party clinging to power as election time. Ruth Pearce's words about the Viceroy's deeds springing from "Something fundamental" (129) in the man, must explain, as far as an outsider can explain the motivations of another, why Thame insists on hanging Morgan. Since he clearly does not seek political advancement, and because he possesses a moral sense that completely realizes a "national ideal" (20), Thame's behavior, though it is not recognized as homespun by some politicans and newspapers, is both predictably and quintessentially British. Sir Ahmed Hossein, "having a passion for the Monarch" (265), appreciates the Viceroy's mixed ethics of "predatory" morality, but the Viceroy's mother does not. Lady Thame owns the purest strain of the moral sense and she very vocally registers to Hossein her concern about Anthony's willingness to engage in bellicose activities with border tribes: "If that sort of thing was all he found to do in India, I though the sooner he came home the better" (228). However, Anthony Andover's granite-like refusal to yield in the Morgan case renews Lady Thame's faith in her son. For his part, the Viceroy holding firm against tremendous

pressure at home to give clemency to a white felon wins Victoria Tring's hand at last. Lord Thame's reinforcement of British paramountcy, his anger with the Mullah and subsequent desire to "'lay him by the heels'" (228), his belief in fair and equal treatment for both Anglo-Indian and the conquered races, creates a paradox that is, simply, British.

Irony of situation dominates the conclusion of the novel. England and Anglo-India await word on Morgan's fate, and the question of whether or not the Government will humiliate the Viceroy circulates through all levels of society. In chapter XXX, while the army rumbles and threatens to disrupt the community, Duncan introduces her ironic deus ex machina: Henry Morgan, by swallowing an opium ball "the size of a marble" (257), commits suicide. The catastrophe looming ahead of the turning point has been sharply and quickly averted. To their immense relief, the residents of Pilaghur, both army and civil, have been spared the trauma of seeing one of their own corporally punished. Duncan's introduction of the deus ex machina avoids a more elemental catastrophe: the outright collision of Thame and Tring ideologies predicted as far back as chapter I.

While readers consider the meaning of Morgan's suicide, Duncan adds yet another ironic consideration. In chapter XXXI, readers learn that Gobind, the watchman, lives. The three days that passed before Surat

notified the police about Gobind's death have offered time for the Hindu's family, with the help of Munshi, Azful Aziz, to set up suspicious circumstances to trap Morgan. Ruth Pearce discovers the details of Aziz's nefarious plan when she happens to see Gobind at Calcutta's New Market. Hiria, who has all along known that Gobind is alive, tells Pearce the reason for Aziz's duplicity:

> 'Great zid [grudge] he has all his life against the pulthan [regiment], because of a bad thing at Cawnpore long ago. I was not born then but my mother saw the Great folly, your honour. My father was sweeper with this Bafforshi Pultan, and the soldiers when they came to Cawnpore were very angry--shooting, killing all sepoys. The father of Azful Aziz was not a sepoy, miss-sahib. He was a teaching man like this one--and the two older sons were writers under the sahibs, good men, of poor spirit, miss-sahib. When the soldiers found them they said, 'We are not sepoys!' but the soldiers said, 'Look at your feet. You have corns on them. Therefore you wear shoes. Therefore you are Sepoys'; and killed all three. Only Azful they did not kill because he was so little. But he saw it, miss-sahib, and he has always zid against the regiment.

So he went to great expense.' (274)

Too late to save Morgan-Tring, Pearce nonetheless passes the information to Arden, who writes back to her with his opinion on the matter; he recommends that administrators "departmentally" deal with the "connivance" (276) of corrupt police and refrain "from further prosecution" in the Morgan case. Ruth Pearce, recognizing "the absolute close of a case under deliberation" (276), returns to England. Morgan's innocence creates a peculiar circumstance. On one hand, his death redresses an old wrong inflicted on a young Hindu by the British. On the other, Morgan's case makes the Viceroy's position more than just unpopular. He is actually wrong. However, a perverted and queer kind of fairness has transpired after all. Pearce reflects, when she hears the pathetic tale of Aziz and the soldiers, that "standards of justice and right rose ironically beside them" (274). The English in India, if Set in Authority is correct, never escape the effects of old wounds inflicted by the conqueror on the conquered. If one Englishman dies unfairly, well, three (274) natives have already died without justice. The fact that Duncan makes "pure justice" seem impossible adds weight to Arden's belief that the high-mark of British justice is found in the courts, however imperfect the system.

