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MORLEY CALLAGHAN

THE EARLY NOVELS

MYTH, METAPHOR AND SYMBOL  
IN THE EARLY NOVELS OF  
MORLEY CALLAGHAN

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by

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## ABSTRACT

In the memoir That Summer in Paris, Morley Callaghan's vehemence regarding metaphor is pronounced. He is critical of writing that, in his view, examines the object in terms of some other thing and he insists upon a direct relationship between language and what is being described. Reflecting his expressed convictions, Callaghan's own writing style in the early novels is plain, at times even prosaic, seemingly stripped of shading and nuance. Callaghan's protagonists correspond to his style for they are all "ordinary" in the sense that they do not experience extremes either of wealth or poverty, heroism or ignominy, power or impotence. A close examination of the early novels reveals, however, that although his style is plain, it is far from simple and Callaghan himself uses metaphor, myth and symbol abundantly in his writing. Each of his protagonists, though "ordinary", is confronted with a profound moral dilemma whose outcome depends upon a clear, though frequently subtle perception of truth.

In each of the early novels, the significance of seemingly unimportant detail enhances the single vision of life that Callaghan presents. In the context of each novel and the context of the early work as a whole, Callaghan's vision of life is based upon the acceptance of man as he is, neither naturally innocent nor naturally evil, but dependent upon his ability to distinguish truth from falsehood in his struggle for physical and spiritual survival. The early novels span a period of nine years, from 1928 to 1937 (More Joy in Heaven, published in 1937, is excluded in this study because of length requirements since its theme is somewhat similar to Such Is My Beloved). Callaghan's growing mastery of female

characterization during this period corresponds with a decline in the influence of tangible Christian, and especially Roman Catholic symbols, such as the cathedral and its soaring spire. Without in any way diminishing the intangible values underlying the Christian faith, Callaghan emphasizes the need for individual responsibility as he probes the relationship between the recognition of truth and the survival of the contemporary human being in a materialistic, success-oriented society. By confronting myth, using symbol innovatively and employing metaphor to enhance truth and expose fraud, Callaghan's writing credo, as he sets it out in That Summer in Paris, is confirmed through the early novels.

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#### Abbreviations

- TSIP That Summer in Paris Toronto: MacMillian, 1963.
- SF Strange Fugitive New York: Schribner's, 1928.
- INO It's Never Over Toronto: MacMillian, 1930.
- NMM No Man's Meat Paris: Black Manikin Press, 1931.
- BJ A Broken Journey Toronto: MacMillian, 1932.
- MB Such Is My Beloved New York: Schribner's, 1934.
- TSIE They Shall Inherit the Earth Toronto: MacMillian, 1935.

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## INTRODUCTION

Much of Morley Callaghan's own writing credo is on record in That Summer in Paris, published in 1963. In it Callaghan is critical of what he calls, "show-off writers who use the language to evade, to skip away from the object because they could never bear to face the thing freshly for what it was in itself." (TSIP p. 19) Callaghan damns writing with a "feel or look like literature" and comes down heavily on academic criticism as a "kind of double talk; one thing always seen in terms of another thing." (TSIP p. 19) He vehemently says, "I'd be damned if the glory of literature was in the metaphor." (TSIP p. 20) He insists, "the words should be as transparent as glass." (TSIP p. 21) Yet this vehemence, to some extent at least, is a red herring; myth, symbol and metaphor do inform his writing and the memoir is no exception.

My purpose in this study is to show that in the early novels Callaghan does employ myth, metaphor and symbol abundantly but always in the service of truth. For Callaghan, to see the object as it is and to see it freshly are the two criterions of truth in writing. The first assures that truth will not degenerate into either superstition or fraud, the second demands imagination for the revelation of truth. Other aspects of Callaghan's developing style will be examined: his growing mastery of female characterization, his attention to seemingly unimportant detail and his use of 'ordinary' protagonists. A close analysis of They Shall Inherit the Earth will be undertaken while the novels preceding it will be dealt with in less detail.

If Callaghan himself uses myth, metaphor and symbol abundantly,

why then is he so vehement about the glory of literature not being in the metaphor when it clearly can be? Why is he so insistent about the "right relationship between the words and the thing or person being described." (TSIP p. 21) And if Callaghan uses the traditional devices of literature is he betraying his own writing credo? The memoir, That Summer in Paris, provides the answer to this seeming paradox. In it he is clear about his attitude to metaphor. For Callaghan the enemy is fraud. His strong abhorrence of sham and pretence is stated forcefully.

Weren't the consequences of fraudulent pretending plain to anyone who could look around? Hadn't the great slogans of the first World War become ridiculous to me before I had left high school? Wilsonian idealism. Always the flight of fancy. And Prohibition. Another fantasy. It was hilarious, a beautiful example of the all-pervading fraudulent morality; and at college it had become a social obligation to go to the boot-legger's, and a man came to have a sneaking respect for those who openly broke the law -- not for the policeman standing on a corner. (TSIP p. 20)

Callaghan looks around his world and condemns what he labels a "decorative Renaissance flight into simile." (TSIP p. 20) In It's Never Over, John Hughes tries to dodge truth in this way. Unable to cope with his friend's execution and the changed relationships resulting from it, he seeks an escape through literature. Ironically, his choice is "Tamburlaine the Great," a renaissance tale of misdirected passion and ambition. Yet John's response is not to the characters in the play -- they "hardly seemed important as long as he caught some of the author's feeling of exultation in the splendour of his own images." (INO p. 72) John is excited only by the "swing and rush of the words", the sound, not the meaning of the words themselves. Other protagonists in the

early novels make similar responses to the fraudulent propensities of words and these will be noted. They occur frequently enough to suggest that Callaghan shares with Montaigne a scorn for eloquence that "leaves it craving itself, not things."<sup>1</sup>

Published in 1963, the memoir is an entertaining recollection about expatriate writers who were living and working in Paris in 1929. It is also a myth in itself, for it retells the familiar, North American, Horatio Alger story with Callaghan himself as protagonist. A young man trained to be a lawyer, discovers through his part-time vocation as reporter for a large metropolitan daily newspaper, that he would rather write than practice law. He meets and is given encouragement by another writer who is already becoming well-known. The young Canadian is impressed but not overwhelmed. When the more famous writer goes off to Paris, the younger man sets Paris as his goal too. Soon, because he is beginning to have some small successes himself, the younger writer is able to achieve this goal. He absorbs all that the magic place "had offered to men from other countries for hundred's of years." For him too it is a symbolic "lighted place where the imagination was free." (TSIP p. 88) He re-encounters his more famous friend; he boxes with him regularly and he meets and talks to other famous writers and artists. Again he is impressed but not overawed. He practices his craft and is observant. He begins to see and hear "ripples" from beyond the "great bowl of light." (TSIP p. 88) Gradually, the young man begins to suspect that his cherished dream of being in Paris had "been only a necessary fantasy." Still holding his famous friends in high regard, he is convinced that their expatriate world involves a "flight from the pain of life, a pain they would feel more acutely at home." (TSIP p. 299)

The young author returns to his home to live and write about the "timeless process of becoming" from the only vantage his integrity allows -- his own moment in history, his own place in the universe. (TSIP p. 94-95) All story-tellers are myth-makers or myth-shapers and Callaghan has taken a legendary time and place and made it live again in the shape that he has chosen.

The memoir also functions as a metaphor for truth in which Callaghan uses the game of boxing to punch home his writing credo, to jab persistently at fraud and sham. That Summer in Paris opens with a boxing incident recalled casually by Hemingway and reported to Callaghan. Callaghan's version of the same incident is different and it comes near the end of the memoir after the reader has been carefully prepared by much detail. That detail comprises the fabric of the memoir and includes much that is not connected with boxing, but all along the way, from beginning to end, there are frequent references to boxing. Consciously or otherwise, the game of boxing establishes the insistent and positive tone of the memoir. In the pre-Paris, Toronto setting of the memoir the two young writers compare the style of Dostoevski. Callaghan says, "...it's like a forest fire. It sweeps indiscriminately over everything." Hemingway responds by referring to a middleweight boxing champion and proceeds to give a demonstration. "'Well Dostoveski writes like Harry Greb fights,' he said. 'He swarms all over you. Like this.'" (TSIP p. 32) Still before the Paris episode, another incident recalls how Hemingway had once critized a story about a prizefighter written by Callaghan. Hemingway, apparently unaware of Callaghan's familiarity with the sport, suggested that Morley Callaghan should "stick to the things he knew something about."

(TSIP p. 64) A few pages later comes a story told to Callaghan by Max Perkins about Ernest Hemingway jumping into the ring at the end of a one-sided match and knocking out the middle-weight champion of France. Callaghan finds the story a strain on his credulity but he "had noted in the beginning in the Star newsroom that Ernest had had that fatal capacity for making men want to tell fantastic tales about him."

(TSIP p. 68) When the two authors meet for the first time in Paris, Callaghan tells us that Hemingway immediately began to talk of fighters and that, "already Ernest was making me feel I had never seen a really good fighter." (TSIP p. 93) At the first of many matches in the Paris gym, Callaghan is overawed initially by the legends connected with Hemingway's boxing skills but gradually the smaller and more practiced man gains confidence:

I could see that, while he may have thought about boxing, dreamed about it, consorted with old fighters and hung around gyms, I had done more actual boxing with men who could box a little and weren't just taking exercise or fooling around. Since I could see this for myself, it didn't matter to me that he would never believe it.  
(TSIP p. 105)

The boxing matches continue regularly and, for the most part, in a friendly spirit. Yet if Callaghan was ever outboxed by Hemingway we are not told about it in this memoir; we are told that Hemingway lost his composure on two occasions and reacted in a surprising and disconcerting way.

For Callaghan there is a link between good boxing and good writing. When he discusses the "brutal mauling style" of Jack Dempsey he equates it with excellence. It is not enough to "do the thing you want to do in your own way"; Callaghan is equally insistent that one



should be excellent at it. (TSIP p. 21) The same qualities that produce a championship boxer -- practiced skill and a highly individual outlook -- enable a writer to "tell the truth cleanly" and see the object freshly for what it really is. (TSIP p. 21) Callaghan is adamant about his aim. In "An Ocean Away" he says, "I wanted a novel to have an impact as a whole -- to offer some one vision of life, giving the whole thing its own reality."<sup>2</sup> For him the novel must be more than an "entertainment," a "loosely-knit variety-show." (TSIP p. 69) He does not seek a comfortable relationship between himself and his reader. The impact of each novel is the essence of its communicative potential, so for Callaghan, success demands that his reader be at least a little jarred, that he be moved beyond his usual "groove of recognition." (TSIP p. 69) And so, throughout the memoir, boxing becomes an appropriate metaphor for revealing truth.

The principal symbol in the memoir is the city of Paris itself. Paris not only represents success, it provides the intangible aura of a mecca. The "great bowl of light" (TSIP p. 87) beckons scores of expatriate writers and artists seeking fame, fortune and inspiration. This includes the young Callaghan. For creative artists in the twenties the real or imagined magic of Paris seemed to embody some ultimate truth. Gradually, however, the young author begins to perceive that the symbol had been "only a necessary fantasy." (TSIP p. 229) Paris begins to represent a flight from truth rather than a mecca of truth.

But all that month I didn't hear any arguments about economics or politics. No one stood up and shouted about the necessity of a social conscience ... At the cafes the writers and hangers-on -- my God, now

they seem to have been nearly all hangers-on -- were more interested in the revolution of the word than the world. (TSIP p. 222)

Within the memoir Paris changes from a pure symbol of light and illumination to a "Babylonian capital" (TSIP p. 116) and Callaghan shows how his own perception of truth was influenced by his response to a symbol. He also comments on the response of the artist to the appearance of things. He says:

We are born, we live a while, and we die, and along the way the artist keeps looking at the appearance of things, call it concrete reality, the stuff of experience, or simply 'what is out there.' Now I think that for intellectuals, writers and artists, the Paris of those days had become like a giant crystal; like a crystal with many facets, and the French had a genius for turning and ever turning the crystal so the light would fall on a few facets, and then from the cafes would come the announcement. 'This is the way it is being looked at now.' Naturally the writer or painter in far-off cities is charmed and interested. (TSIP p. 115)

Callaghan admits that the world capital for writers in 1929 "did seem to be in Paris" but the "great bowl of light" whose symbolic radiance attracted the young Canadian so compellingly, gradually becomes a symbol of a different sort.

The marks of the quick and wonderful French intelligence seemed to be all around one in this city with its open beauty, its elegance, and that splendid indifference of the French citizen at the next table to your private life. And above all, in every corner of this lovely Babylonian capital was stuck the national symbol, the shrewd-eyed watchful madame at the cash register. I could see her there in black near the cafe door, reminding me of the eternal verities. (TSIP p. 116)

Unlike some of the protagonists in his early novels, Callaghan realizes

that a symbol may not always be what it seems, and that fantasy can masquerade as truth.

The protagonists in the early novels often fail to recognize the truth inherent in a particular symbol or, they allow a flawed perception of the symbol's meaning to influence their thoughts and actions. In Strange Fugitive Harry Trotter fails to recognize the truth inherent in the enduring cathedral spire and he allows Isaac Pimblett's interpretation of its meaning to influence him. Isaac tells Harry that the cathedral spire represents the "ultra-respectable class." (SF p. 57) Because its ringing carillon had once caused him to forget what he was saying in the middle of a political speech, Isaac thinks of the spire as a symbolic barrier: "It just struck me that you can't get away from it. It's right in the centre of things. I think about it, that's all." (SF p. 57)

John Hughes, in It's Never Over, allows himself to distort truth to such an extent that he is able to rationalize as a just act a murder he is planning to commit. From the windows of his room in a run-down section of the city, John looks "as far as" the cathedral down the street (INO p. 134) Lingering doubts about his planned act of violence continue to trouble him and he seeks reassurance from the Christian symbol of ultimate truth. John's view of the cathedral from his window reveals "the base of the cathedral was dark and wide and heavy, all shadowed, but the silvered steeple shone in the moonlight and the illuminated cross was bright." (INO p. 145) John is blind to the significance of the vision of the cathedral from his window. At this point in the novel he has isolated himself in his own "small, simple, orderly world" that he wants "always to be the same." (INO p. 36) What he does

not comprehend is that this world of his own making has its foundation in the "dark and wide and heavy" base of his distorted rationale created from a flawed perception of truth. Although the cathedral is only as far as the end of his street, John's imagination is unable to soar to the silvered steeple with its bright illuminated cross that represents truth. Like the shadowy base of the cathedral which is fixed in the reality of the decaying neighbourhood, John's reason is fixed in the reality of its own distorted rationale. The 'confession' he makes is a travesty and because the priest appeals to John's ego he inadvertently confirms John's conviction that "he was ready to kill a woman because it was necessary for his own salvation." (INO p. 136)

In Such Is My Beloved, the symbolic cathedral spire is the first thing Father Dowling sees as he walks along the street. The roof of the cathedral is covered with new-fallen snow and Father Dowling responds to its appearance with a "fresh full contentment." (SIMB p. 15) He has just visited two young prostitutes whom he hopes to help. Determined to treat them as he would treat any of his parishioners in need, the naïve priest never dreams that there may be a gap between the strategy of the 'ideal' Church and the strategy of the 'real' Church. The mantle of snow on the cathedral roof is only a fleeting illusion of purity. The cathedral in this novel is also located in a decaying neighbourhood and the priest can see the "dark mass of the old weather-beaten structure, hemmed in closely by office buildings and warehouses and always dirtied by city soot,..." (SIMP p. 15) For Father Dowling the spire and the Church are one, a symbol of ultimate truth. He cannot comprehend that the soot, now masked by

white snow, is a token of the 'real', that is, the Church as an imperfect and worldly institution.

The example of Michael Aikenhead in They Shall Inherit the Earth, is somewhat similar to John Hughes' dilemma in It's Never Over. Michael creates his own rationale of justice that allows the blame for an act in which he is implicated to fall on another person. Michael almost destroys his father through his persistent evasion of truth. In this novel Callaghan uses a wolf-hunt to show how seeing the object "in terms of another thing" (TSIP p. 19) can partially obscure truth. Michael's blind arrogance prevents him, until it is almost too late, from answering his own question: "If a wolf isn't just plain mean, then what among living things in God's name, is mean?" (TSIP p. 19)

The early novels confirm that Callaghan's use of symbols never contradicts his writing credo. Each use of myth, metaphor and symbol is original and each serves his conviction that the writer must "face the thing freshly for what it was in itself." (TSIP p. 19) By following his credo Callaghan always leads his reader to a fresh perception of truth.

Callaghan's first novel, Strange Fugitive, was published in 1928. It tells the story of Harry Trotter, an inarticulate, common-place man who becomes a bootlegger, then a murderer and is finally murdered himself. The time span, as in all of the early novels, is relatively brief. Harry leaves his wife Vera at the end of summer. By winter he has become an affluent bootlegger. Before summer comes again Harry is dead. Strange Fugitive does much to dispell the aura of glamour that clings to the era of prohibition and the 'twenties' speakeasy. The Toronto underworld depicted by Callaghan is unattractive and drab; the life of a bootlegger, inhuman and precarious. Harry Trotter is an unattractive protagonist whose life can be interpreted as an unsuccessful journey through a labyrinth whose centre remains obscure and hidden. Harry does not recognize that the Cathedral spire "right in the centre of things" (SF p. 57) is the true centre which could lead him to enlightenment and out of the labyrinth. The centre Harry consciously seeks is the "centre of the stage." (SF p. 110) His restless drive to be a 'big shot' leads him more deeply into the maze; to the point of no return when he becomes a murderer, to his own death when that murder is avenged.

Callaghan writes in the third person, but the centre of consciousness, for the most part, is in Harry's limited and restricted vision. The reader is able to perceive what Harry cannot. Harry is tormented by a double standard that he does not comprehend and that he is never able to resolve. His wife Vera, whose name may signify truth, represents an undefined ideal toward which Harry yearns, but

the restless quest of his ego for the "centre of the stage" leads him away from this ideal to his death.

Harry's ambivalence is established in the first sentence of the novel and it serves as an example of what Callaghan means by "the right relationship between the words and the thing or person being described." (TSIP p. 21) Callaghan says: "Harry Trotter, who had a good job as foreman in Pape's lumber-yard was determined everybody should understand he loved his wife." (SF p. 3) He does not say: "Harry Trotter, who worked in Pape's lumber-yard, loved his wife." This would be the start of a different story in which Harry's love for his wife was unequivocal and his job relatively unimportant. Instead, Harry is defined by his "good job" and his authority as foreman; what he protests strongly is not the love he has for his wife but his determination that "everybody" should understand he loves her. Harry cares more about his image than he does for Vera. In the brief chapter following the opening sentence Harry's ambivalence is emphasized. As he lies beside his sleeping wife he thinks "that he would always be in love with her" but the constriction of the bed-clothes on the hot night prevents him from dealing "more successfully with a complicated problem." (SF p. 3) When Vera awakens to continue an old argument -- that he thinks more of his job than of "anything else on earth" -- Harry is upset by some glimmer of truth in her words that eludes him. (SF p. 3) The effort of trying to sort out his "many thoughts" the following day drives Harry to work the men in the yard "savagely" and sends him to a solitary parkbench after work. With few words, all of them simple since they are an expression of Harry's consciousness, Callaghan has

set the tone for the rest of the novel. Harry's restless drive for the "centre of the stage" (SF p. 110) is never satisfied nor does he ever discover the significance of his wish to articulate the feelings he has for Vera. He lives and dies a strange fugitive from truth.

Callaghan's presence as narrator in the novel is unobtrusive but by switching nimbly back and forth from impersonal description to description of Harry's inner-most thoughts and by expressing those thoughts in colloquial language, the reader is able to share Harry's feelings and simultaneously judge him. A passage near the beginning of the novel will serve as an example. It contains a detailed description of Harry changing his clothes at the end of the work-day.

In the three-by-four compartment he had erected for himself in the corner of the warehouse he started to clean up. He got the pail from a corner and went back to the tap for water. He took off his khaki shirt, his undershirt, and, bare-bodied, dipped the soap in water, making lather for his face and rubbing well down his shoulders and hairy chest. Scooping water in his palms he splashed his face, blowing out through his mouth and his nose, and getting soap out of his eye with the thumb-joint. He stood up well-rubbed with the towel, peeled off his overalls, and kicked off his heavy boots. He remembered that tonight one of the ball teams practiced in the park near his place, and, standing in his underwear, putting on a clean shirt, wished he had time to make a place on one of the teams. The soft collar he circled with a sky-blue tie, snappy, conservative, the knot tied fastidiously. He looked squarely and seriously at his image in the jagged piece of looking-glass hanging on the wall, and wondered if Vera would want to do anything after supper that would prevent him from going over to the park. Slowly he brushed his thick hair, took a straw sailor from a nail and adjusted it at a sporty angle on his head. He handled carefully his shining, tan low shoes. He emerged from the warehouse, altogether aloof from the yard, no bum, not just a hunky boss, no cheap skate from a lumber yard. He walked confidently along the platform, the flash of his blond hair under the hat brim well cut, his tanned, high-cheekboned face free from stubble,



his stylish tweed suit with a high waistline,  
well cut and form fitting. (SF p. 7)

The first five sentences describe Harry's fastidious care in washing up after work. In the next sentence we enter Harry's wistful thoughts. Then Callaghan reverts to impersonal description again but we are given much detail concerning Harry's tie including that it is "snappy." Then once again we share Harry's thoughts as Vera enters his mind almost like a nagging conscience. In the next two sentences we go back to impersonal description again as Harry dons shoes and hat. The last two sentences in the paragraph describe Harry's feelings and appearance as he leaves the lumber-yard, the first containing three colloquial words -- "bum," "hunky boss" and "cheap skate" -- words that Harry himself would use. The last sentence contains no colloquial words and the reader sees Harry for what he is, an egotistical dandy whose confidence resides not in himself, but in his stylish appearance. The effect has been carefully built up throughout the entire passage.

The success of Strange Fugitive depends upon its unity, or, to use Callaghan's words, its "impact as a whole."<sup>3</sup> All of the imagery in the novel, including the symbolic Cathedral spire "right in the centre of things" (SF p. 57) complements, almost relentlessly, the implicit metaphor of a man lost in a maze. This first novel also reveals a particular quality that identifies Callaghan's writing, a subtle exploitation of detail that creates successive revelations in the mind of the reader. The effect of any one of these small details may seem to be minimal but because each is an integral part of a carefully wrought, encompassing pattern, each has more significance than may be immediately obvious. A typical example is the exploitation of

fruit imagery in Strange Fugitive and the way Callaghan links it to events in Harry's life. Fruit can signify immortality<sup>4</sup> and in this novel the symbolism works as much from the strategic time and place of its three occurrences as from the image itself. It first appears early in the novel, right at the end of a chapter in which Harry has made a clandestine visit to Julie Roberts. The description of Julie is significant for what it says about Harry rather than Julie herself. "Julie wasn't pretty, a big slow woman, but he loved the lines of her face, and had the feeling of a small boy conscious of the presence of a bold grown woman." (SF p. 16) Julie's ample and authoritative presence is, in this instance, comforting to Harry because he has not outgrown a childish dependence on his mother's memory. Between the end of his visit to Julie and his return to Vera, Harry literally and figuratively walks a crooked path home. Turning into and off the path in Queen's Park, at one moment in the shadows and the next emerging into "rays of white light", Harry's thoughts of other women he has known are as circuitous as the path he takes. (SF pp. 18-19) Then, on the corner near his home Harry notices, "the light in the window shining on pyramids of oranges, plums and rosy apples." (SF p. 19) Harry enters the store and buys some plums, presumably to take to Vera. Fruit appears again in the novel immediately after Harry has been fired for the brutal bullying of an employee under his charge. As he rides homeward in a street-car, "many thoughts came to him but he knew he was really thinking of Vera." (SF p. 36) In front of him sits a woman with a large basket of fruit. Suddenly Harry is assailed by an elusive scent that reminds him of the "smell of funerals." (SF p. 36) Harry's thoughts wing back to his mother's funeral and he tries, unsuccessfully,

to evoke her image. He feels sorry for himself and, "slightly bewildered, he wished his mother were alive, so he could go home to her." (SF p. 36) The lady with the fruit gets off the streetcar, but Harry postpones the inevitable confrontation with Vera by travelling past his own stop. The final appearance of fruit occurs on the day that Harry murders his rival Consantino. In this instance, as in the first, there is a fruit store on the corner. There are also fruit stands on the sidewalk. (SF p. 155) Unlike the first time Harry is not feeling "fairly happy" (SF p. 19), nor is there any mention of Vera, but close by, "two kids were playing catch in the lane, coaxing summer." (SF p. 155) Into this peaceful scene Harry and his driver Eddie bring mayhem and murder. No further mention is made of the fruit on stands on the sidewalk but the scene describes women screaming, people running and tires screeching as Harry fires a second round of shots into the already felled body of Consantino. The image of collapsed stands and tumbling fruit comes readily to mind. On this occasion also, Harry pays a visit to Julie Roberts. Seeking comfort to assuage his troubled uneasiness after the murder, Harry hopes Julie will provide it. This time, however, Julie's size is threatening, not comforting.

