A STRUCTURAL INVESTIGATION OF THE SHORT STORIES OF KATHERINE MANSFIELD WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE IDEA OF THE TRUE AND FALSE SELF

by

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The preliminary remarks which follow may strike a note that is more personal than is strictly desirable in a thesis of this kind. The present writer believes, however, that the recounting of her varied responses to the stories may have some value beyond the merely esoteric insofar as the account thus given may help the reader to understand the manner and spirit in which the subject of this research has been approached.

It was in the course of random and extra-curricular reading in her first year as a university student that the present writer initially encountered the short stories of Katherine Mansfield. The stories interested her, and she read and re-read as many of them as she could find.

Other interests intervened, and she did not read the stories for some years. Chancing to come upon them again, she read them with a growing sense of disappointment. The old magic had fled, and the writer attributed her early enthusiasm to youthful naïveté.

It was through a reading of Katherine Mansfield's Journal[1] that the writer of this thesis came back to the stories for a third time. It is impossible to read the Letters or Journal without becoming impressed by the mind thus revealed, and the present writer, remembering the gulf between her first and second judgment of the stories, turned back to them, curious to discover what her response to them would be at that later stage. The impact made upon her mind was such as to suggest a vindication of the judgment of her youth.

By this time, the writer had returned to a study of English literature, and had come to have some knowledge of objective methods

of criticism. She had noticed the discrepancy between various critical estimates of Katherine Mansfield's work. Thus, while Middleton Murry considered her to be a genius,[2] D.H. Lawrence was markedly conservative in his estimate of her talent.[3] Writing in 1943, Somerset Maugham assessed her as having "a small and delicate talent" which, "when she tried to write a story of any length ... broke to pieces in the middle because it was not supported by a structure of sufficient strength";[4] a few years earlier Dorothy Hoare, while deploring the fact that such talent had been precluded from reaching its full promise, judged her to be "a story-teller of the first rank".[5]

Intrigued by such divergence of opinion, the present writer became interested in the idea of undertaking some kind of research into Katherine Mansfield's work. Remembering that at the time of her second reading of the stories she had felt that the characters were not especially interesting, the incidents presented inconsiderable and the thematic interest slight, the present writer became curious as to whether the stories were in fact deficient in these functions (as in part suggested by Maugham), or whether her method of subjective assessment had been at fault. The idea of an examination of the structural functions of the stories, with an interest in a clearer understanding of the author's world view, thus became attractive.

A survey of the available literature on Katherine Mansfield has shown that, in the five decades which have elapsed since the author's death, critical interest has gradually, but significantly, altered its direction. Despite the workmanlike assessments of such critics as David Daiches in Britain[6] and Andre Maurois in France,[7] and the recognition of her mastery of the short story form by such

fellow practitioners of the art as H.E. Bates[8] and Elizabeth Bowen,[9] the mainstream of criticism tended, in the first decades after the author's death, to centre less upon the characteristics of the work itself than upon a cult-like fascination, initiated, perhaps, by the perceptive but over-interested pen of Middleton Murry. Only more recently has this tendency been superseded by a more rigorous scrutiny of the stories themselves; thus the excellence of the author's technique has now become a major concern. Recent recognition has been accorded, too, to the fact that the stories were in the vanguard of their time with regard to the choice of, as well as the treatment of, theme. Saralyn Daly, for instance, draws attention to the fact that Austin M. Wright, in a treatise on the modern short story as it exists in America, has formulated what could well have been a description of a typical Mansfield short story, in attempting to distinguish the modern from the traditional manifestations of the genre; a coincidence which Wright acknowledges.[10]

Christine Mortelier affirms that it is not only the technique of the stories which is arousing renewed interest in the author's work in France, but also the depth and prescience of her thought, as relating to the Zeitgeist of the present age.[11] The present writer considers that, in her preoccupation with the idea of the loss of the self, and of man's capacity to realize his true essence, Katherine Mansfield has shown herself to be sensitively attuned to the Zeitgeist of the century of which she herself knew only the first two decades.

In one of her letters, Katherine Mansfield mentions the fact that as an artist she tries "to go deep -to speak to the secret self we all have- to acknowledge that".[12] In reading the stories, the

present writer has been struck by the idea of a lost or secret self, which seems to recur throughout the body of the work. The treatment of the idea is carefully controlled as if the writer remained heedful of the admonition contained in the sentence of her letter which follows: "I mustn't say any more about it." Although thus muted, the idea seems to be woven into the fabric of the stories in such a way as to merit attention. This research, based upon an interest in the structural examination of the stories, has found the idea of a lost, unattainable or double self, explicit or implied, to be an important element in Katherine Mansfield's view of the human dilemma, and a useful starting point for a study of the ideational layers of the author's work.

Søren Kierkegaard, troubled by the despair engendered by the reluctance of his contemporaries to allow themselves to become the selves they should be, designated the spiritual malaise thus engendered the "sickness unto death". His line of thought seems to have exercised a profound influence upon those to whom an interest in man's spiritual state descended, be they thinkers in the fields of psychology, philosophy, or literature. Existentialist philosophers such as Jaspers, Heidegger and Buber have seen man's retreat from the adventure of becoming his true self as a refusal of authentic existence. Psychologists such as Jung, Horney and R.D. Laing view the alienation of personality resulting from loss of the self as central to the distress of modern man. Proust, Lawrence, Gide, Carson McCullers and Katherine Mansfield are among those in the literary field in whose work the idea receives attention.

The late Professor Antonissen, in an essay on the poet, Ingrid Jonker, selects the idea of the "double" as one of the most

interesting aspects of her thought, and as highly serious and relevant to present-day thinking.[13] The present writer would like to pay tribute to Professor Antonissen's stimulating essay, which, in some measure, initiated the line of thought which has culminated in the present research. It is interesting to find that across three continents the idea of the divided self has emerged as a literary concern.

An interest in Psychology, in which the present writer has an M.A. degree, has to some extent influenced the direction of this work. It is, however, far from the intention of this work to suggest that Katherine Mansfield would have fashioned her art upon any kind of philosophical or psychological theory. She herself strongly deprecated the idea of an artist's working to "prove" a theory. Commenting pejoratively upon the "sudden mushroom growth of cheap psychoanalysis everywhere"[14] (she had been faced with the task of reviewing no less than five novels based upon this type of theory), she distinguished between the intention of such writers to prove a case, and the aim of an artist to tell the truth. She added, however, that if the fictional world had integrity, it should stand up to the scrutiny of "scientific examination".[15] The intention of this research is not to conduct anything resembling a scientific examination, but, in all humility, to explore the incidence in the fictional worlds of the stories of an interesting facet of the Zeitgeist.

The idea of true and false selves in the works of Katherine Mansfield has been touched upon by certain critics but, to the best of this writer's knowledge, has not previously received close attention. Frank O'Connor, in relating the presence of the idea in certain of the stories to an unresolved conflict between warring

personalities in the artist herself, assumes that her degree of artistic success is associated with the extent to which one of these personalities is held in abeyance.[16] Sylvia Berkman, a careful critic of Katherine Mansfield's stories, touches upon the concept in discussing "Prelude", but does not develop it; rather, she concentrates upon the failure of the author to integrate the character of Beryl.[17] (This is a debatable interpretation, in the opinion of the present writer and at least one other. Arthur Sewell considers Beryl to be among the author's most sensitive creations.)[18] Saralyn Daly shows a perceptive awareness of the link between the inception of a false self in Kezia, and the despair of Beryl at her inability to become her true self.[19] Don W. Kleine suggests the inescapable quality of the selves created for the Burnell children by the dilemmas of the adults in their environment.[20]

Among the aims of this research has been that of examining as many of the short stories as possible with a view to gaining insight into the development of Katherine Mansfield's technique and metaphysic. Of the ninety-one stories included in the definitive edition of the author's works, eighteen have been entirely omitted. Of these, eleven are fragments, while three form part of In a German Pension, an early collection which the author later repudiated as "not what I meant" and "immature".[21] The remaining few, among the slighter of the author's works, did not seem to have particular relevance to the subject of the research. The stories which are generally acknowledged to be masterpieces have either been among those selected for study in depth or have been considered, more briefly, from more than one functional angle. In an attempt to effect a compromise between a detailed study of a few, and a more superficial

consideration of a larger number, sixteen stories have been selected for study in depth, each along one structural perspective; while, of the remainder, all but the few exceptions noted above have been considered more briefly with regard to one or more of the structural perspectives.

As many stories as possible have been considered in the chapters devoted to the functions of tone and atmosphere, as well as in the final chapter on the author's metaphysic. For this reason, no detailed case studies have been presented under these headings. This arrangement of the final chapters has allowed a consideration of the evolutionary aspect of the author's development. Insights yielded by the exploration of each of the structural functions have helped towards a final formulation of the metaphysic as suggested by the body of the work as a whole.

A tempting array of extrinsic material, in which Katherine Mansfield has left us many fascinating asides upon the thematic and technical aspects of her own art and that of other people, is extant within the pages of letters, journal, scrapbook, and in Novels and Novelists, the volume in which her book reviews have been assembled.[22] As Eileen Baldeshwiler has effectively demonstrated, the dicta thus diffusely presented might be collected together to form a perceptive and consistent theory of art.[23] Mindful of the intentional fallacy, the present writer has to a large extent concentrated her attention upon the fictional worlds of the stories themselves. So interesting, however, are the insights made possible by what Brigid Brophy has termed Miss Mansfield's "illuminating and devastating intelligence" that to neglect these entirely would surely be to impoverish one's understanding and to deny oneself access to a storehouse of great interest.[24]

Katherine Mansfield's insight into the common purpose of her works, and her emphasis upon the ultimate unity of their aesthetic and moral purpose, has provided the present writer with valuable guide-lines directing her towards the essence of the author's metaphysic. A careful examination of the stories suggests the validity of the intention since, in her finest work, it is demonstrably present in the result.

A Note on the Presentation of the Manuscript

In the setting out of the typescript, the conventions offered by Kate L. Turabian in A Manual for Writers (3rd ed.), as well as those suggested in The MLA Style Sheet (2nd ed.), have been consulted.

Miss Turabian's instructions with regard to the setting out of first and subsequent footnote references, as well as of the bibliography, have been followed where applicable. In cases where this authority seemingly fails to give clear guidance, The MLA Style Sheet has been consulted.

The advice offered by Miss Turabian with regard to second and subsequent footnote references has been preferred to the convention of using the abbreviation op.cit. In view of the fact that the footnotes appear at the ends of chapters, the name of the author has been repeated in the footnote, even where the name already appears in the text.

With regard to the setting out of quotations, the convention offered by The MLA Style Sheet has been preferred. Thus quotations have been incorporated into the text unless they exceed one hundred words in length.

FOOTNOTES TO INTRODUCTION

[1]John Middleton Murry, ed. The Journal of Katherine Mansfield (London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1954). (Hereinafter referred to as Journal.)

[2]John Middleton Murry, Between Two Worlds : An Autobiography (London: Jonathan Cape, 1935), p. 490.

[3]Richard Aldington, Portrait of a Genius, But ... : The Life of D.H. Lawrence, 1885-1930 (London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1950), p. 182.

V also Ruth Elvish Mantz and John Middleton Murry, The Life of Katherine Mansfield (London: Constable & Company, Ltd., 1933), p. 14.

[4]W. Somerset Maugham, Introduction to Modern English and American Literature (New York: The New Horne Library, 1943). p. 464.

[5]Dorothy M. Hoare, Some Studies in the Modern Novel (London: Chatto & Windus, 1938), pp. 148-154.

[6]David Daiches, New Literary Values (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1936), pp. 83-114.

[7]André Maurois, Poets and Prophets, trans. by Hamish Miles (London and New York: Cassel and Co., 1936), pp. 223-245.

[8]H.E. Bates, The Modern Short Story : A Critical Survey (London and Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1945), pp. 122-133.

[9]Katherine Mansfield, Stories, selected and introduced by Elizabeth Bowen (New York: Vintage Knopf, 1956), pp. I-XXIV.

[10]Austin M. Wright, The American Short Story in the Twenties (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), quoted in Saralyn Daly, Katherine Mansfield (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1965), p. 272.

[11]Christine Mortelier, "The Genesis and Development of the Katherine Mansfield Legend in France ", AUMLA, XXXIV (1970), 252-263.

[12]John Middleton Murry, ed., The Letters of Katherine Mansfield (London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1930), II, 134. (Hereinafter referred to as Letters, II.)

[13]Rob Antonissen, „Dubbelspel en Liefde ", In Memoriam : Ingrid Jonker (Kaapstad, Pretoria: Human & Rousseau, 1966), pp. 38-46.

[14]John Middleton Murry, ed., The Letters of Katherine Mansfield (2 vols.; London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1930), I, 53. (Hereinafter referred to as Letters, I.)

[15]Ibid.

[16]Frank O'Connor, The Lonely Voice : Studies in the Short Story (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1965), pp. 136-7.

[17]Sylvia Berkman, Katherine Mansfield : A Critical Study (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 92.

[18]Arthur Sewell, Katherine Mansfield : A Critical Essay (Auckland, New Zealand: The Unicorn Press, 1936), p. 31.

[19]Saralyn R. Daly, Katherine Mansfield (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1965), p. 72.