If Henry Morgan is not guilty of murder, neither then is Herbert Tring, and, in chapter XXXII, Duncan

finally reveals the true identity of the dead soldier. Morgan has given Dr. Pearce a letter to deliver to his sister in London. Coincidentally, however not improbably, the Trings and Dr. Pearce have acquaintances in common, and at Mrs. Sannaway's Bloomsbury home, Dr. Pearce learns she is to accompany the former to the home of a newly remarried matron, Mrs. Frayley Sambourne. Mrs. Sambourne introduces Pearce to her daughter, announcing, "my girl there...has just promised to marry the Viceroy of India" (278); the daughter is none other than Victoria Tring, owner of the name Herbert Tring has put on the envelope of the letter to be given to his sister. After digesting her shock, Ruth Pearce, remembering Arden's "humility" and "duty" (284) in the performance of his job, does not deliver the letter to Victoria Tring, but instead throws "Herbert Valentia Tring's dying letter to his sister into the fire" (284), and, in so doing, saves the Viceroy from facing the political disgrace of being discovered to be completely wrong in the specific instance of the Morgan case. The public disaster that nearly befalls Anthony Andover and his half-cousin, Herbert Tring, is averted by Ruth Pearce's existential action in choosing the good of all over the purity of her own conscience. She decides she can bear the knowledge of a gross miscarriage of justice more than she can take responsibility for the disgrace or downfall of the system.

To understand the Morgan-Andover relationship is to deal with situational irony. By studying the plot of Set in Authority as if it were designed according to dramatic conventions, the reader turns up blocks of action to support the thesis that primary conflict, an essential ingredient in plot, exists between Anthony Andover (Lord Thame) and Herbert Tring. However wrong in the instance, Lord Thame does hold together a system that has provided England and India with an imperfect kind of order, a system which, through generations of common law, may someday, "more perfectly," come to include without prejudice, the "visionary" and "moral" belief that black and white are equal under the law. Duncan's and Arden's assertion that a system is, after all, only a process and not a form, emphasizes the human qualities of duty, humility, and compassion over any concept of stone-tablet justice. However, when the system breaks down, or just cannot contain the various self-interests in society, revolution and anarchy threaten daily order and the first victim of anarchy is always justice. In the last analysis, Duncan, ever an advocate of the Canadian parliamentary government, which in turn advocates "peace, order, and good government," supports the flagrant mistakes of Apollonian Lord Thame over lovable and passionate behaviour of Dionysian Herbert Tring. Herbert Tring, although innocent of crime himself, symbolizes a European philosophical

movement that would introduce into recalcitrant England and Anglo-India a scientific world where "the moral sense" is definitely not human biological property.[19] If The Burnt Offering challenges the rise of socialism, Set in Authority temporarily blocks the new sciences in favour of the old "moral sense."

But to believe in the moral sense is to hold an untenable scientific position. Although a conspiracy of silence makes the Viceroy the final victor over Tring, the former has acted improperly because of a self-righteous belief in his own English morality. By Ruth Pearce's decision to protect the Viceroy, who represents order (an action, as we know, founded on the values of subplot protagonist Eliot Arden), Duncan in Set in Authority illustrates a fundamental paradox: how does one justify reticence to improve an imperfect system when one has knowledge of the extent to which hypocrisy, lies, and self-delusion are required to keep the system in place? Using plot to spin-the-tail of irony, Duncan creates a political novel which is a sociological

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[19] O'Flaherty says, "But against this Apollonian structure there flows another, Dionysian, current in Indian thought, which views the act of creation as the transformation of order into chaos. Only when living creatures are in conflict--the gentle against the cruel, the truthful against the false--only when the powers of evil are allowed to rise up against the powers of good (albeit only to be inevitably, if temporarily, quelled), only when death exists to threaten life, can life realize its full value" (Hindu Myths 13).

gyroscope, a novel where any simple answer to the above paradox is in itself a neo-Platonic form.