'What the hell,' he thought, 'what the hell. Why did I ever go to see Julie.' Back there on the couch she sat, huge and immovable, encased in steel bands, but walking along toward Yonge Street lights, he was sorry to remember he had once thought her so mysteriously desirable, and though all feeling for her had gone, old thoughts of her weren't very comforting (SF p. 161)

The three images serve as markers in Harry's journey into the labyrinth. At the beginning of the novel he is still attracted by the orderly rows of shining fruit and he partakes in spite of his confused wanderings

away from the 'ideal' or 'centre.' As his actions take him deeper into the maze the token of immortality briefly appears again but inextricably mixed with it is the whiff of Harry's own mortality. By the time Harry commits murder the neat rows of fruit are mere landmarks signifying his arrival at the place of execution and they are absorbed into the landscape of chaos that accompanies the murder and previews Harry's own death. Callaghan has taken the merest detail and expanded it into something more than itself through its associations.

More than any image in the novel, the streets of the city serve as metaphor for Harry's confused state and reinforce the concept of a man lost in a labyrinth. On one occasion, already noted briefly in connection with Callaghan's exploitation of the fruit imagery, Harry travels through Queen's Park in the moonlight, passes Hart House, follows "the road south in the shadows" and eventually takes a street-car "going west". (SF pp. 18-19) As he walks Harry recalls various women he has known and his thoughts wander from Julie, whom he has just left, to Grace, back to Julie again and then to Vera. Changing directions as well as changing patterns of light and darkness, reflect his changing thoughts.

The street is also setting for a variety of 'truths', one of which Harry accepts. As he strolls down Yonge Street he can hear the loud harangues of several proselytising groups. Harry hears the Salvation Army, the communists, anti-communists, an Agnostic Association and others, each one directing its particular 'truth' to whatever audience can be mustered. (SF p. 54) Unimpressed, Harry continues to stroll along until he encounters Isaac Pimblett and the two men continue to walk

together until they are opposite the Cathedral. The spire is illuminated by the moonlight and its carillon rings out. To Isaac the Cathedral represents a barrier of the "ultra-respectable class" (SF p. 57) that he blames for his lack of success. The bells in the spire had once made him forget what he was saying in the middle of a political speech and he says to Harry, "you can't get away from it. It's right in the centre of things. I think too much about it, that's all." (SF p. 57) Harry is unaware that this moment is supremely ironic. He has been led, almost unwittingly, to the true centre. The shining spire "right in the centre of things" is the tangible symbol of the ideal toward which Harry yearns. Yet because he is influenced by Isaac's interpretation of the spire's significance, Harry does not embrace its truth and so loses his chance to escape from the labyrinth he is in.

Callaghan's choice of Isaac Pimblett to introduce the important cathedral symbol in Strange Fugitive is deliberately ironic. As if to emphasize the perverse quality in human nature that permits an unperceived significance to elude recognition, Callaghan leads his protagonist to truth with a patently false prophet for guide. Unlike his biblical namesake, this Isaac is neither blessed nor respected among his own people. He is described as a "white-haired old man, who mumbled to himself during speeches." (SF p. 48) He is disgruntled, "happy to be an outsider" with vague plans to create a new political force that come to nothing. Even his fellow-members at the Labour temple are reluctant to allow Pimblett time at the podium. (SF p. 54) Harry, however, is impressed by Isaac. The way Isaac "snapped out big words excited Harry." He "was interested in the lively way speakers

talked of direct action, solidarity, mass action, good strong words that aroused him." (SF p. 48) The text tells us Harry is not interested in politics "but the words sounded good and made him feel alone and attacked. After the speech he felt aggressive." (SF p. 49) Harry is so bewitched by the sound of Isaac's words he feels he is "determinedly going his own way" (SF p. 49) but Harry is a victim of what Callaghan labels the "all-pervading fraudulent morality." (TSIP p. 20) Harry allows himself to be deceived by Isaac Pimblett's bombast, which is, in Strange Fugitive, the equivalent of a "decorative Renaissance flight into simile." (TSIP p. 20) To Harry, Isaac's stirring words 'sound' as if they were truth.

Isaac is the first of a representative type found in many of Callaghan's novels. These are usually minor characters whose words are either meaningless or only partly true. Their influence on the protagonist is usually temporary. Charlie Stewart in Such is My Beloved fits into this category. Michael Aikenhead's acquaintances with whom he gossips in Hilton's lunch-room are also representatives. As a group they culminate in the Earbender's Club<sup>5</sup> in The Loved and the Lost. Isaac's influence in Strange Fugitive is more lasting because his fierce words have already conditioned Harry by the time he confronts the symbol of truth in the novel, the enduring Cathedral spire. When Isaac rejects Harry because he is married, Harry associates Isaac's interpretation of the Cathedral's influence with his deteriorating relationship with Vera. He compares Vera with Anna, who will become his mistress.

He never felt like quarelling with Anna. Everything went smoothly, loosely, good-naturedly, his way.  
Vera was narrow, tight, too often holding herself in.

Anna let herself go easily, lots of life in her. She was a big husky girl, loving a good sprawly time. She never expected anything and you didn't need even to think about her unless you wanted to. It was easy to think of her, nice thoughts, only Vera was bothering him again. She was always with him. Maybe that was what Isaac had meant. She was with him day and night. Everytime he wanted to do anything important he thought of Vera and what she would say about it. (SF p. 61)

Yet Harry's strangely tormenting relationship with Vera is consistent with his wish to articulate the feeling he has for her. His need to share and affirm his own selfhood in terms of a transcendent ideal is expressed in his words to Vera after a quarrel.

Then he was sorry he had provoked her and wanted to love her, for he couldn't think of her changing her life and becoming strange to him. He wanted to be sure of her at least, he said. Her ankles and hands and hair were always there for him, something unchanging, and feeling lonely, he said that everything he wanted, everything that pleased him, the strength of life, and wind, and trees, and streets deserted in the night were all inside her. It took a long while to tell it to her and at times he was embarassed for she cried after the quarrel, but he fumbled for words and she seemed to become more important to him. He could not express his feelings satisfactorily but he felt at all costs he must keep her. (SF p. 50)

Harry does not keep Vera. His other longing, his drive for the "centre of the stage" (SF p. 110), leads him away from her and allows him to substitute the amoral Anna. Yet Harry remains tormented. He vows never to mention Vera's name again and then feels "he had lost all his identity." (SF p. 114) He continues to walk through city streets, trying to overcome the restlessness that torments him. On one of these walks he discovers that the Cathedral has burned but its charred spire remains. The bells of its enduring carillon ring out, ironically proving Isaac's words: "you can't get away from it." (SF p. 57)

The sound of the bells surprised and aroused him again and walking up the street his thoughts flowed rapidly, the old thoughts of Vera he had been trying to avoid. (SF p. 115)

Charred, but still standing, the symbolic spire reflects Harry's deepening involvement in criminal activities. After he murders Consantino the Cathedral spire does not appear again in the novel and a tombstone takes the place of the spire as a symbol of "something unchanging."

(SF p. 50) The symbol of death replaces the symbol of life everlasting.

Unlike the Cathedral spire whose influence Harry tries to escape, the tombstone impresses him with its "dignity and strength." (SF p. 169)

Harry's untutored ego is still driving him and the lesson of Consantino's funeral is lost on him except for a brief moment at the cemetery when "the whole world seemed to become quietly unimportant and he felt sad and sorry for Consantino and himself." (SF p. 165) Yet Harry is still jealous of Consantino's lavish funeral and he longs "to surround himself with people who would respect him and look up to him, more influential and stronger than Consantino, himself the centre of a crowd...." (SF p. 165)

The Cathedral spire, whose bells were a reminder of Vera and the 'ideal' whose significance he only dimly perceived, is now replaced by "one huge, uncut granite cross, towering over smaller stones." (SF p. 169) It becomes the inspiration for two enterprises that are the last events of Harry's life. He makes a sentimental journey back to the village of his childhood and here he makes arrangements for an ostentatious monument to be placed on the undistinguished graves of his parents. Harry's uneasy psyche is soothed by this gesture. He feels "content from having done something that had been absolutely



necessary for his own good." (SF pp. 178-179) Still under the illusion that he is "determinedly going his own way," (SF p. 49) Harry is unable to recognize the symbolic reburial of his parents for what it is, a vain gesture of appeasement toward his guilt and vanity. More deeply trapped than ever in the labyrinth of his conflicting drives, Harry even convinces himself that he is "going to fix it up with Vera." (SF p. 178)

An extravagant party, inspired by an extravagant funeral, is Harry's tribute to himself, the visible sign that he has "the centre of the stage." It is, however, more like an ironic wake, for Harry is not permitted to usurp a dominant position in the bootlegging hierarchy. In an incident that duplicates the murder he has committed, Harry is gunned down in the street and killed.

Callaghan's subtle manipulation of the reader through his narrative technique, is one way in which the reader sees what Harry does not. Just as effective, and a vital part of the total impact is Callaghan's use of irony. It infiltrates much of the imagery and emphasizes the Christian/Platonic paradox between the ideal and the real which lies at the heart of the novel. The streets of Toronto which serve as a metaphorical maze from which Harry never escapes also lead him to the true centre which he fails to recognize. Other images employed by Callaghan, and which support the central paradox, include mirrors, games and wheels.

At successive intervals in the novel, four glimpses in a mirror reflect Harry's moral decline. Harry looks at himself with satisfaction in the cracked mirror at the lumber-yard. The image confirms for Harry his superiority over the office workers: "he was like them only better

and stronger, neat as a pin, but could smash them if he wanted to. He carried no lunch-pail, and they knew it." (SF p. 8) The second image in a mirror that Harry confronts looks out at him after he has been fired. Harry is afraid his neighbours will realize "he was no longer of any importance" so he dresses with care each morning, "standing before the mirror, shaving, pausing a long time, his thoughts drifting." (SF p. 46) Just as Harry wants "everybody" to understand he loved his wife, Harry wants "everybody" to understand he is important. The image he wishes to project is not the image of his self but the image of his ego. The third time Harry looks at himself in a mirror is just after he has murdered Consantino. "He went into his own room and looked at himself in the mirror as if not accustomed to seeing his own image." (SF p. 163) Harry is reluctant to confront the image of a murderer. Harry's last look in a mirror, shortly before he is killed, is as close as he will come to a recognition that his drive for the "centre of the stage" has been a false quest. At the lavish party he has planned as a tribute to himself, Harry catches a glimpse of himself in a long mirror. His first impulse is to wave and say to his image, "you're there kid." Suddenly, he feels alone in the huge ballroom: "for the moment, the idea, the party, the food seemed unimportant, and he wondered how it had come that he was standing there looking at himself in the mirror." (SF p. 179)

The game as a metaphor of life is an old idea. Just as he used the game of boxing in That Summer in Paris to reveal certain truths about the craft of writing, Callaghan uses three games in Strange Fugitive to reveal different aspects of Harry's personality. After Harry is fired he plays checkers compulsively. He plays, not for

the satisfaction of trying to win through skill, but for the sole satisfaction of beating his opponent. He cajoles his unwilling friends into playing and he forces his wife to play. When he beats Vera badly he gets "a good deal of satisfaction out of it." (SF p. 68) While he plays Harry thinks of the checker-board as:

...his own life and the life around him, his interest reaching a high pitch until it became for him no longer a game of checkers. He had the issue, the opposition, in the hollow of his hand. He felt fine. (SF p. 62)

For Harry the checker-board is like the stage that has only room for one player.

A baseball game in Strange Fugitive advances the plot and reveals more about Harry. When he watches his old team practice it is not the game itself that makes an impression on Harry but the nostalgia he feels for the lost companionship of the locker-room. As he observes two players picking up girls after the game he feels "discontented, anxious for some interesting experience and suddenly decided to go and see Julie Roberts." (SF p. 13) Harry's uneasy feelings frequently lead him to other women, even to darkened theatres where he can rub knees with unknown women.

He didn't want to know the woman. He never even tried to see her face...His knee rubbed against her dress and his thoughts raced eagerly. He was almost disinterested as far as any particular woman was concerned. (SF p. 48)

Nowhere more than in his relationship with women does Harry's divided psyche exhibit the stress of his unconscious struggle between the real and the ideal. Harry's restless drive for power and freedom from restraint is stimulated when he observes the baseball players picking up

girls. The tableau signifies masculine freedom, the very thing Harry feels he has forfeited through marriage to Vera. Yet Harry yearns to be a part of "something unchanging", the unarticulated ideal that Vera represents and for which the Cathedral spire is the tangible symbol. Harry is also strongly influenced by the memory of his mother. He tries, unsuccessfully, to interest Vera in anecdotes of her life, and later, after he has left Vera, he fantasizes a vision of Vera and his mother, "each one coming to him in turn, assuring him of splendid qualities in the other." (SF p. 176) The restless feelings that are triggered as Harry watches the ball-players stroll away from the girls lead him away from Vera and constraint, to Julie and freedom, yet ironically, Julie's attraction for Harry resides in her comforting size and her boldly authoritative presence, qualities associated with Harry's mother.

A hockey game reveals another aspect of Harry's divided self. After he has left Vera and established himself as a successful bootlegger, Harry attends a hockey game alone and at first he enjoys it in typical fashion. He takes the centre of the stage by belligerently cheering the visiting team but when a critical remark from a nearby spectator is directed to him, Harry's thoughts are diverted from the game and back to a childhood incident. The pattern of coloured sweaters on the ice no longer holds his attention, but dissolves instead, into the landscape of his own uneasy recollection. The incident Harry remembers involves his mother's reaction, and his concern over her reaction, to a hockey injury sustained as a child.

Sweat was on his forehead now, for he had been drawn back into that afternoon and suddenly had the feeling he should get up, leave the arena, and go home and

see his mother. Leaning back, he was only pretending to watch coloured sweaters moving on the ice. Really he was experiencing the uneasy restiveness that had been bothering him whenever he thought of his mother. Thinking of her he was happy but nervous, then a little sad and eager to do something that always eluded him when he thought too hard about it. (SF p. 135)

Thoughts of his mother, like thoughts of Vera, tantalize Harry with something he can neither define nor confront.

Irony attends another image in Strange Fugitive because of the way Callaghan exploits it. After Harry guns down his rival he is comforted by the sound of car wheels. "He listened intently, waiting to hear the wheels, and heard a purring sound and felt better." (SF p. 156-157) Unaware that his own fate will be identical, Harry is blind to the ominous menace in their relentless turning. His own life ends as he watches the spinning circles of car wheels overtake him. "He saw the wheels of the car going round and round, and the car got bigger. The wheels went round slowly and he was dead." (SF p. 214)

If there is a weakness in this first novel, some might consider it to be in the portrayal of the women. Vera's shallow notion of respectability and Anna's rampant promiscuity make neither a totally convincing portrait. Both are thinly drawn but since they are seen largely through Harry's limited vision, their somewhat shallow portrayal is not out of place. It is Harry's notion of wife, mistress, mother and whether his perception leads him toward or away from the 'ideal' that is the critical factor. His own moral ambiguity allows him to see the amoral Anna as straightforward. "She had absolutely no idea of morals, but was straightforward, and he couldn't imagine her playing him a dirty trick... although he didn't like the cheerful way she talked about other

fellows who had loved her." (SF p. 45) Harry dimly perceives truth: "he went on thinking of Anna, though she wasn't good enough to hold a candle for his wife" (SF p. 29), but he always falls back on sham and fraudulent pretending.

Two minor characters who only appear briefly in the first part of the novel and then disappear, are personifications of sham and pretense. Neighbours of the Trotters, they impress Vera because Stan Farrel, a lawyer, is a 'professional.' They are a despicable couple who practice one-upmanship on each other by exploiting each other's pet dogs. Pekinese and bull-dog are barely disguised parodies of their owners.

The two dogs quarrelled, so he tried to persuade his wife to get rid of the Pekinese, and when she refused, threatened to let his bitch tear up the little beast next time there was trouble. Stan was nasty to the Pekinese whenever possible, and once tried to coax Harry to take it away and drown it. Mrs. Farrel, hearing of it, insisted she would get even. The bitch was in heat and Stan kept it carefully in the backyard ...One morning, after Stan had gone to work, Mrs. Farrell let the bitch out in the back yard. (SF p. 5)

Stan boasts about his literary pretensions, "I've always been fond of the company of bookish people and artists", and brags about reading Montaigne's "Essays." (SF p. 22) Stan's real propensity is toward a clandestine drink in a back office after business hours. (SF pp. 23-24)

Jimmie Nash, Harry's partner who actually does enjoy reading, represents a threat to Harry until Harry discovers what he considers to be Jimmie's weakness -- a lack of good taste in haberdashery and an absolute dependence on Harry to "carry out the simplest plans." (SF p. 106) Harry, inarticulate and unequipped with the necessary

knowledge to find the true centre, chooses a book-store as a front for his illegal operation. This must be seen as a very wry thrust indeed by Harry Trotter's creator, Morley Callaghan.

Harry Trotter is the first of Callaghan's ordinary protagonists. They are ordinary in the sense that, if they do not have immense wealth, talent or power, neither are they severely handicapped mentally or physically and no special feats of bravery or endurance are required of them. It is within this range that Callaghan chooses his protagonists and within it there is scope enough for his imagination to grasp the limitations and the possibilities of ordinary human beings. In this novel the protagonist's limitations define his life and create his dilemma. In spite of this, his possibilities are not quite stifled. For Harry Trotter is individual enough to dare and, when he finally realizes that the game is over and his position is untenable, he neither whines nor runs. He hesitates momentarily, but, in the end, he stubbornly proceeds to meet his fate. He unlocks the door and goes out into the street. This time he knows where he is going.

## Chapter II

### It's Never Over



Callaghan's second novel, published in 1930, is the author's response to one of the fundamental issues of mankind: war. The response is a highly individual one and is consistent with the author's determination not to succumb to the "consequences of fraudulent pretending." (TSIP p. 20) There are no stirring battles, no brave deeds, no heroes in It's Never Over. Two executions take the place of battles, brave deeds are replaced by moral disintegration and the protagonist, John Hughes, allows his narrow interpretation of pattern and order to obscure truth. By leading the reader to a consideration of execution, betrayal, revenge and murder in order to confront the individual as well as the social implications of war, Callaghan shows that they are not easily separated.

The execution of Fred Thompson at the beginning of the novel is the event around which all other events in the novel coalesce. Execution becomes a symbol for war and Fred, its universal victim. The subject of the novel is the continuing influence of the execution on three friends who were all close to the victim. These three are the 'wounded' and they represent an almost Brechtian-like mankind. Callaghan has written a novel in which the setting, a peaceful Canadian city, is also a psychic wasteland for the human folly that constitutes the action. Setting and action combine to make the entire novel function as metaphor for war.

An underlying theme of futility and despair permeates It's Never Over. The vision of life presented is subjective, turning inward upon itself, arriving nowhere. The novel spans the six cold

months of autumn and winter, ending as it begins, with a street-car journey. There is no resolution, no promise of spring to come. John Hughes' last words are lost in the harshness of the wind: "It was such a cold wind it was more important Lillian should not miss the car than they should go on talking." (INO p. 153) The sense of inevitability implied by the prophetic title finds an echo in W.H. Auden's poem, "September 1, 1939", written on the eve of the second World War, especially in the following lines:

The enlightenment driven away,  
The habit-forming pain,  
Mismanagement and grief:  
We must suffer them all again.<sup>6</sup>

Yet, in spite of the implication of its title, Callaghan's unusual war novel is his way of showing "an affirmative flame."<sup>7</sup> He compels the reader to consider why "it's never over" through the tableau of a close relationship between three people in which love becomes hatred and the viewpoint of each individual is subjective. No one in the novel, with the possible exception of Paul Ross, a minor but important character, is able to see the object "freshly for what was in itself." (TSIP p. 19) No one can distinguish truth from falsehood.

Callaghan connects his story to the war in two ways. First, through an evocative use of imagery, he creates a mood and atmosphere that is a constant reminder of the war and of physical and spiritual death. Second, through the technique of recall, Fred's war-time experiences are given a sense of immediacy by relating them to the present action of the novel. Callaghan juxtaposes two very different men: Fred, the man of impulse and John, who tries to isolate himself in a "small, simple, orderly world" that he wants, "always to be the

same." (INO p. 36) When the circumstances of the second execution are recalled by Paul Ross they prompt John Hughes to ask a universal question: "what would you have done?" (INO p. 133) Ironically, John criticizes Fred's action but he allows his own intellect to become a destructive element for justifying impulse.