[20]Don W. Kleine, "An Eden for Insiders ", College English, XXVII (1965-66), p. 209.

[21]Letters, II, 14.

[22]Katherine Mansfield, Novels and Novelists (London: Constable and Co., Ltd., 1930).

[23]Eileen Baldeshwiler, "Katherine Mansfield's Theory of Fiction ", Studies in Short Fiction, VII (n.d.), 421-432.

[24]Brigid Brophy, "Katherine Mansfield ", London Magazine, New Series, II (Oct. - March, 1962-63), 41-46.

CHAPTER I

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE STORIES

The present research constitutes an investigation into the short stories of Katherine Mansfield in which the major analytical devices employed have been those made available by the structuralist approach to literary criticism. The primary aim of the research has been an exploration of the fictional worlds of the stories in the hope of gaining insight into the manner in which, with such apparent ease, the author achieved a result not only aesthetically satisfying but also richly evocative at the ideational level. A further aim has been to explore certain recurrent themes which seem to the present writer to help towards a richer understanding of the central ideas of the stories. Evidence of these, which include the idea of the true and false self, and of authenticity and inauthenticity of living, has been inferred in the course of the structural examination of the various functions of the stories, and has been found to lead to added insights at the level of world view.

The term "structural" requires definition, particularly in view of the confusion which has accrued to the term as the result of conflicting literary usage. Wellek and Warren suggest that the term "structure" is more meaningful than "form". They use it to denote a concept embracing elements of both "content" and "form", as defined by earlier usage. Thus "structure", according to their concept, contains whatever elements of the aforementioned dichotomy are "organised for aesthetic purposes".[1] "Materials" thus replaces "content" to designate the parts of the design so organised. The

term "structure", then, refers to the "pattern or structure or organism which includes plot, characters, setting, world-view, 'tone' "[2] and amounts to "the world or Kosmos of a novelist".[2] Used in the sense of this definition, the term "structural" would appear to acquire both depth and precision. Wellek and Warren seem to have based their definition on the system of stratification arising from the phenomenological approach to aesthetics of Roman Ingarden, who sees the work of art as consisting of five layers.[3] Of these the first two layers are linguistic; units of meaning arise out of patterns of sound. The third layer constitutes the fictional world insofar as it is imagined in concrete terms. Thus it consists of the characters, spatial constructs and setting of the fictional world. The fourth layer relates to the angle from which the fictional world is regarded, and thus portrayed; the fifth to the metaphysic, and hence to the stratum of ideas. This layer may not be present in the case of a superficially conceived fictional world. It is at the level of this final stratum that the present writer has found the works of Katherine Mansfield to be rich in philosophical and psychological ideas.

In this work, the term "structural", used in the sense suggested by Wellek and Warren, and including Ingarden's suggested system of stratification, is used in preference to the term "formalist". If, however, the terminology advocated by R.S. Crane be preferred, the approach used in the present work would be better described as a structural-formalistic investigation. Crane suggests that the term "form" should be used in the Aristotelian sense as referring to the controlling principle which gives the work unity and cohesion. The "structure", according to the dichotomy he proposes, is that

which is thus controlled -"the order, emphasis, and rendering of all its component materials and parts"[4]- into an artistically satisfying whole. "Form" as used by Crane seems to correspond closely to Ingarden's fifth layer, insofar as ideas control and order the constituent elements of a fictional world which is aesthetically satisfying.

Each of the ensuing chapters constitutes a structural investigation of a function which may be located at one or another of the strata suggested by Ingarden's concept of layers. The first chapter, "Narrative Situation", relates to the fourth layer and embraces "point of view". Stanzel's term has been preferred as including connotations of the manner in which the fictional world is mediated to the reader as well as the perspective from which it is viewed.[5] The structural functions of space and atmosphere, both of which overlap with setting, relate to the third layer, as does the chapter entitled "Character and Characterization". The chapter on action has relevance to the third layer insofar as it relates to actions, both outer and inner, perpetrated by inhabitants of the fictional world, and to the final layer, insofar as these actions are shaped by the underlying metaphysic which must not only determine the plot but also decree each small but essential incident contributory to the design. The function of time gives the imagined world its necessary fourth dimension, and therefore relates to the third layer as well as to the fourth, at which level the temporal distance between narrator or figural mediator and the world thus portrayed forms a fascinating dimension. The function of tone relates to the third and fourth layers insofar as the tones conveyed through dialogue, first person narrators or figural mediators are concerned, and to

the fifth where a discrepancy between tone and overall tone helps to suggest the world-view of the creating mind. The final chapter attempts to plumb the metaphysic which lends depth to the fictional worlds of the stories.

It has been said that the extent to which a critical method is useful depends upon the critic's awareness of its limitations.[6] Virginia Woolf, a brilliant practitioner of the intuitive method of criticism, showed a scholarly recognition of this fact when she suggested that the critical mind, confronted by a new work, longs for "some foothold of fact upon which it can lodge before it takes flight upon its speculative career".[7] E.M. Forster, on the other hand, takes an unequivocal stand against the aid of any kind of "elaborate apparatus" and states clearly his belief that "the final test of a novel will be our affection for it".[8] So subjective a basis for criticism seems dangerous, even in the case of a critic of such innate taste and skill as that displayed by Forster. It is surely desirable for a critic to form an estimate of the strengths and weaknesses of a novelist under consideration on a more objective basis than that of the critic's personal inability to respond to a particular writer.

In adopting the objective method of approach to the work of art allowed by the use of structuralistic tools, the writer has endeavoured to remain wary of possible pitfalls. The objection might well be levied that a strictly objective approach to a literary work directs the attention of the critic exclusively to the technique with consequent neglect of aesthetic and emotional values. Forster probably had some such idea in mind when he wrote that "principles and systems may suit some other forms of art, but they cannot be

applicable [to the novel]."[9] However, the discipline implied by the system of stratification which arises from the phenomenological approach to the work of art suggested by such aestheticians as Ingarden and Nicolai Hartmann[10] directs the attention of the critic, initially to the more concrete layers of the work under consideration, but finally to the more abstract; at which levels both underlying ideas and aesthetic appeal are particularly immanent. In remarking that action is the soul of tragedy, Aristotle, some two thousand years ago, put his finger on the fact that a structural function, and whatever it is that resides in a work of art to move mankind to pity, fear or awe, cannot be separated.[11]

Max Schorer, writing in 1948, formulates a similar truth: "Modern criticism, through its exacting scrutiny of literary texts, has demonstrated with finality that in art beauty and truth are indivisible and one." Since this is the case, "when we speak of technique ... we speak of nearly everything".[12] Katherine Mansfield, herself a literary critic of originality and discernment, would have agreed with Schorer's view. "I believe in technique" she wrote to an artist friend, and proceeded to make her own pronouncement on the indivisibility of content and form: "I don't see how art is going to make that divine spring into the bounding outline of things if it hasn't passed through the process of trying to become these things before re-creating them."[13]

Although the structural method may appear to subject the work to a process of fragmentation, the unity of the work of art need not be endangered if the method be discreetly applied. It should be viewed as a means of systematic entry into the fictional world rather than as an end in itself. No structural element can exist

independently of the other perspectives which lend support to the architecture of the work as a whole. With each part exercising an influence upon every other, a single structural element is an abstraction; a useful instrument which, though allowing only an apparent isolation of a specific function for purposes of close study, none the less helps the critic to achieve a sharper focus than that which may be found in a response to the subtle complexities of the design as a whole.

Katherine Mansfield's stories repay close analysis. Deceptively simple at a first reading, their kinship to lyrical poetry is affirmed by the enriched meaning which emerges with the hindsight allowed through close attention. F.W. Bateson and B. Shahevitch have applied the type of close scrutiny accorded to lyrical poetry by the "New" critics to "The Fly" with interesting results.[14] The method, however, can only be successfully applied to the shortest of short stories. Some of the author's finest works approach the novella in length.

Since it allows a story to be explored in depth along one of a number of functional perspectives, the structural approach seems peculiarly suitable for the consideration of a story, lyrically conceived, but too long for close analysis. Yuan-shu Yen, examining this author's short stories according to the function of point of view, includes among the results of his research the finding that the stories yield new depths and subtleties when examined from such a perspective.[15] The present writer, having adopted as her method the examination of a number of stories along seven structural perspectives, has found evidence in support of this view.

Jean-Paul Sartre remarks that the emphasis placed upon time

in the works of William Faulkner directs the critic to this function of his works as one through which an understanding of his metaphysic may be approached.[16] In this study, an attempt has been made to approach each story according to a function which seems particularly appropriate to the emphasis of structure or symbol. Thus a story in which a character's development or dilemma is presented through his own consciousness would seem to suggest an approach through narrative situation as a suitable perspective; one in which the action is woven about a spatial symbol would suggest an approach through the function of space; while a story such as "The Daughters of the Late Colonel", in which fragmentation of time is an outstanding aspect of the presentation, and in which symbols of, and attitudes towards, it are prominently featured in the fictional world, seems to invite consideration from the perspective offered by this function.

Before starting on the analysis of the stories, the writer of this thesis had been impressed by the idea of the true and false self as it seemed to occur not only within the fictional worlds of the stories but also in notes of an introspective nature made by the author and recorded in letters, scrapbook and journal. In a note entitled "The Flowering of the Self" dated July, 1920, Katherine Mansfield affirms her belief in the search for the self as a feature of the spirit of her time. Thus she notes that "there are signs that we are intent <u>as never before</u>,[17] to puzzle out, to live by, our own particular self ... free, disentangled, single".[18] In this passage, as in the stories, Katherine Mansfield writes of the realization of the self in terms remarkably similar to those which Jung suggests as relating to the archetype of the self in his

remarks on The Secret of the Golden Flower.[19] Thus she continues by mentioning "our persistent and mysterious belief in a self which is continuous and permanent; which, untouched by all we acquire and all we shed, pushes a green spear through the dead leaves ... until, one day, the light discovers it and shakes the flower free and -we are alive- we are flowering for our moment upon the earth".[20] In the course of the structural analysis of the stories, this archetypal idea has been found to be a significant aid in the interpretation, particularly at the layer of ideas and world view.

A psychoanalytical investigation of Katherine Mansfield's life and work would undoubtedly prove an interesting field of research. The author's difficulties in resolving personal problems of aggression, her premature and long foreshadowed death, her interest in the early relationships between children and adults, are among the facets of her life and work which invite speculation in terms of Freudian theory. It has been said that Freud's theory of the development and structure of the personality is, of all systems of psychological thought, the one which allows a tragic view of mankind.[21] In the very fact that his thinking is fundamentally mechanistic, and that man's fate is biologically determined by his psycho-sexual development during the first six years of his life, lies a modern prototype for the ancient idea of Olympian pre-determination and derision. An examination of Katherine Mansfield's metaphysic shows her to embrace a tragic view; in projecting a vision which includes the fact that beauty is doomed, and that man must struggle in vain, she stresses again and again the need for acceptance. It is in the triumph of the spirit, the individual struggle to become a purer and better self (despite the exigencies of fate), that the interest

of the stories ultimately lies. It has been unkindly said of Freud that, despite the apparent pessimism of his biologically oriented theory, he himself was unable to believe that the cure for man's spiritual ills lay further away than the nearest psychoanalytical consulting room.[22] While this is undoubtedly an oversimplification of Freud's true metaphysic, the fact remains that his interest in man was primarily clinical, and that Freudian tools are therapeutic in intention. In this investigation, which aims, not to prove the validity of a fictional world by the application of a theory, but to use such theory as an aid to understanding the subtle struggle of the spirit to rise above inevitable and overwhelming odds, Freudian tools have not been applied.

The present writer disclaims any pretension, not only to the use of psychoanalytical theory in the chapters which follow, but also to the rigorous application of any school of psychological theory. If the emphasis had been upon a scientific enquiry into the concept of the true and false self, and the incidence of the idea in the fictional worlds of the stories, the investigator would have been obliged to start with Freud (the first clear formulator of a theory embracing the idea of division within the psyche and a dynamic unconscious), and to proceed through the ideas of various thinkers in the field. The names of Fromm, Stack Sullivan, Erickson and R.D. Laing spring to mind as among those whose ideas on division in the personality and the search for identity and personal fulfilment might well have yielded insights of interest. However, in this investigation, the ideas of two psychologists only have been invoked. Certain of their concepts have been used as devices for uncovering ideas, typically understated and thus not easy to discern, in the

ideational layers of the stories. Correspondences have been invoked as an aid to interpretation but have not been laboured. The interest of the present writer has been in recording insights achieved through the use of such devices rather than in recording the manner of their attainment.

Karen Horney and C.G. Jung, the two psychologists whose concepts have been thus used, were both originally Freudians who later diverged from strict psychoanalytical theory to establish new systems of psychological theory and practice. Each of these writers stresses the idea of the self (in this respect Karen Horney shows the influence of William James) as distinct from the Freudian concept of the "ego" and emphasises the idea of a division within the conscious self which manifests itself in intellectual apprehension of such division.[13] It is consciousness of the division, then, which distinguishes this concept from those of orthodox psycho-analytical schools. Their followers lay stress on neurotic symptoms or reaction-formation by means of which the Id, the submerged area of Freud's vertically-imagined structure of the personality, makes felt its unsatisfied demands. Thus Freudian psychology does not make use of the concepts of a true self, a false self or the loss of the self. The division within the personality is of a different kind with the unconscious Id revealing its dynamic and insistent demands only through dreams, overt behaviour or symptoms.