Because Duncan believes that the British, despite the Industrial Revolution and the new methods of science, are not yet ready to face the so-called reality of scientific thought with its disturbing opinions on many issues, such as random selection and survival of the fittest, she claims the English, "either anomalies or hypocrites" (15) cloak their aggressive behaviour behind their sense of morality. Arden says, "We shall know better fifty years hence" if Thame's vision of equality before the law (rather than survival of the fittest) lies in the forefront of opinion; aware of the "Viceroy's mistake" (284) in the Morgan case, Pearce opts to protect the system that the Viceroy represents. Some eighty-two years after the novel's publication, after World, Korean, and Vietnamese Wars, as well as Indian Independence, readers may disagree, within the context of Set in Authority, about whether or not Pearce's personal conspiracy to paint the best possible face on the British reality in India is positive within the context of the story.

Even extended analysis of Set in Authority cannot begin to take into account the great number of characters involved, directly or indirectly. Although each chapter contains its own hard kernel of dynamic information to effect the tying or unravelling of the knot,

Duncan's method of fleshing out structure makes the novel much richer than simple dramatic analysis may allow the reader to believe. In Set in Authority, Duncan has collected and drawn together a number of voices.

Dialogue in drama constitutes scenes and Duncan sets scenes, not in parliamentary back-rooms, nor in old-boy clubs, nor in business offices, but in the drawing, dining, and tea rooms of London, Pilaghur and Calcutta. The social talk that takes place when men are relaxed and women ar in charge underlines all the ramifications of both national and sexual politics. These scenes present, in effect, mini-dramas conducted as if they were for the stage, with the narrator supplying stage directions for a reading audience that should, in fact, listen to the play.

Sometimes, as in chapter VI, "Behind the glass of Lady Thame's motor brougham," just seeing the names of characters to whom we have already been introduced is enough to signal a change of setting through association. Many chapters where the narrator actually describes the scenes appear to have a physical excuse for their existence: dramatic exchanges occur at Mrs. Lemon's garden party, the Barfordshires' mess dinner, Mrs. Lamb's tennis due, Mrs. Frayley Sambourne's afternoon tea. In each of these so-called scenes, the dramatis personae speak without the narrator helping

them, explaining what they are thinking. And so the reader listens. The reader listens to their opinions, expressions, dialects, and notes their peculiarities as much as an audience would if players were performing on stage. Her talent for writing witty, cogent dialogue, already well-evident after The Path of a Star and The Imperialist, shows up at its best in Set in Authority, where dialogue becomes a multi-pronged device for supplying narration, illustrating issues, identifying types.

As plot analysis substantiates, chapter I introduces the groundwork of what Set in Authority will address; however, the reader should also note the narrator does not raise these pertinent matters. The characters themselves when they are in conversation with each other chat about the narrative's subjects and themes. Simply to understand the context of the story itself, we look for basic information, such as the fact that Lady Thame is an English mother and aristocrat whose son, Lord Thame, has been appointed Viceroy of India. Although we might expect a narrator could, or would, simply narrate these most elementary details, Duncan prefers, especially for her London scenes, to let the characters control the narrative. Lady Thame is an aristocrat by birth; George Craybrooke, P.M., has just appointed Lord Thame, Viceroy; someone who calls himself Henry Morgan stands trial for murder. Of course,

characters do not completely usurp the narrator's storytelling function, but they do in conversation add so much substance to the tale that the reader considers their first function is indeed narrative.

Nonetheless, in the mouths of characters, simple facts mix with conjecture and opinion;[20] opinion springs from many sources: religious, cultural, racial, sexual, economic. Furthermore, facts and opinions convincingly spoken by some characters can be challenged by other characters. Capitalizing on the requisite confusion inherent in any conversation free from the narrator's controlling and guiding point of view, Duncan uses conversation in Set in Authority as a means of illustrating the complexity of issues and the subtle ironies surrounding even the plainest position. For example, consider Hiria and Colonel Vetchley. What these people say must be considered in the light of who they are. Upon consideration of their idealogies, the reader must readjust the meaning of the information (fact and

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[20]Felix Martínez-Bonati in Fictive Discourse and the Structures of Literature makes the point: "For the fundamental understanding of all narration, the requirement is that the mimetic sentences of the narrator, but not those of the characters, be accepted as true. If a conflict arises (contradiction, opposition, discrepancy) between the singular statements (i.e. statements concerning individuals) of the narrator and those of a character, the character is at once understood to be--intentionally or unintentionally--in error. The narrator's singular statements have logical preeminence" (31).

opinion) received from these two, to accommodate various religious and army-civilian differences in point of view.