Since the execution of Fred Thompson is the event that shapes and modifies all other events in the novel, its significance is stressed in every possible way. Its influence has already altered the relationships of the three friends before the novel commences. John Hughes' fiancée had been the victim's sister Isabelle but when the novel opens John and Lillian are lovers. Lillian's developing romance with Fred has ended with his arrest and the arrest has also ended, apparently, the romance between Isabelle and John. All of the present action of the novel takes place within the narrow boundary of a few city blocks. Within this restricted setting the execution is carried out in a prison located near a large park. The reader is brought back to the scene of execution again and again, either directly, through the development of the story, or, indirectly, through associative imagery. In the opening pages of the novel Callaghan's subtle exploitation of colour creates a memorable picture of the execution site. The reader sees it through John Hughes' eyes as he gets off the street-car in order to join the crowd that is forming outside the prison on the eve of Fred's execution. The outline of a white face "pressed against the bars" (INO p. 3) looks down on the civilized activities in progress in the park surrounding the prison. Green, the colour of growth and civilized lawns, is accented by a small splash of red, the colour of blood,

sacrifice and war, that is featured in the bandeaux of two girls playing tennis. From his cell window Fred is able to look down at the "greenest, tightly-clipped grass" of bowling green and tennis court. (INO p. 1) As the tennis players leave their game and climb the hill to stare at the man in the death cell, the following description is given: "The white shirts and trousers of the men looked very nice moving on the green hill." (INO p. 2) The understated, almost banal description is effective because it provides maximum contrast with the horror of the impending execution and the "soggy ground, heel-marked and trampled" recalls the muddy trenches of the war. (INO p. 3)

The colours and the texture of the opening scene are repeated on the morning of the execution. From his window John can see "tilted surfaces of green and crimson and pearly gray and brown" reflected on surrounding rooftops. In the garden below, "leaves on the tall stems of the hollyhocks by the red fence dropped damply..." (INO p. 10) The colour dichotomy is repeated again as he tries to banish the event from his mind. John sits on the grass, "thick and green" as he waits for Lillian in front of the cathedral. He is comforted by the familiar pattern of "all the usual downtown noises." "There were no strange, sharp noises." (INO p. 13) But the colours of mud and blood are innocuously present. John glances across the street at the "ochre front of a store and the red side of a bread wagon...." (INO p. 13) When he and Lillian take a walk together that is a repetition of one taken before with Fred, they stroll along an abandoned railway line. The rusty tracks and the old tires "were almost covered by earth and grass... It was middle October and leaves that had not fallen were red and brown, and on the hill trees were patches of green and blotches of brown,

and beautiful red leaves." (INO p. 53) The disintegrating tracks are a melancholy reminder of something past but not finished. Callaghan skillfully uses unobtrusive detail to construct a complex pattern of images and ideas in the mind of the reader. Whether it is a tableau of crowd behaviour, the repetition of colours, innocent words in a dialogue revealing weakness, or sounds contrasted, "everything," as George Woodcock has pointed out, "means something more than itself."<sup>8</sup> The opening scene uses understated contrast to create a dichotomy between the savage and the civilized. When darkness falls the same scene is repeated, like a variation on a theme; the effect is heightened and the plot developed. Contrast is used again but, instead of colours, lights and sounds are employed. As darkness disperses the crowd and obliterates the prison from his view, John Hughes takes comfort from the familiar pattern of city lights and night sounds "belonging with the pattern,...." (INO p. 7) Father Mason, who is Fred's parish priest, has joined John and the two men sit quietly talking in the park. Night has conferred a veneer of tranquillity upon the site but there is one discordant note. Animals crying out in the nearby zoo close to the prison, are an unwelcome reminder of the caged prisoners nearby. Mason expresses his concern over Isabelle and asks John, "Didn't she used to go around with you?" (INO p. 7) John's unconvincing answer reveals the first hint of moral cowardice that characterizes his nature. "We thought we felt that way, but six months ago we forgot all about it, after Fred was arrested. She thought she ought to lose everything. It was kind of hard. It was better for both of us." (INO p. 7) Callaghan's introduction of the pattern of familiar sounds at this point in the novel is significant because it reinforces the image

of a man whose longing to remain in a "small, simple, orderly world" motivates all his actions. John's vocation is singing but the novel subsequently reveals that he hears "only the sounds" of music. His personal response to the meaning "beyond the melody or the rhythm" is never mentioned in the novel. (INO p. 48) However, his notion of the importance of his career is revealed in the following description:

He walked erectly, leaning back on his heels, raised with a cork insole to add an inch to his height, because his music teacher had said that a man with such a good bass voice ought to be a little taller. (INO p. 12)

Callaghan's opening pages are remarkable for the number of issues that have been raised and their relationship to the larger issue of the war. Hints of betrayal and cowardice have been conveyed through dialogue. Through contrast, Callaghan shows savagery flourishing in the midst of civilized activity. By relating external patterns of sound and light to John Hughes' personality, Callaghan introduces the paradox between impulse and intellect which is an underlying issue in the novel. As well, the opening scene contributes to the unity of the novel since aspects and details such as the perspective of hill and lowland, the repetition of colours, the prominence of the cell window, are repeated throughout the novel. Some of these will be noted.

At the beginning of the novel, John Hughes, confronted by the horror of his friend's impending execution, tries to become an organic part of the mob that has gathered at the foot of the prison. For the prisoner behind the bars of the cell window, "the eager movements, the faces lifted up to him and the small cheer were movements and rhythm in a brief new world, important in every detail because he had an

immediate relation with everything in it." (INO p. 3) Wishing to become, if only for a moment, a part of this "brief new world", John tentatively reaches out to another human being in the mob, but his gesture is misunderstood and rebuffed.

Timidly, John reached out his hand, hardly touching the thin man on the arm. 'What's the matter with you' the man said glaring at him. The bearded jaw moved abruptly three times, the man blinked his eyes rapidly, again concentrating on the cell window, and John was no longer anxious to feel all the eager emotion of the crowd. (INO p. 4)

Only once in the novel is John's wish to sing connected with Fred's admonition to consider "himself as an unimportant part of the life around him." (INO p. 54) As he withdraws from the crowd slowly he "was angry at the ones who had started to sing a song everybody used to sing in war time. He, too, wanted to sing." The rest of the novel gradually reveals what happens to this man who, from this point on, denies his spontaneous instincts and finally allows his intellect to justify murder. George Woodcock has commented on the subtle and effective way Callaghan links images through association in It's Never Over. He compares the Imagist "quasi-metaphorical use of imagery" to Callaghan's employment of imagery in this novel and says: "the very absence of specific links, like those which are made in a simile, make images of this kind productive of a rich overgrowth of association."<sup>9</sup> A connection is made between the fading flowers in the Thompson garden, Isabelle's appearance and the mood evoked by Fred's funeral. The "withered" flowers "dry and dead against the fence" are reflected in Isabelle's appearance and dress.

Since she had become so much thinner her nose now was almost too large for her face, and her forehead and chin were too prominent. (INO p. 29)

Isabelle's "black crepe dress" has "no movement under it." (INO p. 29)

The decaying flowers in the garden and Isabelle's wasted and cadaverous appearance are linked to the description of the funeral:

In the last days of September, on the damp, cold day with a few drops of rain falling, the wind blew the last leaves of the trees on the hill, scattering them over the neatly-trimmed lawns of the plots. The leaves blew all over the slope and the drier leaves were carried farther away over the flatland and against the vaults. (INO p. 23)

In a similar manner, although the Crucifixion with its twin symbolism of sacrifice and betrayal is never mentioned directly by Callaghan, the image is evoked through the linkage between the place of execution, a hill dominating the landscape to which place the reader is brought back again and again, and the idea of Fred as both victim and sacrifice.

One image that is prominently featured in the opening scene is the cell window overlooking the park below. From behind its bars Fred looks down at the crowd and the crowd, in turn, focuses its attention on the "pale blotch" pressed against the window. (INO p. 3) Like a symbolic eye that can only see what is reflected from itself, the cell window becomes an emblem of spiritual imprisonment. Numerous views from windows and glances towards them are a reminder of the emblematic cell.

As he passes the prison on his way to work the day of the execution, John presses his face against the window of the street-car to stare at the site. (INO p. 12) In his room at the Errington home John sits by the window, "his nose pressed against the glass." (INO p. 36) His view reflects the "small, simple, orderly world" he wants "always to be the same." (INO p. 36) The middle-class community intent



upon its small concerns appeals to John, not for its intrinsic worth but because he is insulated from it, involved only in its pleasant fringes. His room at the Erringtons is a comfortable prison from which he emerges to practice his vocation and to which he returns, self-satisfied, at the end of his day. In three paragraphs which describe a day in his life, each ends with a sentence which shows his removal from life. In the morning, after shaving and dressing, John practices scales on the Errington's piano. "No one was in the house, everything was the way he wanted it to be." (INO p. 37) In the afternoon John plays tennis with Lillian and then watches her play with another girl. He watches the shape of her head and the happy expression on her face, "as though she were a stranger and he was admiring her for the first time." (INO p. 37) At night John takes his singing lesson and, after the lesson, he shares tea and gossip with the teacher and his wife, "... the three of them talking excitedly, gossiping, and disparaging all the other singers in the city and their instructors till it was time for John to leave and walk home." (INO p. 36)

John and Lillian look out of her apartment window just before John makes love to Lillian for the first time. The view is restricted and the colours red and brown appear again.

It was a new street and a vacant lot with trees was between the apartment-house and the next house. The hedges were turning brown, and two small birds were darting at them, rising and darting further along. A little sunlight glinted on the humming bird's small bodies, brilliant-breasted, as they pivoted in the air, almost hovering in one spot, tumbling and darting into the hedge again. (INO p. 47)

When Isabelle visits John at his room she looks out of his window at the reflected light from the street-lamp shining steadily on the cold

quiet street. She recalls a more macabre view from her own window:

It's too late in the year now, but a month or so ago  
I used to watch the street light not far away from  
my upstairs window and for a long time I could faintly  
see the insects crawling on the white glass shade. I  
used to have to keep looking hard. (INO p. 75)

Lillian glances from the window of John's room in the run-down neighbourhood to which he moves when Isabelle's clandestine visit forces him from his "small, simple, orderly world." Not only is there nothing to see but the sound of steel on steel is an emphatic confirmation of their altered circumstances and a relentless omen of their doomed friendship.

Lazily she was looking out the window, no one was on the street. Some one was hammering, steel on steel, in the garage down the lane. There was nothing outside to interest her. She was not trying to suggest, by her lack of strong feeling, that she had lost some of her love for him, only there was hardly any emotional intensity behind her words. (INO p. 90)

Finally, there is John's view of the cathedral as he looks down the street from his window:

The base of the cathedral was dark and wide and heavy, all shadowed, but the silvered steeple shone in the moonlight and the illuminated cross was bright... Looking out, he felt vaguely that something ought to occur, so it would not be necessary to go on with his plan, and he was weaker than he had been all day. Then, looking at the base of the cathedral, he thought it would be quite reasonable to go over there, inside the church. (INO p. 134)

John does "go over there" but his mind does not make the imaginative leap to the shining spire. He responds only to the base, "dark and wide and heavy, all shadowed...." (INO p. 134) All of the glances from windows are reminiscent of the first, imprisoned glance of Fred

Thompson from his cell window; restricted, subjective, reflecting the spiritual imprisonment of the viewer.

John Hughes' limited response to music finds an echo in his response to literature. On the night before the execution his troubled thoughts lead him to remember "days when he thought Isabelle Thompson beautiful." (INO p. 9) To take his mind off Isabelle and the execution, John tries to lose himself in Synge's "Shadow of the Glen". He is unaware of the irony of his choice since Nora is much like Isabelle, a trapped and bitter figure who is, nevertheless, not afraid to flout conventional social attitudes. After her brother's execution Isabelle engages in a succession of degrading love affairs. Convinced of her notoriety as the sister of a condemned criminal, she spitefully revenges the loss of both brother and lover through a desperate promiscuity. Her behaviour culminates in a unannounced visit to John's room at the Erringtons. There is a brief but intense sexual encounter and Isabelle is discovered by the Erringtons as she leaves the house. Her visit to the place where John wishes nothing to change is the cause of his removal from it. Callaghan sets the scene deliberately to show the futility of John's attempt to insulate himself from reality. He has carefully wedged paper between the frame and sash of the loose window in his room but Isabelle's wraith-like appearance in her "light fawn coat and the red felt hat" that give her no protection from the elements, makes a mockery of John's caution. He is reading Marlowe's "Tamburlaine the Great" when Isabelle appears. John's reaction to literature is like his reaction to life. He will not involve himself deeply in either. Ironically, he seeks an escape from the reality of Fred's execution and

the changed circumstances resulting from it by trying to lose himself in a renaissance tale of a pagan war-lord. The misdirected ambition and cruelty of Tamburlaine is ignored as John reacts only to the "swing and rush of the words." The characters in the book "hardly seemed important as long as he caught some of the author's feeling of exultation in the splendour of his own images." (INO p. 72) John's reaction to literature illustrates Callaghan's condemnation of what he labels a "renaissance flight into simile." (TSIP p. 20) Isabelle tells John that she used to like reading but finds her "own thoughts so much stronger and alive and restless..." John is too unimaginative to make any connection between what he is reading and the drama of the life around him. He says to Isabelle, "...talk quietly. Even now your face glows and your eyes are wild and your voice rises." (INO p. 75) For John there is no connection between life and art.

In the opening pages of the novel only the barest facts of Fred Thompson's life are told directly by the narrator. The reader is told that he had been a captain in the war but he had not been successful after the war "because he had gone to the war too young." (INO p. 9) He is executed because he kills a policeman during a brawl in a speakeasy. Gradually, events in his peace-time life are recalled by John and Lillian while his war-time experiences are recalled by Paul Ross, a fellow officer who, like Fred, has made a difficult and unsuccessful adjustment to peace-time life.

The wound on his forehead was always there to remind him he had left the university to fight in France, and at home again he could not get started decently ...For three years he hardly ever talked about the war, but when he became a magazine salesman he carried his two medals in his pocket, showing them

to all the women who needed a final persuasive influence. Now he never thought of them as medals, just a part of his sales talk. The war and the mud in Flanders was all a part of his sales talk.  
(INO pp. 58-59)

While more and more of Fred's impulsive life is revealed, John Hughes' "small, simple, orderly life" gradually deteriorates. At the same time Isabelle Thompson's life also disintegrates physically and spiritually. She impulsively shares Fred's degradation by deliberately destroying her reputation and finally embraces death through deliberate neglect. Her strong reaction to the execution undermines the relationship between John and Lillian. The first hint of John's ambivalence toward Isabelle, revealed through his conversation with Father Mason on the eve of the execution has been noted. His words then, show a reluctance to confront the events of life and contain a hint of betrayal. The qualified "kind of hard" just before "it was better for both of us" (INO p. 7) suggests that it was really 'better for John.' John's reluctance is developed further a few pages later. The occasion is Fred's funeral at which he sings the solo part of the requiem mass. John's feelings on this occasion are similar to the feelings he experienced at the prison site on the eve of Fred's execution. On that occasion Fred and the crowd were united for a brief interval and John's attempt to be included fails. Now, in the church, a similar feeling assails him:

John, standing in the balcony, alternately looking at the white smooth faces of the boys and the small crowd huddled together at the front of the church, was trying to avoid dealing with the notion making him restless and excited, the feeling that he ought not to sing at all or become part of the ceremony or have a part in the sorrow and all the consequences of the death. (INO p. 21)

This time, however, John is able to 'rationalize' away the notion of truth that has temporarily nagged him.

Breathing easier, his hands, which had gripped tightly the railing, relaxed as it occurred to him that it was better to be up there in the gallery, sympathetically standing apart and not drawn into it, then down at the altar with Isabelle and her mother and Lillian. (INO pp. 21-22)

At the cemetery, when he is momentarily and instinctively drawn toward Isabelle's suffering and wants to comfort her by putting his arms around her, John is constrained. "Even at that moment, looking at Lillian, he knew he could not touch Isabelle whom he had loved in the old days, in front of her without feeling embarrassed." (INO p. 24) As John's romance with Lillian progresses his resentment of Isabelle increases. Determined not to be involved in her grief he refuses to accept her insistence that "it's never over." (INO p. 31) His condemnation of her behaviour is an ironic reflection of his own behaviour, "It's over now, I tell you,... and you in your own thoughts are dodging in and out of the shadowy places and all the time it keeps getting darker in your own heart." (INO p. 31)

As incidents in Fred's life are revealed, the essential sham of John Hughes' "small, simple, orderly life" is also exposed and one significant remembrance of their youth recalled by John is symbolic of the illusions that destroy them both. Two lumps of clay falling on Fred's coffin remind John of the "dark cave" where he and his friend had played as children. (INO p. 24) A hidden place to talk and smoke in secret, the boys prefer "the mystery of the chilly darkness to the sunlight outside shining through the leaves of trees." (INO p. 24) For both these men the mystery remains obscured and the

light, whether it is sunlight shining through the trees or moonlight illuminating a tall cathedral spire, never penetrates.

Fred Thompson's recruitment as a recalled event in the novel takes the reader back again to the place of execution. Paul Ross does the remembering and his appearance in the novel occurs at a significant stage in John's progress toward complete self-deception. John believes that Lillian's decision to take an apartment so that she and John can be together has been a spontaneous one, but he discovers that her decision has been influenced by Isabelle. The discovery signals the eventual end of John and Lillian's relationship and the revenge that Isabelle ultimately wields. John's remarks to Lillian when he discovers the deception indicate that the orderly pattern of his life is beginning to break apart. "So that's it, is it? he muttered once. 'That's it. That's it. She's got hold of you.'" (INO p. 55) Paul Ross appears at this point in the novel and, recalling past events of the war, reveals the circumstances of Fred's recruitment.

Do you remember the days when Fred enlisted, the days of the big recruiting-meetings when the sergeants got so much a head and worked all the old stuff on the boys. Fred enlisted right down there in the park with the jail in the corner, at the biggest recruiting-meeting ever held in a war time in the city...Some of the old country girls got behind Fred and me, jostling us, urging us to do our bit, while the sergeant bawled hoarsely. And Fred said to the sergeant, that if he could punch him on the jaw first, he would have no hesitation about joining the army. The sergeant, coming close to him, shook a finger in his face and Fred punched at him, hitting him. The sergeant started to yell for the police, but Fred offered to join the army and the sergeant said he was a fine fellow and all the girls cheered and put their arms around him, trying to kiss him. It was right down there in the park. (INO pp. 60-61)

Callaghan chooses this way of exposing the "slogans of the first World War" (TSIP p. 20) and shows Fred betrayed by the social mythology surrounding war. John's less obvious betrayal of Isabelle fulfills the prophecy implied by the title.

Between Paul's recollection of Fred's recruitment and his recollection of the war-time execution, John's "small, simple, orderly life" alters irrevocably and his feelings of ambivalence toward Isabelle have changed to frustrated rage. Isabelle's influence over Lillian continues to grow until the relationship between John and Lillian is destroyed and Lillian leaves the city. Full of resentment over his lost position as soloist and his loss of Lillian, John decides that he is justified in murdering Isabelle. He lives now, in a run-down neighbourhood in a mean shabby room with a persistent odour of leaking gas. "In his room, John, smelling the gas, had to open the window,...That was the trouble, at first you could not smell it, and then, once the odour was detected, you seemed to smell it all the time." (INO p. 98) The gas is both a reminder of war and a symbol of John's descent into physical and spiritual poverty. In these surroundings, in the company of another "old soldier", Gibbons, Paul Ross relates the story of Fred Thompson's involvement in a war-time execution. Fred is in command of a party of men who have taken German prisoners. One of these prisoners, though wounded, suddenly fires at his captors. "He was an old fellow with a puzzled, stupid, bewildered expression on his face, who had gone a little crazy, and kept swinging his head, trying to fire. He was apt to hit some one, too." (INO p. 133) Fred's men do not shoot back but look to their leader. "Fred looked at the old German, hesitated, and pulling out his revolver



shot him through the side of the head." (INO p. 133) Paul relates the disgust Fred's men feel toward him and says, "it was just a cold execution by an inexperienced officer who had nothing against the poor old fellow." John agrees that there was "no excuse for it" and when it is pointed out that Fred's men had looked to him for direction John asks, "what would you have done?" Paul Ross's answer is disquieting.

'Just about the same. There are no heroes; some win medals, some don't. I would have wanted to do the right thing and would have done what he did.' (INO p. 133)

One man's involvement in "the life around him" has precipitated his early death, the other man's determination to avoid, "the life around him" leads him to the brink of murder. Although Callaghan makes no obvious judgement, the novel suggests that a purely intellectual approach which substitutes ideas for reality leads away from the truth as surely as an approach based entirely on impulse. Unlike the impulsive act that precipitated Fred's death, John's scheme is premeditated and 'rationalized' but his rationalization is based on his longing for an illusion, a "small, simple, orderly world."

Finally, John allows his reason to pervert the meaning of confession. Lacking humility and intent upon revenge, John uses the priest's appeal to reason to justify the act he plans. "That's it, my ego has been destroyed I tell you." (INO p. 140) John is only able now, to hear the "swing and rush" of his own chaotic thoughts:

His own soul had been denied to him but he had a plan that would restore his own feeling of decency and dignity. He had not expected to get such an explanation of the strong feeling from the priest. He swung open the door, stepping out into the cold, exalted, excited, thinking of doing the act that would restore to him all the dignity and decency of the spirit, he, a man of talent, anxious for all the

good things, was entitled to. (INO p. 142)

John's rationale for murder is not far removed from the kind of rationale that makes an excuse for war. Convinced of his own righteousness, John goes forth to commit murder. Only Isabelle's imminent death, brought on through her own neglect, convinces John, at the last minute, that his action is unnecessary. The intent, however, has revealed the flaw in his nature and gives Isabelle an ironic victory, "...she had hold of him more tightly than ever before, till he was with her and her brother and all of them...." (INO p. 148)

After his aborted attempt to kill Isabelle, John starts to make "a new pattern out of the past." (INO p. 149) There is some doubt, though, that this is really a new beginning. John begins to swim daily in the local Y.M.C.A. pool, diving into the cool, green water, taking pleasure in watching the "wriggling, snakelike" reflections on the bottom. He is able to feel that he is an organic part of the "cool water slipping down his body and over his face." (INO p. 150) He is, at last, "able to have a good time by simply considering himself as an unimportant part of the life around him." (INO p. 54) But the life around him does not include those he loves. Isabelle dies and although he thinks about "trying to find Lillian...his new notion of her was always stronger. It was better, he thought, to have her go her own way, for between them there would never be any of the calmness he had found for himself now...." (INO p. 150) His words are so nearly like the words spoken to Father Mason, "it was better for both of us", that the 'pattern' seems to be repeating itself. John has merely substituted a "new calmness" for his "small, simple, orderly world."

Both women in It's Never Over are more authentically developed than Vera in Strange Fugitive. Both women have a stronger influence over the protagonist. With Isabelle, Callaghan has created his first full length characterization of a woman who is not a stereotype but a figure of considerable psychological complexity. Lillian too, succeeds in being believable although her concerns are more closely related to John's career and her love affair is riddled with regrets and self doubt. Both women respond more wholeheartedly to music than John does. Lillian is a piano teacher and John's accompanist.

Lillian enjoyed music because it always gave her fresh experience and meant, to her personally, something beyond the melody or the rhythm that was in the piece... Her ear was better than his, never tiring so quickly, and she retained a sense of personal experience after he heard objectively only the sounds. (INO p. 48)

Isabelle responds to the negro spirituals she plays for John on her record player by dancing.

Her body curved to the rhythm of the music. She was having such a good simple time, amusing herself and him, she went on talking over her shoulder, changing the needle for the disk, explaining about the piece and a dance she had seen on the stage, a negro whose body was like a strand of rubber, quivering when touched. (INO p. 65)

In this novel, both women respond to an event and are changed by its significance. John Hughes on the other hand, remains the same.

The minor characters in It's Never Over contribute to the unity of the novel by emphasizing the interdependence of each individual in contrast with John Hughes' misguided isolation. Paul Ross's sympathetic yet detached recitals of Fred Thompson's war experiences confer authenticity on Thompson's role of symbolic sacrifice in the novel. Isabelle has a brief and frenetic affair with Paul. Her observations on the

nature of war are as relevant to Vietnam as they are to World War I.

'He's really down and out now, but can you imagine it, he wanted to be an architect, then the war got him. Did you know that? The war got him and some day he'll start thinking more intensely and it will be bad for somebody.' (INO p. 74)

Gibbons is another war veteran who has become a dedicated communist but has much in common with Mrs. Thompson. His strong conviction that "the lives of a few individuals are unimportant when the good of society is involved" is tested when the party dismisses him because of a petty dispute over "left wing and right wing communism." (INO p. 132) Gibbons' insistence that Fred's life had no importance in itself inspires John's only impulsive act -- he punches Gibbons. Although Mrs. Thompson's strong faith in a hereafter supports her in the loss of both her children both Gibbons and Mrs. Thompson share a willingness to endure a present existence without joy for the sake of a dubious future.

Callaghan's portrayal of Father Mason who relies on whiskey to help him cope with the unendurable, is probably based upon the priest in That Summer in Paris who has accompanied too many men to the gallows. (TSIP p. 77) Callaghan's compassionate awareness that the 'good priest' cannot remain aloof from the pain and degradation of life will be more fully developed in Father Dowling in Such Is My Beloved. Mason's reaction to Isabelle's death is "almost too cheerful because he was used to the notion of death...." (INO p. 152)

Only Ed Henley shows a natural reaction to Isabelle's death. Henley has had an affair with Isabelle which was based largely on his attraction to her celebrity status as the sister of a condemned criminal. John's attitude toward Ed is one of snobbish disdain but he

wonders "why he could not stand thinking of Isabelle marrying Ed Henley." (INO p. 51) To John, Henley is uncultured and commonplace yet he is able to express honest emotion when Isabelle dies.

They had expected her to die, but Ed Henley had never thought about it till now and his eyes were red and he hardly talked to anybody. There was no excitement in it for him, some one he had loved was dead and he couldn't get used to it. (INO p. 152)

It's Never Over is undeniably a war novel that does much more than protest the "habit-forming pain."<sup>10</sup> Through his portrayal of John Hughes who refuses to be "involved in mankind"<sup>11</sup> Callaghan confronts the issue of war on the level of personal response to violence, ambition, cowardice and death. Through his portrayal of Fred Thompson Callaghan confronts some of the myths of war.