C.G. Jung, who had broken his allegiance to Freud in 1913, gradually developed interests which removed the centre of his thought from the psychiatric consulting room to a study of alchemical and Eastern literature, and, via these, to a deep concern with the nature and discovery of the self. By 1945 he had stated his preference for conducting a study of man "in the light of what in him is healthy and sound".[24] Remarking on the fact that Freud's teachings,

while valid, have relevance only to man in a state of sickness, Jung expresses regret that Freud (in his view) had limited his thinking by "turn[ing] his back on philosophy".[25] With regard to his own method of attempting to throw light on man's condition, Jung clearly affirms that it is both intrapsychic and introspective. ("I know well enough that every word I utter carries with it something of myself- of my special and unique self.")[26] At the same time, he avows his belief in the necessity for a practitioner of the psychological method to heed, and learn from, philosophical criticisms of his method.

The "bitter-sweet"[27] lesson which Jung had been obliged to assimilate through his receptiveness to such criticism had rendered him acutely aware of the subjectivity of his method. Yet Jung believed that it would be the end of his own creative powers, and thus the end of his contribution to the knowledge of man, if he were to abandon the inward orientation of his approach through individuation.

The concept of individuation, which Jung equates with self-realization (and sees as the antidote to self-alienation), seems to have come to him as a result of his interest in the studying and drawing of mandalas, which Jung came to recognize as representing, in linear design, the archetype of the self. The process of individuation, which Jung describes as the "central concept"[28] of his psychology, is not to be regarded as a simple clinical tool, to be used as an aid in the cure of neurosis or psychosis. On the contrary, Jung seems to have regarded the procedure as dangerous for those whose ego-development is not strong. He saw it as the prerogative of the mature man, able and willing to embark upon a journey into the unconscious, as a result of which he might, if

fortunate, make contact with the centre of the true self. Frieda Fordham gives a succinct account of the implications of this "journey", in the course of which:

> the traveller must first meet with his shadow, and learn to live with this formidable and often terrifying aspect of himself: there is no wholeness without a recognition of opposites. He will meet, too, with the archetypes of the collective unconscious, and face the danger of succumbing to their peculiar fascination. If he is fortunate he will in the end find the 'treasure hard to attain', the diamond body, the Golden Flower, the lapis, or whatever name and guise have been chosen to designate the archetype of wholeness, the self. [29]

The passage quoted may be taken as a convenient starting-point from which to discuss several Jungian concepts which, in addition to that of individuation, have been found useful in gaining insights into the ideational layers of the stories. Jung, deeply receptive to and influenced by Taoist thought, invokes the principle of Yin and Yang (the former embodying dark forces, the latter light) to clarify his idea of opposites as fundamental to the archetype of the self.[30] Jung believed, indeed, that the conscious mind shows a constriction of vision in positing a conflict between good and evil. To this, he tells us, the deeper wisdom of the unconscious would reply, "Look closer! Each needs the other. The best, just because it is the best, holds the seed of evil, and there is nothing so bad but good can come of it."[31] The extent to which this principle became a part of Katherine Mansfield's thinking, and is to be found in the metaphysical layers of her later stories, only became fully apparent to the present writer in the course of the structural examination of the stories. Katherine Mansfield's insights into the fundamental compatibility, indeed the essential unity, of good and evil, ugliness and beauty, emerge as perhaps the most fundamental aspect of her mature metaphysic.

The "shadow", an archetype largely existing as part of the personal unconscious, embodies those qualities of the individual psyche opposite in nature to those which the person concerned consciously claims as his own. Thus, he who embraces tenderness as a conscious value of his personality, has it within him to be harsh; he who is puritannical, to be licentious. Katherine Mansfield, whose metaphysic suggests an affinity to Taoist as well as to Jungian thought, shows an intuitive awareness of the existence of, and dynamic pressures exerted by, the "shadow". This becomes apparent in her handling of such characters as Millie[32] and Beryl Fairfield,[33] and is manifest in the rapid alterations in attitude and action depicted at the functional level of action.

Jung's idea of the self transcends the finite boundaries suggested by a single human life or consciousness, for his concept of the "collective" presupposes a psychic content which is common to all members of the human family. In the collective unconscious are to be found archetypal symbols and images which are universal, and which appear in the dreams, mythology and significant works of art of all cultures. Among the archetypal symbols are those of the <u>animus</u> or <u>anima</u>. Here, too, the principle of opposites functions, so that the male will find his counterpart in the feminine archetypal figure of the <u>anima</u>, the female in that of the masculine counterpart, the <u>animus</u>. The <u>persona</u>, also an archetype, is to be found partly at the level of the conscious collective, but also partly at the unconscious level. The <u>persona</u> represents a "compromise formation between external reality and the individual. In essence, therefore, it is a function for adapting the individual to the real world."[34] In order to achieve such adaptation, each person is

obliged, to some extent at least, to adopt the characteristics of the social role expected of him. Jung likens this process to the adoption of a mask, or a persona.

Western society in particular demands that man should assume the outward character of a given social role. The adoption of the mask is, at any rate for anyone who wishes to enjoy the confidence of his fellow men, inevitable.[35] However, "the construction of a collectively suitable persona means a formidable concession to the external world".[35] The person who identifies with the persona sacrifices the self as it really is, and comes to believe that he is the social role he has adopted. Such a person lives according to an idea, an ideal image. At this point Jung again invokes the Taoist notion that "'High rests on low'".[36] As the ego shifts its centre upwards in an effort to become what is imagined as ideal, "an opposite forces its way up from inside".[37] Thus he who would make himself over in a strong and masculine role is at the mercy of feminine impulses arising from within, rendering him subject to such weaknesses as are opposite to the virtues he consciously embraces. Individuation implies self-knowledge- the recognition of the persona as a mask; necessary, perhaps, for purposes of social adjustment but not an integral part of the self. A lonely process, it also requires that man should become acquainted with his anima, conduct conversations with it, and thus "educate" it.[38] Self-alienation, then, arises from an identification with the persona. The price paid by the person concerned for the false image of the self he has adopted as his own lies in the fact that he has placed himself at the mercy of the collective.[39] In unguarded moments, the dynamic forces of the unconscious will assume command, forcing

him to perpetrate actions which his consciously held principles would repudiate. He is at the mercy of both the shadow and the anima.

Jung's stubborn integrity in clinging to his chosen method and apparatus in the face of criticism to which he was so sensitive led to a reward, in that, paradoxically, he seems to have achieved a vision of man's relationship to the cosmos within the enclosed, mandala-like microcosm which constitutes the area to be explored through individuation. This he expresses through the alchemical concept of the philosopher's stone:

> As I have repeatedly pointed out, the alchemist's statements about the lapis, considered psychologically, describe the archetype of the self. Its phenomenology is exemplified in mandala symbolism, which portrays the self as a concentric structure, often in the form of the squaring of a circle. Co-ordinated with this are all kinds of secondary symbols, most of them expressing the nature of the opposites to be united. The structure is invariably felt as the representative of a central state or of a centre of the personality essentially different from the ego. It is of numinous quality, as is clearly indicated by the mandalas themselves and by the symbols used (sun, star, light, fire, flower, precious stone, etc.). All degrees of emotional evaluation are found from abstract, colourless, indifferent drawings of circles to an extremely intense experience of illumination. [40]

That Katherine Mansfield had an intuitive understanding of the mandala image as a symbol of the self is evident not only from the entry already cited from her scrapbook (in which she likens the flowering of the self to the opening of a flower) but also from the fictional worlds of the stories, in which characters regularly look into mandala-like areas before embarking upon a voyage of self-discovery. Thus Linda Burnell gazes into a flower,[41] Josephine and Constantia look upon a square of sunlight which glows upon the Indian carpet,[42] and Mr Neave looks up at the flower-decked front of his big, white-painted house;[43] in each case, something akin to a

process of individuation follows, and the character concerned gains a new measure of self-awareness.

Rich as the concepts of Jungian psychology may be as an aid to unravelling the deeper significance of Katherine Mansfield's imagery, this area for research has barely been touched upon in this thesis. Such concepts have been used as a measure of obtaining added insights; but no systematic exploration of the fictional worlds for the presence or significance of archetypal symbols has been attempted.

Karen Horney broke away from the orthodox psychoanalytical tradition soon after 1930. While retaining many of Freud's basic concepts, she criticized his mechanistic and biological view of man's development, which she considered to be over-pessimistic. By the time of her death in 1952 she had become well known for the cultural orientation of her theory. Deeply interested in the phenomenon of alienation of the self, Dr Horney acknowledges the influence of Kierkegaard in her description of the alienated personality, and invokes the descriptions given in their novels by the existentialists, Sartre and Camus, of the man who has suffered a loss of the self.[44] Thus she is a psychiatrist with an interest in philosophical ideas.

That Karen Horney remains essentially a psychologist rather than a philosopher in her view of man is shown in the limitation of her interests to his position against a cultural background, rather than against the background of the natural world, or of the universe. Dr Horney's view of anxiety, which she sees as germane to the "central inner conflict"[45] through which man moves towards the formation of a false and idealized self, differs signally from that of the existentialists, who, from Kierkegaard onwards, have looked

upon anxiety, or anguish, as the hope of mankind, constituting the challenge towards transcendence, and hence the gateway through which the human creature may progress towards true selfhood. Karen Horney, on the other hand, looks upon anxiety as the death-knell of the true self, for it is as a reaction against what she calls "basic anxiety"[46] that the young child, unable to find approval for that entity which constitutes his true self, makes himself over into the travesty implied by her concept of the "idealized image".[47] Anxiety, which, in Dr Horney's view, is intolerable to the human psyche, is thus banished, but so is the true self. The victim achieves an uneasy peace of mind, at the price of the warm and vital centre of his being which, having been usurped, lives on in some undefined sphere, at once hated and feared. The life of the false self which is in possession becomes what Horney describes as the "search for glory",[48] where motivation arises from "the tyranny of the should"[49] rather than from any intrinsic interest in people or activity. The artist thus motivated would find satisfaction in his idea of himself as projecting the image of an artist, rather than in the act of creation; the mother, in her role of maternal perfection, rather than in true affection for her child. The price paid for the attainment of this state of unreal perfection is a blunting of moral awareness and sensitivity of response. The person so affected suffers a loss of the self which Dr Horney believes to be the most serious deprivation a human being can be called upon to endure. Thus she agrees with Kierkegaard in his description of such a loss as "the sickness unto death".[50]

It is in the remedy which Karen Horney proposes for the sickness of man thus described that the limitation of the psychotherapeutic standpoint becomes apparent. Dr Horney's clinical

interest directs her towards an indulgent attitude to the patient and his illness which might, when viewed from a different angle, be seen as a denial of the dignity of man. The remedy for the "sickness unto death", as proposed by Dr Horney, is mental analysis under the guidance of a skilled psychiatrist;[51] preferably one who is an adherent of her school of thought. Psychoanalysis, if directed with tact and skill, should lead the "patient" back to self-realization through the gradual mobilisation of the true self, and the substitution, for false and unreal idealized goals, of a more valid set of values and aspirations. The "road to re-orientation through self-knowledge"[52] along which the patient is thus guided is a procedure which implies constant protection and help on the part of the analyst.[53] Although Karen Horney turned to Kierkegaard and to the more modern existentialists, Sartre and Camus, as an aid to describing the victim of self-alienation, her view of anxiety, and her therapeutic bias, reveal her to be considerably removed from them with regard to her view of man.

It is, perhaps, inevitable that Dr Horney's position as a physician should cause her to evolve a metaphysic which seems to absolve man of responsibility for his fate, and to deny him that very freedom to rebel against it which, in the metaphysic of Katherine Mansfield, appears as the central source of human dignity. An examination of the author's short stories at the levels of characterization, action and world view yields insights pointing towards her interest in the subtle daily triumphs and failures of the human spirit. The situations depicted in the fictional worlds relate to the commonplaces of everyday living, and, with the exception of a few early stories, the characters presented are neither

neurotic nor insane. Neither a psychiatrist nor the members of her immediate family circle were necessary to help Kezia towards her lonely decision to defy the closed systems of thought ordered by social convention and the wishes of her elders, and to seek a living relationship with the little Kelveys.[54] Karen Horney's system of thought (or that of another psychologist) might help us to gain insight into the nature of the process with which Kezia's development was threatened, but it cannot assist in the assessment of that gallant resistance of her spirit which enabled her to find her own remedy for the anxiety engendered by the pain of adult disapproval and to move towards true selfhood. Laura, in her decision to defy common sense and the protective power of her mother, moves towards a transcendent spiritual experience. The fact that she is able to benefit from this experience, despite discouragement from those around her, points to the author's view of the human spirit as capable of private resilience and triumphs.[55]

As the present writer proceeded with the structural analysis of the stories, it became increasingly clear to her that, at the ideational layer, the author was pre-occupied with problems of human responsibility, freedom of choice, and the day to day decisions which are fateful insofar as they propel the human being towards evil or good. In the examination of the later metaphysic in particular, the present writer began to question the adequacy of the psychological apparatus and intention. Katherine Mansfield's final world view, in which good and evil seem to be apprehended as obverse sides of the same coin, and the movement towards either to rest upon continual nice decisions, seems to rest upon a metaphysic which cannot be understood without the consideration of the human spirit -a concept

which psychoanalysts (with the noteworthy exception of Jung)[56] generally seem to regard as too tenuous for scientific recognition.