In Hiria's case, clearly her opinions are those of her religion. The serving position of Hiria, a Hindu woman of good but not high caste, as the ayah or maid of Ruth Pearce, fits very well culturally with the English-type class system. Hiria herself "accepted the world at par, with its customs, its chances and its wonders; she was a Ghoomati sweeper's wife with four silver rings on her toes, but she took life more importantly than many people from whom it would seem to demand greater attention" (58). However, when Hiria outlines in great detail the Morgan case, beginning with "some gomal [disorder] in the bazaar" (61), every sentence reflects her religion's tenets about the function of women in society: "Miss-sahib, I found five d'otta, and to all when they burnt the chapatties, I gave smack-smack. Thus they learned crying, but now their husbands are not thin" (63). When Gobind cuts off Junia's nose, Hiria reflects, "It is the smallest punishment, but Gobind had a good heart" (65). Although Dr. Pearce wisely never qualifies, or questions, Hiria's opinion, in placing these women together, Duncan illustrates, through their conversation, a subtle complexity for the discerning reader: at what point may a person from one culture criticise the practices of another? Does cultural

criticism immediately invoke the charge of hypocrisy? Does failure to criticise mean one is hopelessly paralyzed by relativism? The narrator could confront readers directly with these problems. Duncan prefers to let dialogue make the point.

The army's Colonel Vetchley has only one point of view: the army's. Facing soldiers with "a big angry voice and bullying common sense" (251), within his limited ideology, Vetchley offers his opinion on any matter that affects the army. In conversation with Arden and Biscuit, making one or two valid assertions, he may even tempt the reader to accept his army perspectives. Looking over Vetchley's conversations with other residents, the reader soon sees in him the limitations of the military itself: too aggressive, dogmatic, inflexible, emotional. However praiseworthy Vetchley's defence of his men, both he and the regiment, lacking diplomacy, subtlty, and understanding are well placed serving under civilian officers. The narrator never tells the reader that Vetchley's opinion is limited by his position; Vetchley's own words show it. He violently disagrees with Arden about how Anglo-India must behave in light of the Morgan case: "[Hanging Morgan] is an infamous miscarriage of justice. The men won't take it lying down, and I don't want to command anybody who would" (255). Not "taking it lying down" connotes mutiny and violence, military responses which

Eliot Arden clearly states are unacceptable. The narrator offers no opinion on Vetchley's behaviour; the reader sides with Arden.

After supplying narration and illustrating issues, dialogue, in the sociological novel, identifies people by showing off their public mantles. Casting all but Pearce and Arden in the role of "types," Duncan expertly and frequently uses conversation and contrast to illustrate the workings and manners of different levels in society. Once again, so characteristic is this "showing" in Duncan's use of dialogue that to cite each occurrence would produce an exhaustive study of manners and types, enough to fill another book. Next to the arrangment of dramatic events, dialogue produces Set in Authority's complexity.

Although the narrator never directly addresses the relationship between Lord Thame and Judge Lenox (sitting on the bench when Morgan is re-tried, Lenox sentences Morgan to hang, an event Arden predicts that the Viceroy wants), and the reader never meets either man, Duncan has set the stage for their male, family and political connection: she introduces their feminine alter egos who are basically the same "type." The first character that readers meet is the mother of the newly appointed Viceroy of India, the larger-than-life figure of Lady Thame, a woman supremely conscious of her own power as matriarch of a family with undeniable class status. Her

position is further emphasized when she is placed opposite to Mrs. Lenox. Class and social distinctions have moulded the women's public faces to the extent that their social identities are mere extensions of a host of other identities: class, family, husband. When Lady Thame and Mrs. Lenox chat in Lady Thame's cold drawing room, a compliment of the vagues kind, "your mother was on the people who use to overfeed [Anthony] on his half holidays at school" (4), brings a flush of "happy gratification" to the face of Mrs. Lenox. In the presence of Lady Thame and her imperious manner, Mrs. Lenox is childlike and submissive. When asked if she would like some bread and butter, she expresses herself using the speech of a schoolgirl, with such phrases as "heaps" and "greedy." Duncan defines Mrs. Lenox, not just in herself, but in contrast to Lady Thame. Vicariously through female counterparts, Mr. Justice Lenox is defined in terms of Lord Thame. In fact, Lenox is so utterly submissive to the will of the Viceroy, in sentencing Morgan to hang, he completes the circle by acting in his sphere much the same way his wife acts in hers. Even though readers do not confront Lenox or Thame, or ever hear <u>them</u> in conversation, Duncan, by making the women "types," suggests to a certain degree that the feminine type can be extended to include the masculine. She is then able to write a political novel from the drawing-room, not the back room.