Chapter III

No Man's Meat

In 1931 a short novella, No Man's Meat, was published privately in Paris. In 1978 it was reissued and published together with The Enchanted Pimp by The Macmillan Company. A story that features a lesbian relationship no longer shocks the general reading public. No doubt Callaghan was "having a bit of fun with the whole system of thought as well as with those artists who took it so seriously"<sup>12</sup> and no doubt he intended to be both shocking and 'avant garde'. Nevertheless, No Man's Meat confirms that even while Callaghan is being outrageously obvious and heavy-handed, he is skillfully manipulating his reader toward an awareness of the novella's real subject, sterility. Emotional and intellectual sterility is the price paid by Bert Beddoes for "fraudulent pretending." (TSIP p. 20) Callaghan writes about a couple who live in a spiritual wasteland and who confuse the landscape with their own condition. One of them, the woman, escapes.

The Beddoes, Bert and Teresa, have by virtue of eliminating "all undisciplined impulses" achieved the "contented peacefulness they had hoped for when they had first thought of getting married." (NMM p. 3) Mr. Beddoes' infrequent visits to his wife's bedroom rarely evoke "a passion strong enough to destroy the feeling of calmness between them, a steady calmness overpowering all quick feeling and every day growing stronger." (NMM p. 3) Callaghan depicts an intelligent, articulate couple who, nevertheless, show an enormous capacity for self delusion. The Beddoes are not unlike John Hughes before his friend's execution disturbs his "small, simple, orderly world." The agent of change in the novella is Jean Allen, a divorced friend who

visits the Beddoes at their summer cottage on Lake Echo.

. In No Man's Meat landscape serves as metaphor for the Beddoes' sterile condition. Life at Lake Echo is identical to the lake's appearance in the morning calm: "The dark surface simply shone brilliantly." (NMM p. 3) Bert and Teresa wear city clothes, engage each other politely in conversations about "a modern writer or painter" while a maid serves their meals. However, Teresa's "thin hard little body" is held "tensely", an indication that she has not achieved the same level of detachment as Mr. Beddoes. She spends her mornings woodcarving, "for years she had thought of it as her work, a medium through which she could find a more orderly way of living." (NMM p. 4) Teresa's life is already a "controlled calmness" and her daily withdrawal to private whittling which she never shows to anyone is a hint of chaos lying just beneath her calm surface. (NMM p. 6)

Mocking the controlled calmness of the Beddoes is the deliberately exaggerated symbolism of the landscape. The Beddoes' summer place is dominated by a prominently looming rock. Teresa cannot decide if it reminds her of a man, "hard steady and urgent", or of an old woman. She says of it, "it drove all feeling out of me." (NMM p. 8) A lake that is "stirred easily" (NMM p. 15), a moss-lined cleft in a small grotto of rock that is surrounded by bushy pines are other obvious features in a landscape that mocks the Beddoes' conviction that "they had got beyond all undisciplined impulses...." (NMM p. 3) Callaghan points out the anomaly of the Beddoes by contrasting them with their nearest neighbours, the Scots. Mrs. Scot, the farmer's wife is not at all like Teresa. She is "untidy, small, but full-throated and white breasted and black-haired." (NMM p. 5) Her casual breakfast summons each morning to her husband



disturbs Beddoes' daily walk because he is made uneasily aware of the difference between natural and imposed order: "It annoyed Beddoes, who had been trying for years to be orderly and always conscious of his own dignity to see this woman moving lazily, indifferently, so much a part of the untilled fields." (NMM p. 6) Callaghan links the bird imagery used to describe Mrs. Scot to Teresa and Jean Allen. Although Teresa is nervous and tense, unlike the relaxed Mrs. Scot, her movements are quick and darting. When Jean Allen arrives at Echo Lake Teresa's reaction is spontaneous and impulsive. She cannot resist hugging "the round firm body" and she exclaims: "You lovely wild bird, you belong in this part of the woods." (NMM p. 9)

In spite of the Beddoes' "consciously happy" state and their "steady reasoned happiness" (NMM p. 7) they are both excited by the prospect of Jean Allen's visit. Bert Beddoes anxiously waits for her arrival and says: "She seems to have in her most of the life we haven't touched. She'll be a new stimulus for us." (NMM p. 4) They look forward eagerly to hearing the tales she will have to tell of faraway places: "They were having a steadier more satisfying emotion, thinking about these untold tales, then they had ever got in their own years in Europe and Mexico, trying so earnestly to find a long excitement...." (NMM p. 8) When Jean Allen does arrive both Beddoes hover over her as she talks, taking a vicarious pleasure from the revelation of her adventures. "They were sitting, one to each side of her, leaning their heads over in front of her, helping her to talk...She had simply suggested the outline, but they actually believed they had lived through the entire exotic pleasure." (NMM pp. 9-10)

When Beddoes and Jean Allen climb to the top of the looming rock

above the lake, a glimpse of Jean's white thighs almost inspires Bert to "touch her tentatively." (NMM p. 11) This encounter between Jean and Bert Beddoes foreshadows their subsequent disastrous encounter and it shows Callaghan's mastery of ironic situation and incident. Both human beings are under an illusion, both misjudge each other and their relation to the landscape they inhabit. Beddoes' thoughts about Jean and Jean's conversation about Teresa contain almost identical words. Bert compares Jean mentally to the "surface of the wild hard country" (NMM p. 11), believing her to be "wildly passionate." (NMM p. 13) Jean discusses Teresa and says to Bert: "She's lovely. I like her bright metallic hardness. I love it." (NMM p. 12) She thinks that the Beddoes belong "entirely to this little part of the country with its calm lake...." (NMM p. 11) For his part, Bert equates the beauty of Jean's body, her "exuberance and vivacity" (NMM p. 11) with the "wild hard country" but he persists in viewing the land as "rocky and sterile underneath" when it is he who is sterile underneath his controlled surface. Beddoes' customary habit of disciplined calmness checks the lust he feels for Jean on this occasion and he is "almost glad he hadn't touched her for fear she might have disturbed him too long a time." (NMM p. 13) Two references to the land are made by Beddoes which link this incident to his behaviour later in the novella. On their way to the top of the looming rock Beddoes shows Jean some Indian carvings on the wall of a cave and tells her that "...the Algonquins were here." (NMM p. 11) He also points out to Jean, his stand of growing pine trees, "the only first-growth pines around here." (NMM p. 12) His pride of ownership and his solicitous concern that they will not be cut are contrasted with his later

behaviour with Jean:

No longer could he think of her as an adventurous woman who had left her husband and had had many lovers, for she was depressed and terrified by a virginal shyness that made him feel ashamed. Leaning on his arm, she held on to him, seeking a protection, revealing a sincere virginal temper which merely aroused him to a new point of passion. (NMM p. 24)

Just before Beddoes collects his gambling debt from Jean he tries to distract her obvious apprehension by telling her how the Algonquins made their last stand against the Iroquois. Beddoes is oblivious of the irony of his anecdote. He tells Jean, "they were beaten though" and the land that he had thought of as rocky and sterile is now described as "rich territory." (NMM p. 24)

It is Jean Allen who suggests the crap game in which she loses each wager. It is Beddoes who suggests the final wager -- the money she has lost against her virtue. Teresa not only concurs, "it was a moment when she was definitely able to assert the extent of her calmness and her aloofness from conventional restraint." (NMM p. 16) Teresa is aloof from conventional restraint because she and her husband share the excitement and lust that Jean arouses in both of them. With a few tosses of the die the "contented peacefulness" (NMM p. 3) achieved by Bert and Teresa is altered irrevocably. Their dark surfaces have been penetrated. Teresa, a willing accomplice in the affair, encourages her husband to collect his bet: "If it amuses you, entertain her to the best of your ability." (NMM p. 25) Who would be more aware of Beddoes' ability than Teresa? It amuses neither Jean Allen nor Beddoes but when the clumsy assault is over and Beddoes asks his wife to comfort a distraught Jean, Teresa is described as

"trembling with excitement." (NMM p. 27) The two women spend the rest of the night together while Beddoes is tormented by "the waves lapping loudly on the beach and he was thinking of the way Jean had thrown her arms around Teresa to find a satisfactory comfort." (NMM p. 29) In the morning the women drive away from the cabin together leaving Beddoes with his "dark tall first-growth pines" (NMM p. 31) and a note from Teresa saying she "could not come back for a long time." (NMM p. 30)

In No Man's Meat both women show perception and compassion which is entirely lacking in the characterization of Bert Beddoes. Jean Allen is more perceptive at penetrating Teresa's superficial calmness than Bert is and her question, "but why does she move so nervously, holding on to herself?" is dismissed by him. He insists that Teresa's life is "an orderly satisfactory life." (NMM p. 12) Teresa Beddoes is aware that the local farmers laugh at the couple "because we're here doing nothing" (NMM p. 7) and she is able to comfort Jean after the disastrous encounter with Bert. The word 'love' is never used by Beddoes in the novella although Teresa speaks of her love for Jean in the note she leaves her husband. When Jean asks, "do you love her very much?" Beddoes replies: "We're necessary to each other. Between the two of us we've got hold of something, that's all." (NMM p. 23) At the end of the novella there is no evidence that Bert will change. "So accustomed was he to a steady calmness that he walked very slowly toward the cabin, shaking his head jerkily." (NMM p. 31)

The sexual innuendoes that are liberally scattered throughout the novella are obvious yet funny. Some examples are the pun implied

in Beddoes' name, the way in which the gambling terms "cover" and "covering" are linked to the image of animal coupling and a silly conversation between Bert and Jean in which the sexual imagery is undisguised:

'You and Teresa seem to belong entirely to this little part of country with its calm lake and its big rock and the few farmers moving silently in the fields.'

'You mean moving a little droopingly in the fields.' 'But they're not detached from it like you are.'

'Yes it does hold you down, but when you accept it, when you're ready for it, then it's rather beautiful. There's a hardness that becomes a calmness.' (NMM p. 12)

Yet Callaghan's heavy-handed exploitation of the sexual imagery is absolutely effective in exposing the folly of the Beddoes' relationship in which no intense human feelings are allowed to intrude. Their folly is a ludicrous pretense and the harshly beautiful landscape which the Beddoes think of as only a "fine picture" (NMM p. 4) has more vitality than they do. Although Callaghan will go on to satirize certain characters in his novels such as Mr. Robison in Such Is My Beloved and Mr. Carver in The Loved and the Lost, this is his only work which is a sustained satire in itself. Callaghan, who is always a serious writer, manages to be outrageously heavy handed in No Man's Meat and manages, because of it, to expose pomposity and sham in a work that is in itself a small masterpiece. There is an almost Swiftian intelligence at work in No Man's Meat. Like Swift, Callaghan knows instinctively that ridicule is sometimes the surest way to truth.

## Chapter IV

### A Broken Journey

Callaghan's next novel, A Broken Journey, was published in 1932. It represents a departure from previous work because it stresses personal relationships. This is the first novel that can be called a love story in the romantic sense. The plot develops around Marion Gibbon's aborted romance with a young lawyer, Peter Gould. The great depression of the thirties is part of the background but its influence is not as pervasive as it will be in Such Is My Beloved and They Shall Inherit the Earth. Although Peter, his brother Hubert and Patricia Lee with whom Peter has a brief affair, are all affected by the depression its influence is not an important issue in this novel. Callaghan's growing skill in the portrayal of women is evident in A Broken Journey. There are three women in the novel and each portrayal is authentic. Both Marion and Peter are more internalized than previous protagonists have been and this is achieved largely through dialogue and an unobtrusive narrator whose access to inner feelings allows the reader to enter into the mind and psyche of both. In the following passage which occurs after she discovers that Peter does not return her mother's misguided affection for him, Marion's joy and relief are captured credibly:

'Mother, I love you, I must go now. I must hurry.'

'Good-night.'

'Good-night, Mother, she said softly. She half smiled with embarrassment: her lips moved, then she threw her arms around her mother and kissed her. 'Good-night, good-night.' she said.

When she got to her room Marion could no longer subdue her excitement. It seemed that she, herself, in refusing to go away with Peter, was doing what her mother had done when she was a young woman.

'Peter, Peter, I've been so foolish. Peter, I love you so much. I want to be with you forever,' she muttered. 'I must see you.' (BJ p. 111)

In A Broken Journey Callaghan continues to explore the problem of relating a "Christian enlightenment to some timeless process of becoming." (TSIP pp. 94-95) In 1932, when this novel was published, sexual mores including concepts of chastity, faithfulness and the guilt connected with these concepts were much more rigid than they are now. Callaghan examines these concepts through the character and behaviour of the three women in the novel. He does so with considerable insight and compassion. If Marion's vacillating behaviour toward Peter sometimes seems tedious and if the dialogue is occasionally wooden, this is more likely an accurate reflection of the time and place than a defect in writing. Another aspect of Callaghan's exploration is a trend which will become more apparent in Such Is My Beloved and They Shall Inherit the Earth. The influence of the Church is diminished as the influence of the individual and the issue of personal responsibility is stressed. There is a Cathedral as well as a spire in A Broken Journey. The spire appears twice but its appearance and influence is less noticeable than in Strange Fugitive and It's Never Over. The first view of the Cathedral in A Broken Journey is through Marion Gibbon's eyes. Unable to decide whether her mother is "extraordinarily sincere, or unbelievably deceitful" she yields to "a sudden curiosity" (BJ p. 97) and follows her mother to church. The Cathedral is described as: "...high and splendid though surrounded by squat rooming houses and small factories. Its spire stuck up darkly against the light sky." (BJ p. 98)



The second appearance is through Father Sullivan's eyes after he has failed to proffer comfort to a distraught Teresa. The encounter leaves the young priest feeling embarrassed and inadequate as he returns from the Gibbon's home to the Cathedral.

He was walking very slowly. The Cathedral spire stuck up in the night sky above all the houses in the block. He was still breathing irregularly and feeling that he had been close to something immensely ugly and evil that had nearly overwhelmed him. He shook his head a little, because he still wanted to go on thinking that Mrs. Gibbons was one of the finest women in the parish, for his notion of what was good in the life in the parish seemed to depend upon such a belief. As he walked slowly he felt, with a kind of desperate clarity, that really he had been always unimportant in the life around the Cathedral. (BJ p. 145)

In both views of the Cathedral spire the image is associated with doubt and there is no illumination. In this novel the harsh Algoma hills take the place of the Cathedral spire as a symbol of the 'ideal'. They are described from Marion's point of view as she looks across the river from her canoe:

"...and beneath this burned timber was always the rock, slabs of quartz, basalt and granite, and the peak looked so white in the sunlight; it looked like an immense, crude, rugged cathedral of rock with deep, dark crevices for a decorative pattern ...For the first time now, looking toward the shore, she saw how far up and unobtainable was the peak." (BJ p. 230)

The metaphor which informs the novel and gives it its title is life as a doomed journey yet, for Peter at least, the journey is one of self-discovery. For Marion Gibbons the journey is futile since, literally and figuratively, she travels back again to the same place. Their romance and their journey to the rugged Algoma country is the principal concern of the novel but Callaghan examines other relationships

as well. They include the relationship of mother and daughter, of Teresa Gibbons to her husband and to her lover killed in the war, Peter Gould's brief relationship with Patricia Lee, and even the relationship of newcomers -- priest, merchant, labourers -- to the primitive Algoma country where they have intruded. All of these relationships depend upon the necessity to distinguish truth from falsehood, or, to use Callaghan's words again, the capacity to see the object "freshly for what it was in itself." (TSIP p. 19) In A Broken Journey, most relationships, including Marion and Peters', fail.

The journey motif is introduced at the start of the novel as Marion Gibbons returns to her home and family and to Peter Gould. We are not told where she has been, only that her journey has been a long one, "up the Pacific Coast and by the Great Lakes and through the rocky country on the north shore of Lake Superior, those great cones of spruce ...the loneliest and most beautiful country in the world." (BJ p. 7-8) The beautiful and lonely country is where the final resolution of the novel takes place with Marion returning alone once again. Setting for the first part of the novel is the city. This is where the romance between Peter and Marion is first aborted and then resumed and it is here, in the interval, that events occur which affect the final resolution. A short steamer trip which only comprises a chapter is a link between the two parts and the two settings. It not only continues the journey motif, it portends the eventual outcome. The three travellers, Marion, Peter and his brother Hubert (who has accompanied them to care for the injured Peter) seemed suspended between two worlds as they sit together on the deck watching "the hills and shoreline receding till there was only the blue sky and the blue lake, and far beyond on the

horizon one great white bank of clouds rolling like white winter hills." (BJ p. 152) On the steamer trip the cabin the travellers occupy is described as a "small white room." (BJ p. 147) It is a link with the identically described "small white room" (BJ p. 200) to which Peter is carried when they reach their destination. The cell-like image also provides a link to the time in Marion's past when she was a novitiate in a cloistered religious order. The atmosphere of confinement is heightened as Marion, walking alone on deck, watches a trio of young girls gaily dressed in "red pyjamas and little striped sweaters." (BJ p. 147) This is typical of the way in which Callaghan arranges significant detail unobtrusively. The freedom and gaiety of the trio is set against the anxiety and impairment which threatens the journey of Marion, Peter and Hubert. The chapter ends with a conversation between Hubert and Marion in which their unexpressed fears are implied through their spoken reassurances to each other, "he even laughed a bit, implying that it was ridiculous to think of anything upsetting Peter permanently." (BJ p. 155) The ship's orchestra and the noisy frivolity of the other passengers is a mocking accompaniment to their conversation while Peter remains below deck in the "small white room." The remaining ten chapters of the novel are set in the promised land of Peter and Marion fantasies but the resolution does not include the fulfillment of their personal quest.

One notable feature of A Broken Journey is that symbolic references are numerous and much more obviously employed than in the previous two novels. The journey itself is symbolic, a personal quest that ends in disillusionment. A network of symbols associated with growth, decay and death provides a counterpoint for Marion's romantic

dream of fulfillment. Roses, which can signify earthly passion as well as heavenly perfection,<sup>13</sup> are used by Callaghan to apply to more than one character and situation. In the first part of the novel roses and a rose garden signify doomed love, not only Marion and Peters', but Teresa's past love as well. Her marriage to Marion's father has been a failure, due largely to his misunderstanding and rejection of Teresa's passionate nature. Her subsequent romance with a young officer who is killed in the war has left Teresa bitter because "there had never been any kind of union between them." (BJ p. 3) The two passions in her life when the novel opens are an almost mystical preoccupation with saints and religion, and the cultivation of roses. "Her favourite saint was Augustine, because his life had been so turbulent before he found peace and she had read his 'Confessions' four times." (BJ p. 21) One carelessly broken rose in her garden has caused Teresa obsessive and anguished concern -- "she had cried all morning as she had heaped earth around it." (BJ p. 35) On her bedside table are manuals on the culture and care of roses which "she had never tired of reading." (BJ p. 21) Attitudes toward Teresa vary, some consider her devout and saintly, others "thought her an old huzzy beyond redemption." (BJ p. 1) When the novel opens she is under the delusion that Peter Gould's interest in her is something more than the considerate attention of a young man for his girlfriend's mother. Marion is unaware of her mother's feeling and of her long-ago romance but Teresa's frequent affairs have convinced her daughter that her own passionate nature is a debased inheritance. The scent of roses from the garden below fills the room as Marion confronts her mother over Peter. "The roses were splendid this year, the best year for roses in a long time, according to her

mother, who was spending more time in the garden than ever before, clipping and pruning and tending each bush she knew so well." (BJ p. 36) Marion's discovery that her mother cares for Peter convinces her that "everything I've wanted is now destroyed utterly." (BJ p. 37) She peremptorily breaks her relationship with him without any explanation shortly after the confrontation with Teresa.

Roses are used figuratively again in a second encounter between mother and daughter in which Teresa admits to Marion that her infatuation for Peter was based upon a foolish and futile attempt to relive the past: "I got the notion he was fond of me. I seemed to have a lot of things mixed up in my head. Then I saw I was a silly old woman." (BJ p. 110) Teresa reveals the story of her last evening with the young officer before he goes overseas to his death. Her explanation prompts Marion to resume her plans to go away with Peter. As they talk together, Marion looks down at the rose garden from the window. The blooming period for the roses is over, "but yesterday, a white one, blooming later than the others, had blown and the withered petals in the clear night were splashed on the dark ground." (BJ p. 110) Both the broken rose and the spent petals signify doomed love -- not only Teresa's love for her soldier but Marion and Peter's as well. Hurt and embittered by Marion's dismissal of him, Peter has moved in with Patricia Lee, a girl he has picked up in a movie theatre. When he decides to leave her Patricia vengefully pushes Peter down the stairs. He is injured and partially paralyzed. The broken rose bush and the spent white petals portend the spiritual injury inflicted by Marion on Peter as well as Peter's exploitation of Patricia; they also portend the physical injury that will prevent the consummation of Marion and Peter's love. The spent

and broken roses are also a link to Marion's past vocation which has been a failure. In order to "keep a deep respect for her mother" yet keep herself "untouched by any of the passions she felt had destroyed her mother" Marion had once entered a religious order and become Sister Mary Rose. (BJ p. 22) She tries very hard to "lift herself into an ecstasy so she might see the image of Christ and feel Him beside her before she went to sleep." (BJ p. 40) But Marion dreams instead, of a tall boy, Christopher, who used to hold her in his arms" and she is convinced that "it's my mother's nature in me...." (BJ p. 41)

Callaghan captures in A Broken Journey the poignant folly inherent in both Marion and Teresa's situation. The middle-aged Teresa is suddenly pathetic as she realizes her infatuation for Peter is one-sided. "Mrs. Gibbons, so much older but now so much like a trembling young girl, knew at once with shame that he didn't love her." (BJ p. 64) Peter's embarrassed retreat leaves her standing with "her plump, well-manicured, soft white hands crying out for something that had always eluded her." (BJ p. 64) Marion's ambivalent feelings alternate between "absolute hatred" (BJ p. 100) and a "warm love for her" (BJ p. 102) as she realizes the vulnerability of her aging mother.

Callaghan captures credibly the feelings of a confused young woman:

Full of a strange, hurting compassion, she listened outside her mother's door. Her mother was asleep. This new tender loyalty to her mother, after her own resentment had tired her, puzzled her. 'Poor Mother, forgive me for not trying to understand you,' she whispered. She went back to her own room and, lying down, she seemed to be taking herself apart and finding only what was weak and pitiable. When she got into bed, her lips were moving in supplication for contentment and purity, but when she hunched up her knees, she felt within her an uneasy twinge of resentment. (BJ p. 48)

Both women are momentarily united by Teresa's revelation. Marion realizes that her mother's lost love had been like her own love for Peter and she tries to express her feelings to her mother, "Peter and I...I mean it was something the same with us." (BJ p. 110) The encounter between mother and daughter suggests that Marion has come to a new realization. Teresa asks: "What was it that cheated me? Why should I have to be so swift, Marion?" Marion's answer indicates a new awareness:

'I don't know. I've often cheated myself. When a thing's so close and you want it, you ought to be swift before you have a chance to cheat yourself."  
(BJ p. 109)

The outcome of the novel and Marion's subsequent actions indicate that her words are both prophetic and ironically ambiguous, since what she ultimately reaches out to and touches is not her true love but a surrogate lover who symbolizes Marion's romantic notion of the Algoma wilderness.

In the interval before their journey is resumed, both Peter and Marion are obsessed with thoughts of the northern journey. Peter's feelings are expressed in images of an almost unobtainable quest. He begs his brother who has worked in the mines and lumber camps of the north to describe the country and from this description Peter fantasizes: "All along the shore there would be, no doubt, cool, measureless cliffs, and on the summits, so high from the water that great trees looked like bits of shrubbery, there would be almost impenetrable bush." (BJ p. 52) Peter tries to discover some meaning from his destroyed hopes and continues to ponder what the journey might have been. He sees the "brilliant white peaks of a mountain" both as barrier and beckoning

quest. (BJ p. 93) Even a city landscape of warehouses on a "flat barren sandy stretch of reclaimed land" evokes the beckoning peaks of the north. In the urban version there are new grain elevators instead of hills, "white, round, clean and solid in the moonlight as if they had just been polished and set down there in the level wasteland."

