HERMAN MELVILLE:

TYPEE AND REDBURN

POINT OF VIEW IN HERMAN MELVILLE'S

TYPEE AND REDBURN

By

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ABSTRACT

Herman Melville is a difficult writer because of the built-in ambiguities of his narrative technique, i.e. point of view. The present study attempts to examine his use of point of view in his two early novels--Typee and Redburn with a view to understanding the meaning and vision embodied in them. The introductory chapter reviews some of Melville's critics and evolves an approach which may grapple with Melville's intricate handling of point of view. In the following chapters I use this approach to study two of Melville's early novels, Typee and Redburn. The analysis of the point of view in these two novels reveals that they are inspired by a vision of evil. Each of the novels expresses and illuminates some particular aspect of the human situation or of evil in the universe.

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INTRODUCTION

The fiction of Herman Melville has appealed to the contemporary imagination with special force, and the twentieth-century has accepted him as its own. However, the biographers and critics seem to be confused by the wave of commentary, explication, and documentation that has welled up ever since the discovery of Melville in the nineteen-twenties. There is astonishing richness and maddening prolixity in the contradictory and confused nature of the literature that has accumulated on Melville. The concensus of Melville criticism regards him as essentially a symbolist, although there are protests against such a view. The symbolic approach has intruded even into the biographies of Melville, which consider him as a symbol, almost the mythical American writer. There is a tendency to read his books as allegories of the writer committed to his art. Such remarks are not supported by a valid and adequate explication of the texts. The early biographies of Melville--by R. M. Weaver, John Freeman, and Lewis Mumford--are full of trivial biographical data. Commentaries on Melville's individual works continue to pile up with increasing rapidity.

In this state of confusion in Melville criticism, what is needed is a detailed analysis of the entire body of his fiction done with a view to arriving at the meaning and vision embodied in it. I, however, shall approach the meaning and vision of Melville through an analysis of point of view as a technical device in two of his early novels--Typee and Redburn. Critics, such as Richard Chase, Lawrence Thomson, Merlin

Bowen, H. Bruce Franklin, Perry Miller, Leon Howard, Tyrus Hillway, seem to ignore Melville's fictional technique and more particularly his use of point of view--his "Art of Telling the Truth" (to use Melville's own terms), because of its built in ambiguities. I hope my attempt to examine his point of view will yield some insights into Melville's method and vision. Most of the early critical books on Melville were devoted to special turns in Melville's thought, such as Vega Curl's Pasteboard Masks, Facts as Spiritual Symbol in the Novels of Hawthorne and Melville (1931), Stanly Geist's Herman Melville, The Tragic Vision and the Heroic Ideal (1939), and Charles Olson's Call me Ishmael (1947). Richard Chase in Herman Melville (1949) uses the recent theories of psyche and myth to analyse Melville's fiction. Merlin Bowen in his Long Encounter (1960) examines Melville's writings from the viewpoint of his characteristic vision of reality. Likewise H. Bruce Franklin's very illuminating study The Wake of the Gods (1963) argues that Melville consciously used myths and mythologies in most of his major works and that his whole career may be seen as an attempt to create a mythology of his own. All these critics have focused their attention mainly on the theme, meaning, and symbols in Melville's fiction and seem to have ignored fictional techniques, such as point of view, which are so important in the study of his fiction.

In the present thesis I am going to study the use of point of view in two of Melville's early novels. This topic has received very little attention in Melville criticism. None of the critics surveyed above talk about point of view in Typee at all. The point of view in Redburn

has been recognized as a crucial problem by some critics, but very little attention has been paid to it by them. F. O. Matthiessen in his American Renaissance (1941) devotes only one sentence to the problem. He says that Melville has neglected "to keep his center of consciousness in Redburn's experience" and added reflections "that could have occurred to someone much older."[1] In Melville's Early Life and "Redburn" (1951) William H. Gilman[2] agrees with Matthiessen's statement that Melville's use of the narrative voice is not consistent and calls the "disruptive shift" in the narrative voice a "ruinous defect." After that Gilman does not discuss the problem of narration at all. Similarly Lawrence Thomson[3] in Melville's Quarrel with God (1952) locates the problem of point of view in Redburn, but he does not analyse it in detail. He just says that in the novel there are three points of view--of the younger Redburn, of the older Redburn, and of Melville himself, who satirizes the first two. It is Merlin Bowen,[4] who, in his article "Redburn and the Angle of Vision" (1954) discusses the problem of point of view in detail. Bowen's analysis of point of view in Redburn is very illuminating and convincing, but most of the time, he is involved in refuting Gilman and leaves many important things unclarified, such as, the relationship

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[1]F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance (New York, 1941), p. 397.

[2]William H. Gilman, Melville's Early Life and "Redburn" (New York, 1951), pp. 208-209.

[3]Lawrence Thomson, Melville's Quarrel with God (Princeton, 1952), pp. 75-76.

[4]Merlin Bowen, "Redburn and the Angle of Vision," (Modern Philology, LII, 1954), pp. 100-109.

between the protagonist and the narrator and the narrator's method of rendering his past experiences.

By point of view I mean "the way a story gets told--the perspective or perspectives established by an author through which the reader is presented with the characters, actions, setting, and events which constitute the narrative in a work of fiction."[5] The question of point of view has acquired prominence since the critical writings of Joseph Conrad and Henry James, but the use of point of view in Melville demands as careful scrutiny as that in post-Jamesian fiction. Not a few of the difficulties involved in understanding Melville are due to his intricate handling of this device. Modern fictional criticism is especially rich in analysing the devices which a novelist employs in the handling of his point of view. On the question of point of view and narrative devices, I have found Wayne C. Booth's[6] The Rhetoric of Fiction and Norman Friedman's[7] "Point of View in Fiction: The Development of a Critical Concept" essentially valuable. These critics have provided most of the categories and terminology that I shall be using in my discussion of Typee and Redburn.

Essentially there are two kinds of point of view in fiction: first

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[5]M. H. Abrams, A Glossary of Literary Terms (New York, 1971), p. 133.

[6]See Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961), pp. 149-398.

[7]See Norman Friedman, "Point of View in Fiction: The Development of a Critical Concept," PMLA, LXX, 5(December, 1955).

person and third person.[8] Point of view in fiction may be managed through the employment of the first-person narrator who may be either dramatized or undramatized. That is, he may be either a participant in the action of the fictional work or a mere observer. The device of employing the first-person narrator in fiction may involve a distance between the author's point of view and that of the narrator; the distance may be ironic. Further, the first-person narrator's voice may not be always reliable, since the point of view of some major or minor characters may be occasionally or frequently absorbed to it through the free indirect style. The knowledge of the first-person narrator about his subject may be more or less limited, i.e., he may be an omniscient narrator, or, he may have limited omniscience about his subject.

The second way of managing point of view in fiction may be through the employment of the third-person who is not necessarily to be identified with the author's point of view. The third-person narrator (who is seemingly the author himself) may have an ironic attitude to his subject. In such a case even the third-person narrator cannot be relied on. In many cases, the point of view of the major or minor characters may be absorbed to the authorial voice through indirect style. In these instances, the author's point of view must be disentangled from that of the characters, for indirect style renders now the author's point of view and now the character's. The earliest critics to detect this phenomenon in fiction

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[8]Second person narration has seldom been used in fiction.

were Bally, Proust, Thibaudet and Ullman.[9] Sometimes there may be no point of view at all, i.e., the narrator in a fictional work may be totally impersonal or objective. This type of narration may lead to confusion and unintentional ambiguity.[10]

Elizabeth Bowen[11] has introduced some further terminology that will be of use in my study of Typee and Redburn. For point of view she uses the term "angle." Angle for her is of two kinds: visual angle and moral angle. Moral angle is the "camera-eye" of the author which he can locate, first, in the breast or eye-brow of one of the characters; or, second, in the breast or brow of a succession of characters; or, third, in the breast or brow of an omniscient story-teller.[12] The selection of a particular visual angle will depend upon the demands of the plot. By the moral angle Bowen means moral view point which maintains the conviction in the novel's poetic truth and "lights" the characters in their relation to this truth. Finally everything in the novel turns on the question of its relevance to the poetic truth.

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[9]See Graham Hough, Style and Stylistics (London, 1969), p. 35.

[10]According to Kierkegaard the impersonal narration is essentially demoralizing. See Northrop Frye, The Well-Tempered Critic (Bloomington, 1967), p. 37; also see Wayne C. Booth, pp. 271-398.

[11]Elizabeth Bowen, "Notes on Writing a Novel," Collected Impressions (New York, 1950). This essay has been reprinted in Perspectives on Fiction, eds. J. L. Calderwood and H. E. Toliver (New York, 1968), pp. 217-230.

[12]Ibid., pp. 222-223.

In approaching Melville, it is necessary to very carefully ascertain the kind of point of view he is employing. If we are not constantly aware of this we are in danger of misunderstanding what Melville is saying. I shall be analysing Melville's use of point of view in Typee and Redburn in the light of the above extended notion of point of view which may be either first-person or third-person with varying degree of omniscience.