Imposing a dramatic pyramid on Set in Authority determines that the primary conflict--man against man--lies not between Thame and Arden, but between Thame and Tring. Dialogic complements the dramatic structure. As Lavinia notes, "We're all chips off the same block, aren't we?" (10), and so their conversation proves. As much as the "type" that is Anthony Andover, in absentia, reflects his mother, the "type" that is Herbert Tring, also missing, mirrors his mothers.

In her various conversations with Pamela Thame, Frayley Sambourne, and Sir Ahmed Hossein, Deirdre Tring emerges as an eccentric, clever, and lovable woman. Her broad-minded, mystical, but modern, attitude to almost every issue the characters discuss, sharply contrasts with the traditional ideas held by Lady Thame. Reading Maeterlinck (57), espousing Fabianism (17), and writing plays (279), Tring charms Liberal politician Frayley Sambourne, whom she eventually marries. Pamela Thame, as remote as her drawing-room is unfriendly (1), falls far behind her Tring relatives, even in habit: "I won't smoke," said Lady Thame decidedly. "You can't teach an old dog new tricks. But I don't in the least mind watching you perform" (57). In every London scene, every time they speak to each other and to others, Thame and Tring accentuate the differences between them. Extending their differences in parallel lines to their sons seems a natural connection. Lady Thame, the

matriarch of the clan, dominates, in status and perhaps in other ways, Deirdre Tring; Lord Thame, the Viceroy, carries more authority and position than Herbert Tring (or Henry Morgan), private in the fifth Barfordshires. Lady Thame, moralist and Liberal, holds fixed traditional English views, whereas Deirdre Tring, existing in a metaphysical flux, floats between intuition and reason before she lands on an assertion; Lord Thame acting in ways his mother only thinks, survives the results of his own intractability, whereas Herbert Tring, out to experience all of life's contradictions, gets stuck like a butterfly pinned to a board. Never to the point of carrying each minute detail of feminine conversation to an hypothetical masculine counterpart, but certainly as far as maintaining the integrity of the type, the reader applies the social consciousness of these women to the absent and corresponding social consciousness of the men who are their "other" selves.

All things considered, something this chapter cannot do, Set in Authority ranges far. Not only illustrating the complexity of one nation's applying rigid morality upon another nation, when the latter faces starkly moving evidence of its own internal conflicts, the text moves easily among philosphical, sociological and political issues of the nineteenth-century to address very modern problems, not the least

of which is the antagonism at home faced by veterans and officials who have participated in unpopular wars. Writing about the painful position held by men and women in the field who believe no one at home supports or even cares about their efforts, Duncan herself cares about English and Anglo-Indian relations and shows her sympathetic approach to the Anglo-Indian situation of voluntary exile. Far less clear than her opinion on Anglo-India is the authorial point of view regarding imperialism itself and European advances in science. Analysis directed by classical dramatic structure and the function of dialogue only begins to open the mysteries of Set in Authority.

Set in Authority shows Duncan at the height of her skills. It is a big, complex and serious work. To misquote Henry James, it illustrates the figure in the carpet after the carpet has been flipped over to expose the underside; the novel functions through irony. Instead of a masculine perspective, the story is told by a feminine voice. Instead of having strong and visible protagonist and antagonist, these two men never appear in the story. Instead of offering a clear solution to a moral dilemma, the story accepts paradox as the only answer.

V. CONCLUSION

> The Intentional Fallacy is a confusion between the poem and its origins, a special case of what is known to philosophers as the Genetic Fallacy. It begins by trying to derive the standard of criticism from the psychological causes of the poem and ends in biography and relativism....The outcome of either Fallacy, the Intentional or the Affective, is that the poem itself, as an object of specifically critical judgment, tends to disappear. (Wimsatt 21)