(BJ p. 91) Callaghan shows, later in the novel, that Peter is able to put aside his romantic dream and accept comfortably, his own version of the North American experience. It will not be like Peter's melodramatic idea for an epic poem. As he walks along the street Peter recalls "a conversation he had had that afternoon with a doctor, a hurried man, who wanted to write in his spare time a romantic poem that would be a symbol of North American experience." (BJ p. 53) Peter's idea' for the doctor is full of strong sexual imagery that gives no hint of the future injury and partial paralysis symbolically manifested in the broken rose and the spent petals.

And he thought of a massive, bronzed woman standing on a hill looking out over a darkened field, listening for sounds from the battle: she heard the sound of flying hoofs, and the strange animal, the terrible horse, bearing a rider in shining armour, swept by, and she knew the field was soaked with the blood of her race. When the newcomers from the far-away world came rushing over the hill, she knew they would rape her, so she tried to send her soul after the horse, for it was so swift in its passing and its hoof-beats were still pounding in her ears. (BJ p. 54)

A mischievous presence can be detected behind Peter's 'idea' for a romantic poem. Callaghan is poking fun at the notion of writing in the spare time snatched from a "hurried" life that is, in itself, a symbol of North American experience.

Marion continues to dream as well of what might have been but,



prophetically, she sees herself "...alone, high and solitary, drifting among great cones of pines in deep valleys in the solitude of wooded hills." (BJ p. 70) She dreams of "unbroken peacefulness" and a "clean white-washed boarding house." (BJ p. 71) Her view from the hammock in which she sees "a few brown, withered, rotting stalks" (BJ p. 71) is linked to the broken rose and the dark, undulating weeds in the water which will attract yet repel her after she has been seduced by the half-breed Steve. (BJ p. 261) All of the images associated with Marion's fantasies are linked to her notions of her mother's life and Marion's conviction that she has inherited the same 'degenerate' traits.

When the journey is resumed, first impressions of the promised land are not like the idealized fantasies. Images of decay and stagnation are numerous as the three travellers disembark. Garbage discharged from the steamer spoils the "blue lake water." (BJ p. 157) The river current is unmoving, "thick weeds were like a great net holding down the life in the river." (BJ p. 161) Sitting impassively on the dock watching the arrival of the threesome from the city, is Steve, who will become the surrogate lover for Peter. It is Steve who assists in carrying Peter up to the hill to the Bousineau boarding house. Steve's appearance is a near parody of Peter's earlier fantasy of war-like invaders and a "massive bronzed woman." (BJ p. 53) Part Indian, Steve's face is "richly copper-coloured" and he is dressed in an old sweater royally coloured purple and gold. (BJ p. 157) He is puzzled by the arrival of the threesome: "he wanted to ask why on earth they had come so far." (BJ p. 162)

Partly through images of decay and corruption, partly through the comic-opera figures who people the north, Callaghan changes the

dream of a quest fulfilled to the disillusionment of failure and disintegration. He shows an Eden that is exploited and polluted. Outsiders try to extract a precarious living from the land or use it to play out their own illusions. One episode describes how workers from the outside, a carpenter and a truck-driver, encourage the debauchery of an Indian girl whose teeth have already been replaced by "store teeth." "They were taking turns pouring glasses of whiskey into the girl, who squealed, twisted, giggled, squirmed, and embraced them passionately." (BJ p. 197)

Bousineau, who owns the "white-washed boarding house" has made his peace with the harsh country by living from the labour of his wife.

Bousineau was very jolly, very boisterous,...He showed them their rooms; he introduced his wife, slapping her on the back and explaining she was a good woman; indeed she was, he having lived entirely on her work in the boarding house for six years. It was the only boarding house for miles and miles, so he was able to eat heartily, sleep in the afternoons and sometimes go fishing at twilight...." (BJ p. 164)

Another episode describes the visit of a young English immigrant priest who is the Anglican chaplain for the district. Caught up in the panoply of vestments and ritual, he deludes himself into thinking that his native charges perceive the difference between an Anglo-Catholic and a Catholic service of worship. "It never seemed to occur to him that the Indians thought he was someone who wanted to say mass, and didn't care much anyway." (BJ p. 181)

Callaghan's portrait of Steve is a convincing one in spite of a tendency towards caricature. Steve is the ideal primitive who fishes, can make a fire by rubbing two sticks, and is strong, capable and silent. He lives simply, co-existing harmoniously with the rugged environment.

He is one of the few inhabitants who truly belong in the country of Marion and Peter's fantasies. When Marion and Hubert discuss Steve they agree that he should always remain free and alone. Hubert says: "A woman really wouldn't be having an affair with Steve at all. She would be having an affair with this country." (BJ p. 225) When Marion allows herself to be seduced by Steve, her "affair with this country" ends unsatisfactorily. Before the seduction Steve tells Marion the story of a young Indian boy who drowns after he is attacked and stabbed by a loon whose nesting eggs he attempts to steal. (BJ p. 255) After the seduction Marion peers into the weed-infested water and considers drowning herself. She feels debased, a part of the rotting deck and the thick growth of the dark water, and she thinks: "It's what I ought to do. It's what I'm ready to do. Oh why don't I do it?" (BJ p. 261) Instead, she returns to the city alone leaving Peter behind in the "small white room." Like her mother, Marion regrets: "If only we had had one night together." (BJ p. 268) Unlike her mother, Marion denies her passionate nature and allows herself to be tormented by guilt. She ignores Hubert's wisdom: "Maybe it's better that's over. Maybe it's better that's all over. That never was so important." (BJ p. 253) Marion persists in believing she is without integrity and that she lacks the redeeming grace of the strong religious faith of her mother but Teresa Gibbon's religious ecstasy has its roots in her own passionate nature and the ideal she remains faithful to is the memory of her unfulfilled love. Her decision to go to France for her last days to be close to the grave of her beloved confirms this, rather than any inherent religious faith.

In A Broken Journey the character of the male protagonist shows

most development for Marion remains essentially unchanged. Peter Gould is able, because of his forced immobility, to reshape his opinions and he realizes "the futility of trying to escape into the woods." (BJ pp. 195-196). This truth eludes Marion. She is unable to accept either the reality of her mother's past or the new environment of the primitive setting for what they are in themselves. For Marion her mother's past becomes the symbol for what she believes is her own debased inheritance, her own "rotten streak." "Years ago I felt it and tried to get away from it. I've always been trying things so hard. I wanted so much to come up here." (BJ p. 264) Sensing Marion's growing discontent with a land that seems to engulf her, Peter eagerly tries to communicate his own feelings which indicate, that although the journey has not fulfilled their personal desires, he has achieved a new perspective still beyond Marion's grasp. He says, "I was thinking that if I could be high up here in these hills looking closely at everything, wouldn't it be just our way of thinking that would become trivial." (BJ pp. 214-215) As he lies on his back he recalls incidents related to his former existence in the city. He remembers Patricia "who wanted to own a millinery shop and make smart, neat little hats" (BJ p. 194) and he recalls the bustle and noise of the city. He misses the daily newspaper and the world series and says, "when you're on your back you like to be in your own country." (BJ p. 195) All that Peter can see as he lies in bed is a small bird perched on his windowsill but by looking intently at the bird's wing he can visualize other natural objects -- a trout, a chipmunk, the bark of a birch tree. He looks at his hand as if he were seeing it for the first time and tries to communicate to Marion the feeling of ecstasy in "trying to get close to everything

for the first time." (BJ p. 215) Peter longs for the city, "his own country", but he shows a willingness to examine "all the notions you've lived by...." (BJ p. 215) He disagrees with Marion when she says: "What is right, what is wrong, what is important, or any ambition, all seems unimportant here." (BJ p. 214) Marion allows the "loneliest and most beautiful country in the world" to engulf her just as she has allowed her notions about her mother to engulf her.

Callaghan's perception regarding the precarious nature of human relationships is evident in this third novel; what is more praiseworthy is his willingness to examine 'old notions' regarding women. Each female characterization in the novel is accomplished with a considerable degree of compassionate awareness. Patricia Lee is pathetically anxious to hold on to Peter and the security he represents. Once arrested on a vagrancy charge, "a deep fear was always inside her that she would have no money and would have to go on the streets and be arrested again." (BJ p. 69) Kept by a succession of men, "who, in the long run, ill treated her and then got rid of her" (BJ p. 84), Patricia is understandably vengeful when Peter Gould deserts her too. Although they have little in common, Peter feels, for a while, "full of sympathy, for the uneasiness that was so deep in her life and in her soul seemed but a part of the vast discontent and unrest in his own soul...." (BJ p. 84) When Peter decides his affair with Patricia cannot make him forget Marion Gibbons he leaves her. His fall and the injury he sustains are a symbolic manifestation of his fall from grace for his exploitation of Patricia Lee.

Teresa Gibbons is a foolish woman who allows her unreconciled past to become an obsession. Caught in an unhappy marriage she deludes herself into thinking that Peter's affection is something deeper than

polite consideration for his girl-friend's mother. Teresa shows, however, a touching credibility when she admits her self-deception to her daughter and reveals her poignant, long ago romance. Although Marion pities her mother's desperation she is unable to accept the contradictions in her mother's character. "How could a woman like her mother pray with so much honest devotion, she asked herself, and be neither honest or dishonest? Nothing was plain, nothing very simple, nothing could be stated in just so many words, and so everything was all mixed up." (BJ p. 100) Unable to perceive that doubts and uncertainties are part of the mix in each human being, Marion not only judges her mother's character but misjudges her own by measuring it against that standard.

Marion's long journey from an undefined place begins the novel. "I came up to the Pacific coast and by the Great Lakes and through the rocky country of the north shore of Lake Superior,...." (BJ pp. 7-8) The long trip is like a symbolic testing, a journey of discovery that has prepared her for a new life with Peter. When their romance ends in the "small white room", Marion prepares herself for yet another journey whose destination is not defined. Her feelings are expressed in language that evokes a strong image of a religious martyrdom and death. Lying in her room on the eve of her departure from the place that held such promise, she begins to be excited by leaving so much behind. 'I'll leave Peter, dear Peter. I'll leave this strange country. I hope to gain something.' But her whole body felt lifeless and cold...." (BJ p. 268)

The journey cycle also links Marion to her father whose life follows a repeated pattern of packing up bags to "follow the ponies

to another city." (BJ p. 16) Mr. Gibbons is depicted as a somewhat pompous man who affects a "Norfolk sporting jacket and the occasional throaty, cultured accent when he wanted to be most impressive." (BJ p. 16) His feelings for his daughter are "vague and uncertain" but he admits his culpability in the failure of his marriage to Teresa. "I was a fool not to have trusted her. She was so damned handsome and gay in those days too." (BJ p. 16) By not naming Mr. Gibbons, Callaghan adds to the picture of a somewhat anonymous, vaguely dissatisfied man whose vagabonding life-style belies a wistful regret that he was not closer to his daughter. "With a kind of stubborn eagerness he wished he might have been a little closer to her; he wanted to say something to justify the life he led in the house." (BJ p. 17)

The tormented relationship of Teresa and Marion is set against the equanimity of the two Gould brothers. Peter and Hubert are almost like two sides of one individual. "The brothers tried to share everything in common, just as they went everywhere together." (BJ p. 49) Since there was only enough money to send one brother to university Hubert has already travelled when the novel opens, "north to the lumber camps and the mines and out west for the harvesting, feeling the sinister quality of the northern country and getting his own calmness and curious contentment out of it." (BJ p. 50) It is to Hubert that Peter turns to find out what the Algoma country is like. Hubert's reply that "the nights are so awfully clear you seem to be walking dreadfully close to the stars and the way the northern lights keep swinging, there's a kind of steady illumination" is a reflection of his own qualities. (BJ p. 51) Hubert has the ability to sense awe and wonder yet remain unintimidated. When he and Marion walk together under a sky in which the stars seemed so

high yet so dreadfully close", Marion says: "Such nights. Such nights, they destroy us." Hubert's response is different: "Oh no. They exhilarate me. They make me feel that we're really all magnificent and that there's no struggle against life." (BJ p. 238) Marion feels "puny and inconsequential" when she tries to fit herself into the vast panorama of the primitive setting. She is unable to accept Hubert's wisdom: "It all belongs. Remember you're a piece of it, too." (BJ p. 240) She scoffs at Hubert when he tries to explain the feeling of mystical unity he had once experienced as the result of a sermon. Skeptical himself, as he listened to the "unctuous" voice of a prominent minister in the city, Hubert had been startled momentarily by the minister's question: "Can you feel God?" (BJ p. 242) As he walks along the outskirts of the city after the sermon Hubert experiences much the same feeling that Peter experiences in his small white room by looking intently at the bird's wing and his own hand. "There was clarity and unity and I was part of the unity. The water, the banks, the old paper mill all seemed so perfectly co-ordinated by the feeling of spontaneous elation." (BJ p. 242) All of the characters in A Broken Journey travel through life with some injury; their lives represent, in terms of the title and the metaphor, failed journeys. Hubert's life is the only exception.

Much of the symbolism in A Broken Journey is obvious. The broken rose and the spent petals that signify doomed love, the weed-infested and stagnant water that portend the eventual outcome, these are used in a readily apparent manner. There is an aspect, however, of Callaghan's use of symbol in this novel that is both innovative and perhaps not so obvious. Callaghan considers in A Broken Journey, some of the myths of human existence, myths that have sustained us, to some



extent at least, in the "process of becoming." Three that he touches upon in the novel are: the myth of the efficacy of the Church, the myth of sexual mores and the myth of a romantically beautiful hinterland. By diminishing the Cathedral spire as a symbol of the ideal and investing the tall shining peaks of the north with the luminous characteristics that the spire possessed in previous novels Callaghan reaffirms his determination to examine the object freshly, to see it as it is in itself. Each of the three travellers responds differently to the symbolic country with its high shining peaks but it is Peter who, although he is isolated in the small white room makes the imaginative leap that allows him to confront his "old way of thinking" (BJ p. 215) and make a new beginning. He begins to be his distinctive self as he realizes that, for him, "whatever is to be done culturally, creatively, economically will all be done in the city." (BJ p. 195) Before the journey north Peter had "tried to ponder the meaning of its magic as though he were close to an explanation that could be grasped intuitively; only it was like staring till your eye ached at the brilliant white peak of a mountain that could not quite be seen." (BJ p. 93) After the journey Peter transcends both injury and isolation and is able to 'see'.

Hubert is as much at home in the Algoma hinterland as he is in the city. Marion recognizes that Hubert is "the only one who has climbed his own mountain...." (BJ p. 194) Hubert's approach to the north is relaxed and mundane. He discusses the potato crop prospects and the wheat growing "up the line at Hearst." (BJ p. 188) His attitude frequently annoys Marion but for Hubert the journey is not a personal quest but a shared adventure with two people for whom he cares.

Marion's despair is occasionally cloaked in elation or pretended

indifference. Once during the course of a beautiful moonlit night she feels a "strange harmony and peace all around her" (BJ p. 208) and her faith in her love for Peter is, for the moment, restored. Marion, however, continues to put her faith in her romantic obsession with the symbolic country. She asks the question: "Did you ever look up suddenly and see the sun shining on the summit of a snow-tipped mountain, and want awfully hard to reach it." (BJ p. 194) For Marion the shining peaks remain inaccessible.

Callaghan examines relationships, old myths and new beginnings in A Broken Journey. His portrait of Marion Gibbons is his most ambitious female characterization to date and she is totally credible. A Broken Journey paves the way for They Shall Inherit the Earth, a novel of greater complexity and broader scope than any of Callaghan's previous works. In it there will be a little of Marion Gibbons in a more perfectly realized Sheila Aikenhead; a little of Patricia Lee's earthiness rediscovered and redefined in the character of Anna.

Chapter V

Such Is My Beloved

Such Is My Beloved, published in 1934, shows Callaghan's growing mastery of his craft. All of its components -- tone, setting, characterization, are what Henry James called "intimately associated parts of one general effort of expression."<sup>14</sup> The novel's impact depends upon its irony. The controlling metaphor is prostitution and the spreading ironies arising from its use are like concentric circles in a pond when someone tosses in a pebble. The pebble in the novel's case is the unexpected salutation of two prostitutes to a startled priest named Father Dowling. Through them, a naïve but persistent man acknowledges that he is his brother's keeper. The prostitutes themselves become a metaphor for Mary and the Church, the "beloved" of the title. The Church as entrenched institution is unsparingly examined and found wanting. The 'truth' or message of Christianity, redemption from evil through the person of Jesus Christ, is obscured through the "fraudulent pretending" (TSIP p. 20) of the self-righteous. Bishop, business-man and pimp are motivated by the same philosophy, "to weigh the profit from the transaction...." (MB pp. 70-71) Caritas is replaced by 'arms length' charity and the parish disregards those who need its help the most. The poor Canzanos go on producing children with "a fixed silliness in their eyes" (MB p. 123) they cannot possibly hope to support. The 'problem' of Midge and Ronnie is banished to another jurisdiction. Father Dowling is the exception. He learns to care, he stops pretending, he discovers the cost of truth. He goes from Cathedral to asylum. He is forced to exchange his beloved parish community with its "murmuring

city noises...the steady and mysterious hum that was always in the air" (MB p. 58) for the restricted environment of the mental institution, whose inhabitants scream out their rage or withdraw in frozen silence.

The great depression of the thirties was at its height when Such Is My Beloved was published and the economic climate of those hard times is an integral part of setting. Against this background, Father Dowling confronts the orthodoxy of the institutionalized Church. Through the confrontation some timeless questions are generated, for one, the definition of community. Physical and spiritual poverty are still with us and the implications of the story are as moving now as in 1934. Callaghan anticipates, in Father Dowling, the concept of the worker priest. Other issues he only touches upon in the novel such as clerical celibacy and birth control, are now in the forefront of Roman Catholic controversy.

In spite of the bitter ending the novel is not pessimistic. This is largely due to Callaghan's creation of a protagonist who is simultaneously heroic and endearing. Dowling's naïvety affords some genuinely funny moments in the novel. The parable type quest is reminiscent of romantic quest. Father Dowling and Sir Gawain are not so far removed from each other as time would indicate.

Callaghan opens his novel with a view of Father Dowling seen through the eyes of a staid and more senior priest, Father Anglin. Dowling is disturbing to some because he is likely "to attack any difficult social problem with all the intensity of his very ardent nature." (MB p. 3) Father Anglin disapproves of Dowling's approach but says nothing because "he was afraid he would reveal too easily his own lack of faith in any social progress." (MB p. 3) The ironic note

is immediately struck. After we learn about Dowling from Anglin's viewpoint of age and cynicism, a short paragraph follows in which the narrator tells us more about Dowling. He is warm and charming, both old and young are attracted to him, and he is secure and confident in "his charming smile that usually made everybody feel amiable so he did not have to take criticism seriously." (MB p. 3) Through the simple device of two narrative points of view a dichotomy is established. Father Dowling is enthusiastic and idealistic but he is also egotistical and vain. This mixture of frailties permits the reader to respond to Dowling the man as well as Dowling the priest.

With the third paragraph the action begins. Dowling returns to the Cathedral residence after visiting an aged parishioner who is convinced she is dying. We have already seen that Dowling is a man of vigour and passion; when he recognizes the vigour still flourishing in Mrs. Schwartz he stops praying and "he assured her he would see her many times in church on Sundays, and he went away." (MB p. 4) Dowling's light-hearted attitude and his enjoyment of the walk back to the Cathedral reinforce the evidence that he is no ascetic. He does not even notice the Cathedral spire although it is in plain view, because he is engrossed in his own thoughts. He is imagining "another powerful discourse on the building of a society on Christian principles and wondering if he dare use such bold fine thoughts in his next Sunday sermon." (MB p. 4) Dowling is full of himself and his fantasy. He even imagines a possible snub by "prominent and wealthy" parishioners who might complain about him but in his fantasy Dowling thinks of himself as "a nice young fellow." (MB p. 4) It is at this point that the nice young fellow is unexpectedly hailed on the street by two young prostitutes. His pompous dream is

shattered.

Callaghan has accomplished a lot in his brief opening paragraphs. The contrast between the serious young priest wildly gesticulating in the pulpit as he tries to save the world, and the shock of the actual encounter with that world is quite funny. Yet there is a hint of the ending in the beginning as it is clear that Dowling is out of step with his superiors. Anglin "merely stared at him with his pale blue eyes and shrugged his shoulders as a kind of warning." (MB p. 3) The Cathedral spire appears and is not noticed. Unlike the spire in Strange Fugitive which even survives a fire, this one is a structure decaying rather than enduring. Later, Dowling feels a "fresh full contentment" as he looks at the roof of the Cathedral shining under moonlit snow but the white snow is only a fleeting illusion of purity. (MB p. 15)

Callaghan's carefully built-up and successive encounters between the priest and the prostitutes adds authenticity to an unlikely situation and helps to make the characterizations of both priest and prostitutes consistent and credible. As his involvement with them develops he learns more about their background and their drift into prostitution, more about their strengths and weaknesses. The reader is able to accept them as real people, not stereotypes.

Dowling's reaction to the two prostitutes in his first encounter is predictable. Shocked and embarrassed, he beats a hasty retreat. He has noticed the shabby appearance of the two girls but does not look at their faces. In a sense he has not seen 'them.' (This is the first of several occasions in the novel when the act of seeing has the extra connotation of awareness and will be discussed subsequently.) Dowling's instinct for honesty soon surfaces. "Before he has gone twenty paces he

began to be ashamed of his behaviour, for he had ducked his head and hurried as though hiding some guilty thought or longing within him...." (MB p. 5) He also has a strongly developed sense of community, for he realizes that the two girls are part of his parish, "who, no doubt, lived...not far away from the church." (MB p. 5) His second encounter is accompanied by deep humiliation: "His failure to be impressive with the girls made his face hot with shame." (MB p. 6) Dowling is still more concerned with his own inability to control a situation for which he feels himself eminently suited, than with the girls themselves. This time, however, he has seen 'them' and the two girls remain in his thoughts. He wishes, regretfully, that he could have "touched them in some way." (MB p. 17) Dowling is unaware that it is he who will be touched by them, that they will be the instrument that turns his dream of a "society built on Christian principles" to harsh reality. (MB p. 3)

Dowling returns once more to the prostitutes, asking himself defensively why he shouldn't call on them, "as I would on anyone else in the parish who might need me?" (MB p. 7) On his way to find the girls Father Dowling begins to realize how easy it has been to confront the thing he calls "moral looseness" in the comfortably dark shelter of the confessional chamber. (MB p. 7) Dowling's march to martyrdom has begun. By the end of the novel the Church as institution will have failed its priest and the two women who most need its strength and solace. In the process Father Dowling is transformed from an ordinary priest to something approaching sainthood. At one point in the novel, after he has dismissed Dowling, the Bishop is troubled by "a feeling stronger than his reason." He begins to reconsider his judgement of Dowling but decides instead: "It's absurd. He would have to have been



a saint. I don't know much about him. It's odd I've never really heard of him before,' he whispered." (MB p. 135) The Bishop is disturbed, momentarily, at his own lost sense of wonder in the possible. He recalls his past ardour when he "had longed to love Christ in everything he did" and his gradual adjustment as he had grown "more cautious and had formed estimates of the value of all human expectations." (MB p. 134)

Dowling, however, is not a saint. He likes his nip of brandy, he enjoys conviviality and he temporizes when caution dictates. Wanting to say to his wealthy parishioner, Mr. Robison, "tell me are there some places where a priest must not go, some people that must not be touched?" he restrains himself instead and, "with extraordinary diplomacy said: "'Of course I understand your point of view.'" (MB p. 84) Father Dowling is an 'ordinary' man who undergoes a transformation because he dares to "face the thing freshly." (MB p. 19) He doggedly persists in loving Midge and Ronnie for themselves. He refuses to accept Charlie Stewart's impersonal judgement that the prostitutes are mere failures in an imperfectly functioning economic system. Stewart insists that Dowling is mistaken in viewing Midge and Ronnie as a "religious problem" and that in the "perfectly organized state there would be no streetwalkers." (MB p. 127) Dowling disdains Mrs. Robison's point of view that "all prostitutes are feeble-minded." (MB p. 94) Finally, he denies the Bishop's 'rational' approach that his love for the girls should be seen "objectively as a philosophical problem." (MB p. 131) Dowling admits to the Bishop that he grew "to love them for themselves" and he says when he is rebuked: "'It seems to me it was loving them in the only way I knew how, your Grace.'" (MB p. 132)

The means of grace for Father Dowling's transformation is the intervention of the two prostitutes. Between their first salutation and his eventual incarceration in a mental hospital, Dowling learns the truth about poverty, humiliation, temptation, forgiveness, humility and obedience. Before his love for the prostitutes transforms his life, all of these concepts are only hypothetical to Dowling, appropriate subjects for his "fierce" sermons.