CHAPTER 1

TYPEE

In Typee (1846) Melville employs first-person narration. The protagonist in the novel is the inexperienced, naive Tommo, whereas the narrator is the mature Tommo, who has experienced growth in thoughts and feelings. In the novel the mature narrator is at a distance from the immature protagonist, and in spite of the fact that the story is unfolded and narrated by him, we have to interpret it in relation to the limited perspective of the protagonist. The narrator is the part of the "yarn" Melville spins:

> Yet notwithstanding the familiarity of the sailors with all sorts of curious adventure, the incidents recorded in the following pages have often served, when "spun as a yarn," not only to relieve the weariness of many a night-watch at sea, but to excite warmest sympathies of the author's shipmates. He has been therefore led to think that the story could scarcely fail to interest those who are less familiar than the sailor with a life of adventure.[1]

Although Melville identifies himself with Tommo, we find the narrator a fictional figure just as we find Richard Tobias Greene imaginatively transmuted into Toby. The narrator is, in some way or the other, a fictionalized portrait of the author himself; but even so, he is never quite the same as the author. Wherever Melville uses the first-person

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[1]Herman Melville, "Preface," Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life, eds. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle (Evanston, 1968), p. xiii. All further references to Typee are to this edition.

narration, he projects the narrator-persona according to a specific scheme of presentation. Evidently, he lends to his narrators his own voice, experiences, thoughts and feelings; but the narrators are, at the same time, his fictive creations eminently adapted for probing "the axis of reality."[2]

The narrator of Typee, the mature Tommo, is constantly engaged in a conscious act of retrospection; he is involved in an act of recollection of an experienced adventure. For Melville remembering is an imaginative act which makes him understand creatively the past adventures that he had experienced as an unintelligible and frightening chaos of sensations. Years after his original experience, he created now the matured Tommo to define the truth and meaning of it to himself and to his readers. He tries to present the whole thing as truthfully as possible to his readers. He makes his intention very clear in the Preface:

> There are somethings related in the narrative which will be sure to appear strange, or perhaps entirely incomprehensible, to the readers; but they cannot appear more so to him than they did to the author at the time. He has stated such matters just as they occurred, and leaves everyone to form his own opinion concerning them; trusting that his anxious desire to speak the unvarnished truth will gain for him the confidence of his readers.[3]

Melville's intention is, clearly, to turn his original experience of the Typee valley into a story, a "yarn," in order to express the imaginative

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[2]Melville, "Hawthorne and His Mosses," in The Portable Melville, ed. Jay Leyda (New York, 1962), p. 408.

[3]Typee, p. xix.

truth. Tommo throws himself into the destructive sea of experience and is confused by the chaotic incidents that he encounters. While telling the story, he is able to see the vital truth. The narrator describes his adventures and feelings in the past from the vantage point of the present. It is through the reconstruction of his past adventures and his retrospective comments that the narrator is able to understand the full meaning of it. And by doing so he is able to show his earlier self, the immature Tommo--the protagonist, in the process of maturing. In the reconstruction of his past adventure, he tries to be as objective as possible, and he describes the past incidents and the scenes through the eyes of the protagonist Tommo, and then, occasionally, provides comments on them from his present vantage point. Throughout the novel this is the pattern. Towards the end of the novel we find that there is some identity between the narrator's point of view and that of the protagonist.

In the "Preface" to Typee, the narrator makes the reader aware of the period of time that has elapsed since the protagonist's adventures and unintelligible experiences he is relating:

> More than three years have elapsed since the occurrence of the events recorded in this volume. The interval, with the exception of the last few months, has been chiefly spent by the author tossing about on the wide ocean.[4]

This statement of the narrator emphasizes two points in time, first, the protagonist Tommo at the time of his stay with the natives of the Typee

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[4] Ibid., p. xiii.

valley, and the second, the narrator Tommo after his escape and his subsequent "tossing about on the wide ocean" from which point the earlier experiences are to be recounted. Later in the novel the present vantage point of retrospection and his puzzled state of mind over the incomprehensible behaviour of the Typees at the time of his stay with them is emphasized:

> Their singular behaviour almost led me to imagine that they never before had beheld a white man; but a few moments' reflection convinced me that this could not have been the case; and a more satisfactory reason for their conduct has since suggested itself to my mind.[5]

By the act of turning his experience into a story, Melville is able to place himself outside the experience and view and recreate it objectively. The narrator's moral angle has no distance from the author or the reader. There is an identity between the narrator's awareness of moral and philosophical implications and the reader's perception of them. The narrator's manner of narration is so convincing that we never doubt the authenticity of his adventures or his thoughts and feelings. All the time during his stay with the natives he attempts to find out "the meaning of the strange things that were going on,"[6] but all his attempts end in failure and despair: "all their explanations were conveyed in such a mass of outlandish gibberish and gesticulations that I gave up the attempt in despair."[7] In this way the narrator goes on describing his adventures

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[5] Ibid., p. 74.

[6] Ibid., p. 168.

[7] Ibid., p. 168.

and the Typeean life in the relaxed voice of a tourist. During his stay among the Typees, he observes and notices many things but understands very little: "I saw everything, but could comprehend nothing."[8] Everything in the Typee valley seems mysterious to him in the beginning. But after staying among the Typees for some time, he, it appears, does understand some of their activities, and he describes a particular day in Typee valley, the feast of the Calabashes, the preparation of arva, a chief's tomb, the Typees' religious practices, the various civil institutions of Typee, burial procedures, and the matrimonial relationships among the natives. Throughout the novel the visual and moral angles are placed in Tommo, who is the burnished reflector or the central consciousness. The young Tommo's visions of the civilized and the savage worlds are juxtaposed to illumine each other. His experiences of evil civilization put the Typees in a sharp relief. The narrator successively presents his experiences of Typee valley and that of the white civilization. Since the narrator comments and moralizes on the shortcomings as well as the good things about both the societies, the reader never questions the veracity of Tommo. The narrator confesses even his own mistakes committed by him earlier which wins him the confidence of his readers.

While looking back over his past experience in the Typee valley and recapitulating it, he allows no lies to distort the narrative. It is in retrospection that he is able to see the evil which is so prominent

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[8] Ibid., p. 177.

among the whites; whereas initially he was blind to the evils of the whites and could see only the savages full of evil. The narrator recounts his feelings when his ship Dolly approaches the Marquesas islands:

> The Marquesas! What strange visions of outlandish things does to the very name spirit up! Naked houris--cannibal banquets--groves of cocoa-nut--coral reefs tatooed chiefs--and bamboo temples; sunny valleys planted with bread-fruit trees--carved canoes dancing on the flashing blue waters--savage woodlands guarded by horrible idols--heathenish rites and human sacrifices. Such were the strangely jumbled anticipations that haunted me during our passage from the ground.[9]

Initially, the narrator had a very low opinion of the Typees, because his mind was already preconditioned by the tales of horror about the Typees. During his stay among the Typees he found their behaviour unexplainable and altogether different from what he had heard or imagined about them. After his escape from the valley and his subsequent wanderings over the sea in the company of the whites, he realizes in retrospection that the Typees were not so bad as he had imagined them. It is only in retrospection that he sees the limitations of both the societies--the Typees and the whites.

Prior to his escape from the Dolly, the immature Tommo's point of view is defective. Some of the anecdotes the narrator relates throw light on relative cultural mores. In the first Chapter he relates two amusing anecdotes, which establish the personal values and cultural background of the white woman and the marquesan queen. When the King

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[9] Ibid., p. 5.

Mowana's queen displays her tattooed buttocks, the resulting embarrassment is quite natural for the French, who have entirely different social and cultural background. In the beginning the protagonist Tommo is unable to see the limitations and the cruelty of civilization and can see only the barbarity of the primitive world:

> Although I was convinced that the inhabitants of our bay were as arrant cannibals as any of the other tribes on the island, still I could not but feel a particular and most unqualified repugnance to the aforesaid Typees.
>
> I had heard too of an English vessel that many years ago, after a weary cruize, sought to enter the bay of Nukuheva, ... The same night the perfidious Typees, who had thus inveigled her into their fatal bay, flocked aboard the doomed vessel by hundreds, and at a given signal murdered every soul on board.[10]

It is the mature Tommo, the narrator, who can see civilization and the primitive world in the correct perspective by a kind of hindsight, and he remarks: "It's [the primitive world] inhabitants have become somewhat corrupted, owing to their recent commerce with Europeans."[11] Several pages later, the narrator, again, compares the two societies and comments upon them:

> The grossest licentiousness and the most shameful inebriety prevailed, with occasional and but short-lived interruptions, through the whole period of her stay. Alas for the poor savages whan exposed to the influence of these polluting examples! Unsophisticated and confiding, they are easily led into every vice, and humanity weeps over the ruin thus remorselessly inflicted upon them by their European civilizers. Thrice happy are they

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[10] Ibid., p. 25.

[11] Ibid., p. 11.

> who, inhabiting some yet undiscovered island in the midst of the ocean, have never been brought into contaminating contact with the white man.[12]
>
> A high degree of refinement, however, does not seem to subdue our wicked propensities so much after all; and were civilization itself to be estimated by some of its results, it would seem perhaps better for what we call the barbarous past of the world to remain unchanged.[13]

Melville has here the advantage of his narrative device, and he is able to express the truth he experienced himself. Had he said all this in his own authorial narration, it would have been, perhaps, unconvincing to his readers. But by creating a fictional surrogate for himself and by catapulting him into two kinds of vicious societies, he makes the protagonist discover his own [Melville's] meaning. It is a very characteristic device of Melville and he employs it in several of his important novels. In his encounter with the vicious society the protagonist, such as Tommo and Redburn, either survives with his bitter experiences and his subsequent compromise with the society, or like Pierre and Billy Budd is destroyed. Unable to compromise with his tyrannical Captain, the pusillanimous crew, bad food, and an uncertain future aboard a slow whaler, Tommo decides to desert it in search of a better life in the mountains. He is deceived everywhere by appearances, and it is only towards the end of his misadventures among the cannibals that he is able to see the past incidents in correct perspective, by a sort of hindsight. In all his adventures Tommo learns many things about

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[12] Ibid., p. 15.