Duncan's career as a journalist, in some respects, may act against her being respected as a novelist. In addition to twenty-two novels, Sara Jeannette Duncan has a large body of journalism to her credit. One may imagine that Duncan's dashing out columns on current affairs and hurriedly meeting deadlines probably did not allow the newswoman many moments of reflection between assignments. As a journalist, she had two bosses: the editor and the public. Perhaps an editor told her one day that only her opinionated columns sold newspapers; perhaps, on another day, he warned her that she was offending the public with her opinionated views. The point of mentioning the journalist's paradox is this: Duncan's columns only "seem" to trumpet all her ideas. She may have felt uncertainty about any number of

issues, but humility has never been known to sell papers. As a result, the simple realities of the newspaper business can present problems for critics of Duncan's novels because an examination of her columns offers a natural place to begin looking at her themes, her style and her tone. Too often Duncan's columns appear to illustrate the limitations of journalism: occasionally Duncan's diction rings with a disdainful and condescending tone; sometimes, her sentiments are patriotic in the extreme; once in a while, she contradicts herself. In the face of these deficiencies, we should remember that newspaper columns are one matter, novels another.

Tausky, not wishing to ignore what he believes to be Duncan's "artistic limitations" (Preface), makes the following claim: "...I cannot feel that Sara Jeannette Duncan really understood the drift towards a modern consciousness" (N.oE. 80). In light of his sense of Duncan's "failures of comprehension" about the nature of the "modern consciousness," Tausky suggests that only five works "can be termed successful and whole novels: An American Girl in London; The Simple Adventures of a Memsahib; His Honour, and a Lady; The Imperialist; and Cousin Cinderella" (80). As an editor and a reader well-acquainted with Duncan's journalism and novels, Tausky offers a formidably qualified opinion. Yet formal analysis of The Path of a Star and Set in

Authority demonstrates that these two novels should be added to his list. In light of their sophisticated subject matter and narrative patterns, the novels invite close reading and extended analysis. Furthermore, it remains to be seen whether A Daughter of To-Day (1895) and The Burnt Offering (1909)--two novels I believe will benefit from formal scrutiny--should be on Tausky's list too.

If a formal examination of Duncan's novels leads to a flirtation with the Intentional Fallacy, the claim must be made that, in this analysis, "causes" have not overshadowed the novels as objects of study. In trying to show the sophistication of The Path of a Star, The Imperialist and Set in Authority, I have assumed that Duncan deliberately makes artistic decisions and that her experience in India has a positive effect on her work. It may be splitting semantic hairs to insist that the deliberate act of creating fiction is not always self-conscious: no one has denied that Duncan "deliberately" wrote the novels in question, but how self-conscious were her deliberations? In other words, determining the difference between what Duncan does instinctively and what she does consciously probably constitutes an impossible task. A reader certainly can be wrong in asserting intention or self-consciousness on the part of an author, because the artist may be reluctant, or even unable, to explain the text. The

form of the text, however, is constant. If Duncan is not self-conscious about patterns in iterative and singulative telling in The Imperialist or the effect of structural irony in Set in Authority, the reality of their designs does not change.

Without dwelling on the quality or nature of Duncan's meditations, I have assumed, nevertheless, that cultural, environmental and feminine influences acting on her consciousness have modified Duncan's art. Geoffrey Strickland defends those close readers who occasionally find themselves in the position of risking an opinion about an author's intentions:

> ...I should like to set out and defend what I see as some of the inescapable presuppositions of the fact that anyone reads anything at all.
>
> [1] All that we say or think about a particular utterance or piece of writing presupposes an assumption on our part, correct or otherwise, concerning the intention of the speaker or writer.
>
> [2] Which is why we can say certain things about what we read which are true but never deny the possibility that we may be wrong.
>
> [3] But a true understanding of what is written or said does not and could not possibly imply a complete sharing of the

writer's or speaker's experience...

(Structuralism or Criticism 35)

Strickland makes the point that both writer and reader expect "intention" to be inherent in the act of communication, but, in a novel, there is often a difference between the narrator's intention and the author's. To say that the narrator of The Imperialist does not express Duncan's point of view is to presuppose some knowledge of the author's intentions. To say that India broadens Duncan's artistic vision is, once again, to presuppose some knowledge of the author's intentions. In the final analysis a reader must judge the text for what it is; however, because irony functions through our expectations being denied, the investigation of possible differences between the author and the narrator's point of view is a valid process for the reader.

Duncan moved to Calcutta with her husband, Everard Cotes, in 1891, when she was thirty. Although her maturity may account for Duncan's growth in skill and vision, Duncan wrote her best work during her time in India. Formal analysis of the novels under consideration in this thesis shows the usefulness of a close reading, especially when her journalism does not mitigate the reality of the text.

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