Faced, therefore, by a sense of the inadequacy of psychological tools as an aid to her full understanding of the implications of the situations presented, the writer of this thesis abandoned her original intention of invoking the ideas of a number of psychologists, and turned instead to the systems of thought of the existentialists. It was found that these provided exceptionally useful instruments for gaining insight into the author's layers of ideas. One might hazard the statement, indeed, that had Katherine Mansfield set down her queries about man's position in the universe and the meaning of his life as a treatise, instead of converting such questions into art, she might have emerged quite clearly as an existentialist philosopher.[57] The metaphysic of early stories such as "The Woman at the Store" invites speculation as to the reason for human existence in a world apparently so absurd; while the later metaphysic shows a constant concern with ideas evincing a remarkable frequency of correspondence with such typical existentialistic interests as the relationship between man and the natural world, the extent of his responsibility with regard to his own manner of existence and his relations with his fellow men, his awareness of his being and of the cessation of that being, and the degree of his freedom to realise his potential by finding his true essence.

Katherine Mansfield's preoccupation with ideas relating to the mental and spiritual isolation of those living in close contact with one another; the suggestion contained in her work of the frightening responsibility towards the other which may be incurred through the chance encounter or the thoughtless remark; her awareness that a richer type of living may be attained

through the recognition of mortality in every manifestation of living beauty; the implication to be found in her stories that the call to transcendent experience is likely to occur without warning and at inconvenient moments; her concept of the useless and tragic waste of human potential through thoughtless conformity to ready-made systems and social custom: all these, and other ideas which have emerged at the metaphysical layer of the stories, allow greater insight into the depth and power of her vision if perceived more clearly through the aid of existentialist thinking and concerns.

Jaspers' concept of the limiting situation has been especially valuable insofar as it helps towards an understanding of the true significance of seemingly inconsiderable incident or plot.[58] Some everyday incident of little obvious import causes a character to stop and reassess the direction and meaning of his living. The event which calls up the feeling of guilt or suffering, sufficient to constitute a limiting situation for the person most nearly concerned, may seem to the observer to be trivial or of little importance. The hasty or inattentive reader of a Katherine Mansfield story is in the position of such an observer. Jaspers' concept provides a useful device whereby the hidden implications may the better be discovered.

The powerful but understated ideas which constitute the most significant layer of a Katherine Mansfield short story have proved highly amenable to the testing power of existentialist ideas. The concepts of Sartre, Camus, Jaspers, Heidegger and Buber have been invoked where they have seemed to find an echo in the underlying ideas presented, and have proved themselves to be useful and sensitive instruments.

Katherine Mansfield's ultimate vision of good and evil as virtually indivisible, each seemingly disparate entity only a hair's breadth away from the other, and as involving man in constant difficult temptations and decisions, seems to approximate closely to the existentialist concept of authenticity and inauthenticity. These ideas, therefore, have proved themselves to be valuable in the understanding of the author's metaphysic.

A quotation from Katherine Mansfield's Journal shows that her idea of "health" approximated very closely to what may be described as authenticity of existence; and that for her, the realization of the self, to be achieved through health and authentic existence, was not incompatible with Jung's concept of individuation, or the realization of the archetype of the self. The references to the sun- to the longed-for state of "a child of the sun" -bear a striking correspondence to the description of light and heat necessary for the kindling of the light in the dwelling place of the true self, as noted by Jung in the course of his commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower.[59] The passage quoted below from the Journal is dated October 14th, 1922:

> By health I mean the power to live a full, adult, living, breathing life in close contact with what I love - the earth and the wonders thereof - the sea - the sun. All that we mean when we speak of the external world. I want to enter into it, to be part of it, to live in it, to learn from it, to lose all that is superficial and acquired in me and to become a conscious, direct human being. I want, by understanding myself, to understand others. I want to be all that I am capable of becoming so that I may be (and here I have stopped and waited and waited and it's no good - there's only one phrase that will do) a child of the sun. About helping others, about carrying a light and so on, it seems false to say a single word. Let it be at that. A child of the sun.
>
> Then I want to work. At what? I want so to live that I work with my hands and my feeling and my brain. I want

> a garden, a small house, grass, animals, pictures, music. And out of this, the expression of this, I want to be writing. (Though I may write about cabmen. That's no matter.) [60]

The final paragraph of the passage quoted gives evidence of the manner in which, for the author, work and moral goodness ("health", authenticity of existence) mingle so that, in her final vision, moral dignity becomes an integral factor in that which she expresses through her art.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I

[1]René Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature, Peregrine Books (Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1963; rpt. 1968), p. 141.

[2]Ibid., p. 214.

[3]Ibid., p. 151.

[4]M.H. Abrams, A Glossary of Literary Terms, Rinehart English Pamphlets (3rd ed.; New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970), p. 65.

[5]F. Stanzel, Narrative Situations in the Novel, trans. by James P. Pusack (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1955; rpt. 1971), Chapter I.

[6]Richard Blakmur, "A Critic's Job of Work ",(1935; rpt. in Form and Value in Modern Poetry (Garden City, New York, 1952), pp.346-7, cited by Ingo Seidler, "The Iconolatric Fallacy : On the Limitations of the Internal Method of Criticism ". Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, XXVI (1967), 9-15.

[7]Virginia Woolf, Granite and Rainbow : Essays by Virginia Woolf (London: The Hogarth Press, 1958), p. 86.

[8]E.M. Forster, Some Aspects of the Novel (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1927), pp. 37-8.

[9]Ibid., p. 38.

[10]v Horst Ruthrof, "Death Situations in the Short Story" (unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Rhodes University, 1968), pp. 192-4.

[11]Francis Fergusson, ed., Aristotle's Poetics, trans. by S.H. Butcher, A Dramabook (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961; rpt. 1968), p. 63.

[12]Max Schorer, "Technique as Discovery ", in Perspectives on Fiction, ed. by James L. Calderwood and Harold E. Toliver (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 200-216.

[13]John Middleton Murry, ed., The Letters of Katherine Mansfield (London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1928; rpt. 1930), I, 83. (Hereinafter referred to as Letters, I.)

[14]F.W. Bateson and B. Shahevitch, "The Fly : A Critical Exercise ", Essays in Criticism, XII (1962), 39-52.

[15]Yuan-shu Yen, "Katherine Mansfield's Use of Point of View ", Dissertation Abstracts, XXVIII (1967), 674A (University of Wisconsin.)

[16]Jean-Paul Sartre, "On The Sound and the Fury : Time in the Works of Faulkner ", trans. by Annette Michelson, Literary and Philosophic Essays (London: Rider & Co., 1955), pp. 79-87; rpt. in Robert Penn Warren, ed., Faulkner : A Collection of Critical Essays, Twentieth Century Views (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962), p. 87.

[17]Emphasis mine.

[18]John Middleton Murry, ed., The Scrapbook of Katherine Mansfield (London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1939), p. 137. (Hereinafter referred to as Scrapbook.)

[19]Carl Gustav Jung, Alchemical Studies, Vol. XIII, trans. by R.F.C. Hull, in The Collected Works of C.G. Jung, ed. by Sir Herbert Read (18 vols.; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), pp. 23-30.

[20]Scrapbook, p. 137.

[21]Stanley Edgar Hyman, "Psychoanalysis and the Climate of Tragedy ", in Freud and the Twentieth Century, ed. by Benjamin Nelson (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1958), pp. 163-181.

[22] Ernst Breisach, Introduction to Modern Existentialism (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1962), p. 57.

[23]v Karen Horney, Neurosis and Human Growth (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1951), pp. 173-4.

v also Carl Gustav Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology Vol. VII, trans. by R.F.C. Hull in The Collected Works of C.G. Jung, ed. by Sir Herbert Read (18 vols.; 2nd ed.; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 177.

v also Ibid., p. 238.

[24]Carl Gustav Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, trans. by W.S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1945), p. 135.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid., p. 136.

[27]Ibid., p. 135.

[28]Carl Gustav Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, trans. by Richard and Clara Winston; Fontana Library Theology and Philosophy (London: Collins, 1967), p. 235.

[29]Frieda Fordham, An Introduction to Jung's Psychology, Pelican Books (3rd ed.; Gt. Britain: Penguin, 1966; rpt. 1972), p. 79.

[30]Jung, Two Essays, p. 182.

[31]Ibid., p. 183.

[32]v "Millie ", in Katherine Mansfield, Collected Stories (London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1945; rpt. 1972), p. 582. (Hereinafter referred to as Collected Stories.)

[33]v "Prelude"; "The Doll's House"; Ibid., pp. 11; 393.

[34]Jung, Two Essays, p. 298.

[35]Ibid., p. 193.

[36]Ibid., p. 194.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Ibid., p. 203.

[39]Ibid., p. 173.

[40]Carl Gustav Jung, Mysterium Conjunctionis, Vol. XIV, trans. by R.F.C. Hull, in The Collected Works of C.G. Jung, ed. by Sir Herbert Read (18 vols.; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 544.

[41]v "Prelude ", Collected Works, p. 11.

[42]"The Daughters of the Late Colonel ", Ibid., p. 262.

[43]"An Ideal Family ", Ibid., p. 368.

[44]Horney, Neurosis and Human Growth, p. 158.

[45]Ibid., pp. 112; 368.

[46]Ibid., pp. 18-9.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid., pp. 17-39.

[49] Ibid.,pp. 11-2; 64.

[50] Ibid., pp. 157-175.

[51] Not necessarily, however, in person; as is implied by the title of one of her books, viz., Self Analysis.

[52] Ibid., p. 341.

[53] v Ibid., pp. 333-365.

[54] v "The Doll's House ", Collected Stories, p. 393.

[55] v "The Garden Party ", Ibid., p. 245.

[56] v Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, p. 136.

[57] v Daly, Katherine Mansfield, p. 112.

[58] v Karl Jaspers, Philosophy, II, trans. by E.B. Ashton (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), 177-222.

[59] Jung, Alchemical Studies, p. 21.

[60] Journal, pp. 333-34.

CHAPTER II

NARRATIVE SITUATION

In his influential work on the narrative situation of the novel, Franz Stanzel is careful to avoid dogmatism with regard to his proposed trichotomy of authorial, figural and first-person narrative situations. Thus he adds a qualifying "as a rule" to his statement that "a fixed type of mediative process" is maintained throughout a given work.[1] Later, in discussing narrative distance, he emphasizes the fact that, as this varies, so will the actual type of the narrative situation. Thus he states that the narrator may "move right up to the scene. . . . In this case, authorial narrative situation is suspended ... [and the] figural or neutral mode takes over".[2]

Of the ninety-one stories and fragments gathered together in the Collected Stories, some twenty are first person narratives. The situation was one which interested Katherine Mansfield, who sought assiduously for methods whereby she might render herself a transparent medium through which the fictional world might be reflected. "Lord, make me crystal clear for thy light to shine through" was the prayer she uttered as she strove to do justice to the unfinished and demanding story, "Weak Heart".[3] It was her belief that it was possible to tell the truth only through self-effacement.

Of the remaining seventy, it is difficult to single out any which is clearly authorial. From her earliest work to her last, a natural flair for rendering consciousness seems to have enabled her,

as author-narrator, to enter a character's mind with a minimum of fuss. This quality relates in all probability to a gift of "negative capability", as remarkable as that of Keats. "When I write about ducks I swear that I am a white duck with a round eye, floating on a pond fringed with yellow blobs.... There follows the moment when you are more duck, more apple, or more Natasha than any of these objects could possibly be, and so you can create them anew."[4]

Thus, in "The Tiredness of Rosabel",[5] written when she was not yet twenty, the narrator, clearly present at first, enters Rosabel's mind through an introductory sentence: "She had thought of no one else all day."[6] Then she withdraws gradually until, in the following paragraph, style indirect libre enables Rosabel's imaginings to be rendered from the figural point of view. "Suppose they changed places. Rosabel would drive home with him. Of course they were in love with each other, but not engaged, very nearly, and she would say ..."[7]

The supposition is Rosabel's, not the narrator's; and the breathlessly rapid, effusive nature of the thoughts as rendered by the sentence structure is an admirable representation of a young and hectic day-dream. The narrative situation continues as predominantly figural for a considerable part of the story's length. The author-narrator is not totally absent, however. Twice there are interpolations, ostentatiously demarcated by the use of brackets. The second of these in particular leaves the reader in no doubt that the long and detailed thought sequence is conducted on an imaginary level. "(The real Rosabel, the girl crouched on the floor in the dark, laughed aloud, and put her hand up to her hot mouth.)"[8]

Two paragraphs follow in style indirect libre before the

narrator, taking over for the remaining three paragraphs of the story, dispenses with the brackets to reassert his sway.