[13] Ibid., p. 17.

man and his different masks. For example, in the very first chapter of the book Melville makes the narrator tell the tale of a Christian missionary in the south sea islands who, faced with the problem of converting the reluctant savages, wrought evil in the name of virtue by practising deception. The missionary sets up his young wife as a divinity. The reluctant natives worship her until they discover the sex of the unfamiliar creature behind the "sacred veil of Calico." The unmasking of their harmful "benefactors" by the natives is a serious criticism of the Christian missionary in the South Seas.

Tommo feels eager to quit the ship and go to the shore because he has been on the ocean for six months. As the book opens he and his fellow sailors anxiously await the arrival at Marquesas Islands, and particularly the Nukuheva island. As the ship moves closer to the land, the physical perspective changes. Melville conveys this by narrowing Tommo's field of vision, which moves from general to particular. The narrator places the visual angle in the eye-brow of the immature protagonist, and the scenes and his earlier feelings are described through the protagonist's point of view. Tommo begins with the history of the Marquesas, which soon gives way to the geographical location of the island of Nukuheva. As the ship comes closer to Nukuheva, the perspective of the protagonist changes, and his descriptions become more physical. The geographical description is followed by a description of the length and breadth of the Nukuheva, the number of harbours, and the names of the tribes inhabiting this island. As the ship approaches the island opposite the harbour side, Tommo's description of the island

becomes a visual one. In Chapter Two the narrator describes a scene in which the native swimmers are mistaken bythe immature Tommo for coconuts, and the young girls in water for a shoal of fish because of the physical distance.

Thus the first two chapters of the book illustrate the significance of perspective and its effect upon the protagonist's vision. They also present the protagonist's personality as characterized by self-confidence. Tommo draws conclusion based upon appearances and acts on the basis of these conclusions. As a result he decides to quit the ship Dolly: "I chose to risk my fortunes among the savages of the island than to endure another voyage on board the Dolly."[14] He is so deluded by the appearance of the island--"No description can do justice to its beauty[15]--that he decides to risk his fortunes on theisland. Had he realized that he comes from a different social and physical background, he would not have been so anxious to desert the Dolly. He is fascinated by the island, because he has been at sea for six months without ever coming to the shore. The company of the pusillanimous crew and the tyrannical Captain aboard the Dolly is also responsible for his deserting the ship. The narrator decribes the tyrannical Captain and the vicious crew aboard the ship thus:

> The usage on board of her [Dolly] was tyrannical, the sick had been inhumanly neglected . . . the captain was the author of these abuses; it was in vain to think that he would either remedy

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[14] Ibid., p. 20.

[15] Ibid., p. 12.

> them, or alter his conduct, which was arbitrary and violent in the extreme.
> . . . our crew was composed of a parcel of dastardly and mean-spirited wretches, divided among themselves, only united in enduring without resistence the unmitigated tyranny of the captain.[16]

Being an inexperienced man Tommo is misguided by the false appearance of the island, which makes him desert the Dolly in the company of a fellow-sailor Toby. It is the mature narrator who realizes the mistakes committed by him earlier, and so he, very obliquely, comments upon the actions of his earlier self:

> Those who for the first time visit the South Seas, generally are surprised at the appearance of the islands when beheld from the sea. From the vague accounts we sometimes have of their beauty, many people are apt to picture to themselves enamelled and softly swelling plains, shaded over with delicious groves, and watered by purling brooks, and entire country but little elevated above the surrounding ocean. The reality is very different.[17]

Tommo plans to escape the Dolly in the company of a daredevil, handsome and likeable fellow Toby:

> Having made up my mind, I proceeded to acquire all the information I could obtain relating to the island and its inhabitants, with a view of shaping my plans accordingly.[18]

But such plans, as we soon learn, are based on appearances only: "the beautiful aspect of the shore is heightened by deep and romantic glens, which come down to it at almost equal distances, all apparently radiating

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[16] Ibid., p. 21.

[17] Ibid., p. 12.

[18] Ibid., p. 23.

from a common center."[19] Tommo feels that if he can only reach the peak of the mountain, it would be easy to see his way out. Once he reaches that "common centre," he thinks he will be able to find out which valley is inhabited by the Happars and which by the Typees. (Tommo had heard tales of the Typees' ferocity and the Happars' nobility: "Typee or Happar? A frightful death at the hands of the fiercest of cannibals or a kindly reception from a gentler race of savages?"[20]). In Chapter 6 through 9 we are given an account of Tommo's escape to the mountains, and his confident expectation of what he will discover. Just before his escape Tommo relates his and Toby's careful planning, the success of which depends upon the fruits of the island to sustain them, wherever they might wander. Tommo is full of confidence about his plans and the outcome of them:

> In all this the leading object we had in view was to seclude ourselves from sight until the departure of the vessel; then to take our chance as to the reception the Nukuheva natives might give us; and after remaining upon the island as long as we found our stay agreeable, to leave it the first favourable opportunity that offered.[21]

Immediately after they desert the Dolly, they begin to encounter such incidents as were least expected by them; in fact, they were not at all included in their plans. In Moby-Dick Ishmael says that man's life is woven of threads of freewill, necessity and chance. Tommo and Toby are the first of Melville's characters to encounter fixed necessity.

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[19] Ibid., pp. 23-24.

[20] Ibid., p. 66.

[21] Ibid., p. 33.

Wherever Tommo goes, after escaping the Dolly, he attempts to thrust himself upon his surroundings and the result is always painful. Like Ahab in Moby Dick he feels free to determine his movements and actions, and does not realise the limitsto his free will. Whether he is in the mass of reeds, the mountains, or the valley, he attempts to clear his passage out. He is significantly bitten by a snake, which is symbolic of mental anguish resulting from frustrations. To understand the significance of their experience in the mountains one has only to compare their earlier expectations with their bitter experiences. Still they remain confident. On their way to the "common centre" from where they can see their way out, they are first confronted with a mass of steel-like reeds and then by rain which Tommo had so little anticipated. Finally, they reach the summit which seemed to be the highest land on the island, and from there they see natives who look like pigmies and their huts like baby-houses. At the same time, because of the distance, they feel secure. Their feeling of security is full of ironical import, because they are not at all secure.

Tommo and Toby's perspective having been based on mere appearance, they have merely exchanged one hellish place (the Dolly) for another (the island inhabited by cannibals). Throughout these descriptions the tone of the narrator is confessional:

> My curiosity had been not a little raised with regard to the description of the country we should meet on the other side of the mountains; and I had supposed, with Toby, that immediately on gaining the heights we should be enabled to view the large bays of the Happar and Typee reposing at our feet on one side, in the same way that Nukuheva lay spread out below on the other. But here we were disappointed. Instead

> of finding the mountains we had ascended sweeping down in the opposite direction into broad and capacious valleys, the land appeared to retain its general elevation, only broken into a series of ridges and intervals, which as far as the eye could be stretched away from us, with their precipitous sides covered with the brightest verdure, and waving here and there with the foliage of clumps of woodland; among which, however, we perceived none of those trees upon whose first we had relied with such certainty.[22] (Emphasis added.)

Tommo's earlier plans are inadequate enough, for the island is not structured as it appeared to be from the sea. They escaped the vicious captain and the crew of the Dolly only to be faced with new problems.

So far Tommo has not learnt anything from these incidents, and he continues to act as if the world existed as he conceived of it. Later on, when he reaches the top of the second elevation beyond which he expected the desired valley, the narrator confesses: ". . . discouraged as I was by other circumstances, this prospect plunged me into the very depths of despair. Nothing but dark and fearful chasms, separated by sharp-crested and perpendicular ridges as far as the eye could reach."[23] Being disappointed, now they start responding to their surroundings. Regardless of his faulty plans and resultant disillusioning experiences, Tommo's vision continues to be limited.

The first nine chapters of the book, thus, define the perspective and vision of the protagonist Tommo, who is full of confidence about his capabilities. This confidence results from a single angle of

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[22] Ibid., p. 41

[23] Ibid., p. 53.

vision in spite of the changes in the physical surroundings. At the end of this section Tommo is left at the entrance of a new world and his response to this new world occupies the major portion of the book. By handling distance and height Melville prepares his readers to respond to Tommo who figures in the foreground. In the first nine chapters Melville establishes a frame of reference within which Tommo is made to examine and judge all that he sees and experiences in the Typee valley. As Milton R. Stern[24] has pointed out, in Typee Melville explored "the conduct of a wrongly informed vision." "The conduct of a wrongly informed vision" is developed in the section of the book dealing with the Typees, and we get numerous examples of it in the chapters following Tommo and Toby's trip across the interior of the island. For example, seeing some fruit trees at a distance Tommo and Toby run forward, to eat only the rotten fruit of the Cannibals' Paradise:

> What a race! I hobbling over the ground like some decrepit wretch, and Toby leaping forward like a greyhound. He quickly cleared one of the trees on which there were two or three of the fruits, but to our chagrin they proved to be much decayed; the rinds partly opened by the birds, and their hearts half devoured.[25]

The incident is symbolic of Tommo's actual encounter with reality of the savage society.

After reaching the Typee valley Tommo feels as helpless among the savages as the natives of Nukuheva felt before the guns of the French.

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[24]Milton R. Stern, The Fine Hammered Steel of Herman Melville (Illinois, 1968), p. 25.

[25]Typee, p. 67.