Dowling has been accustomed to associating a life of vice with luxurious surroundings. As he looks about the mean room in the shabby hotel where Midge and Ronnie live and ply their trade, he suddenly realizes "there might be many things he did not understand." (MB p. 22) The girls point out that Dowling's prayers will not pay the room rent and Midge says angrily:

'We're not even high-class whores, see,' she said. 'We take what comes our way and mighty glad to get it.' She was speaking with all the fury of an indignant, respectable woman and the mingling of her strange humility and her passion was so convincing that Father Dowling began to feel doubtful, as if there might be many things he did not understand . . . . There was much he had not understood, there was a whole economic background behind the wretched lives of these girls. They were not detached from the life around them. They had free will only when they were free. (MB pp. 22-23)

Father Dowling approaches his wealthy parishioner Mr. Robison in order to seek financial help for Ronnie and Midge. Robison is a pillar of the church who likes his charitable acts well attended by publicity. (MB pp. 38-39) Dowling's serious approach makes Robison uncomfortable, "for the lawyer preferred the way the old priest asked for contributions, with a splendid aplomb, a fine, gracious exchange of compliments that set them both rolling with hearty laughter." (MB

p. 82) Robison offers Father Dowling platitudes and little hope and the priest leaves "with his face burning" at the patronizing way he has been handled. (MB p. 41) Dowling suffers even deeper humiliation from Mrs. Robison who is "so devout in observing all the feast days and holy days and giving leadership to all her co-religionists in the nicest social matters...." (MB p. 90) Infuriated that Dowling has invited prostitutes to her home, she peremptorily calls a taxi for their removal. "Father Dowling felt that they had given him his hat and put him out of the house, just as though he were the neighbourhood nuisance." (MB p. 94)

Dowling's temptation is also attended with humiliation. For a long time Midge and Ronnie are puzzled by the priest's interest in them. "They could not believe that sooner or later he would not want either one of them." (MB p. 48) Dowling, always circumspect, is shocked one night by the behaviour of Annie who is a friend of Midge and Ronnie. Annie had "tried many times to arouse Father Dowling and refused to accept his celibacy." (MB p. 49) She viciously challenges Dowling by exposing herself and although Midge rebukes her, Dowling's awakened passion torments his thoughts of Midge and Ronnie and he sees them suddenly as desirable young women. "He wanted to take their soft bodies and hold them while his arms trembled. He wanted to put his head down on white warm softness." (MB p. 49) Fighting his inclination never to go back to the hotel again, Dowling perseveres patiently "with all these girls till they all got used to him." "They began to ask his advice on many matters. They had more problems than he had ever heard in the confessional." (MB p. 50)

At the beginning of his relationship with the two girls, Father

Dowling's primary concern is to lead them away from a life of prostitution. He prays that, "the grace of God will make things easier for you and you won't want to go out on the streets." (MB p. 12) Gradually as Dowling confronts the circumstances that have led the girls to prostitution, he is able to forgive their choice and finds himself, after the unceremonious dismissal from the Robison home, able to say: "I don't blame Ronnie and Midge, whatever they're doing." (MB p. 95) Dowling does not learn to love the sin but he learns to love the sinner. The Bishop admonishes him and says: "I should imagine the notion of prostitution alone would make you sick with disgust." Dowling's reply reveals his hard-won humility.

'If I start hating prostitutes where am I going to stop? . . . These girls have prostituted their bodies. All around us there are all kinds of people prostituting their souls and their principles for money. I know people in this city who prostitute our faith for the sake of expediency. I watch it going on all around and wonder how corrupt our faith can become before it dies. So if I can't have charity for those girls, certainly I can have no love for many others in higher places. (MB p. 132)

Dowling knows, as he leaves the Bishop's office, that he will be disciplined, "like a fallen priest, or like one who was simply not a good priest." (MB p. 133) He accepts the rebuke and does not desert his calling. He calmly tells himself: "Obedience is necessary. Obedience is to be preferred even to sacrifice." (MB p. 133) He is able to find joy in the knowledge that through his love for Midge and Ronnie he was "loving the whole world too." (MB p. 133)

The setting for this novel is Father Dowling's parish in a run-down neighbourhood. The action is circumscribed even more narrowly by the streets that join the Cathedral to the sleazy rooms in the shabby

hotel where Midge and Ronnie live. The time-span is short and parallels a symbolic time of testing, the days of Lent leading to Easter. The time-span is circumscribed in another way through the aged parishioner, Mrs. Schwartz. At the beginning of the novel, on the day that Dowling first meets Midge and Ronnie, Mrs. Schwartz lives in spite of her conviction that she is dying. Near the end of the novel, Mrs. Schwartz does die, and simultaneously Midge and Ronnie are run out of town as a result of discreet intervention by the Bishop and the Robisons. The old woman's extra lease on life is almost like a reprieve which parallels Dowling's interlude with the prostitutes. After her funeral the priest compares the fate of his two prostitutes and the death of Mrs. Schwartz whose "soul was in such peace and so well secured." (MB p. 122) "Before him, . . . there seemed to be slowly passing all those restless souls who were struggling and dying all over without consolation. And those who were living seemed so much more in need of peace and the justice of God than the soul of the dead old lady who had known such repose." (MB p. 122)

The four appearances of the Cathedral and its spire support the contention of the novel, the failure of the Church as institution to recognize the truth. When Dowling is lost in his own egotistical fantasy the spire is passed, unnoticed. When he does see "the dark mass of the old weather-beaten structure" its roof is shining under its covering of snow but this illusion of purity is fleeting. (MB p. 15) Midge tries to see the Cathedral spire from her hotel-room window because she is lonely and hopes that Father Dowling will come and talk with her. She has chased a 'client' away and she thinks that Father Dowling would be pleased. "There would have been something about it that

would have pleased him." (MB p. 30) The Cathedral is close to the shabby hotel, "but no matter how she strained her neck she could not see the spire." (MB p. 30) The final appearance, or non-appearance of the spire occurs after Dowling has failed to obtain help from his wealthier parishioners for Midge and Ronnie. He tries his luck with Charlie Stewart and is able to borrow twelve dollars from his friend who "had no faith and was a dreadful rationalist...." (MB p. 43) Charlie Stewart and Father Dowling rarely agree but the young man accepts Dowling for himself. His flat is an oasis where Dowling can go and "take off his collar, stretch his legs, and relax and laugh like a human being." (MB p. 43) This time Dowling does not see the spire because he is making a fervent little prayer for his good friend. "In all the city, he thought, no other priest had such an interesting friend, a man who was not only good-natured but full of his own wisdom, full of startling observation, speculative thought and, above all, a man with a simple heart." (MB p. 44)

Much of the imagery in Such Is My Beloved is provocative. There are, for example, two feasts and a transformation. The first feast is a parody of communion, the second, a metaphorical communion. Father Anglin's habitual daily ritual is lunch at his favourite coffee shop. Here, "with a deep expansive relish" he consumes a club sandwich, "containing dainty bits of chicken breasts and tomato and lettuce and toasted bread and two dill pickles." (MB p. 15) Callaghan uses understatement here to produce an ironic effect. In the passage in question the impression of Father Anglin is first reported through Father Dowling's consciousness and in the good priest's thoughts Anglin "was, of course, a very pious old priest, white-haired, fresh-faced, vigorous too, although

a bit settled in his habits and way of thinking." (MB p. 15) Then the point of view alters slightly as we are told by the narrator that everyone in the neighbourhood knew the old priest and we see Anglin from the point of view of the storekeepers, fruit-dealers, Jewish tradesman, Protestant businessmen and the policeman on the beat. All of the vocations are secular; few, presumably, are Catholic. What these people see, as Anglin walks to his solitary feast, is a man whose "big body rolled along the street . . . Bits of hair stuck out at the sides of his hat, his face was always red as if he couldn't get his breath, and half the time his eyes seemed to be closed." (MB p. 15) Every item in his sandwich is described and we are told he felt as sober as he looked while eating it. Finally, we are told that this man is so sober and serious that he will not allow rice to be thrown "frivolously" at weddings. Without anything in the passage that damns Father Anglin directly, the image of a pompous glutton is evoked, a glutton who indulges himself as devoutly as he carries out his holy offices.

The second feast is a light-hearted picnic of cheap wine and sandwiches shared between Father Dowling and Midge and Ronnie in the shabby hotel room. Not only is it a metaphorical communion, it is an act of contrition on Father Dowling's part. In the usual communion forgiveness is bestowed upon the recipient through the intervention of the priest; in this instance it is Dowling who seeks forgiveness from the two prostitutes. He holds himself responsible for the humiliation they have suffered from their visit to the Robisons.

The transformation in the novel is effected through Dowling's gift of clothing to Midge and Ronnie. Although the miracle is fleeting,

the transformation is, as Dowling has hoped, "deeper than a mere change of clothing." (MB p. 60)

And when they returned, shyly standing in front of him and looking around with an awkward uncertainty, glancing one at the other in a curious mutual uneasiness, he said nothing, he watched in silence and he did not even smile. Then they smiled timidly. They couldn't get rid of their feeling of shyness, they tried laughing at each other, 'Look at you, Midge,' Ronnie said. Midge looked almost dainty in the grey dress, with her face paler and her eyes round with endless surprise. In the black crepe dress with the long, severe, but graceful lines, some of the awkwardness seemed to have gone out of Ronnie, and her hair looked fairer, her face fresher. With this new timidity, lasting for just a few moments, she seemed severely honest, severely forthright in appearance. . . . Then they began to laugh and walk around gaily, Midge extending her left hand gracefully to Ronnie and making a little curtsy. Then they both laughed with a fine free happiness: "they shrugged their shoulders, they became simply themselves..." (MB pp. 60-61)

Malcolm Ross refers to Callaghan's artful exploitation of the "Song of Songs" in the novel. He notes in his introduction, "this bridal symbolism is also tense with interior sexual ironies, and Callaghan adroitly pits clerical celibacy against the injunction to be fruitful and multiply, the cult of the Virgin against the church of the big families." (MB p. x) The paradox exists and Callaghan is obviously aware of it and other paradoxes but his response is to a paradox at once more simple and profound. Through the "Song of Songs" secular love and sacred love become one. In the novel Father Dowling's beloved, the Church, is suffering from the same "invisible worm"<sup>15</sup> that corrupts the lives of the two prostitutes whom he learns to love. The furtiveness and hypocrisy that characterizes their profession also threatens his true beloved, the Church. Midge's unnamed disease, which will inevitably destroy her if left untreated, becomes a symbolic symptom



of what threatens the parish and may destroy the Church.

As it exists in the Old Testament, the "Song of Songs" is a poetic celebration of sexuality and the perpetual renewal of life. Its language is sensuous, its images erotic and it is a far cry from the rooms of Ronnie and Midge that reek of poverty and staleness. It is also far removed from Mrs. Canzano, "bulging with her twelfth child" whom Dowling reluctantly tries to resign to her fate on the basis of "Christian resignation to a life of misery." (MB p. 103) Dowling's response to the Canzanos and the burden of their fruitfulness is less assured after his awareness has been jolted by his friendship with the two prostitutes. He wishes to write a commentary for the "Song of Songs" that will show "how human love may transcend all earthly things." (MB p. 139) When he is banished to the asylum he continues to work on his commentary during his lucid moments. The real 'gloss' however, has surely been undertaken and accomplished through Father Dowling's personal response to the "secret, rich feeling of this love song, sung so marvellously that it transcended human love and became divine." (MB p. 78) His gloss is made manifest by three actions in the novel: Dowling's love for Midge and Ronnie and his acceptance of them as part of his parish; his joyful sermon that instructs his parishioners on the love "that all people ought to have for one another" (MB p. 78); his quiet confrontation with the Bishop in which he admits: "Yes I did grow to love them for themselves." (MB p. 131)

To face the object "freshly for what it was in itself" is a fundamental tenet of Morley Callaghan's writing credo. In Such Is My Beloved there are significant occasions when the act of seeing has the extra connotation of awareness. The first is Dowling's initial

encounter with the prostitutes when, reacting only to the stigmata of a stereotype, he is afraid to look into their faces and so does not see 'them'. Later, in his room at the Cathedral residence he tries peering through his window in the hope that he might locate their hotel beyond the roofs and chimneys, "but the water that had streamed down the windows now blurred his vision." (MB p. 7) Water, so often a metaphorical sign of cleansing and God's grace, has obscured seeing. When the girls are sentenced the magistrate 'sees' them only as a part of a "long procession of girls that kept straggling before her every morning, making her disgusted and angry." (MB p. 116) To the officials at court, "all these women, after a little while, began to look alike." (MB p. 114)

"Whistling Joe" is an old man of the streets who passes by as Father Dowling, Ronnie and Mr. Robison are walking together. Robison is acutely uncomfortable in the presence of the prostitute and Ronnie is aware of his embarrassment. Whistling Joe is shabbily dressed and is said to be "a bit daffy" by Ronnie. Nevertheless, the prostitute recognizes and accepts his presence on the street. Dowling too, has noticed him many times and draws Robison's attention to him. "I've seen that poor fellow many times around here. Haven't you?" (MB p. 87) One wonders why Callaghan put him there and his presence recalls the admonition that Christ would go unrecognized if he reappeared on earth. Such an appearance is consistent with Callaghan's ironic vision in Such Is My Beloved, especially since it is Mr. Robison who says: "I've never seen him in my life before." (MB p. 87)

When Dowling is removed to the asylum by the lake it is his confrontation with "the face of the wretched gray-haired woman" who

shrieks out her rage and anguish, that brings him to the realization of his own condition. Dowling's painful moment of awareness occurs as he stands "looking out over the clear lake which was so very blue and calm today." (MB p. 143) Earlier in the novel the sound of "lake water lapping on the shore" is associated with Dowling's happiness at finally becoming a priest. (MB p. 73) The novel ends in darkness with the "cold night light on the skyline" and the "cold smooth waves still rolling on the shore." (MB p. 144) It also ends on a consistently ironic note. Father Dowling is able to accept his condition and even offers his "sickness and insanity" as a sacrifice, asking only that the souls of Midge and Ronnie be spared.

Judith Kendle, writing in Canadian Literature says: "It is the good father's experience of the Bible as imaginative literature that has led him to his perception of human truth. Instead of finally revealed truth or Roman Catholic dogma, the poetry of the Bible is approached as metaphorical sign, and the most appropriate attitude towards it is one of awareness not reverential awe."<sup>16</sup>

## Chapter VI

They Shall Inherit the Earth

They Shall Inherit the Earth, published in 1935, is about a man and his son, their estrangement and eventual reconciliation, a version of the familiar prodigal son story. The scope of the novel is broader than any previous work. Although the principal consideration of plot develops from the father/son relationship, other relationships within the Aikenhead family are also developed. The microcosmic world of the Aikenheads is set against the larger world of a North American city caught in the grip of the great depression. A dual theme provides the paradox from which the action of the novel proceeds: a nostalgic longing for a return to innocence and reconciliation is set against the theme of man as conniving predator, often fearful and a victim himself. Previous novels have shown that the problem of "relating a Christian enlightenment to some timeless process of becoming" (TSIP pp. 94-95) is dependent on a need to distinguish truth from falsehood. Reflecting its greater complexity, They Shall Inherit the Earth shows how unaccommodating the recognition of truth can be. When the novel opens Andrew Aikenhead has already begun to question the values upon which his life and business are founded. His son Michael is cloaked in arrogant idealism, then trapped by his own distorted rationale of justice. He almost destroys his father and their relationship.

The dual theme is reflected in structure, setting, characterization and imagery. There are three sections in the novel although there is no formal division between them. The first part comprises only three chapters in which Callaghan establishes the central issue, the estrangement of father and son. The first chapter could be summarized

very briefly. A middle-aged man visits his estranged son in order to invite him to spend the week-end with his family at their country home. With some reluctance and condescension, the son accepts. The first chapter however, is filled with unobtrusive detail that links themes and introduces imagery significant to the rest of the novel. It opens on an "early summer evening" in keeping with Andrew's mission of reconciliation and closes on a "fine spring night." A mood of hopeful expectancy is established which contrasts with what actually happens in the novel. In this chapter and subsequent chapters Callaghan frequently uses the words "seeking", "longed", "eager", "yearning", "softly" and "upturned" to emphasize the reconciliation theme. Andrew's identification with "the firm of Hillquist and Aikenhead" helps to establish the distance between father and son. Michael reveals both pride and arrogance when he dismisses his father's offer of employment. "I'm an engineer,...An engineer. I like engineering. I wouldn't like the advertising business." (TSIE p. 16) The brief appearance of Huck Farr introduces the stalking imagery that represents the other half of the theme, man as predator. When Andrew "coughs like a man who is about to make an important speech and offers a few preliminary sounds as a friendly gesture" (TSIE p. 11) his advertising agency mannerisms, which are only superficial, spoil his attempt at communication. This incident foreshadows what happens later in the country when father and son meet. Failed communication images are frequent in the novel. Anna makes a brief appearance in the first chapter. She functions in the novel as a means of grace and in her first appearance she alleviates Andrew's unease. "But when she smiled like that Michael's father suddenly found the flow of friendly words that had been eluding him,...."

(TSIE p. 14) The amount of significant detail contained in the first chapter, all of it relevant to what happens subsequently in the novel, shows how Callaghan's subtle and unobtrusive technique allows him to achieve his aim -- "...I wanted the novel to have an impact as a whole -- to offer some one vision of life, giving the whole thing its own reality."<sup>17</sup> The remaining two chapters of the first section introduce other characters and continue to emphasize the dual theme, largely through the consciousness of Andrew. Andrew shares with his daughter Sheila, his delight in the anticipated reconciliation with Michael but the anticipation is marred by guilt he feels over his resentment of his step-son Dave. "With sudden shame he remembered the leap of gladness he had felt within him as Dave went out and closed the door, and he wondered why he had felt that way, and as he got up he was deeply troubled, for he wanted to be honest with himself." (TSIE p. 22) Andrew is also beginning to realize that a way of life he had once considered important enough to sacrifice ideals for, is no longer important to him. "And that part of his life of twenty years ago was crying out for life against that contrived and hollow gaiety he heard in the other room and that early time of his life now seemed the most like home." (TSIE p. 28)

The next section of the novel, comprising nine chapters, is where the longed-for reconciliation is to take place. Appropriately, it has an idyllic landscape; ironically, it becomes the setting for tragedy. In an incident akin to the biblical Cain and Abel story, Michael is implicated in the drowning of his step-brother Dave. His sister Sheila's joy over her forthcoming marriage is infected by doubt and Andrew's hopes for a reconciliation with his son are shattered.

Michael blindly refuses to acknowledge any responsibility for Dave's death and is able, through his personal 'rationale' on the meaning of justice, to transfer his guilt to his father.

The rest of the novel and by far the longest portion, is set in the depression-gripped city. This is a fit location for the resolution which must take place far from the idyllic setting to which now, no return is possible. It is against a depression background and through the influence of Anna, that a resolution takes place. This section contains the three brief but crucial chapters which comprise the wolf-hunt through which Michael achieves a tentative comprehension of his dilemma.

The time-span of the novel is relatively short, from one summer to another, and even the seasons are integrated into the two-fold theme. The novel commences in summer, in what should be a time of fruition. The introductory chapters are characterized by a mood of hopeful expectancy which continues into the second part but is terminated by Dave Choate's drowning. As winter approaches the depression-gripped city, despondency and then guilt overtake Andrew while Michael's suppressed guilt festers beneath an uneasy surface. The brief interlude of the wolf-hunt, through which Michael begins to discover significance in the relationship of single parts to the whole, and gains a degree of humility, also takes place in winter. But this is winter away from the close confinement of shabby flats in the city. It is winter cold, crisp and glistening, near a town where lake boats once carried grain-laden cargoes to distant ports. The partial vision Michael experiences here is reflected in the open landscape with its long vistas of uninterrupted view. The novel ends where it began, in the city in summer. The birth



of Michael and Anna's son, the hard-won humility of Michael and the "shy" reconciliation of father and son make it truly a time of fruition.

The setting of the first three introductory chapters has a more benign atmosphere than the same location has in the last part of the novel. In keeping with the mood of hopeful expectancy, the depression atmosphere is softened. The "early summer evening" with which the novel opens, the "streets of old houses" and the "fine spring night" with which the chapter ends, obscure the harshness of the actual times. In the next two chapters the threat of unemployment through the decline of the advertising firm's accounts, underlies the shrill bravado of the Aikenhead party but the scene is set in the affluent Aikenhead household. Its location "across the city" emphasizes the gulf between Andrew's life and his son's existence in a shabby walk-up. By the end of the novel both father and son have similar accommodation within walking distance of each other.

In marked contrast to the depression atmosphere of the city is the almost lyrical description of Michael's return to the Aikenhead country home.

So Michael was driving into the country with Ross Hillquist, his sister's lover. They had been driving all afternoon through a country that was rolling farm land with the road dipping down through long smooth hills and then rising to high crests, from where you could see the country spreading out for miles with the sun glistening on ripening fields and gleaming on small blue lakes in every wide valley, and always beyond the low rolling hills and the great dark clumps of woodland was the misty skyline, so you had the feeling of rising and falling and always going deeper into that grey misty country beyond the hills. (TSIE p. 29)

The dream-like mood and the romantic surroundings of the Aikenhead

home which includes lake, green lawns, a shuttered stone cottage and apple trees in blossom is deliberately other world. It is far from the reality of the city and the depression. As Michael and Ross drive through the gently rolling hills, their journey and even the weather assume symbolic significance. "You had the feeling of rising and falling and always going deeper into that grey misty country beyond the hills."

(TSIE p. 29) Journey and place are tinged with biblical allusions as the son returns to the father's home. Callaghan's use of the word 'into' in the first sentence rather than 'through' gives a sense of Michael's envelopment by the surrounding hills and valleys. The rain is like a gentle baptism, a ceremonial renewal and refreshment: "It was a very warm rain that made the country glow softly, and whenever the rain touched Michael's face he felt more alive." (TSIE p. 29)

The feelings of every exile are captured in Callaghan's description of Michael's first view of the place that is uniquely home: "An unpremeditated flow of gladness swept through him to be there again in his own country...." (TSIE p. 35) Setting is ideally suited to the realization of Andrew Aikenhead's hopes and Michael's remembrance of past times, "when one had been a boy and the other a young man and they had been father and son and close together,...." (TSIE p. 17)

The choice of setting is not only ironic, Callaghan uses it to create a double image in keeping with the dual theme. Each idyllic episode in this section is followed and modified by one that is threatening. Michael and his father achieve a measure of harmony while they fish together. Andrew contentedly watches his son's eager response to "that quiet passion of the hunter or fisherman that took Michael cleanly out of himself." (TSIE p. 43) Immediately following is an

episode in which Michael joins his step-brother Dave and his friends, as well as Sheila and Ross. They share a bottle of wine and a trifling conversation on sex and economics. Superficially, it is light-hearted and bucolic. To Michael it "seemed very good, and it seemed to be what he had wanted so much when he thought of it at night in his bed before he left the city." (TSIE p. 46) This scene ends with Sheila being roughly grabbed by Dave while Michael, who is too inebriated to think clearly or to act, notices his sister's eyes "had that excitement in them that used to worry him when he saw it." (TSIE p. 46) Under the surface of shared conviviality is an undefined threat and the repetition of the word "seemed" effectively expresses doubt.