The fact is that, as Katherine Mansfield was primarily interested in states of inner consciousness, style indirect libre was bound to be an integral part of those stories whose narrative situation did not allow the appropriate alternative, interior monologue. It has been pointed out that her feat of having developed "independent of her contemporaries ... [the] multiple time shift, dream image, interior monologue, above all an exquisite verbal equivalent of fleeting mental nuances" represents, to some extent, her "true originality".[9]

That the authorial narrative situation of a Mansfield short story tends towards the figural may be seen in such stories as "Ole Underwood",[10] "Life of Ma Parker",[11] "Millie"[12] and "The Fly".[13] In others, where the consciousness of several inhabitants of the fictional world is rendered, it tends towards the neutral mode. This is the narrative situation of such stories as "Prelude",[14] "At the Bay",[15] "The Doll's House",[16] and "The Daughters of the Late Colonel".[17] In the opinion of some modern critics, this mode represents the writer at her highest level.

Despite this tendency towards the figural and the neutral, the author-narrator of a Mansfield short story is never entirely absent. The presence is so tactfully controlled that for long stretches her effacement seems to be complete. This aspect of the author's control has been sensitively expressed by a recent critic: "The notion of the author's complete disappearance has become a cliché in criticism dealing with modern fiction, and the case of Katherine Mansfield is no exception.... Katherine Mansfield never lets the

reader - the sensitive reader - quite forget the presence of an author-narrator. Our example ["Her First Ball"] ... shows that she 'intrudes' discreetly."[18]

The following stories will be discussed with special reference to the structural function under consideration: "Bliss",[19] which is an example of a story of authorial narrative situation, where the movement towards figural presentation is confined to the representation of the protagonist, Bertha Young; "Prelude",[20] where the narrative situation, still authorial, moves towards the neutral mode, with the consciousness of several characters presented in detail; and "Je ne Parle pas Francais",[21] an example of a first person narrative. "A Married Man's Story",[22] an unfinished story of the same genre, will be briefly touched upon as a parallel to "Je ne Parle pas Francais". In the study of these stories, attention will be directed towards the incidence of the ideas of the true and false self, and of authenticity and inauthenticity of existence. It is expected that the representation of consciousness as affected by the writer will yield especially interesting results in these respects.

Bliss

In this story,[19] the protagonist progresses from a state of euphoric blindness to one of anguish, as she achieves a forced and sudden clarification of vision.

The original mental state of the protagonist, with its heightened aesthetic perceptions and blissful emotional accompaniment, is one to excite anxiety in the reader, on the protagonist's behalf. The intense joy with which she views the world has some of the quality of hubris. The fact that her happiness is accompanied by spiritual blindness is underlined clearly by her perception of "the

lovely pear tree" in her garden as a "symbol of her own life".[23] Miss Sylvia Berkman interprets this symbol strangely, as embodying "Bertha's own virginal quality".[24] Perhaps it would be more in keeping with the given facts of the fictional world to see it as an impossible identification, representing the state of blissful unawareness which Bertha, as a human being cursed with consciousness, would like to retain, but cannot. The tree is an en ensoi. Bertha is a pour ensoi.[25] The movement of the spirit which informs the action of the story is from the state of blindness, which is bliss, to the state of awareness, which is anguish. The configuration of human relationships which has constituted Bertha's life is the same at the end of the story as it is at the beginning. Her perception of the Gestalt has altered, bringing about new insight, after which the world as she experiences it can never return to its former unreal beauty. Only the pear tree, which could be a symbol, not of Bertha, but of the natural universe, remains the same. It seems that Miss Berkman could be mistaken in assuming that: "Bertha Young herself makes clear the symbolic intention" of the tree as a "symbol of her own life".[26] This judgment, surely, has been formed without sufficient regard for the narrative situation of the story. The critic implies a certain clumsiness in those stories which Katherine Mansfield "deliberately shapes about a symbol".[27] The reader who attends carefully to the question of whether it is the author-narrator, or a figural substitute, who clarifies the symbol may decide that it is the latter: "And she seemed to see on her eyelids the lovely pear tree with its wide open blossoms as a symbol of her own life."[28]

It is through a verb, not of thinking, but of possibly illusory

speculation, that the reader is moved into the protagonist's consciousness. In order to see the tree as a symbol of herself, she has to close her eyes and "[seem] to see on her eyelids".[29] The narrative moves straight on into style indirect libre. In the light of the protagonist's euphoric state of distorted perception, and the spiritual blindness which has not yet left her, it would seem an underestimation of the subtlety of the writer to conclude that the protagonist's perception of a symbolic identification must necessarily coincide with that of the author.

Basically, the narrative situation of "Bliss" is authorial, but the author-narrator's intrusions are discreet, occurring only when it is necessary to prod the reader into an awareness of the discrepancy between Bertha's view of reality and the true one. The example quoted above is an excellent illustration of the way in which the narrator intrudes and withdraws; in this instance the narrator directs the reader with the first five words: "And she seemed to see".[30] So delicate is the intrusion that the reader may well miss the significance of the clear directives, "and" - linking this perception with the distorted perceptions previously presented, and "seemed" - suggesting, as already noted, the illusory quality of the symbolic identification to follow. Having established thus an unobtrusive direction of the reader's awareness, the narrator remains hidden for the whole of the following paragraph, allowing the figural substitute to reveal simultaneously the causes for her complacency and to give corroboratory evidence of the unreliability of her view: "She had an adorable baby. They didn't have to worry about money. They had this absolutely satisfactory house and garden. And friends - modern, thrilling friends, writers

and painters and poets ... just the kind of friends they wanted. And then there were books, and there was music, and she had found a wonderful little dressmaker, and they were going abroad in the summer, and their new cook made the most superb omelettes...."[31]

Thus, through her own mental idiom, and her inconsequent juxtapositioning of values, the protagonist reveals the inauthenticity of her existence.[32] Little in the way of authorial intrusion is necessary to show the inadequacy of Bertha's estimation of her circle of friends. Three short paragraphs later, the Norman Knights make their debut, and, in the neutral presentation of scene and dialogue which follows, lose no time in revealing themselves for what they are. If the reader has missed the subtle signals of Bertha's unreliability as a reflecting intelligence, hindsight should enable him to perceive her judgment of these friends ("just the kind ... they wanted")[33] as not only ironic but also a revelation of the loss of the self and of inauthentic living.

The skill with which the author handles the technical problems posed by this story becomes more readily appreciated if examined in the light of the protagonist's spiritual development. Since Bertha Mason's inner state of consciousness and being is of primary importance, the narrative situation should ideally allow easy entry into her thoughts and perceptions. This is effected through the frequent movement of the narrative towards figural presentation.

The movement of the protagonist's spirit is from the blissful but dangerous state of unseeing naïveté associated with inauthenticity of existence - that which Heidegger might well have described as "a kind of limbo"[34] - towards the clearer awareness of one at least on the threshold of new insights, which might lead to added self-

awareness and the possibility of becoming one's true self.

The reader is enabled to follow the steps of this progression through the continued revelation of the protagonist's thoughts, judgments and perceptions through style indirect libre, assisted by delicate intrusions on the part of the narrator.

Before the guests begin to take their leave, the protagonist, who despite the obscurity of her initial view is neither stupid nor vicious, begins to reflect an altered awareness of the "modern thrilling friends".[35] As, through a close-up and neutral presentation of word and gesture, the friends have revealed themselves to the reader, so have they begun at last to make some imprint upon the vision of the protagonist. It is interesting to compare the progressive stages of her changing view. The catalyst, ironically, appears to be Pearl Fulton. In imagining a deeper relationship with her, Bertha Mason moves towards an awareness of the superficial quality of the rest, and, finally of a deeper range of possibilities with regard to human relationships in general; as evidenced by her sudden and ardent longing for a more meaningful sexual relationship with her husband.

Thus we are presented with the figural medium's view of the assembled friends at an early stage of the evening. The slight astringency of the description of "Face" suggests that the blindness is spiritual and euphoric, rather than intellectual, but the general tone suggests uncritical acceptance: "He really was a most attractive person. But so was Face, crouched before the fire in her banana skins, and so was Mug, smoking a cigarette and saying as he flicked the ash ..."[36]

Later, she regards the guests closely as they eat their soup.

A feeling of spiritual kinship - either illusory, or the result of deliberate falsity on the part of Pearl Fulton - causes her to speculate upon the capacity of the members of the group for other than superficial feelings. The verdict, eventually to formulate itself as a clear negative, is suggested to her first by an impressionistically perceived glimpse of their essentially un-spiritual quality. Thus she sees "Face and Mug, Eddie and Harry, their spoons rising and falling - dabbing their lips with their napkins, crumbling bread, fiddling with their forks and glasses and talking".[37]

The impressionist presents the quality of the sensation first, in order that the particular of the idea to be apprehended may assert itself afterwards.[38] With typical tact, the narrator remains silent, allowing the impression to linger upon the reader's consciousness, as a percept to be interpreted later.

No rapid insight follows. That the impression has been recorded by the reflecting intelligence is suggested by the subtle alteration of tone in her next perception of the group: "No, they didn't share it. They were dears - dears - and she loved having them there at her table ..."[39] The emphatic quality of the second sentence, together with the stress accorded by repetition of the word, "dears", suggests a concession of view, and an effort on the part of the observer to reassure herself along safe and pre-conditioned lines of thinking. The recording mind, still not having classified its percepts, fumbles towards symbols suggestive of their essential artificiality. They are a "decorative" group. They seem to "set one another off". They remind the protagonist of a "play by Tchekof".[40] This last allows an interesting insight into the process at work on some level of the protagonist's mind. Characters

in a Chekhov play reveal themselves through dialogue.

It is not long before Bertha's view has so far progressed as to enable her to see one at least of the observed as irresistibly amusing. Watching Face's "funny little habit of tucking something down the front of her bodice", the protagonist is obliged to "dig her nails into her hands - so as not to laugh too much".[41] Here the narrator steps forward to guide the reader. The inference is that the protagonist's desire to laugh has outstripped her awareness of the cause of her amusement.

Pearl Fulton, deliberately entering into a relationship with Bertha, the depth of which betrayal only becomes fully apparent later, promotes the latter's spiritual regeneration. Bertha moves towards a state of being in which she is capable of the desire to give. Her clearing vision enables her to see her present self as a false one, from which she would be well parted. As she moves towards the moment of adventure in which she may achieve a more authentic state of being, she longs for her guests to depart. Thus the reader is shown such detail as her squeezing of Norman Knight's hand in gratitude at his refusal to stay longer. As she bids them goodbye, she formulates clearly the feeling "that this self of hers was taking leave of them for ever".[42] The contempt of the figural medium towards what she has come to see as a false self is clearly reflected in the tone as revealed through <u>style indirect libre</u> in the four words: "this self of hers".

This moment is heir to an earlier one, in which Bertha's growing awareness of the quality of her trivial existence enables her to achieve detachment. It is not only at Face that she laughs just before she goes out to make coffee. Moving away from herself,

she has been enabled to perceive herself more clearly. That which she sees causes her to resort to the mental exclamation, "I must laugh or die."[43]

In the fact that a human spirit which has travelled so far along the road to regeneration should receive a rebuff at the exact moment of moving towards a richer relationship with a fellow creature lies the tragic quality of the writer's view. The emphasis is on the loneliness of the human condition, and the perverse quality of fate which allows such unkind coincidences.

Of the characters presented in the fictional world, only Bertha is rounded; only her consciousness is relevant. The remaining characters, harshly satirized, are shown from the outside. Bertha's developing consciousness, the occasional interpolations of the narrator, and, most trenchant of all, the neutral presentation of the close-up scene, combine to reveal them as false and brittle personae, held fast in the morass of inauthenticity. The writer has not yet moved towards the wider view in which she would have seen them, too, as struggling towards transcendence.

Prelude

The artistic value of the narrative situation in "Prelude" is more readily appreciated through a consideration of some of the central ideas of the story. That one of these is the intensely private character of individual consciousness was recognised by Desmond McCarthy[44] shortly after the story's publication, and has been stressed by critics since. A figural narrative situation, with a number of intelligences reflecting the fictional world, is ideally suited to the representation of such an idea. This is the narrative

situation employed, with six separate consciousnesses presenting varied - and secret - impressions of events and people experienced in common. Verbal communication between the characters, conveyed through frequently interpolated close-up scenic presentation, reveals the remarkable discrepancy between what is thought, felt, and spoken aloud; even (or perhaps especially) when the communication is between those living in a closely-knit family circle.

Unity, despite the disparate points of view, is ensured by the presence of a discreet authorial narrator, who adjusts the focus and effects easy transitions from one consciousness to another; and also by the centring of the consciousnesses upon a common traumatic experience - a move from town- to country-dwelling. The move, with its suggestion of the opening of new vistas of experience (stressed by the title), provides an everyday crisis which brings to the surface the nature of the existential dilemma confronting each figural reflector. The change of environment, the closer relationship with the natural universe, provides, for some of the characters at least, a limiting situation. As André Maurois has pointed out, one of Katherine Mansfield's characteristic qualities is her insistence on the significance of everyday experience.[45] Here she shows herself as having much in common with the thought of Jaspers, who sees inauthenticity as a state of being entrenched in everyday concerns, and authenticity as an endless movement towards wider horizons of transcendence.[46] Linda, Beryl and Kezia are shown as being jerked into a sharpened awareness of the self and the nature of being; which might, at a later stage, lead towards still wider horizons.