Change of physical surrounding and society ought to have made Tommo aware of the relative values; but he continues to act on a set of values which can operate well only within the ambit of the white civilization and not among the Typees. Because of the fixed concept of himself as well as of his world Tommo fails to see the natives and their actions in proper perspective. The result of all this is that he becomes a laughing-stock. For example, his eating habits appear as ludicrous to the Typees as the display of the native queen's buttocks was to the whites. Like Captain Amasa Delano in Benito Cereno Tommo is unable to penetrate the surface reality and draws wrong conclusions on the basis of appearance. Because of his "wrongly informed vision" he is incapable of comprehending the full meaning of his experiences, and therefore he is unable to make any compromise with anything that does not conform to his own set of values. Tommo views all the activities of the natives through his own framework of values and imposes these values on the natives:

> But what he said failed to convince me: partly, perhaps because I could not comprehend a word that he uttered; but chiefly, that for the life of me I could not understand why a woman should not have as much right to enter a canoe as a man . . . but it was high time the islanders should be taught a little gallantry, and I trust that the example I set them may produce beneficial effects.[26]

After entering the Typee valley Tommo thinks: "Was it possible that after all our vicissitudes, we were really in the terrible valley

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[26] Ibid., p. 133.

of Typee, and at the mercy of its inmates, a fierce and unrelenting tribe of savages."[27] Tommo's mind is already preconditioned about the ferocity of the Typees and he cannot think of them in any other way. He expects an unkind and savage behaviour from them, but he is "fairly puzzled" after living among them for a week; he realizes that "the horrible character imputed to these Typees appeared . . . wholly undeserved."[28] Because this is just the beginning of his maturity, his attitude towards the Typees is not completely changed. He is still suspicious about the nature of the Typees and says: "Notwithstanding the kind treatment we received, I was too familiar with the fickle disposition of savages not to feel anxious to withdraw from the valley, and put myself beyond the reach of that fearful death which, under all these smiling appearances, might yet menace us."[29] But he cannot escape the valley because of the mysterious disease in his leg, and so he is forced to stay there for a couple of months.

In course of time Tommo's vision is enlarged by his actual contact with the natives, and gradually he comes to the conclusion (which is the same as the narrator's at the beginning of the book) that civilization is evil, but primitive life is not desirable either. The protagonist's enlarged vision merges with the narrator's retrospective vision and he frequently dilates upon the two societies:

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[27] Ibid., p. 76.

[28] Ibid., p. 97.

[29] Ibid., pp. 125-126.

> The term "Savage" is, I conceive, often misapplied, and indeed when I consider the vices, cruelties, and enormities of every kind that spring up in the tainted atmosphere of a feverish civilization, I am inclined to think that so far as the relative wickedness of the parties is concerned, four or five Marquesan Islanders sent to United States as Missionaries might be quite as useful as an equal number of Americans despatched to the Islands, in a similar capacity.[30]

> Civilization does not engross all the virtues of humanity. She has not even full share of them. They flourish in greater abundance and attain greater strength among many barbarous people. The hospitality of the wild Arab, the courage of the North American Indian, and the faithful friendships of some of the polynesian nations, far surpass anything of a similar kind among the polished communities of Europe.[31]

With his enlarged vision Tommo compares the two societies and discovers that the Typees have different kinds of vices from those of the whites. After living among the Typees the rigid mind of Tommo becomes a little flexible, and then he surrenders himself to the circumstances. Unconsciously he makes a kind of compromise with the values of the Typees, and symbolically his leg is healed. It does not mean that Tommo has become vicious cannibal like the Typees, it simply means that he does not impose his own values upon them, instead he accepts them as they are. As long as he remains receptive to his present environment, his leg heals and he feels comfortable.

In spite of Tommo's enlarged vision and flexible mind, he fails to understand the Typees and their taboo. He attempts to make a very close study of the natives; but because of his individual vision and his

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[30] Ibid., pp. 125-126.

[31] Ibid., pp. 203-204.

dependence upon appearances that his eyes see, the natives remain incomprehensible and unknown to him. Typee emphasizes the limitations of human vision and of his free will. There is a limit to both physical and psychological perspective, beyond which everything is incomprehensible. Physical realities such as land and distance restrict Tommo's vision from aboard the Dolly. Typees, too, are limited within the fixed boundaries of the valley, and their free will can operate only within this boundary. This is the truth of human life that Melville conveys through the adventures of Tommo.

Some critics[32] of Melville have suggested that Typee is an Eden, but this is hardly true. After leaving the valley and having seen much

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[32]Commenting on Typee, Lawrence Thomson in his Melville's Quarrel with God (Princeton, 1953), p. 47, remarks that "Melville felt justified in dealing harshly with the misconduct of the missionaries, not only because of his own deeply ingrained Puritanism, which was offended by religious delinquencies, but also because of his ardent belief that the Polynesians in their primitive state came close to existing in Earthy Paradise, deliberately and divinely designed for them." (Emphasis added). About Melville's criticism of the misconduct of the missionaries Thomson is absolutely correct. But he is mistaken when he says that the Typees live an "Earthly Paradise"; he takes the narrator's distorted romanticized retrospective comments at their face value. No doubt, after escaping from the Typee valley, travelling the world and seeing more of humankind, when he casts a backward glance over the Typee, Tommo romanticizes it. But he does not approve of the savages because he finds the Typees as well as the whites essentially alike in their manifestation of evil.

Harry Levin, in his Power of Blackness (New York, 1958), p. 173, sees Typee as an earthly Eden Garden. Levin sees the whites as the serpent in Eden whose contamination makes the children of nature lose their innocence. There is no doubt that the conduct of the would be civilizers of the primitives is corrupting, but the Typees themselves are in a fallen state, and so they cannot be as "fresh as at their first creation" (to use the phrase Levin himself uses). As soon as Tommo deserts the Dolly and enters the Island, he is significantly bitten by a snake, a creature of fallen nature of the fallen Typee valley.

of civilization, when the narrator looks back over the Typees he finds them, in retrospect, a kind of Noble Savage. He feels nostalgic about them. And so, whenever he feels nostalgic about the Typees, while reconstructing his past adventure, he romanticizes them:

> There were none of those thousand sources of irritation that the ingenuity of civilized man has created to mar his own felicity. There were no foreclosures of mortgages, no protested notes, no bills payable, no debts to honor in Typee; no unreasonable tailors and shoemakers, perversely bent on being paid; . . . no debtors' prisons; no proud and hard-hearted nabobs in Typee; or sum up all in one word--no Money! That "root of all evil" to be found in the valley.[33]

> But continuous happiness, which so far as I was able to judge appeared to prevail in the valley, sprung principally from that all-pervading sensation which Rousseau has told us he at one time experienced, the mere buoyant sense of a healthful physical existence. And indeed in this particular the Typees had ample reason to felicitate themselves, for sickness was almost unknown.[34]

In these passages we find that the narrator is romanticizing the Typees, but at the same time we find that he is not approving Rousseau's Noble Savage as an answer to the evil of the civilization, for immediately after the above passage he says:

> The general repose, however, upon which I have just been descanting, was broken in upon about this time by an event which proved that the islanders were not entirely exempt from those occurrences which disturb the quiet of more civilized communities.[35]

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[33] Ibid., p. 126.

[34] Ibid., p. 127.

[35] Ibid.

After a thoughtful retrospection, the narrator comes to the understanding that the Typees present one more response to life which is different from that of the whites but with its own limitations and its own kind of evils. By comparing the two societies the narrator finds that the Typees are only less evil than the whites and have different kinds of evil:

> . . . if our evil passions must find vent, it is far better to expend them on strangers and aliens, than in the bosom of the community in which we dwell. In many polished countries civil contentions, as well as domestic enmities, are prevalent, at the same time that the most attrocious foreign wars are waged. How much less guilty, then, are our islanders, who of these three sins are only chargeable with one, and that the least criminal.[36]

> The reader will ere long have reason to suspect that the Typees are not free from the guilt of cannibalism; and he will then, perhaps, charge me with admiring a people against whom so odious a crime is chargeable. But this only enormity in their character is half so horrible as it is usually described . . . for cannibalism to a certain moderate extent is practiced among several of the primitive tribes in the Pacific, but it is upon the bodies of the slain enemies alone; and horrible and fearful as the custom is, immeasurably as it is to be abhorred and condemned, still I assert that those who indulge in it are in other respects humane and virtuous.[37]

By creating an imaginative world in which the primitive and the civilized are brought side by side and throw light on each other, the narrator is finally able to comprehend the hidden truth which lies beneath his earlier incomprehensible experience. Like a social critic, he evaluates both the societies, the civilized and the primitive. His

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[36] Ibid., p. 205.

[37] Ibid., p. 205.

comparative treatment of the Polynesian culture is revealed to the extent to which he understands. The mature narrator approaches his earlier experiences from two angles--then and now. His present objective and sometimes ironic narration which occasionally intrudes upon the narrative can be seen in the following example:

> When I observed the striking devotion of the natives to him [Marnoo], and their temporary withdrawal of all attention from myself, I felt not a little piqued. The glory of Tommo is departed, thought I, and sooner he removes from the valley the better. These were my feelings at the moment, and they were prompted by that glorious principle in all heroic natures--the strong-rooted determination to have the biggest share of the pudding or go without any of it.[38]

In this passage the narrator is presenting his earlier feelings ironically. The conclusion to which the mature narrator, who has assumed the role of a critic, after a thoughtful reflection over his past experiences, is that evil is dominant all over the earth, and man is essentially a savage whether he belongs to the civilized society or to the primitive one in the Typee valley. From the civilized society in America and aboard the Dolly to the society of the primitive Typees, Tommo encounters evil and savagery. It is the basic truth of his experience aboard the Dolly and in Typee that the narrator finally reveals to his reader.