Two other episodes involve Sheila and Ross and then, Sheila and Dave. The first is a love scene between Sheila and Ross in which the description of setting serves as metaphor for their shared passion. The natural fecundity of place provides a sensuous atmosphere that is developed through response to sight, sounds and touch. Water lilies grow in profusion near the banks that are "laden with a heavy brown rotting sawdust" from a disused mill. Ross wades into the stream to pick a bouquet of lilies for Sheila and the sounds they hear as they lie on the bank of the stream include a water-thrush's call and a "stirring in the tall sedge along the bank." (TSIE p. 47) The blissful afternoon spent with her lover is still in Sheila's thoughts when she agrees to accompany Dave to the post-office. The time is now dusk and although they walk side by side, "they both had their own separate thoughts." (TSIE p. 48) Although they walk past pastureland "all yellow with buttercups", night is anticipated in the "long line of mist above the ground" and in the "deep woods looming behind with the

magnificently straight trunks of towering elms." (TSIE p. 48) After Dave confesses his feelings for Sheila he manhandles her in a clumsy and desperate attempt to force his affection on her. When his advances are rebuffed, Dave spitefully insinuates that Sheila should be reluctant to marry anyone since she is likely to inherit the mental illness suffered by the first Mrs. Aikenhead before she died. Evening has become night and Sheila runs from Dave feeling she would always "be separate and alone." (TSIE p. 52) By juxtaposing the Eden-like setting and the behaviour of its inhabitants Callaghan creates the image of a spoiled paradise. Resolution will take place outside of 'paradise' and, significantly, Anna, the means of grace in the novel, makes no appearance in this section.

The last and largest section of the novel is set in the city. In all of Callaghan's novels the locale is mainly urban, often unobtrusively but obviously Toronto. Most of They Shall Inherit the Earth is set in a large anonymous city. That city could certainly be Toronto but more important than its geographic setting is the socio-economic setting. The depression is featured in several Callaghan novels but nowhere more pervasively than in They Shall Inherit the Earth. Anna and Michael rarely have enough money to eat well; they sit on the radiator or go to bed in order to keep warm. It is, however, the moral and spiritual degradation engendered by the depression that Callaghan emphasizes. Anna almost succumbs to the amoral Huck Farr because, after a long period of unemployment, she is lonely and insecure as well as hungry. The anonymous "they" Michael thinks of as "crushing the humanity in her" (TSIE p. 105) is simply humanity debased and driven to survive on whatever level possible. Even Ross

Hillquist, who is described in the novel as a happy man, "with peace and unity in his soul, who had never been pulled and pushed close to death in the riotous struggle to live," (TSIE p. 190) is confronted by the depression. As a doctor he is tormented by doubts after he refuses to abort a young woman whose own existence and that of her lover will be seriously jeopardized by the unwanted birth. The executives of the Hillquist-Aikenhead agency, striving for accounts in a dwindling market, flatter the dubious talent of Stuart Roebuck in a desperate effort to secure his account. Andrew recognizes that "they're all afraid the office'll fail tomorrow and they'll be on the street, and their wives are in there twiddling their fingers and full of fear too." (TSIE p. 27) Dave Choate and his "useless" friends are only sustained through indulgent parents and inspire resentment and jealousy in Michael. He is suddenly made conscious of his "old-fashioned" and worn clothes and their "piles of fine clothes," their liquor and their tackle, "all looking like a lot of money tossed around very freely." (TSIE p. 32) Hilton's lunch-room where Michael argues and gossips with acquaintances is filled with young men unemployed like himself.

...young men who were out of work and sat in their chairs along the wall and stared blankly at the floor...Michael was wondering how it was that the bouncer knew so surely that even decently dressed men had lost their confidence and would get up and go meekly when he ordered them to go. (TSIE p. 173)

The sense of impending calamity that infects Andrew as he listens to the "wild hoarse singing" (TSIE p. 29) floating up his stairs from below is not shared by his partner Jay Hillquist who, like an ostrich with its head in the sand, simply tries to will the depression away.

Andrew's response to Jay that "you can't sell cheese to people if they haven't got the money to spend" (TSIE p. 25) is considered as arrant defeatism by Jay. Through such glimpses Callaghan catches the misery and the meanness of spirit that characterized the depression.

There is another aspect of setting in this novel that deserves attention since Robin Mathews has recently written about They Shall Inherit the Earth in a political context. The purpose of Mathews' "The New Colonialism" is to reveal a shift in influence from "the growing sense of Canadian identity and even away from British influence toward the power and culture of the U.S.A."<sup>18</sup> Because Mathews' concern over the fight for the very existence of Canada deserves attentive sympathy it is all the more necessary to point out some potentially jingoistic conclusions that he draws in his study of They Shall Inherit the Earth. During the time that Mathews correctly notes was a time of "oppressive" American cultural influence (from the twenties to the sixties), Callaghan continued to live and write in his own city and from his own Canadian experience and imagination. To say that his work was tending in the American direction because he was influenced by such writers as Anderson, Crane and Hemingway is open to debate. These were some of his peers, they inhabited the same continent and shared the same language; they could hardly avoid sharing things in common. To draw absolute conclusions about influences on a particular writer is risky at best. One could argue that Callaghan has been influenced as much by Chaucer, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas as by Hemingway, Crane and Anderson. Part of Callaghan's strength as a writer is his healthy acceptance of himself and his place and time in history. This is not to say that Callaghan accepts what is wrong with his environment.

His acute sense of what has brought us to this particular place and time lends perspective to all that he writes. He knows that to be Canadian is also to be North American. This is not the same thing as tending in the "American direction", which, in itself, means very little. Mathews says that Callaghan is advocating, through an alliance of setting and philosophy, "an anarchist individualism as a criterion of human meaning." ("New Col." p. 98) He says that in the novel, "the external world as a meaningful extension of and an inspiring influence upon the protagonist doesn't really exist...the drowning doesn't shape, modify, or affect the community." ("New Col." pp. 96-97) The external world is the depression and its influence on society and the protagonist is made very clear. Dave's drowning in the lake in the country does make ripples in the larger community. There is an inquest held in Barrie and when Michael returns to the city the event is already known through the newspapers. (TSIE p. 93) Huck Farr has read about it, Stuart Roebuck knows of it and so does Andrew's club and the congregation of his church... The first two individuals do not judge Andrew but club and church both judge and condemn.

The Canada Year Book, 1934-35 shows that in the decade ending in 1931, urban communities absorbed nearly seventy-seven percent of the total increase in population.<sup>19</sup> During this period of rapid urban expansion it is difficult to discover other Canadian novelists of stature who were writing about life lived in the city where so many Canadians were experiencing the flux and tension attendant on such growth and change. Yet Morley Callaghan's novels all had urban settings since the publication of Strange Fugitive in 1928. Mathews is wide of

the mark when he says, "the Maritimes and the West hardly exist in Callaghan's fiction." ("New Col." p. 105) Surely Jane Austen is no less English because she chose to write about provincial society, which she knew, and largely ignored London. Is Ethel Wilson less Canadian because she used a western setting and "neglected" the rest of Canada? These writers wrote about human experience recreated in a particular place but we recognize it as good writing when the experience has universal application beyond its particular setting. The city is not named in They Shall Inherit the Earth and there are none of the definitive landmarks of Strange Fugitive, It's Never Over and A Broken Journey, yet it is just as easy to 'prove' that it is Toronto as to accept Mathews' theory that Callaghan "moves unerringly to set the action in the U.S.A." ("New Col." p. 107) If the city is Toronto then Nathaniel Benjamin's appointment to an American college, Ross's departure to specialize in the United States and Anna's parents living in Detroit are all realistic touches in keeping with a Canadian setting and the Canadian reality at that time. The story could happen plausibly in either country. Its concern is with the perception of truth and the need for individual responsibility. Of the three protagonists, only Anna is consistently unafraid to make responsible choices and accept the consequences. Mathews says of Michael: "He is to learn of his own sin and judge its meaning without recourse to the social structure." ("New Col." p. 107) Michael's sin is not murder. His sins are pride, arrogance and blindness. He does not kill Dave although his blindness is a factor in Dave's death. Dave dies because of his own sins but even so, Michael finally makes the hard decision to go to the police in order to clear his father's name. He is prevented from carrying out



his decision by his father's and Anna's intervention. "You're his wife and I'm his father. We mustn't let him do anything foolish. We couldn't bear it, could we? (TSIE p. 254) Andrew is unwilling to trade love for reputation and Anna, the most consistently responsible person in the novel, realizes that such an act would serve neither society nor the individual.

Callaghan's ability to create memorable characterizations out of 'ordinary' persons has its source in his sense of wonder at the possibilities and the limitations of each human being. In this novel his range of characterization is broader than in any previous work. Michael, Andrew and Sheila develop within the novel. Ross Hillquist, Marthe, Dave and Anna remain essentially unchanged. Jay Hillquist's characterization comes close to parody. One of the most remarkable characterizations is that of Dr. Albert Tucker, the protestant minister. In They Shall Inherit the Earth there is no cathedral and no spire. The church is not Roman Catholic and may be presumed to be less authoritarian. Of the three protagonists, only Andrew looks to the church for strength and comfort. The congregation rejects him and although the minister encourages Andrew to attend services after Dave's death has cast suspicion on him, Callaghan's characterization of Albert Tucker leaves little doubt about the position of the church in this novel. It is uncharitable and un-Christian in its attitude. But, significantly, it is the church deliberately chosen by Andrew to enhance and develop his business career. "In his eagerness to get rich he had joined all the good business clubs in the city, he went to a good church and he was very conservative in political matters." (TSIE p. 26) Dr. Tucker is no Father Dowling. His eyes are described as, "wise, hard, materialistic eyes, and they hardly

ever changed in expression, even when he was comforting the sick, or drinking the health of a distinguished visitor to the city." He is one of "the most successful ministers in the city." (TSIE p. 168)

One of the ironies in the novel is that Andrew Aikenhead finds it difficult to know "what Tucker was actually thinking" because Dr. Tucker used "the same broad-minded manner" and the same "comforting enthusiasm when he was visiting prisons and asylums." (TSIE p. 168)

Andrew seems unaware that Dr. Tucker's style is as calculated as his own and Jay Hillquist's has been in building their agency. Both are directed toward material success. In spite of Tucker's counterfeit character he is able to show, momentarily, compassion toward Andrew's suffering and by linking Tucker's behaviour with Michael's, Callaghan is paving the way for the eventual reconciliation of Michael and Andrew.

Michael denies his father three times in the novel. The first time is at the lake after the drowning, when he angrily says, "you ought to have had more sense than to have brought us along up here." (TSIE p. 67)

The second time is at his sister's wedding in Albert Tucker's church. At first, Michael is eager to be absorbed in "this normal relationship with his own people, and when he heard his father's voice, and saw him smile, he said to himself, 'Everything is all right. Nothing has happened to anybody.'" (TSIE p. 169)

But when Michael perceives his father's altered appearance he is disturbed. "He could see what had happened to his father, and suddenly he felt that his father's suffering and bewilderment were being thrust out at him for him to bear, and he resented it and looked impatient, and went to turn away." (TSIE p. 169)

In the chapter following the wedding Michael

denies his father so shamefully that his carefully built 'rationale' of justice (the mask of his guilt) crumbles temporarily. Feeling a "desolate shame within him" after he has pretended not to see his father in Hilton's lunch-room, Michael starts after him. Before he carries out his impulse he suddenly becomes "frightened of doing something he would regret later on." (TSIE p. 176) He returns instead to the comforting presence of Anna. He even denies to Ross Hillquist, who is enquiring about Andrew, that he has seen his father. Michael will not confront the truth of his action until he experiences fear himself at the time of his own son's birth. Shared suffering will finally open the doors of perception for Michael and it is shared suffering that motivates Tucker's compassion for Andrew. The successful and fashionable minister has "slightly mishappen feet" (TSIE p. 213) that keep him in constant discomfort. Tucker is too vain to wear shoes which would alleviate his pain. When his shoemaker designs a special pair of shoes Tucker succumbs to the bliss of physical comfort but his vanity is easily pricked and the glances of a prominent banker's wife in his congregation convinces him she is staring at his feet. The minister angrily returns the shoes and refuses to pay for them. The shoemaker's threat to take the "distinguished political, civic, and religious leader" to court terrifies Dr. Tucker. His fear of becoming the "talk of the town" inspires another feeling "that he had never had before in his life, a feeling that was almost regret and shame." (TSIE p. 215) Tucker's unaccustomed sense of shame enables him, for once in his life, to extend compassion to another human being. He is intuitively able to comprehend what Andrew has suffered since the drowning has cast suspicion on him. "And that

was why he was looking down at Andrew Aikenhead this afternoon as if he realized for the first time what the man had endured." (TSIE p. 215) He encourages Andrew to receive communion. When several members make their hostility toward Andrew visible, Tucker shows his contempt and anger by staring them down and, "with a strange clumsy tenderness showing plainly in his manner, he gave Andrew Aikenhead the bread and wine." (TSIE p. 217) In spite of vanity and superficiality, Albert Tucker is able to react and respond when his own sense of fear and shame unites him with Andrew. Michael, who is contemptuous of what he perceives as the kind of hypocrisy represented by Tucker and his own father's profession, is still unable to bridge the gap between himself and his father. Tucker's compassion for Andrew may only be fleeting but it illustrates the close link between social responsibility and individual responsibility. The incident also prepares for Michael's eventual acceptance of his own involvement in his father's ruin and Dave's death.

Jay Hillquist's characterization is the ultimate illustration of Callaghan's strong feeling about the "consequences of fraudulent pretending." (TSIE p. 20) He is the aggressive partner in the advertising agency who encourages Andrew to exploit his friends and his community in their climb to material success. "The trouble with you, Andrew, is you don't use your friends. What good are your friends if you don't use them?" (TSIE p. 27) Jay's 'faith' is rooted in the products his firm promotes. "He filled his stomach with the condiments of his clients and took the purges of other clients and was soon made whole again." (TSIE p. 25) His appearance resembles a cadaver. He

has sunken cheeks, clothes that "hung loose on him" (TSIE p. 133) and a neck that "looked creased and red and stringy." (TSIE p. 169) Callaghan depicts a 'man of faith' who refuses to acknowledge change or the reality of the depression. Jay is adamant that he would consider it weakness of character if he should "ever see the day when I'd let a personal relationship interfere with business...." (TSIE p. 135) True to his code, he does not. He has few qualms when he eases Andrew out of the firm they have built together and he, like Michael, has his own 'rationale'.

'For ten thousand years men have fought with each other to make a little money and it's only when they get tired that they lie down and start talking about feeding each other and not looking after themselves....Jay was honestly indignant, for he could not imagine a society among men where there was not a ruthless struggle for profit, where man did not stand alone, and where a man did not have a sacred right to demand that he be left alone to conduct his business in his own way.' (TSIE p. 137)

Ross Hillquist, Jay's son, functions in the novel as mediator and foil for Michael. Unlike Michael in temperament, he shares his view of their father's vocation and rejects his own father's "vigorous individualism and all his ideas and ready catch phrases about human liberty and personal rights." (TSIE p. 69) Both Michael and Ross are trained in science, one as an engineer, the other as a doctor but Ross is much less dogmatic than Michael about the infallibility of science. He accuses Michael of being "bogged down with a lot of nineteenth-century notions about science...." (TSIE p. 191) During the wolf-hunt Ross gives Michael a lecture that finds an echo in Callaghan's remarks in That Summer in Paris. In the novel, Ross says to Michael:

'Sometimes I can't help thinking that scientists don't know anything. They all work their own

little gardens and they all hoe their own little patches. They specialize. They refuse even to consider the relation of one thing to another. If you ask them to, they apologize and say, 'Excuse me, that isn't my field.' Yet the whole world worships them. I'll respect science that's first-hand observation, just as I'd respect your observation on life among the wolves if it was worth a damn, but it isn't. (TSIE p. 191)

Callaghan's remarks in That Summer in Paris share a similar approach although the subject is different.

In the hotel one day I remember encountering a British author, a nice middle-aged gray-haired man. And in no time I was telling him firmly that writing had to do with the right relationship between the words and the thing or person being described; the words should be as transparent as glass, and every time a writer used a brilliant phrase to prove himself witty or clever he merely took the mind of the reader away from the object and directed it to himself; he became simply a performer. (TSIP p. 21)

Unlike his father, Ross is aware of coming change and the death of an old order. He knows that "people on the streets" are deeply fearful. (TSIE p. 220) He is aware that Jay's fight against the failure of his business is a fight against the only death he will acknowledge even though Jay's appearance gives the lie to his illusions. "His sunken cheeks made his wide grin look fanatical." (TSIE p. 219) Jay is unable to comprehend his son's questioning of old values. "He simply couldn't understand his son when they got talking seriously about such matters. It was as though the young doctor had thought a long time about freedom and liberty and had kept asking himself when he was actually free among people." (TSIE p. 69) In this, Ross is similar to Father Dowling in Such Is My Beloved, who comes to the realization that "they [Ronnie and Midge] were not detached from the life around them. They had free will only when they were free." (SIMB p. 23) It is Ross's long thinking

about freedom and liberty that torments him when he recalls his refusal to abort the young girl. "Maybe I made a mistake. Maybe it was up to me to help them. Who am I to pass judgment on how they ought to shape their lives." (TSIE p. 182) Ross's moral dilemma has added irony since Anna is already pregnant, though still unaware of it. Anna's viewpoint also opposes Sheila's since Sheila is afraid to conceive a child after Dave's taunt regarding her mother's stability.

In fairy tales the step-mother and step-children are traditionally wicked and a threat to the true child's inheritance. Marthe Choate and her son Dave are not stereotyped villains but the influence of Dave's drowning on Sheila, Michael and Andrew is lingering and malevolent. Callaghan's finely balanced portrayal of Dave and his mother contributes enormously to the moral dilemma in the novel. Callaghan has, by now, become very skillful in the art of delineating character, especially in taking us away from absolute good or evil to create people with all the ambiguous shadings of reality. Marthe's first appearance in the novel indicates a woman who has more than one side to her nature, unlike the first Mrs. Aikenhead. She is attractive and "when she wore the low-cut black crepe dinner gown she had on tonight she looked deep-breasted and warm with a kind of rich opulence that was half concealed by a natural passivity or stillness within her." (TSIE p. 20) Her son Dave is the product of a romantic wartime marriage but when she marries the widower Andrew, "she felt for the first time that she was close to some security for herself and her son." (TSIE p. 20)

Michael's dislike of his step-mother and her son has its source in a childhood remembrance in which Marthe restrains Michael's mother,

who is ill, from leaving her room. "But Michael, who was watching her, did not understand that she might have found it necessary to struggle with his sick mother. He only knew that he had never felt as much hatred for anyone in the world as he felt for her." (TSIE p. 57)

Marthe, along with her son Dave is installed in the Aikenhead country home in order to look after the ailing Mrs. Aikenhead. The narrator never tells us that Marthe is shrewd and calculating. Instead, with restrained irony, he tells us that the first Mrs. Aikenhead "had a simple unpretentious acceptance of her husband's ambitions. She was not a particularly shrewd woman, for indeed there were times when she seemed to have no particular ambition except that they might preserve their domestic happiness." (TSIE p. 55)

When Dave is drowned Marthe's reaction is vindictive. It is very similar to Dave's reaction to Sheila when he realizes he cannot ever hope to have her. Marthe deliberately tries to implicate Andrew in the drowning by telling the police who are investigating the accident, about the quarrel between father and step-son. "The policeman was embarrassed by the passion he felt in her voice; the farmer was staring with simple unconcealed curiosity at Andrew Aikenhead whom he had known for fifteen years." (TSIE p. 74) Marthe Choate disappears from the novel after the drowning. In her last appearance in the novel, only two pages after her vindictive tirade against Andrew, her sense of isolation is captured through the dialogue. There are several people gathered about her -- Andrew, Jay, Ross and Michael, who are offering consolation to the stricken woman after she has deliberately walked out into the lake.

When Jay repeated, 'We're all here with you, Marthe,' she startled them by saying quietly,



'No, you're not all here Jay.  
 Look, Marthe, we're here, look, Marthe.'  
 'Your wife isn't here, Jay,' she whispered.  
 'My wife?'  
 'Your wife never come here since I've been here.  
 She never asked me to her house either,  
 Jay.' (TSIE p. 76)

Marthe's goodness or badness is left open. What Callaghan does is make her human. Dave's characterization follows a similar pattern so that, although there is no doubt that he is spoiled and spiteful and "worthless" in Michael's eyes there is, nevertheless, sympathy generated for Dave. Sheila recognizes, on the same evening that Dave destroys her happiness, that "he had always been alone when he was in their home,...and now he was alone, too...." (TSIE p. 50) Dave himself expresses his awareness of his shortcomings: "We've always had enough money to make me a bum and I never had to stick to anything." (TSIE p. 50) Each mitigating factor in Dave's character and personality has the effect of enhancing the enormity of Michael's presumption. Out of his arrogance and blindness, Michael presumes to judge another human being's worth. However, the novel makes it clear that he does not drown Dave nor does he expect Dave to drown. He wants him back in the boat and feels "desperate and beaten" when Dave eludes him. He also tries to watch him "heading surely for the other side." (TSIE p. 63) When he hears the cry for help his instinctive response is not, "drown you bastard," it is "swim you bastard." (TSIE p. 63) When his anger subsides, probably in seconds, he makes an attempt to locate Dave but it is too late and too dark. Dave's own irresponsible action is the direct cause of his drowning but Michael is indirectly involved. Callaghan's ability to describe situations so truthfully that it is impossible for the reader to evade the inherent dilemma contributes

to the total impact of the novel. Without Callaghan's carefully weighted characterizations of Dave and Marthe Choate and the manner of Dave's death, the impact would be considerably lessened.

Anna Prychoda represents absolute success in Callaghan's development of female characterization. Vera in Strange Fugitive was flat and somewhat unconvincing. Temperamentally, she was no match for Harry's aggressive but confused drive toward an undefined and always elusive goal. In It's Never Over Isabelle's personality was more vividly drawn but she shared the female protagonist's role with Lillian, and John Hughes wavered ambivalently between them, realizing too late his true feeling for the 'dark' lady. In A Broken Journey, Marion Gibbons was a more rounded characterization and totally authentic, as was Teresa Gibbons. Patricia Lee's directness exemplified a new kind of female characterization; her reactions were immediate and honest. Ronnie and Midge in Such Is My Beloved were authentic and completely plausible but they were not, after all, 'ordinary women.'. In Anna, Patricia Lee's directness and Marion Gibbon's generosity are blended without any of Marion's attendant agonizing. The same healthy skepticism that enabled the two prostitutes to penetrate Mrs. Robison's sham Christianity, enables Anna to see through and resent Nathaniel Benjamin. Nathaniel is one of the many "young intellectuals in America and England, but mainly in France, who are announcing their conversions on all sides." (TSIE p. 87) He belongs to that group of minor characters usually encountered in Callaghan's novels, who hold authoritative and arbitrary opinions on almost everything and in this novel, is one of the habitués of Hilton's lunch-room. The reference to "conversions of all sides" may safely be taken to constitute a playful jibe in the

direction of Hemingway and Eliot.