The intensity of everyday experience, leading to the idea that time and events are all part of one extended whole of adventurous

living, is underlined by the illusion of "presentness" allowed by the narrative technique. Thus the reader is plunged into the midst of the action by an author-narrator who assumes that the knowledge of events and characters of the former is coincident with her own. A complete absence of summary report ensures that the reader's consciousness will enter upon the here-and-now of the characters rather than that of the narrator. Although standing ahead of the narrated action in time, so that the epic preterite is used, temporal distance is blurred through the narrator's close stance to the figures in the fictional world, and by her withdrawal in favour of their consciousness whenever possible. Not only does she retreat behind the figures as substitute narrators for long periods of the narrated length; she flickers in and out of various consciousnesses momentarily as well, so that even Lottie - not one of the six reflectors - is allowed to mirror the arrival of Kezia at the new house as she "seemed to come flying through the air to her feet".[47]

The illusion of "presentness" is intensified by the open-ended quality of the conclusion. Just as the beginning of a story with the conjunction "and" may be viewed as an impressionistic device,[48] connecting the events presented with an undefined foreground, so does a story which may be said to "stop" rather than draw to a conclusion, suggest that the view presented is but a fraction of the undisclosed whole. Thus the journey of the characters towards an understanding of the self, and the possibilities of authentic existence, neither begins nor ends with the presented time-span of the story. The implied perspective thus established answers to some extent at least the contention of a recent critic that the story lacks "depth of background".[49]

In commenting upon the authorial narrator who, however unobtrusive, is present in "Prelude", the same critic suggests that "it is as if the Burnells were viewed by an omniscient pre-school child".[50] While there is truth in this insofar as the narrator has managed to recapture the innocence of the childhood view, the description hardly does justice to a narrator who intrudes, when necessary, briefly and to essential purpose. Thus the narrator, about to enter Linda's consciousness, intrudes for a moment to direct the reader's attention to the hardening of her heart: "Looking at it from below she could see the long sharp thorns that edged the aloe leaves, and at the sight of them her heart grew hard...."[51] (My emphasis.) The carefully chosen verb indicates that this is a process, not an accomplished fact. When, entering her mind, the reader is shown the little parcel of hate which, along with all the other feelings, Linda "longs to hand"[52] to her husband, he is prepared, through the intrusion, to doubt whether she will in fact do so. The signal suggests that she is not hard by nature; but that life, as it threatens to overwhelm her, moves her towards a state which is false to her true self.

For all the apparent lack of temporal distance, the narrator has a double relationship with the presented fictional world. Her maturity of vision allows the tactful guidance of the reader through the quicksilver changes of point of view which enable Beryl to present the processes of individuation occurring within her consciousness, and guides him to an understanding of the delicate irony of Linda's view. But this, by what has been described as a "conscious, deliberate act of magic,"[53] is laid aside, in favour of a wondering, child-like view. The narrator is able to achieve this

by virtue of the author's memory and her gift, already noted, of negative capability.

Middleton Murry equates this latter facility with Blake's concept of self-annihilation.[54] The process necessary to achieve this view is described by Katherine Mansfield as of vital importance in the truthful mediation of a fictional world: "One must learn, one must practise, to forget oneself. I can't tell the truth about Aunt Anne unless I am free to enter into her life without self-consciousness."[55]

The skill with which this is effected is demonstrated by a comparison of idiom and vocabulary in the consciousness of the various characters as rendered through style indirect libre. Each thinks in highly individual idiom, with characteristic vocabulary, imagery and thought-rhythms.

Stanzel points out that, in fiction figurally mediated, traces of the original author-narrator can often be detected in the consciousness of the figural medium. Mentioning Virginia Woolf's Mrs Dalloway, he observes that the "author's characteristic mode of seeing and experiencing things shines through" the figural presentation.[56] Although the thought sequences presented in Virginia Woolf's books have poetic beauty, they might be accused of lacking the vitality and warmth which the variety of the individual presentations through six characters, each very different from the other, allows in "Prelude".

The central symbol of the story, the aloe,[57] is presented without authorial comment. First it is mediated through the innocent perceptions of Kezia. She perceives it in terms of its separate parts and the idiosyncrasies of these parts. Able to classify it as

a plant in terms of stem and leaves, she is sufficiently bewildered by its unusual aspects to react with strong curiosity. "Whatever could it be?"[58] is presented through style indirect libre, while later, aloud, she questions her mother. Linda's response to these same percepts is significantly different. It is the fleshiness of the stem which strikes her, the cruelty of the leaves. Both the secrecy and the implacable strength of the plant imprint themselves upon her view. Thus mother and daughter select significant features of what they see and verbalize them in terms emotionally toned through the force of their respective existential circumstances. Later, Linda perceives the plant in terms of a boat which may row her away, and its "long sharp thorns"[59] as a defence against a life which impinges upon her with an insistence beyond her strength.

Mrs Fairfield, calm in her acceptance of the existential pattern, and singularly whole in personality, views the aloe tranquilly, as a part of the natural universe; it may, or may not, be going to flower in the near future.[60] Her objective interest suggests the tranquillity of her subjective view.

These three views of the central symbol - representing, perhaps, the tough and mysterious natural world with which the move has brought all characters to a close confrontation - are projected through a representative of each of the three generations into which the characters may be grouped.[61] The three chosen intelligences may be seen as representing varying degrees of wholeness of the self. The description of Mrs Fairfield's kitchen, which she finds "very nice, very satisfactory"[62] carries a strong suggestion of a mandala symbol.[63] In the atmosphere so created, Beryl and Linda seem to experience a release from existential confusion.[64] Thus the

grandmother, well in control, is able to bring order into her living and that of those she loves, and is contrasted with Linda, whom life threatens with impingement. Kezia, on the threshold of experience, receives impressions which are diffuse, to be categorized later.

It could be argued that Kezia is the central character of the story. The title relates to her position in the "play" period before life begins in earnest, and a considerable proportion of the figural presentation is effected through her intelligence. Soon she is to be brought to a confrontation with death, an experience which she views with an innocence of perception almost equal to that characterizing her view of the aloe. In the presentation of the incident which centres upon the decapitation of the duck, Kezia's belated reaction, in which she entreats Pat to "Put head back!"[sic][65] suggests the beginnings of a conceptualizing process, soon to be interrupted by the distraction offered by Pat's ear-rings.

The open-ended quality of the story invites the reader to infer the continuation of all initiated ideas. Kezia's encounter with death will come into clearer focus, to receive more precise definition in "At the Bay", where she learns that even she and the beloved grandmother are mortal.[66] In "Prelude", she moves from childhood security to a first and violent encounter with nothingness. At approximately the same time as she receives this powerful, though as yet unclassified, impression she becomes aware of the properties of the aloe - a firm, sure symbol of sturdy life and longevity. A sensitive intelligence, on the threshold of being, is initiated into the idea of nothingness. The mystery of the experience arrives like one of the ciphers which Jaspers envisages as approaching from transcendence. Don W. Kleine has perceptively suggested that the

children in these stories will have difficulty in shaking off the selves that are "predicted and created" for them within the fictional world presented.[67] "Prelude" begins and ends with Kezia's experiencing relationships which may cause her to move towards a loss of the self. At the outset, the "grandmother's lap was full", and the mother, more anxious to have various "urgent necessities" readily available than the children, drives off, leaving them forlornly behind.[68] The final incident presented, involving calico cat and lid of cream jar, shows Kezia in a state of crushing guilt, moving away, in the furtive movement implied, from the true self towards the self which will receive social approval. Guilt is one of the four situations Jaspers sees as constituting a limiting situation. Later, in "The Doll's House" we are shown Kezia's adventurous response to a subsequent occasion for guilt.

Stanley Burnell, threatened by the loss of the self in the direction of a persona, reveals the tendency (of which he is quite unconscious) through day-dreams which centre upon his growing status in office and community.[69] That Linda is aware of this is delicately suggested through her teasing nickname, "Mr Businessman".[70] (In "At the Bay", she reveals considerable insight into the process.)[71]

Most interesting of all in terms of narrative situation is the process of individuation whereby Beryl gains awareness of a loss of the self. First, there is a letter written to a friend, describing the new life and its limitations; as it sets down a certain level of her thoughts and feelings, it can be regarded, in a way, as a type of interior monologue. But, reading it over, she herself decides that the letter is both "flippant and silly".[72] This leads Beryl to the insight that it was her "other self" who had written it.

This process of self-realization and self-repudiation is presented with a minimum of authorial intrusion, through style indirect libre.

During the self-examination, Beryl surveys herself in the looking-glass[73] and as she does so is allowed to present her own appearance, still through style indirect libre. This self-scrutiny brings back a degree of complacency, her annoyance at which jerks her back to a sense of her false selfhood.

The journey into the self is mediated through a mixture of style indirect libre, in which the false self is seen as a clear and separate image, "running up and down stairs, laughing a special trilling laugh ..."[74] and occasional snatches of monologue, as she utters her thoughts aloud. It is at the moments of deepest insight into the self that interior monologue supersedes, with Beryl sharing her thoughts directly with the reader. Inverted commas, initially present, are dropped after the first sentence. Thus: "'Life is rich and mysterious and good, and I am rich and mysterious and good, too.' Shall I ever be that Beryl for ever? Shall I? How can I? And was there ever time when I did not have a false self?"[75]

In that initial, clearly demarcated sentence, Beryl comes close to formulating the quality of authentic existence. The true self, which she sees as having existed only for "tiny moments" at a time, is the self which is capable of an adventurous existence - of becoming a richer, more creative being. At the very moment of individuation, the narrator intervenes. Kezia approaches with a summons for her aunt to join the grown-ups below. A male guest has come to lunch. As Beryl prepares to join them, we are returned to her mind just for a moment, long enough to be shown that the moment of insight has been brushed aside. Her concern is again with the

trivial. "Botheration! How she had crumpled her skirt, kneeling in that idiotic way."[76] The last opprobrious epithet reduces the moment of almost mystical insight to the status of a foolish lapse.

Sylvia Berkman considers that the author has had difficulty in integrating Beryl satisfactorily as a character.[77] Perhaps it would be more constructive to see her as a character in the grip of archetypal forces - of the shadow, or the *animus*. In either case, in the light of Jung's ideas, Beryl would have delivered herself into the grip of forces beyond her control, having put herself into the power of the collective.[78]

It is interesting to see that Katherine Mansfield, in a note jotted on the manuscript of "The Aloe ", comes near to hazarding an explanation of Beryl's state of being, which is not inconsistent with Jung's theory: "What is it that I'm getting at? It is really Beryl's *Sosie*. The fact that for a long time now, she hasn't even been able to control her second self: it's her second self who now controls her."[79]

In the opinion of the present writer, Katherine Mansfield, far from failing to integrate Beryl's character, has achieved success in presenting a sensitively realized picture of a disintegrating personality.

Je ne Parle pas Francais

The point is made by Stanzel that the first person narrative situation is not intrinsically different from the authorial on the one hand or the figural on the other.[80] If there is clear distance between experiencing and narrating selves, with emphasis on narrative

as a process, it approaches the authorial; if, on the other hand, experiencing and narrating selves tend to coincide, with an inclination on the part of the narrator to withdraw behind direct presentation of a scene, or his own thoughts (interior monologue), it approaches the figural. In the latter event, narrative pace tends to be decelerated, with a marked limitation of the presented period of time.[81]

"Je ne Parle pas Francais" is an example of a first person narrative in which these two tendencies are skilfully alternated. The narrator, Raoul Duquette, sits in the corner of a café. Using the present tense, establishing a self-conscious and confidential attitude towards the reader, he writes the story, describing the actual process of composition ("All the while I wrote that last page ...")[82] and, in a series of interior monologues, he discloses his thoughts, including their digressions, as he writes. The time of the narrated present is the time it takes to write the story; the action, the process of writing it down. On this level of time - the narrated present - the story almost exactly fulfils Stanzel's criteria for a first person narrative which approaches the figural narrative situation.[83] Apart from the outer action of the actual writing of the story, the action is almost entirely devoted to either interior monologue or the close-up, scenic presentation of a sharp but distorting camera lens.

This presentation of the narrated present is fragmented by means of a number of incursions into the past. Through this device, the narrating self presents to the reader, at a number of staircase-like time levels, the experiencing self, as on a number of significant occasions, in the remote or recent past. Whenever time montage is

employed, narrative distance is established while narrative pace increases, events taking over as a major interest of the narrative, while interior monologue moves into the past tense, necessitating introduction through verbs of thinking, as in: "Suddenly I realised ..." "The very second after I was thinking ..."[84] Where, at these past levels, scenic presentation or dialogue takes over, the posteriority to the act of narration is firmly established. (The camera-like scene of the narrated present is highly contemporary, being presented in the present tense.) Whenever montage interrupts the present, then, the first person narrative situation moves towards the authorial.