To sum up, our examination of the way in which Melville has used the narrator's consciousness for probing reality has revealed that Typee is no utopian arcadia. If anything, it is a dystopia, an evil place with soulless, mindless savages as its inhabitants. Free from the evils of civilization, it is not free from original evil. Rousseau's noble

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[38] Ibid., p. 137.

savage is no answer to the evils of civilization. The savages of the Typee valley with their instinctive behaviour are as much evil as good. The civilized Christians and the primitive cannibals are both tarred with the same brush. Hatred stirs in them both as much as love. In the next chapter we shall see how point of view is employed to conduct an anatomy of other aspects of evil.

REDBURN

While writing Redburn (1849) Melville deliberately employs the device of a retrospective narrator who is identical in person with the protagonist, but at the same time he is distinct from the protagonist in time and the degree of knowledge. He has already employed this technical device in his earlier novels Typee, Omoo, and Mardi with great success, and in Redburn he is simply following a pattern he has already established. The choice of this narration was made by Melville, perhaps, without much forethought of its artistic possibilities, and he was not given to such formal considerations as point of view. However, this device became a highly effective tool in Melville's hands, and he was able to bring his readers to a readier acceptance of his story through the narrator's personal testimony. The narrator, who has himself lived the experiences described, records his personal "Confessions and Reminiscences," and in the process of narrating the story he (not immediately engaged in the action of the narrative) is able to provide the moral comments acceptably. Melville's intentional use of this device demands a careful scrutiny for an understanding of the theme and meaning of the novel.

In Redburn, as in Typee, Melville employs first-person narration. The protagonist of the novel is the young Redburn, whereas the narrator is his mature self which differs from his earlier self morally, intellectually, and temporally. Both the protagonist and the narrator are, considering the superficial surface continuity of being, quite the same person (per+sona = the mask of physical exterior), but they are,

considering the phases of consciousness they represent, quite different from each other. The young protagonist is an inexperienced youth whom the mature narrator, experienced and morally and intellectually superior to his earlier self, looks at objectively. The maturity of the narrator places him at a distance from his early self, the protagonist of the story he narrates. Throughout the novel we constantly hear the voice of the mature Redburn, except at places where statements are ascribed to the young Redburn either in direct quotation or through indirect narration. The fact that the young Redburn, the protagonist, is depicted in the process of maturing and his mature self is the narrator, involves a back-and-forth shift in perspectives and makes for a complex and complicated handling of the point of view.[1]

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[1]The point of view in Redburn has been recognized as a crucial problem since F. O. Matthiessen's observation (American Renaissance, New York, 1941, p. 397) that Melville has neglected "to keep his center of consciousness in Redburn's experience" and added reflections "that could have occurred to someone much older." William H. Gilman (Melville's Early Life and "Redburn," New York, 1951, pp. 208-209) agrees with Matthiessen's statement and calls the "disruptive shift" in the narrative voice a "ruinous defect." In Melville's Quarrel with God (Princeton, 1952, pp. 75-76), Lawrence Thomson argues that there are three, and not two, points of view: of the younger Redburn, of the older Redburn, and of Melville himself, who satirizes the first two. In "Redburn and the Angle of Vision" (Modern Philology, LII, 1954, pp. 100-109), Merlin Bowen argues that there is no other narrative voice except that of the older Redburn: "And as for any marked 'shift in the angle of vision', one must simply deny that it ever actually takes place" (p. 102). Hershel Parker (in the "Historical Note" to Redburn: His First Voyage, eds. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle, Evanston, 1969, p. 349) attempts to reconcile the various views and suggests that "Melville's tone is not consistently satirical toward either the younger or the older Redburn and that the narrative voice is not consistently that of the older Redburn."

Redburn is not the same person at the end of the novel as at the beginning. In course of the action considerable inner changes have taken place in him; his illusions have vanished, giving way to deeper knowledge of the world and of himself. And so, the protagonist Redburn of the first half of the novel is different from the protagonist of the second half, and the narrator Redburn is different from either, in moral and spiritual perspective. This means that there are three Redburns--the naive Redburn at the beginning of the voyage, the experienced youngster at the end of it, and the more experienced and mature, older narrator. There is no moral and spiritual identity between the three perspectives that the mature narrator presents as his personal "Confessions and Reminiscences": "I was then but a boy."[2] Because of the narrator's enlightened state, there can be no identity between his perspective and that of the protagonist who is naive and inexperienced. The narrator casts a backward glance over his boyhood experience and renders it, in all its rawness. By wrenching out significance from the action the narrator attains an equilibrium at a higher level, whence he records his earlier experiences and makes judgement upon them. In my discussion of the novel, I shall be referring to the young Redburn at the beginning of his voyage, and the experienced Redburn at the end of it as the protagonist and to the older and more mature Redburn as the narrator.

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[2] Redburn (Evanston, 1969), p. 3. All subsequent references will be made to this edition.

The narrator's attitude towards the past is reflected in his tone of voice which is sometimes sympathetic, sometimes condescending, and sometimes ironic. By separating the narrator from the protagonist and distinguishing the naive young protagonist at the beginning of the novel from the experienced youth at the end, Melville shows his hero in the process of maturing at three different stages. The title of the book says that Redburn is the "Confessions and Reminiscences of the son-of-a-Gentleman, in the Merchant Service." The act of reminiscing implies that the detached retrospective narrator is the developed self of the dramatized protagonist: he is distinct from the protagonist in time, outlook and degree of knowledge. The confessions of the narrator about his past guilt or simply about his foolishness imply that he has now acquired a new level of awareness whence he contemplates his former self and analyses it. The gap between the Redburn now--the narrator--and the Redburn then--the protagonist in action--is emphasized by the narrator to create a distance between his present vantage point and his earlier naive self when he says that "so many years have elapsed, ere I have thought of bringing in my report."[3]

The narrator locates the "camera-eye" in the eye-brow of the protagonist, and he himself provides the moral view point after describing the scene through the protagonist's angle of vision. The narrator presents the incidents as they occurred to the boy protagonist and then he comments on them. For example, after describing his earlier

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[3]Ibid., p. 200.

odd behaviour on the steam-boat in Chapter II, he (in order to make a clear distinction between his earlier actions and present feelings and realization) says:

> . . . several persons standing to their feet, exclaimed that I must be crazy. So I was at that time; for otherwise I know not how to account for my demoniac feelings, of which afterwards I was heartily ashamed, as I ought to have been, indeed; and much more than that.[4]

Obviously the tone of the narrator is confessional here. But it is the narrator alone who understands the true significance of his earlier behaviour and not the protagonist who is involved in the action. Again, in Chapter IV after describing the incident when Captain Riga avoids advancing him three dollars, the narrator comments:

> The fact was, that my young friend (for he was only about twenty-five) was not a very wise man; and this was a huge fib, which out of the kindness of his heart, he told in my behalf, for the purpose of creating a profound respect for me in the eyes of my future lord.[5]

It is obvious that the narrator realizes the foolishness of his friend by a sort of hindsight. Similarly throughout the novel the past incidents are seen by the narrator in their correct perspective by hindsight. But the protagonist and the narrator do not remain always at a fixed distance from each other, and this distance between them converges as the protagonist moves from naiveté to experience and maturity. The narrator's chief concern in the novel is to show his earlier naive self in the process of maturity.

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[4] Ibid., p. 13.

[5] Ibid., p. 16.

Throughout the early part of the book the protagonist is presented by the narrator at his farthest remove from enlightenment. The young protagonist is seen as self-absorbed and obsessed with romantic imaginings without any clear perception of his environment or of himself. The feelings of the young protagonist are now criticized by the narrator:

> . . . it had been a hardhearted world, and hard times made me so. I had learned to think much bitterly before my time; all my young mounting dreams of glory had left me; and at that early age, I was as unambitious as a man of sixty.[6]

The narrator is ironically presenting here the point of view of the naive Redburn; for the lessons of this "hardhearted world" are lost upon him, and his "young mounting dreams of glory" have not, as he thinks, really left him. The illusory disillusionment of the boy is confined merely within the boundary of his own town, beyond which he sees gleams of a better world of adventure and romance. He thinks that after discarding the harsh realities of life, such as poverty and ignominy ("the scent and savor of poverty was upon me"[7]) in the Hudson village, he will be able to fulfil his "mounting dreams of glory" by "seeking . . . fortune on the sea."[8] The protagonist's point of view is full of ironical import but, it is the narrator alone who is fully aware of it. The narrator further presents the point of view of the protagonist before his departure from the Hudson village for the sea voyage:

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[6] Ibid., p. 10.

[7] Ibid., p. 12.

[8] Ibid., p. 7.

> As I grew older my thoughts took a larger flight, and I frequently fell into long reveries about distant voyages and travels, and thought how fine it would be, to be able to talk about remote and barbarous countries; with what reverence and wonder people would regard me, if I had just returned from the coast of Africa or New Zealand; how dark and romantic my sunburnt cheeks would look; how I would bring home with me foreign clothes of a rich fabric and princely make, and wear them up down the streets, and how grocers' boys would turn back their heads to look at me, as I went by.[9]

> As years passed on; this continued dwelling upon foreign associations, bred in me a vague prophetic thought, that I was fated one day or other, to be a great voyager . . . . And I have no doubt that this presentiment had something to do with bringing about my subsequent rovings.[10]

The narrator confesses here that when he was a boy he cherished all these romantic illusions ("an erring and willful boy, . . . I was"[11]). In the above quotations the protagonist's way of thinking is ironically presented through the point of view of the narrator. Since he has experienced the results of the protagonist's "vague prophetic thought," he can see the irony implied in the boy's point of view.