What makes Anna so different from previous Callaghan heroines is her assured acceptance of self. There is no trace of the puritan ethic in Anna, no fear, unlike Sheila Aikenhead and she willingly accepts the consequences of her own actions, unlike Michael. She is open about her relationship with two previous lovers (TSIE p. 122) but commits herself without reservation and without rejecting Michael when she finally discovers the source of his disquiet. It does not, as Michael is afraid it will, "break us, I know, as it has been breaking me." (TSIE p. 244) Like Ross Hillquist, Anna remains essentially unchanged from beginning to end and contrasts, as Ross does, with Michael's more turbulent and developing characterization. She is, though, much more than a foil for Michael in the novel. Sufficient detail is given about her background to show that her life has been dominated by the depression, yet she maintains a sense of grace, joy in simple things, and a capacity for giving. Without saying directly that Anna is agnostic or detached from any orthodox religion, the novel suggests that she is scornfully skeptical over Nathaniel's convictions. She feels threatened by his lofty talk about a "passion that isn't purely physical" (TSIE p. 144) and finds herself wishing:

...she had a fine education...she longed to be able to take delight in fine ideas and not have to talk always about things she could feel and see, and then it would never be necessary for Mike to turn away from her to another for a satisfaction she had been unable to give him. (TSIE p. 145)

Anna's thoughts show how Callaghan manages to convey meaning without direct commentary. Her yearning toward some quasi-intellectual or spiritual level on which she could meet and match Michael's intellect

is based partly on genuine humility and generosity of spirit and partly on jealousy and resentment at being excluded from Michael and Nathan's conversation. Her insight into Nathan's personality is revealed in her remarks and his reaction to them:

'I know you're quite a firecracker, all right, Anna said, 'You often hit the ceiling, but the excitement's all in your head and not in your heart.'

Anna did not know how she had hurt Nathaniel by suggesting there was a difference between the things he felt. It created a dualism in his nature that terrified him; and he looked at her unhappily, and then struck out,...." (TSIE p. 144)

The suggestion is implicit as well, that Michael is still too easily swayed by the intellectual convictions of others and is still incapable of seeing things as they are: "While Michael was smiling at Nathaniel, as if he was sure he had found at last the one true bright and good part of his friend's nature, Anna was feeling more and more separated from them." (TSIE p. 145) When, later in the novel, Michael begins to recite Elizabethan love lyrics to Anna, her reaction is uncharacteristically angry. This should not be interpreted as an anti-intellectual bias or dislike of Elizabethan love songs, or, that Anna is incapable of reacting positively to literature. It is Callaghan's way of showing Michael's still persistent "flight into simile." (TSIE p. 20) Anna's unexpressed fear that their coming child will have no clothes has triggered her outburst, yet her accusation, "you've just been reading them to amuse yourself." is partly true. (TSIE p. 211) Michael is still a "performer" (TSIE p. 21), for while he is reciting poetry Anna worries and Andrew sits in lonely isolation a few blocks away.

It is through Anna that Sheila Aikenhead-Hillquist conquers the inhibiting fear instilled by Dave before he drowns. From the

beginning Callaghan contrasts and develops the difference between these two women. Anna is an outsider. Michael tells his father he doesn't know much about Anna's background but believes it to be "Ukranian." The Aikenheads and the Hillquists are established and prosperous; Sheila lives a sheltered and affluent life in her father's comfortable home. Anna is unemployed and a potential victim of Huck Farr's predatory stalking, "everybody around here's watching her." "Huck Farr, Miss Gray the lecturer on the next floor and the electrician on the ground floor. Soon they'll be making bets on how long it'll be before Huck lands her." (TSIE p. 15)

Callaghan introduces a certain frailty into the characterization of Sheila. She has "blue eyes that always looked a little feverish and made her father worry and wonder if she might be tubercular." (TSIE p. 22) Sheila is also 'gap-toothed.' Because of Callaghan's penchant for unobtrusive but insignificant detail, one cannot help speculating on the connection between Sheila's teeth and her temperament. She has an "ardent nature" and a capacity for teasing. "She was laughing softly, and teasing the boys, and wondering from time to time whenever she looked over at Ross Hillquist, if he wasn't a little jealous." (TSIE p. 45) When Sheila's reaction to Dave's disclosure about her mother's illness occurs, Callaghan has already built small frailties into her character. We cannot imagine Anna reacting in the same way. The effect of Dave's disclosure on Sheila's subsequent life -- her refusal to have children and her creation of a "little boudoir world" (TSIE p. 177) that does not satisfy the man who loves her -- heightens the contrast between the two women when they finally meet. "The doctor saw Sheila looking shrewdly at the girl that her brother loved, this

girl who had not had her education, who had nearly always been poor, and who was not even expecting Michael to marry her, and yet she was content." (TSIE p. 182) Through Anna's example Sheila is freed from her own fear and is able "to find a new fullness in living." (TSIE p. 205)

Imagery in They Shall Inherit the Earth is exceptionally well integrated into characterization and incident although certain events, such as the wolf-hunt, are more obviously symbolic. The novel contains many biblical allusions including the names of the protagonists. The story itself is a version of the prodigal son. The Cain and Abel myth is exploited and water imagery in the novel sometimes evokes a symbolic baptism, at others a symbolic drowning. Callaghan's employment of myth in his writing reveals an approach at once sophisticated and artless. He is never afraid to confront myth while remaining aware that it is myth that provides the illusion that man can "understand the universe."<sup>20</sup> In the first chapter of They Shall Inherit the Earth two allusions to the Garden of Eden are used in an original way. The first is only implied in the brief description of Huck Farr seen through Andrew Aikenhead's eyes. Huck, who lives in Michael's rooming-house is completely amoral, always willing to turn another's disadvantage to his own advantage and so he preys on Anna. There is no direct reference to a gliding serpent or to Satan yet the image is evoked.

On the second floor, where the light was brighter, he saw a small, neat man with such delicate features and such fair wavy hair parted in the middle that he looked like a pretty boy, except that his blue eyes were red-rimmed and shrewd, and this man was tip-toeing along the hall carrying a basket of fruit in both hands. (TSIE p. 11)

When Anna discovers Huck's calculated offering she brings it to

Michael's room where Andrew has his first and only glimpse of Anna until the end of the novel. In a reversal of Eve's first bite, it is Michael who takes the first bite of the "shining red apple." (TSIE p. 13)

Water imagery in the novel is mainly associated with Michael but it also links father and son through the drowning image used in connection with Andrew's downfall. Water first refreshes Michael with its gentle baptism of rain on his journey to the lake. Its effect fills him with nostalgic regret over "the separation between himself and his people and this country." (TSIE p. 35) It is on water, as fishermen, that Michael and his father achieve the only truce they will experience during Michael's visit. After the drowning the lake becomes a "vast immeasurable expanse of water" in Michael's tormenting dreams. (TSIE p. 92) He is haunted by the sound of lapping water until an imagined cry for help rouses him from his terror. During the day the sight of an old man sitting on a park bench triggers hallucination in Michael. He experiences "a kind of taut brilliance in his vision that made the bench and square shift and waver uncertainly, as though someone wriggling the slide in a magic lantern had caused the image on the screen to go like that." (TSIE pp. 93-94) Michael's distorted magic lantern vision, like the distorted surface of disturbed water, reflects his own distorted rationale that allows him to project blame for Dave's death onto his father. While the son is tormented by suppressed guilt, Andrew assumes guilt for Dave's death although he is blameless. Left over guilt from "his unfaithfulness to his first wife" and the "doubt that had gone with his love for second one" is added to "the longing he had had to be free of Dave." (TSIE p. 131) Andrew's

real and imagined guilt overwhelms him.<sup>1</sup> When Ross Hillquist visits the shabby flat where Andrew lives after selling his home, the drowning image is repeated. "Then he was deeply troubled as though he were on the bank of a river and watching someone far out sinking into death in the water." (TSIP p. 255)

Michael experiences another metaphorical baptism the night before he succumbs to illness after days of neglect and nights of tormenting dreams. "He felt the softness of the summer rain on his forehead, soft and gentle, and making no noise as it fell in the night on the city." (TSIE p. 114) For two days and nights Michael remains semi-conscious while Anna nurses him.<sup>1</sup> When he recovers Anna moves in with Michael.

The gulf separating Andrew from the life he longs for is expressed in two different images.<sup>1</sup> One is simply a distancing technique in which Andrew is separated by physical space from those he loves. The first instance is at the start of the novel as Andrew looks with longing toward Michael's rooming house. He stands on the sidewalk eagerly "looking up at the rooming house where his son lived, and he was full of delight, as though he had at last taken a necessary step that would bring joy again into his life." (TSIE p. 11) As his daughter Sheila descends the stairs in the Aikenhead family home, Andrew looks down at her retreating figure: "she seemed to slant away from him like a path of light." Then as she returns up the stairs with Ross, "the father loved the way those two faces together rose up the stairs to him." (TSIE p. 23) After Sheila's wedding, Andrew stands at the corner waiting for the light to change and "he thought he saw the bright yellow cab that had carried Sheila and Ross away



. . . and all the cabs moved slowly across the road, and the brightest yellow cab shot forward on the other side and went farther and farther away." (TSIE p. 177)

The second image used in the novel to emphasize the gulf between Andrew's goal of reconciliation and the reality is the image of failed communication. Hilton's lunch-room is the appropriate setting for the first of these encounters since this is the place where Michael discusses with acquaintances, their widely differing philosophies. The amoral Huck, the socialist William Johnson and the 'converted' Nathan Benjamin, each has his special way of viewing the world and each has his own solution to its problems. All are caught up in the "swing and rush" of their own words. When Michael brings his father to the lunch-room he is prevented by the general din, from hearing his father's words. Michael, accustomed to considering his father "glib" and "with a million easy words" (TSIE p. 17) is unexpectedly moved by the yearning tone of his father's voice and the eagerness in his face. This will be the only time that Michael responds and is touched by "some deeper experience they had once shared together." (TSIE p. 17) Ironically it takes place without words.

When Michael arrives in the country and Andrew's "bland manner of a lifetime" unintentionally causes his greeting to sound contrived and pompous, "as if he were trying to sell something to someone," Michael is unable to overcome his disappointment that "they had had to struggle so hard and then fail to express the humanity that was in them both . . . there had been no reunion and he regretted that he had come." (TSIE p. 36) Michael and Dave also fail to

communicate when they meet in the small country hotel not far from the Aikenhead cottage.

'Go on and do your stuff. Don't let me put a wet blanket on the party,' Michael said, but he was so obviously unwilling to be there and he was so much like a stranger among them that the two bond boys and Dave were silent, watching Michael's dark and sober face, from which the shy smile had passed so quickly. They watched him as if they expected a startling remark to burst out from him, some sharp remark that would be dreadfully hostile, and Dave Choate, whose own flushed face had a strangely innocent expression as he stared at Mike, was trying desperately to think of something smooth and bright and beautiful to say that would make them all laugh and be comrades there in the hotel in the little village. (TSIE p. 31)

Callaghan's exploitation of the wolf-hunt in this novel is both original and refreshing. In 1935 this puts Callaghan with the few who were willing to view the wolf apart from its literary stereotype and one should be grateful when one considers how frequently this animal has been maligned. As the stalking imagery in the novel suggests, it is man who is culpable and not the wolf. Huck Farr stalks Anna and the tenants in the apartment watch, "with a growing excitement . . . it was as if they were all in a little circle around her, kneeling down with excited faces, and watching her crawling like an insect to some place where there was security, and always stumbling and falling back." (TSIE pp. 95-96) Henry Huston, the contact-man for the advertizing agency, is described as "a bird dog for the agency who galloped along in advance and then stood still, sniffing, making them all watch alertly while he pointed gracefully at the business quarry and waited for Aikenhead and Hillquist to hurry and bag the game." (TSIE p. 126)

On the night before the hunt as Ross and Michael and their Indian guide argue over the real and imagined qualities of the wolf, Michael asks the question: "If man isn't just plain mean, then what among living things, in God's name, is mean?" (TSIE p. 192) Michael is still too blindly arrogant to recognize that the meanest living creature is man. On the day of the hunt, through Michael's conventional response to the wolves' seemingly wanton killing, Callaghan is able to exploit the wolf as the mirror of the self. Michael actually sees himself in the wolf although he is unable to make the connection. For Michael, the wolf represents all that is evil and destructive in the human soul but he is still unable to look into himself. When Jo, their guide, suggests a plausible reason for the wolves' slaughter of the deer, Michael is, at least, able to see that "the deer and the wolf have their place in the pattern...." (TSIE p. 197) Robin Mathews says that Callaghan "doesn't define the appropriate social role of the wolf and the deer," but this is incorrect. ("New Col." pp. 106-107) Callaghan defines the role of the wolf and the deer in their own terms or, to use Callaghan's words, as they are in themselves. Michael remains troubled because he is still trying to fit himself into a pattern that implies order and a kind of justice but it is not the human pattern. Mathews is wrong when he says that "during the wolf-hunt, Michael's problems are solved. ("New Col." p. 105) He only achieves a tentative understanding through the wolf-hunt. Not until his child's life and Anna's life seem threatened can he accept the enormity of what he has allowed to happen to others. Michael tries to draw an analogy between the 'ordered' world of nature and the 'jungle' of society but he remains confused as he has yet to under-

stand the "meaning of the single parts" (TSIE p. 197), his own responsibility as a human being. He does however, come to terms with his pride: "I know everything will have some meaning if I stop passing judgment on other people, and forget about myself, and let myself look at the world with whatever goodness there is in me." (TSIE p. 197) Michael has achieved a tentative understanding of his own nature but he will not realize the futility of his search for justice until he himself needs mercy. During the birth of his son, fear of losing Anna finally forces Michael to confront the reality of Dave's death.

And from deep within him, as if it had been waiting a long time to burst out, was the unuttered cry, 'What right have I to bring life into the world? Death has been growing in me. Death has been all around me. I can still hear Dave. I can hear him crying now, 'Mike, oh, Mike, help me.' Yet I let him go, and now I stand here waiting for my own child to come into the world. (TSIE p. 232)

The pattern of destruction that conveyed some meaning in the lives of the wolves and the deer could only teach Michael the folly of his pride and arrogance, the fallacy of his "nineteenth century notions about science." (TSIE p. 191) Only fear, fear of losing the love that distinguishes Michael from the animals, forces him to confront his blindness. The safe delivery of their son releases Michael temporarily, from the crisis of his confrontation. The relief is only "a delicately poised and fearful happiness." (TSIE p. 237) Gradually, Michael's deepening awareness of the nature of Anna's grace, "she went on from day to day, living and loving and exposing the fullness and wholeness of herself to the life around her" (TSIE p. 23), enables Michael to confront his guilt.

The happy ending of They Shall Inherit the Earth, the "shy"

reconciliation of Michael, Anna and Andrew, contrasts with Callaghan's usually enigmatic endings. Michael achieves, through Anna's grace and his own suffering, a kind of 'pilgrim's progress' from arrogance, pride and blindness to something approaching true humility. But if the reader is sensitive and intellectually honest then he or she will be involved in the issues Callaghan raises in the novel.

Callaghan's awareness of human fallibility suggests that the "death rattle" note detected by Andrew near the beginning of the novel has wider implications than the personal tragedy depicted within the Aikenhead family. Their tragedy may be symbolic of a larger tragedy sensed by Callaghan. Four years after this novel was published World War II began. Those youths considered "useless" by Michael as well as the Michaels and Ross's themselves, would find themselves suddenly useful in a way they had not planned. In the light of the dual theme in this novel, even the biblical title taken from the "Beautitudes" should make us consider what part of humanity is 'they' and what emphasis should be put on the inheritance.

Conclusion

The years that Callaghan's early novels span witnessed the dislocations of the first World War, including the rebellious twenties and a world depression in the thirties. In Canada the death of an old order and the dissolution of familiar boundaries during this period was hastened by the growth of urban populations. It is significant that many of Callaghan's early protagonists live in boarding houses or apartments, their roots being somewhere else. Harry Trotter's Maydale reflects the moral authority of his parents; the city streets between his apartment and the Cathedral reflect the moral ambiguity that torments him. In It's Never Over the Thompsons are settled in the city but Lillian and John are both from somewhere else. Similarly, in A Broken Journey, although the Gibbons are established in a once prosperous but now shabby neighbourhood, Peter Gould writes home to his father and both Gould brothers live in rented rooms. Midge and Ronnie, in Such Is My Beloved, are transients and Father Dowling who learns to love the murmur of his city parish is from a smaller village. Anna Prychoda in They Shall Inherit the Earth, is from somewhere else and Michael has left the security of his family home to pit his independence against the uncaring and impersonal city. These are Callaghan's 'ordinary' human beings who involve him in the problem he defined for himself: "to relate a Christian enlightenment to some timeless process of becoming." (TSIP pp. 94-95) Through these individuals Callaghan brings insight to a perennial question: what is the meaning of man's experience as he attempts to reconcile his inheritance -- all the traditions of his past -- with the realities of his place

and time? Callaghan is never afraid to examine the illusions inherent in myth as he probes this process of becoming and he is aware that the past can be an encumbrance to the present but this does not mean he lacks what T.S. Eliot has called the "historical sense":

The historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his contemporaneity.<sup>21</sup>

In The Critical Path Northrop Frye discusses two myths which, he says, operate simultaneously in western society. The "myth of concern exists to hold society together, so far as words can help to do this."<sup>22</sup> Contained within the myth of concern is the "myth of freedom" which Frye says is dependent upon the "socially critical attitudes which perceive hypocrisy, corruption, failure to meet standards, gaps between the real and the ideal...." Frye points out that the myth of concern has its roots in religion and is attached to "ritual, to coronations, weddings, funerals, parades, demonstrations, where something is publically done that expresses inner social identity."<sup>23</sup> He says: "Concern by itself (so far as we can consider it by itself) has great difficulty in separating appearance from reality",<sup>24</sup> and he goes on to say:

When we look at whatever it is in our own world that makes it not quite the abhorred world, but something we can live with in the meantime, we find that one of the most important elements is the tension between concern and freedom. When a myth of concern has everything its own way, it becomes the most squalid of tyrannies, with no moral principles except those of its own tactics, and a hatred of all human life that escapes from its particular obsessions. When a myth of freedom has everything its own way, it becomes a lazy and selfish parasite on a power-



structure. Satire shows us in 1984 the society that has destroyed its freedom and in Brave New World the society that has forgotten its concern. They must both be there, and the genuine individual and the free society can only exist when they are.<sup>25</sup>

It is Morley Callaghan's awareness of the tension between the myths of concern and freedom that finds expression in the early novels. That awareness is based on his determination to "face the thing freshly for what it was in itself." (TSIP p. 19) It is expressed in direct and simple language with the force of truth behind it. Callaghan's attitude toward metaphor about which he is so vehement in That Summer In Paris, is simply the expression of his attitude toward truth. "To have the artless integrity to prefer truth to all intellectual opportunism and to all trickery, whether in philosophy, theology, art, or politics, to have such artlessness demands a purification more radical than one might think."<sup>26</sup> Callaghan is radical enough to examine Christian mythology, as he does in Such Is My Beloved, and, instead of dismissing it as a failed experiment, he interprets it symbolically to rediscover truth.

Karl Jaspers writes that "by the nineteenth century the struggles of Europe against those forms of authority which go back to the Middle Ages resulted in giving everyone a standard of freedom perhaps without precedent in history."<sup>27</sup> Callaghan is more aware than many contemporary authors, of the nature of the freedom we have inherited. His novels reflect the problem Jaspers sets out in his essay of freedom and authority, a search for "authentic freedom" based on "genuine authority." Jaspers says "the greatest chance of salvation, the real opportunity before us, lies in man's responsibility, the responsibility of each individual person. What he is going to be rests in his own hands."<sup>28</sup> This view does not imply anarchy

nor do Callaghan's novels even though Callaghan himself has said, "I do have this really peculiar moral view of the world, absolutely my own. In some ways it's a quite anarchistic view of the world." But Callaghan qualifies his 'anarchy' by adding, "well, anarchistic in the sense that it is fiercely dependent upon the individual view never yielding to another man's sense of rectitude."<sup>29</sup> A sense of rectitude has helped the western world accept the most pervasive mythology of all, that 'scientific' progress will lead to human betterment. In It's Never Over Callaghan portrays an individual with a strong sense of rectitude whose distorted perception of truth finally leads him to the brink of murder. The distorted rationale of scientific progress has led us to a life of absurdities. "Cars are designed to go faster than it is safe to drive; food is processed to take out the nourishment, housing is expertly engineered to destroy neighbourhoods; weapons are stockpiled that only a maniac would use."<sup>30</sup> This is the true vision of anarchy and it has its source in the "all prevailing fraudulent morality" about which Callaghan expresses himself so vehemently in That Summer in Paris. (TSIP p. 20) Each of the early novels makes a strong impact on the reader and each leads the reader to a new level of recognition because of Callaghan's insistence that we see the object freshly as it is.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Donald M. Frame, transl., The Complete Essays of Montaigne (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1948) p. 185.

In Book 1:40, "A Consideration Upon Cicero", Montaigne says, 'Fie on the eloquence that leaves us craving itself, not things.' In Strange Fugitive, a discredited character boasts about reading Montaigne's Essays in order to make an impression. The question of eloquence for the sake of eloquence only, is one about which Callaghan is emphatic and variations of this issue occur in each novel, notably so in It's Never Over and They Shall Inherit the Earth.

<sup>2</sup>Morley Callaghan, "An Ocean Away", in Morley Callaghan, ed., Brandon Conron (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1975) p. 19.

<sup>3</sup>Conron, "An Ocean Away," p. 19.

<sup>4</sup>J.C. Cooper, An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Traditional Symbols (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978).

<sup>5</sup>Morley Callaghan, The Loved and the Lost (Macmillan of Canada, Laurentian Library, 1951) pp. 66 & 47.

<sup>6</sup>W.H. Auden, "September 1, 1939" in The College Survey of English Literature, ed., Alexander M. Witherspoon (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1951) p. 1327.

<sup>7</sup>Auden, "September 1, 1939." p. 1327.

<sup>8</sup>George Woodcock, "Lost Eurydice: The Novels of Callaghan" in Morley Callaghan, ed., Brandon Conron (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1975) p. 95.

<sup>9</sup>Woodcock, "Lost Eurydice: The Novels of Callaghan", p. 94.

<sup>10</sup>W.H. Auden, "September 1, 1939" in The College Survey of English Literature, ed., Alexander M. Witherspoon (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1951) p. 1327.

<sup>11</sup>John Donne, "Meditation 17" in The College Survey of English Literature, ed., Alexander M. Witherspoon (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1951) p. 340.

<sup>12</sup>Victor Hoar, Morley Callaghan (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing Co., 1969) p. 47.

<sup>13</sup>J.C. Cooper, An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Traditional Symbols (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978).

<sup>14</sup>Henry James, "The Art of Fiction" in The Future of the Novel (New York: Alfred A. Knop Inc., & Random House Inc., 1965) p. 15.

<sup>15</sup>William Blake, "The Sick Rose" in The Norton Anthology of Poetry, ed., Arthur M. Eastman (New York: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 1970) p. 226.

<sup>16</sup>Judith Kendle, "Callaghan and the Church" in Canadian Literature 80 (Spring, 1979) 13-22.

<sup>17</sup>Morley Callaghan, "An Ocean Away" in Morley Callaghan ed., Brandon Conron (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1975) p. 19.

<sup>18</sup>Robin Mathews, "The New Colonialism" in Canadian Literature Surrender or Revolution (Toronto: Steel Rail Publishing, 1978) p. 91. Further references hereafter cited within parenthesis as "New Col."

<sup>19</sup>Canada Year Book 1934-35 (Ottawa: Ministry of Trade and Commerce, 1935, p. 99.

<sup>20</sup>Claude Levi-Strauss, Myth and Meaning (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978) p. 17.

<sup>21</sup>T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" in The Sacred Wood (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1920) p. 49.

<sup>22</sup>Northrop Frye, The Critical Path (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1973) p. 36.

<sup>23</sup>Frye, The Critical Path, p. 45.

<sup>24</sup>Frye, The Critical Path, p. 44.

<sup>25</sup>Frye, The Critical Path, p. 55.

<sup>26</sup>Jaques Maritain, The Range of Reason (New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1942) p. 212.

<sup>27</sup>Karl Jaspers, "Authority and Freedom" in Diogenes No. 1  
(1952) 25-42.

<sup>28</sup>Jaspers, "Authority and Freedom", p. 42.

<sup>29</sup>Donald Cameron, Conversations with Canadian Novelists Part 2  
(Toronto: Macmillan, 1973) p. 29.

<sup>30</sup>Paul Goodman, The Moral Ambiguity of America (Toronto: CBC  
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