The major theme of the story is that of the spiritual decay of the narrator-protagonist. Miss Berkman believes that the "central story" lies in the "tortured relationship between Dick Harmon and his sweetheart Mouse",[85] with an oblique light shed upon the "peculiar depravity of Raoul Duquette's character".[86] It will be the contention of the present writer that the focus on the character of the narrator is intended to underline the pity and terror of his condition, as a human being who has suffered a loss of the true self, and the anguish resulting from his impotent awareness of this fact. Miss Berkman states that the "full portrait of Raoul Duquette is necessary both to sharpen by contrast the genuine suffering of Dick Harmon and Mouse, and to convey the extremity of Mouse's betrayal, since at the end she is left friendless in Paris except for his depraved interest".[87] (Emphasis mine.) This interpretation seems hardly consistent with the facts of the story as presented. The interest of the protagonist in Mouse at the end of the story is ideal, and singularly free of depravity; to write off his suffering as less than genuine is, in the opinion of the present writer, to

misread the tone of some of the interior monologues of the narrated present.

The narrative situation is skilfully designed to induce order into what could well have degenerated into a chaotic representation of the protagonist's multiplicity of selves. On the time level of the narrated present, the spiritually corrupt Raoul Duquette is shown at an advanced stage of alienation from the self. That this condition has not yet progressed to its ultimate stage is suggested by the fact that, although he is powerless to evoke it on other than an idcal level, he is aware of the existence of the "other" self, and suffers anguish at his sense of the difference between its spiritual possibilities and his own. Raoul Duquette's false self has, in Jungian terms, taken over from the self which has abdicated in favour of an imagined meaning, and a socially defined role.[88] He has adopted the mask of a self-conscious literary sophisticate and poseur. Jung warns that the shifting of the centre of gravity of the personality in favour of an imagined meaning is likely to have dire consequences. "To the degree that the world invites the individual to identify with the mask, he is delivered over to influences from within."[89] Such a person will not be in command of his own life. He will act in accordance with forces he neither understands nor is able to control.

On two occasions within the narrated present, the interior monologue of the protagonist gives way to interior monologue of heightened intensity, in which the activities of the other self, existing at a highly ideational level, are given curious reality in terms of spatial and temporal definition. "All the while I wrote that last page my other self has been chasing up and down in the dark

out there."[90] The momentary change to the past tense (the narrator has immediately before been presenting his thoughts and his surroundings in the present) is followed by the perfect, to denote concurrent levels of outer action (the act of writing), and inner (the image-conveyed activities of the other self). The tense changes back to the present as the frenzied longing of the protagonist, not only for Mouse but also for the pure quality of the lost self's feeling for her, is conveyed through altered tone, atmosphere, and the urgency of the thought-rhythms, replacing the cynical modulations of the normal interior monologues. "Are you this soft bundle moving towards me through the feathery snow? Are you this little girl pressing through the swing doors of the restaurant? Is that your dark shadow bending forward in the cab? Where are you? Which way must I turn? Which way shall I run?"[91] Tone and atmosphere, the genuine feeling which has replaced the former sneer, suggest the agony of irretrievable loss rather than a "depraved interest".[92] The second occasion on which the interior monologue is transposed into this different key takes place just before the narrated present moves to the presentation of the full extent of the protagonist's depravity. He is revealed as a pimp, a cynical and posturing procurer without pity for his victims. But the presentation of inner action which, as the tense and choice of words signals, goes on all the time, transforms the revulsion which his corruption excites to pity and fear. "But how she makes me break my rule.... Evenings when I sit ... I begin to dream things like ..."[93] The images of young boy and girl which follow are pure in essence, simple in vocabulary and sentence structure, and unequivocal in tone. The juxtapositioning of this monologue with the

one which follows (and which returns the reader to the spectacle of the depravity of the dominant self of Raoul Duquette) is no accident. It forms a lucid illustration of the author's contention that, in some paradoxical way, beauty is present in suffering, and in ugliness.

Intermittently, the leisurely flow of the narrated present is interrupted, the levels of the past selected for presentation enabling the reader to view not only the various selves of the narrator, but also the dynamic relationship between the corruption of the present and its genesis and growth in the past. The question of the narrator's degree of reliability is an interesting one. At the level of the narrated present, the quality of his perceptions, resulting in unusual imagery, should alert the reader to the fact that his distorted vision is likely to yield an unusual view. Thus he perceives the blotting paper in terms of the "tongue of a little dead kitten",[94] and human destiny in such images as of portmanteaux and of "Ultimate trains and Ultimate porters".[95] At the same time, his attitude as narrator is conscientious. Thus he continually makes an effort to detach himself and to examine his percepts from a different angle, thereby offering the reader every opportunity to attain depth of perspective, and to apply his own judgments to correct the presented view.

Thus, when Raoul Duquette leads us back to his most distanced experiencing self, the child standing on the edge of his "forgotten" childhood, he selects the memory because, in his judgment, it now seems "so very significant as regards myself from the literary point of view".[96] The emphasis on the lost childhood suggests that the significance was more profound. Later, he tells us that as a result

of the presented incident, his childhood was "to put it prettily, 'kissed away'".[95] The phrase, flippant and cynical, suggests pain and lasting anger. There follows immediately a description of an altered experiencing self. "I became very languid, very caressing, and greedy beyond measure."[97] Despite his protestation, the memory is obviously fixed in the narrator's mind for reasons other than literary. He may or may not be clearly aware that in the incident lay the seeds of his present corruption. He does realize that, ending his childhood, it initiated a new era of his existence.

In general, the narrative pace of the flashbacks is quickened, as the narrative itself receives emphasis. Even within the flashbacks, however, interior monologues are presented. Thus the first flashback returns the reader to the occasion of the protagonist's first visit to the café which forms the setting for the narrated present. Reminded of Mouse by a chance encounter with the title phrase of the story, he enters upon a moment of spiritual agony which, described in detail, suggests a disintegrating self. Such interior monologues differ from those of the narrated present in that their posteriority is clearly established through the use of the past tense. The interior monologue here presented is particularly interesting because, having mediated a genuine experience of anguish, suggesting a movement towards annihilation of the self, a pert and posturing experiencing self reasserts its sway, observing, questioning and obviously complacent: "Just for one moment I was not. I was Agony, Agony, Agony....

"Then it passed, and the very second after I was thinking: 'Good God! Am I capable of feeling as strongly as that?' But I was absolutely unconscious! I hadn't a phrase to meet it with! I was overcome!

"And up I puffed and puffed, blowing off finally with: 'After

all, I must be first-rate. No second-rate mind could have experienced such an intensity of feeling so ... purely.'"[98]

The agony, while it lasted, was genuine. But after "then it passed", "purely" is the one word which rings with a tone of the genuine, sounding a clear note amid the falsity of the rest. This forms a link between the experiencing self and the purity of the "other" self, which is presented in the section immediately following, on the level of the narrated present.[99]

After the second flashback has returned the reader to the seduction of the ten-year-old self of the narrator, a series of selected levels of the past brings the various presentations of the experiencing self towards congruence with the narrating self. Thus narrated events of the past - the friendship of the narrator with Dick Harmon, the betrayal of Mouse by each - are unified with the theme of the narrator's growing corruption. When the narrator is confronted with the moment of choice - the occasion of his complicity in Mouse's betrayal - the corruption of the spirit has progressed too far for his decision to be other than that which it is. The full force of the protagonist's self-loathing is indicated through the tone which characterizes the rendering of this moment: "Of course, you know what to expect. You anticipate, fully, what I am going to write. It wouldn't be me, otherwise."[100] Together with the protagonist's self-contempt, the degree of the lassitude which robs him of the power to renew his direction is indicated. "Naturally, I intended to. Started out - got to the door - wrote and tore up letters - did all those things. But I simply could not make the final effort."[101]

An explanation in terms of the hatred of the false self for

the true self in exile[102] sheds light upon the tone adopted by the narrator towards himself and the various experiencing selves. His detached viewpoint as narrating self enables him to look back on the selves of the past, for whom he has a feeling of dislike mingled with clinical interest. Presenting the abdication of the self in favour of a literary persona, he uses the image of a snail carrying the bric-a-brac of its living upon its back.[103] The emerging false self writes books, the titles of which are instructive (he describes himself as "the Author of False Coins, Wrong Doors and Left Umbrellas")[104] and addresses his "radiant image" thus: "I am a young man who has his own flat. I write for two newspapers. I am going in for serious literature.... I'm rich - I'm rich."[105]

Contempt for the listless self of the betrayal, as well as regret for the self which has been lost, merges the series presented into the final mediation of the self the protagonist has become. The full depth of his spiritual decay is presented in the penultimate paragraph. The story closes with a restatement of the firm entrenchment of the persona; a final short paragraph in which the present tense of verbs, combined with the reiteration of negatives and the use of the adverb "yet", suggests an overall tone of sympathy for the narrator's continuing spiritual distress.

"A Married Man's Story"[106] is a long, unfinished first person narrative in which a similar narrative technique is employed. The quality of the protagonist's spiritual decay is less obvious, possibly because the story is unfinished. The narrated present consists of the same outer action - the writing of the story by the protagonist-narrator. The reader is again taken back in time to a presentation of experiencing selves at various levels of the past. The narrator

states unequivocally that the roots of his spiritual malaise cannot be understood without a consideration of the selected past. As in "Je ne Parle pas Francais", the experiencing selves of the past are presented in forward-moving progression; the possession of the narrating self by a "master", an entity whom he does not understand but who controls him, is clearly affirmed. It is unfortunate, indeed, that the story was not completed. The secret of the unnamed protagonist, less obviously corrupt but as surely within the grip of some terrible power, might have shed considerable light upon the author's view of spiritual corruption.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II

[1]Stanzel, Narrative Situations, p. 6.

[2]Ibid., p. 43.

[3]Journal, p. 271.

[4]Letters, I, 82.

[5]Collected Stories, p. 524.

[6]Ibid., p. 527.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid., p. 529.

[9]Kleine, "An Eden for Insiders ", p. 201.

[10]Collected Stories, p. 573.

[11]Ibid., p. 301.

[12]Ibid., p. 582.

[13]Ibid., p. 422.

[14]Ibid., p. 11.

[15]Ibid., p. 205.

[16]Ibid., p. 393.

[17]Ibid., p. 262.

[18]Friede Busch, "Katherine Mansfield and Literary Impressionism in France and Germany ", Arcadia, V (1970), p. 63.

[19]Collected Stories, p. 91.

[20]Ibid., p. 11.

[21]Ibid., p. 60.

[22]Ibid., p. 432.

[23]Ibid., p. 96.

[24]Berkman, Katherine Mansfield, p. 192.

[25]v Breisach, Modern Existentialism, p. 97.

[26]Berkman, Katherine Mansfield, p. 195.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Collected Stories, p. 96.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

[32]v passage quoted above. The "adorable baby" is mentioned in the same breath as the "modern thrilling friends", the "wonderful little dressmaker" and the new cook who makes "superb omelettes".

[33]Collected Stories, p. 96.

[34]Breisach, Modern Existentialism, p. 87.

[35]Collected Stories, p. 96.

[36]Ibid., p. 98.

[37]Ibid., p. 100.

[38]Busch, "Literary Impressionism ", pp. 58-76.

[39]Collected Stories, p. 100.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid., p. 104.

[43]Ibid., p. 101.

[44]Desmond McCarthy, review of Bliss by Katherine Mansfield in The New Statesman (15 Jan., 1921), cited by Antony Alpers, Katherine Mansfield (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1954), p. 398.

[45]Maurois, Poets and Prophets, p. 238.

[46]v also Breisach, Modern Existentialism, pp. 110-131.

[47]Collected Stories, p. 18.

[48]v also Busch, "Literary Impressionism ", p. 62.

[49]Kleine, "An Eden for Insiders ", p. 206.

[50]Ibid., p. 206.

[51]Collected Stories, p. 53.

[52]Ibid., p. 54.

[53]O'Connor, The Lonely Voice, p. 141.

[54]Mantz and Murry, The Life of Katherine Mansfield, p. 6.

[55]Journal, p. 269.

[56]Stanzel, Narrative Situations, p. 55.

[57]The original version of the story was entitled "The Aloe". v also Journal, p. 97.

[58]Collected Stories, p. 34.

[59]Ibid., p. 53.

[60]Ibid., p. 52.

[61]v William Walsh, A Manifold Voice : Studies in Commonwealth Literature (London: Chatto & Windus, 1970), pp. 156-158.

[62]*Collected Stories*, p. 29.

[63]*v supra*, pp. 11-12.

[64]*v Collected Stories*, pp. 29-32.

[65]*Ibid.*, p. 46.

[66]*v* "At the Bay", *Ibid.*, p. 226.

[67]Kleine, "An Eden for Insiders", p. 209.

[68]*Collected Stories*, p. 11.

[69]*Ibid.*, p. 36.

[70]*Ibid.*, p. 23.

[71]*v* "At the Bay", *Ibid.*, p. 222.

[72]"Prelude", *Ibid.*, p. 57.

[73]A mandala-type symbol.

[74]*Collected Stories*, p. 59.

[75]*Ibid.*

[76]*Ibid.*

[77]Berkman, *Katherine Mansfield*, p. 96.

[78]*v* Jung, *Two Essays*, p. 173.

[79]Cited by Berkman, *Katherine Mansfield*, p. 92.

[80]Stanzel, *Narrative Situations*, p. 68.

[81]*Ibid.*

[82]*Collected Stories*, p. 65.

[83]Stanzel, Narrative Situations, p. 68.

[84]Collected Stories, pp. 63; 64.

[85]Berkman, Katherine Mansfield, p. 167.