The narrator provides further instances of the protagonist's point of view which is full of illusion and at the farthest remove from his own point of view. The young Redburn imagines a romantic world with "fine old lands, full of mossy cathedrals and churches, and long narrow crooked streets without sidewalks, and lined with strange houses."[12]

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[9] Ibid., p. 5.

[10] Ibid., p. 7.

[11] Ibid., p. 10.

[12] Ibid., p. 5.

Perhaps his romantic longings manifest an urge to seek compensation for poverty forced upon him and his family:

> Cold, bitter ad December, and black as its blasts, seemed the world then to me; there is no misanthrope like a boy disappointed; and such was I, with the warm soul of me flogged out by adversity.[13]

The poverty which is forced upon the young Redburn turns him into a misanthrope, and his approach to life, like Tommo's (whose situation aboard the Dolly is somewhat similar to that of Redburn in Hudson village), has been influenced by physical and social circumstances. The poverty-stricken life in Hudson village has forced Redburn to distrust his immediate environment, and he yearns for a romantic world full of hopeful imagining. Because of his romantic imagining his point of view continues to remain limited and becomes ironical, because the reader knows that the protagonist's expectations are going to result in bitter frustrations. When Redburn leaves home for New York in a steam-boat, the passengers aboard the ship "looked stony-eyed and heartless" and they "cast toward me their evil eyes and cold suspicious glances."[14] Like Tommo, the young Redburn is full of confidence and thinks that he is superior to the people around him: "I could not help it, I almost hated them; and so to avoid them, went on deck."[15] But in this particular instance we must note that Redburn sees his own stony-eyed heartlessness in others. These instances throw light on the personality of the protagonist who is

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[13] Ibid., p. 10.

[14] Ibid., p. 12.

[15] Ibid.

so absorbed in his own reveries that he is not able to see the limitations of his own point of view.

An analysis of the young Redburn's adventures in the first half of the novel will make it clear how the protagonist's point of view is at a distance from that of the narrator, and how the narrator presents it to his readers. Self-confident and proud of his family background, Redburn thinks that as soon as he boards the Highlander, Captain Riga will favour him for his background (His "great-uncle died a senator," his "father, a gentleman of one of the first families in America, crossed the Atlantic several times on important business"[16]) and he will be distinguished from and elevated above the common sailors: "I had thought him [Captain Riga] a fine, funny gentleman, full of mirth and good humour, and goodwill to seamen, and one who could not fail to appreciate the difference between me and the rude sailors among whom I was thrown."[17] But immediately after his leaving home, he begins to encounter such incidents as were least expected by him. Instead of being impressed by his background ("respectability of my paternity"[18]) Captain Riga takes advantage of it in order to avoid advancing him three dollars. Young Redburn and his friend lie to the Captain that his relatives and friends are very rich. The mistake is realized by the protagonist later; and looking back over this incident the narrator moralized: "Poor people

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[16] Ibid., p. 16.

[17] Ibid., p. 67.

[18] Ibid., p. 17.

make a very poor business of it when they try to seem rich."[19] The protagonist's contact with the pawnbrokers forces him to realize that his perspective is not at all shared by others. Not only is he unable to get a fair price for his gun; he is also cheated during the course of the transaction.

The incidents that occur after Redburn's boarding the Highlander provide the contrast between his romantic expectations and his sad disappointments. The life on board the Highlander has very little resemblance to La Reine, the glass-ship he had admired so long. On the very first night aboard the ship he is hungry and lonely in the "damp and dark forecastle, without light or fire, and nothing to lie on but the bare boards of my bunk."[20] On the next day when the sailors start arriving, he realizes that he knows practically nothing about ships. Change in physical surrounding from land to sea requires that he should realize the foolishness of his earlier imaginings about sea-life. His image of the sea-life is drawn after La Reine which has "beautiful little glass sailors . . . with hats and shoes on . . . and curious blue jackets with a sort of ruffle round the bottom."[21] The sailors aboard the Highlander drink and swear and treat him badly. His background instead of distinguishing him and winning favours from his fellow-sailors proves a handicap. Before boarding the ship he had formed in his mind an ideal

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid., p. 25.

[21] Ibid., p. 8.

image of a sea captain: "I had made no doubt, that he would in some special manner take me under his protection and prove a kind friend and benefactor to me; as I had heard that . . . sea captains are fathers to their crew."[22] He even expects that the captain would invite him "to a dinner on a sunny Sunday."[23] But what he actually encounters to his disappointment is a petty, vicious and tyrannical captain. Like Tommo, who fails to communicate with the Typees, Redburn completely fails to understand the sailors' jargon and the orders of his officers. He experiences something which he could not have done and learnt by standing before his glass-ship, La Reine. Looking back over his romantic dreams about sea-life and his encounter with the reality aboard the ship the narrator comments:

> People who have never gone to sea for the first time as sailors, cannot imagine how puzzling and confounding it is. It must be like going into a barbarous country, where they speak a strange dialect, and dress in strange clothes, and live in strange houses.[24]

The young Redburn must compromise with the new world he has entered, but he is still not able to adapt himself to this change of environment. When he is set "to clean out the chicken coops, and make up the beds of the pigs in the long-boat,"[25] Redburn, again becomes self-conscious and is unable to cope with the hard realities of sea-life:

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[22] Ibid., p. 67.

[23] Ibid., p. 68.

[24] Ibid., p. 65.

[25] Ibid., p. 66.

> Miserable dog's life is this of the sea! Commanded like a slave, and set to work like an ass! Vulgar and brutal men lording it over me, as if I were an African in Alabama. Yes, yes, blow on, ye breezes, and make a speedy end of this abominable voyage.[26]

Realizing that life aboard the ship is not the same as he had expected earlier, Redburn, unlike Tommo (who deserts the Dolly), gradually learns to adapt himself to his changed circumstances and tries to become a part of the crew. During the storm when the sailors find an opportunity to tease him, he is no longer irritated. "I was getting a little to wise for this kind of foolish talk."[27] By the end of his voyage he is so used to the life aboard ship that he is not at all terrified by the height of the mast or the rolling of the ship. Now the sailor's jargons, too, begin to make sense to him. He himself employs the sailor's vocabulary in describing the art of steering a ship ("At sea, the sailors are continually engaged in "parcelling," and "serving," and in a thousand ways ornamenting and repairing the numberless shrouds and stays; mending sails or turning one side of the deck into a rope-walk, where they manufacture a clumsy sort of twine, called spun-yarn . . ."[28]), in describing the furniture of the quarterdeck ("I might proceed and speak of the booby-hatch, used as a sort of settee by the officers, and the fife-rail round the mainmast, inclosing a little park of canvas. . ."[29])

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., p. 102.

[28] Ibid., p. 114.

[29] Ibid., p. 119.

and in enumerating the qualities of an expert sea-man:

> A thorough sailor . . . must have a touch of millinery, so as to tie graceful bows and knots, such as Matthew Walker's roses, and Turk's heads; . . . he must be a semptress, to darn and mend the sails; a ropemaker, to twist marline and spanish foxes. A sailor, also, in working at the rigging, uses special tools peculiar to his calling--fids, serving-mallets, toggles, prickers, marlingspikes, palms, heavers, and many more . . .[30]

One of the important changes that takes place in Redburn's attitude toward his environment is his growing awareness of the sailors as individuals. Earlier in his voyage he thinks of people in terms of group or class, and we learn very little about his attitude toward specific individuals except Mr. Jones, a friend of his elder brother. He never thinks of others in terms of individuals. His family, the passengers aboard the steamboat, the pawnbrokers, and his fellow sailors are all initially described by him as particular groups or classes. The protagonist's description of the passengers aboard the steamboat is an example of his thinking of others in terms of groups or classes: "They were certainly a cheerless set, and to me they all looked stony-eyed and heartless."[31] But gradually Redburn's perspective changes, and the sailors begin to emerge as individuals in his consciousness. Some of his fellow-sailors strike his consciousness as having their own individuality. Jackson is, for example, described as "the foul lees and dregs of a man"[32] who is "spontaneously an atheist and an infidel,"[33]

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[30] Ibid., p. 121.

[31] Ibid., p. 12.

[32] Ibid., p. 58.

[33] Ibid., p.104.

and Belfast man as a "remarkably robust and good-humoured young man."[34] Similarly, he recognizes the individual identity of the dreamy-eyed Blunt, of Larry as a reserved member of the crew with his impressive knowledge of whales, and of Captain Riga with all his cunningness and tyranny.

In the section of the book that deals with the homeward journey from Liverpool to America, the center of focus frequently shifts from the protagonist to the other characters and he is seen as one among many. This development in the structure of the novel is important for the development of the novel's theme; Redburn's consciousness expands as his awareness of other people increases in him. The narrator shifts his focus from the protagonist to the other characters in order to present the protagonist's growing awareness of other perspectives. As the protagonist becomes aware of his fellow-sailors' individuality, he realizes the limitations of his own point of view. In order to present his earlier feelings and gradual development, the narrator has to expand his "camera-eye" and bring into focus other characters (other than the protagonist) as well. This awareness of other people is important in the development and education of the young protagonist.

The protagonist's education begins immediately after he leaves home. By the time he boards the Highlander some of the wonders dreamed of in childhood turn out to be ordinary, despicable and mean. His long imagined whales (which he expected would "look like mountains on the sea; hills and valleys of flesh! regular karkens, that made it high tide, and

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[34] Ibid., p. 59.

inundated continents, when they descended to feed."[35]) turn out to be nothing more than "long, black snaky-looking shapes, only a few inches out of the water."[36] After about a month at sea when the Highlander passes Ireland, Redburn gets excited: "Ireland in sight! A foreign country visible!"[37] Having a "vague idea" that the shore would be something strange and wonderful," Redburn stares hard at a

> . . . bluish, cloud-like spot to the north east. Was that Ireland? Why there was nothing remarkable about that; nothing startling. If that's the way a foreign country looks, I might as well have staid at home.[38]

The narrator is presenting here the point of view of the protagonist who, after his disappointments and understanding of the meaning of his experience, comes closer to the enlightened state of the narrator. But it is just the beginning. As the ship passes Wales, Redburn again begins to dream of the mountains and the Prince and Queen of Wales. But very soon he discovers that the mountains of Wales "was mortifyingly like the general effect of the Kaatskill Mountains on the Hudson River."[39] When the ship arrives at Liverpool harbour Redburn feels that it is very much like New York. The principal buildings of Liverpool are no "mossy

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[35] Ibid., p. 96.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid., p. 126.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid., p. 126.

cathedrals" or "old ruined abeys," the dingy warehouses bear "a most unexpected resemblance to the warehouses along South-street in New York."[40] He discovers even greater stench of vice and poverty in London than in New York. The voyage does not bring any relief to Redburn's burning soul.

The most important stage in Redburn's education and correction in his romantic expectations comes with the perception of his failure in following his dead father's old guidebook, The Picture of Liverpool. Redburn had read this book several times, and had formed a picture of Liverpool in his mind. He prepares himself to explore Liverpool with the help of the guidebook, hoping that by following in the footsteps of his father he will be able to recapture the past successfully. But his dreams and illusions are quickly destroyed. The Picture of Liverpool proves to be an ineffective guide. Redburn contemplates at the failure of the guidebook and his consciousness merges with the consciousness of the mature narrator:

> Here, now oh, Wellingborough, thought I, learn a lesson, and never forget it. This world, my boy, is a moving world; its Riddough's are forever being pulled down; it never stands still; and its sands are always shifting. This very harbour of Liverpool is filling up, they say; and who knows what your son (if you ever have one) may behold, when he comes to visit Liverpool, as long as you come after his grandfather. And Wellingborough, aa your father's guide-book is no guide for you, neither would yours (could you affoard to buy a modern one today) be a true guide to those who come after you. Guide-books, Wellingborough, are the least reliable books in all literature; and nearly all literature, in one sense, is made up of guide-books. Old ones tell us the ways our fathers went, through thoroughfares and courts

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[40] Ibid., p. 127.

> of old; but how few of those former places can their posterity trace, amid avenues of modern erections; to how few is the old guide-book now a clew! Every age makes its own guidebooks, and the old one are used for waste paper. But there is one Holy Guide Book, Wellingborough, that will never lead to astray, if you but follow it aright; and some noble monuments that remain, though the pyramids crumble.[41]

Here the narrator does not distinguish his own point of view from that of the protagonist. But this merging of two points of view (of the protagonist and of the narrator) is temporary. Though Redburn has gained an important insight into the nature of his experience, he has failed to grasp the full meaning of it. Immediately after this the narrator disassociates himself from the protagonist and says: ". . . though I rose from the door-step a sadder and a wiser boy . . . I did not treat with contumely or disdain, those sacred pages which has once been a beacon to my sire."[42] Here the narrator is presenting partly his own point of view towards his earlier self (the dramatized protagonist) and partly the protagonist's point of view which is still not completely free from illusions.

The relationship between Redburn and Jackson is presented by the narrator wholly through his own point of view. Though the narrator is conscious of the distance between the protagonist and himself, sometimes this distance is obliterated by him, and he feels and speaks with the protagonist. Redburn's experiences aboard the Highlander and in Liverpool call into question all his previous beliefs and assumptions. Jackson's

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[41] Ibid., p. 157.

[42] Ibid.

atheistic misanthropy is most threatening to Redburn's beliefs. Jackson is the most malicious member of the crew. As Tyrus Hillway[43] has observed Jackson is "the first of several persons in Melville's books who embody the principle of absolute evil." For Redburn, there is "more woe than wickedness about the man; and his wickedness seemed to spring from his woe."[44] Throughout the voyages Jackson violently protests against heaven and earth:

> Don't talk of heaven to me--it's a lie--I know it--and they are all fools that believe in it. Do you think, you Greek, that there is any heaven for you? Will they let you in there, with that tarry hand, and that oily head of hair? Avast! When some shark gulps you down his hatway one of these days, you will find, that by dying, you will only go from one gale of wind to another; mind that you Irish cockney! Yes, you'll be bolted down like one of your own pills: and I should like to see the whole ship swallowed down in the Norway maelstrom, like a box on 'em.[45]

The atheism and misanthropy of Jackson arouses a sense of pity in the heart of the young Redburn:

> But there seemed even more woe than wickedness about the man; and his wickedness seemed to spring from his woe; and for all his hideousness, there was that in his eye at times, that was ineffably pitiable and touching; and though there were moments when I almost hated this Jackson, yet I have pitied no man as I have pitied him.[46]

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[43] Tyrus Hillway, Herman Melville (New York, 1963), p. 63.

[44] Typee, p. 105.

[45] Ibid., p. 104.

[46] Ibid., p. 105.

Redburn recognizes the spiritual hunger of Jackson, not very unlike his own romantic longings; and in sympathizing with Jackson he unconsciously sympathizes with his own disappointed self. Here again, the protagonist comes closer to the narrator, and the narrator realizes when he says "yet I have pitied no man as I have pitied him" that his present feelings about Jackson are the same as he felt earlier aboard the Highlander. But there is still some distance between the narrator's consciousness and that of the protagonist. And so their point of view are not the same. The evil, inhumanity that have turned Jackson into a misanthrope and atheist, threaten Redburn too:

> . . . at last I found myself a sort of Ishmael in the ship, without a single friend or companion; and I begin to feel a hatred growing up in me against the whole crew--so much so that I prayed against it, that it might not master my heart completely, and so make a fiend me, something like Jackson.[47]

Jackson is, in fact, a fully developed alter ego of young Redburn's disappointed misanthropic nature. Here the narrator has distanced himself in presenting the point of view of the protagonist about Jackson.

The narrator recounts an important incident in which the protagonist's wrong perspective is further corrected, and he (the protagonist) reaches at a significant conclusion about the society which is full of evil. To Redburn, what makes Liverpool differ from New York is the extreme poverty of the English city:

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[47] Ibid., p. 62.

> Every variety of want and suffering met the eye, every vice showed here its victims. Nor were the marvelous and almost incredible shifts and strategems of the professional beggars, wanting to finish this picture of all that is dishonorable to civilization and humanity.[48]

Here the narrator is not at all distinguishing his own point of view about the English city from that of the protagonist. In presenting the point of view of the protagonist, he is presenting his own point of view, too. Redburn encounters a mother and her three children dying of starvation in Launcelott's-Hey and starts seeking help for them. To his utter surprise, he learns that his perspective of the dying family is not at all sharedby others:

> "She desarves it," said an old hag . . . "that Betsy Jennings desarves it--was she ever married? tell me that."
> Leaving Launcelott's-Hey, I turned into a more frequented street; and soon meeting a policeman, told him of the condition of the woman and the girls. "It's none of my business, Jack," said he. "I don't belong to that street."[49]

Through the experiences of the protagonist, the narrator is presenting his own point of view. Redburn's maturity comes from his realization that the society is very cruel and indifferent towards those who are poor and are suffering from poverty. This is the point of view of the narrator, too, about the society. People are so indifferent towards others' sufferings that Redburn is shocked, and in his outrage he, along with the narrator, cries:

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[48] Ibid., p. 186.

[49] Ibid., p. 181.

> Ah! what are our creeds, and how do we hope to be saved? Tell me, oh Bible, that story of Lazarus again, that I may find comfort in my heart for the poor and forlorn. Surrounded as we are by the wants and woes of our fellow-men, and yet given to follow our own pleasures, regardless of their pains, and are we not like people sitting up with a corpse, and making merry in the house of the dead.[50]

Redburn's outcry against the society reveals an important truth that the people on this earth are vicious and cruel, and they live in their own egocentric shell. (Redburn has already experienced people's indifference and cruelty in the Hudson village, in New York, and on board the ship Highlander.) This is the essence of the narrator's past experiences; this is the point of view of the narrator and of the protagonist towards the society. To make Redburn's education complete, Melville introduces Harry Bolton, a young boy of almost Redburn's age, as a foil. Melville seems to have created Redburn and Harry Bolton as the separate halves of essentially the same self. Harry Bolton is similar to the protagonist in many ways. He comes from almost a similar background as that of Redburn, and his attitude to life and his surrounding are in common with the naive Redburn. Like Redburn, Bolton's home is in the country (he has lost both the parents, whereas Redburn's mother is still alive) and is the son of a gentleman. Like Redburn, again, Bolton is to go to sea for the first time. He has expectations and romantic dreams which were once nourished by the young Redburn. Both the youths are yearning for something romantic, new and wonderful.

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[50] Ibid., p. 184.

Bolton has a great desire to

> . . . gallantly cross the Atlantic as a sailor. There was a dash of romance in it; a taking abandonment; and a scorn of fine coats, which exactly harmonized with his reckless contempt, at the time, for all past conventionalities.[51]

Of course, the narrator is presenting Bolton ironically, here. When Bolton is brought before Captain Riga, he too is like Redburn, "full of admiration at so urbane and gentlemanly a sea-captain."[52] But very soon Bolton's wrong perspective and imaginary visions are exposed in the mind of the maturing protagonist whose now enlarged vision has no distance from that of the narrator. Now there is an identity between the protagonist's point of view and that of the narrator:

> No sooner were his wishes made known, than I perceived in the captain's face that same bland, benevolent, and bewitchingly merry expression, that had so charmed, but deceived me, when with Mr. Jones, I had first accosted him in the cabin.
> Alas, Harry! thought I,--as I stood upon the forecastle looking astern where they stood,--that "gallant, gay deceiver" shall not altogether cajole you, if Wellingborough can help it. Rather than that should be the case, indeed, I would forfeit the pleasure of your society across the Atlantic.[53]

Here we must note that the distance between the protagonist and the narrator has to a large extent disappeared. Now the protagonist is no longer fascinated by the "gallant, gay deceiver" [Captain Riga]. On the other hand, the young Redburn, along with the narrator, can now

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[51] Ibid., p. 220.

[52] Ibid., p. 219.

[53] Ibid., p. 220.

penetrate the "bland, benevolent, and bewitchingly merry expression" of the Captain and see his [Captain Riga's] hideous self. From now on the protagonist's perceptions and visions gradually move toward and merge with the perceptions and visions of the narrator. With his newly acquired knowledge of the sea-life and of Captain Riga, the protagonist warns Bolton about the Captain and the ship's crew. Here, again, we notice that the protagonist's consciousness has merged with that of the narrator. The protagonist advices Bolton with the maturity and the perception of the narrator:

> "Harry," said I, "be not deceived by the fascinating Riga--that gay Lothario of all inexperienced, sea-going youths, from the capital or the country; he has a Janus-face, Harry; and you will not know him when he gets you out of sight of land and mounts his cast-off coats and trousers. For then, he is another personage altogether, and adjusts his character to the shabbiness of his integuments. No more condolings and sympathy then; no more blarney; he will hold you a little better than, his boots, and would no more think of addressing you than of invoking wooden Donald, the figure-head on our bows."[54]

As I have stated earlier, with the arrival of Harry Bolton on the Highlander Redburn's education is brought to a completion. Now on the protagonist's progress from ignorance to knowledge, from illusion to reality makes a rapid progress. Bolton encounters all those difficulties which Redburn experienced once. But whereas Redburn learns to respond and adjust to his surroundings, Bolton fails to do so. The result is that he is destroyed like Jackson, whose concept of himself and of the

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[54] Ibid., p. 220.

world was as rigid as that of Bolton. As Redburn sees his own earlier self reflected in Bolton, he not only corrects himself but also attempts to correct and protect Bolton. He discovers, however, that like his father's old guide-book he is completely useless to Bolton. In this vicious world an individual has to learn all by himself. If he is unable to adjust himself to the ways of the world and clear his passage out, he will be destroyed like Bolton, and like Jackson before.

The protagonist gradually completes his education, and his earlier distorted visions and vague ideals are now viewed by him in the correct perspective. The movement and the effect of the early part of the novel is different from the later one. During the first half of the novel the protagonist's progress towards maturity is slow because of his being very naive and full of expectations. But by the time the ship starts its homeward voyage, the protagonist has learnt the limitations of his own point of view because of the resulting frustrations from his expectations. Towards the end of the book we see Redburn, like Tommo, with his changed psychological perspective. His earlier self is transformed into a new one and his earlier myopic vision of sea life of a foreign country is greatly changed. And with this enlarged vision the protagonist speaks out:

> We may have civilized bodies yet barbarous souls. We are blind to the real sights of this world; deaf to its voice; and dead to its death. And not till we know, that one grief outweighs ten thousand joys, we will become what Christianity is striving to make.[55]

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[55] Ibid., p. 293.

Here we note that now the protagonist's point of view has completely merged with that of the narrator. In the above passage the narrator is presenting his vision of the society, which is the essence of the protagonist's experiences in the Hudson village, in New York, aboard the Highlander, in Liverpool, and in London. Here the narrator's point of view cannot be distinguished from that of the protagonist. From this point when the mature narrator looks back, he comprehends the full meaning of his earlier experiences. In facing his past he allows no lies to distort his perspective.

To sum up, our examination of Melville's use of point of view demonstrates that the narrator's conscious act of retrospection and self-analysis is of supreme importance. In the mature narrator's point of view are nested the morally and spiritually misinformed visions of the naive boy (on which terrifically side-lights are thrown by the perspectives of Jackson and Bolton) and the gained wisdom of the rather socially adjusted youngster of the second half of the book. An understanding of the three levels of perspectives--egocentric (the naive boy's), ethical (the experienced youngster), and spiritual and philosophical (the mature narrator's)--make it clear that Melville's handling of point of view is intended to discover, through self-awareness, the development of moral perspectives and the gradual withering away of the egocentric, self-righteous masks of the natural man in the young Redburn. The world discovered by Redburn is full of vices and cruelties, and the vision of a single individual is limited. The only way to survive in this evil world is to be aware of one's own share of the Original Sin

and join the communion of sinners, the human society. This adjustment will save the individual from the isolating and destructive masks of the self-righteous innocence and naiveté.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing analyses of point of view in Melville's early novels, i.e., Typee and Redburn have revealed certain aspects of his method and vision. What I want to do now is to synthesize these points into a general and synoptic framework. These novels convey their meaning by dramatizing it in a realistic narrative. Both novels use the same technique of narration: the first-person point of view with limited omniscience. In both the novels the narrator's personality and point of view are of paramount importance. Even when we have rounded portraits of other characters, such as Harry Bolton and Jackson in Redburn and Kory-Kory and Toby in Typee, they are totally submerged in the personality and point of view of the narrator. Harry Bolton, Jackson, Kory Kory and Toby are character sketches, who exist for the thematic development of the novel and throw side-lights on the personality of the narrator. The narrator's point of view (his visual and moral angle) is all important in these novels; we almost never find the point of view of another character absorbed to his own voice through indirect style. In both Typee and Redburn we have perfectly dramatized narratives and digressions which serve to clarify and expand the significance of the main narrative.

Both the novels I have discussed illuminate different aspects of evil. Theoretically Melville does not deny that there are two sides to life, bright and dark. But the fact remains that both the novels are somehow inspired by a vision of evil. His heroes are those who are defeated. The imagery of defeat, of physical wreckage, and of spiritual

ruin weave figures in Melville's world of imagination. Tommo's swollen leg in Typee is symbolic of his spiritual suffering. In whatever society Tommo moves he discovers only vices, cruelty and villainy. He becomes a victim of the circumstances. On board the ship Dolly he is surrounded by a vicious crew and a cruel Captain. He finds it almost impossible to continue his journey in that ship, and so he deserts it. In the Typee valley he discovers another kind of evil, such as cannibalism and barbarity. Even the missionaries are vicious and full of evil intention. They convert the reluctant savages but do not care for their future welfare. The missionaries' conduct in Polynesia is an example of evil act as well as of defeat of a religious institution. In Redburn, Jackson is another figure who suffers physically as well as spiritually. Even Redburn and Bolton suffer in their longing for a better life. They undertake sea voyage in search of a better life, but ultimately they are defeated. In Melville's fictional world, the individual self either suffers defeat and extinction (like Jackson and Bolton in Redburn) or somehow lingers on, (like Tommo and Redburn) precariously poised between pulls of evil forces. Like Tommo (who discovers evil in the white society as well as in the primitive society of Typee), Redburn discovers vices in different nations of the white civilization. In New York Redburn experiences indifference of people towards those who are poor and helpless. He discovers almost the same situation in Liverpool. The vicious captain of the Highlander cheats Redburn as well as Bolton. All these acts and situations are examples of the evil forces in the world.

Melville's diptychal vision of reality does not consist of two absolutes. The novels I have studied reveal that the diptych consists

of two aspects of the same absolute: evil. In his Hawthorne essay Melville writes that "in this world of lies, truth is forced to fly like a scared white doe in the woodlands; and only by cunning glimpses will she reveal herself, as in Shakespeare and other masters of the great Art of Telling the Truth--even though it be covertly, and by snatches."[1] How covertly Melville reveals the truth, has been partly shown in my analysis of his point of view, his "great art of Telling the Truth." The truth that we glimpse in his novels, is, however, the truth of evil in the universe. Already at the very beginning of his career, Melville seems to have decided to conduct his anatomy of evil in all its aspects. "Certain it is, however, that this power of blackness in him [Hawthorne] derives its force from its appeals to that Calvinistic sense of Innate Depravity and Original Sin, from whose visitations, in some shape or other, no deeply thinking mind is always and wholly free. For in certain moods, no man can weigh this world, without throwing in something somehow like Original Sin, to strike the uneven balance."[2] His novels seem to have been inspired by this basic attitude. They question not only the social order but the cosmic order itself. His penetrating probe into the social and cosmic reality has an abiding value; because of the inveterate "duplicity" of his narrative technique he will compel his readers to pause and think.

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[1]Herman Melville, "Hawthorne and His Mosses," in The Portable Melville, ed., Jay Leyda (New York, 1962), p. 408.

[2]Ibid., p. 406.

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