[86]Ibid., p. 154.

[87]Ibid., p. 168.

[88]v Jung, Two Essays, p. 173.

[89]Ibid., p. 194.

[90]Collected Stories, p. 65.

[91]Ibid.

[92]Berkman, Katherine Mansfield, p. 168.

[93]Collected Stories, p. 90.

[94]Ibid., p. 63.

[95]Ibid., p. 60.

[96]Ibid., p. 66.

[97]Ibid.

[98]Ibid.

[99]Ibid., p. 65. v passage opening: "Mouse! Mouse! Where are you?"

[100]Ibid., p. 90.

[101]Ibid.

[102]v Horney, Neurosis and Human Growth, pp. 110-154. v also R.D. Laing, The Divided Self : An Existentialist Study in Sanity and Madness, Pelican Books (London: Tavistock Publications, 1960; rpt. Penguin, 1965), pp. 103-4.

[103]Collected Stories, p. 67.

[104] *Ibid.*, p. 77.

[105] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

[106] *Ibid.*, p. 432.

CHAPTER III

THE FUNCTION OF SPACE

It has been suggested that the spatial detail of stories such as "Prelude" and "At the Bay" (set in New Zealand and representing, in the opinion of a number of critics, Katherine Mansfield's highest level of achievement) is presented in such a way that it fails to provide a sufficiently realistic "depth of background". Conceding that the detail is "organically realised", the critic concerned finds that the backgrounds against which the action is presented are unsubstantial in quality, with "little sense of the reality against which we are accustomed to view in relief even the most tenuous literary actions".[1]

Attention to the manner in which Katherine Mansfield handles the function of space gives rise to the hypothesis that the quality to which this critic directs the reader might well be regarded as a distinctive attribute, rather than a defect or limitation. A distinction has been drawn between the illusion of reality as created in the theatre, and the illusion of truth as presented in fiction.[2] To present the truth in such a way so as to lead character and reader towards new insights into the complex and delicate implications of a situation may call for the type of emphasis or distortion associated with caricature rather than a minute and photographic reproduction of realistically imagined background detail. In seeking to prize what she called the "deepest truth out of the idea",[3] Katherine Mansfield practised a policy of rigorous selection of detail whereby she excluded all aspects of

the fictional world which did not pertain to the central ideas of the story. That the fictional worlds were originally more substantially imagined than they were later presented is revealed, not only by such evidence as the known paring away of the background detail of "The Aloe" as it was revised to form the more artistically satisfying "Prelude", but also through the informative entry made by the author in her journal (17th January, 1922) in which she noted: "The truth is one can only get so much into a story; there is always a sacrifice. One has to leave out what one knows and longs to use."[4] While of interest with regard to all aspects of the fictional worlds presented, this remark seems particularly relevant to the function of space.

An attempt will be made in this chapter to show that the author's method of handling this function consists in an impressionistic selection and presentation of background detail, symbolically suggestive of her characters' existential dilemmas, rather than in a solid representation of background reality. If some measure of empirical reality is sacrificed, a deeper fidelity to the truth of the situation explored is thereby effected, as the paradoxical obscurity inherent in the clear but over-detailed quality of the photographic view is eliminated.

Katherine Mansfield asserts that a number of her stories owe their inspiration to a "deep sense of hopelessness, of everything doomed to disaster, wilfully, stupidly".[5] Such stories, expressing in artistic form the author's "cry against corruption", frequently show characters whose existence is entrenched in the absurd. While it is difficult to abstract a principle which holds for all the stories belonging to this category, it seems safe to venture the

observation that characters who are not to be allowed to progress towards a clearer view are presented in spaces which are confined and, in the wide sense of the word, sterile. Thus the protagonist of "The Woman at the Store"[6] is shown as a voluntary prisoner in a waste-land setting characterized by flies, heat, sick forms of life and a general air of the hideous and the grotesque. The narrator, who might just conceivably be moving towards some new awareness as a result of the facts she witnesses and presents, is shown as moving away; the protagonist remains in her spatial setting as well as in her despair. Such stories as "At Lehmann's",[7] "Frau Brechenmacher Attends a Wedding",[8] and "The-Child-Who-Was Tired"[9] present powerful impressions of restrictive interiors which serve to reinforce the idea that those trapped within them have little chance of breaking free.

A development of the author's metaphysic is to be seen in the fact that in later stories she depicts characters who are offered a chance to progress. Limiting situations allow a chance for reassessment, and a character may be presented as grasping a proffered cipher, and thus moving towards an advanced order of awareness; or as refusing it, and sinking back into inauthenticity of existence. In "The Wrong House",[10] Mrs Bean is offered a chance to acquire a richer sense of her own Being through the accidental progress of a funeral procession to her front door. She is, however, unable to widen the horizons of her living through an acceptance of the cipher. At the close of the story she is shown as thinking, not of the quality of her Being as affected by mortality, but of the "chicken for that night's supper".[11] The setting is that of her dusk-filled house, dominated by clock-time within and a desolate

view of the houses opposite, which look "as though they had been cut out with a pair of ugly steel scissors and pasted on to the grey paper sky".[12] Even this view of the unreal world outside is excluded when, at the end of the story, the maid pulls down the blind, enclosing the protagonist firmly within her house as well as the restricted mode of her existence. The protagonist of "Millie"[13] is shown in an interior which reflects her impoverished existential status. The mirrors are fly-specked, she is surrounded by packing-case furniture, and the ashes mount in the grate. Her attention to the incongruous pictures upon the walls of her dwelling suggests, perhaps, some inner longing to transcend the aridity of her existence. Moved by compassion for a suffering fellow creature, she almost does so. The story ends, however, with Millie's estrangement from the better self towards which she was making such favourable progress. Forces beyond her understanding transform her compassion for a hunted victim to a lust for blood. As Millie gives herself up to the power of the animus,[14] which swings her from a manifestation of maternal tenderness to a tough and masculine fury against one who has posed a threat to the safety of the group, she rushes from the safe though restrictive setting of her dwelling to the road outside. The final presentation of Millie shows her as one in the grip of uncontrollable forces. "She laughed and shrieked and danced in the dust, jigging the lantern."[15] Thus is movement in space used to underline spiritual alteration.

The luxurious appointments of the office which constitutes the setting of "The Fly"[16] reflect in their own way the sterility of the existence of the protagonist, who is offered a cipher, and rejects it. Unable to benefit from the limiting experience

vouchsafed by his killing of the fly, the "boss" is shown as entrenched not only in the limited confines of his office, but in existential despair.

If characters who are unable to benefit from messages from transcendence are shown as confined within restricted spatial areas symbolic of their impoverished mode of existence, those who are able to learn seem typically to be shown in the process of movement symbolising their progress towards wider horizons. Thus Laura makes her way from the enclosed space of house and garden towards augmented knowledge of death and the quality of Being.[17] Kezia, having "thieved" out of the house (the area of acceptance of ready-made stereotypes concerning her relationship with her fellow human beings) swings out on a gate towards independent moral judgment and the adventure of authentic existence.[18] The narrator-protagonist of "An Indiscreet Journey" is carried by train towards a new realisation of the meaning of war and the quality of human sacrifice.[19] The progress of a small ship across ocean waters is used recurrently to form the setting against which a character journeys towards some new level of awareness with regard to the relationship between life and death. Fenella, after an experience with death whose meaning she has not yet fully apprehended, moves towards a deeper understanding in the presence of a beloved grandmother, whose acceptance of death as an integral aspect of Being will render its impact less terrible for her.[19] The mother in "Six Years After" moves towards full realization of that cruel fact of the human condition that there is no service left for the living to render to the beloved dead.[20] Janey, disembarking from the ship which has borne her towards a transcendental experience, is able to share it with no other than

the remembered dead.[21] It is worth noting that characters who are about to gain knowledge of the self are often shown as looking into a space which is rounded or squared about significant objects inside, and thus reminiscent of the concept of a mandala. Thus, Kezia is fascinated by the interior of the doll's house, and especially by the symbol of light inside;[22] Laura, vouchsafed the opportunity to look upon the beauty of death, perceives the mortal remains of a young man, enframed by bed and walls;[23] John Hammond, about to learn a hard lesson with regard to the inviolacy of human relationships, is faced by a room which is "huge, immense, glittering" and which "fill[s] his whole world".[24]

Characters who gain awareness of co-existent lost selves are shown as watching the movements of these selves through phantasies projected against spatial backgrounds. Imagined space is thus a feature of the stories. Matilda watches a future self aboard a dark steamer; safe in the protecting presence of the brother she loves, she is sailing away from her native island.[25] The mother in "Six Years After", while sitting on the deck of a ship, experiences herself vividly as "hushing and holding a little slender boy - so pale - who had just waked out of a dreadful dream".[26] Beryl watches her false self as running "up and down stairs" while her true self, which constantly eludes her, is seen in tenuous terms as "a shadow ... faint and unsubstantial".[27] Raoul Duquette imagines his "other" self against a variety of spatial backgrounds, which have received detailed attention elsewhere in this thesis.[28]

In those stories which owe their origin to what the author termed a different "appearance of things",[29] when "joy - real joy"[30] was the inspirational power, characters seem to be envisaged as perilously but excitingly poised upon the brink of decisions which

will lead them towards either authentic or inauthentic existence. Some of the stories discussed above, such as "The Garden-Party" and "The Doll's House", belong in this category. Spatial setting in these stories is integrally related to point of view. In "Prelude" and "At the Bay" the same details of spatial setting are presented as seen through the eyes of various characters, transformed in each case by the degree of ontological security of the character concerned. This impressionistic presentation of setting, with the natural background distorted by the eye of the beholder, is barely mentioned here, as it will be more fully discussed in the chapters on atmosphere and narrative situation; however, the fact that the author's interest lies in the presentation of a shifting view of objects, as seen by a number of beholders, may well justify Kleine's sense of the tenuous quality of the backgrounds.

Of the stories chosen for detailed consideration according to the author's handling of the function of space, "An Ideal Family"[31] presents a character who, by means of a process which approximates to Jung's concept of individuation,[32] gains knowledge not only of the state of alienation from the self in which he lives, but also of the essential inauthenticity of the existence in which he helps to support his family. Space is presented in an especially interesting way to help unfold and emphasize these themes. In "Life of Ma Parker",[33] a character, whose brave resistance to the absurdity of her existence has taken the form of faithful service to those whom she loves and to those who employ her, is brought to a limiting situation, as a result of which she is confronted with the emptiness of her existence. The protagonist's positioning in space is used with skill to reinforce her growing sense of desolation. "A Suburban

Fairy Tale"[34] is an example of a story in which skilful handling of space emphasizes the inauthenticity of existence of a suburban couple; and serves to stress the different quality of the sphere to which their little son escapes.

An Ideal Family

In "An Ideal Family", a walk home from the office represents the movement through space which coincides with the progress towards a state of recognition achieved by the father of a family, in which he comes to see that his life has been wasted, squandered in supporting his family in an expensive and superficial mode of existence. The walk, followed by a brief nap before dinner, represents a process of individuation, in which the protagonist comes to realise that he has become a false self, a persona, existing only in his role of businessman and family provider. At the same time, he becomes aware that the members of his family are living in the state described by Jung as alienation from the self, by Kierkegaard as despair. It is that degree of despair which the latter describes as the worst of all, for they themselves think that they are happy.[35] In making the choice of living according to a social ideal, the members of Mr Neave's family have become unreal people. Hence the ironic force of the title, "An Ideal Family".

Action, both inner and outer, represents an arc of tension stretched between two imposing buildings, important for their symbolic value as well as their solidity as the cornerstones of the narrated reality. Typically, these buildings are impressionistically presented in terms of significant rather than complete detail. "Three broad steps", swing doors and vestibule invoke the opulent

and substantial offices whose portals have engulfed the protagonist and claimed the better part of his life. In the presentation of the house, the emphasis is upon an imposing front, with resulting lack of privacy and depth. The gate and windows are open, and the curtains are described as "floating outwards" to reveal "blue jars of hyacinths" on the sills;[36] such detail adds up to a symbolic expression of the house's main function, and the life style of the family which inhabits it. The house, too, wears a mask; a front existing for, and turned towards, society. As its tired owner draws near, it offers him neither rest nor privacy. Instead, it announces to the waiting world: "There is young life here. There are girls-"[37]

In its initial impact upon the reader, the house appears as singularly light, airy and white. It seems to float in space and to present a curious symmetry of open spaces joined lightly together: "And then he faced the big white-painted house, with its wide-open windows, its tulle curtains floating outwards, its blue jars of hyacinths on the broad sills."[38] Hindsight enables the reader tc nail down the initially elusive impression. The description of the house suggests a spider's web, suspended above the hydrangeas in the garden. At once the house's invitation acquires the sinister quality of that issued by the spider to the fly. Spatial detail has been used to evoke the quality of the whole edifice of family life and the goals and characters of those who live within. It foreshadows, too, the eventual insight into the quality of his own existence by the protagonist, who comes to recognise himself as a redundant male spider, swinging down from his web in order to provide the needs of an insatiable family.

The details of furniture and possessions within the house

which have been selected for presentation reinforce the idea of energies directed towards outward show and a superficial manner of existence. Articles of apparel ("wraps, parasols and gloves") are, "as always",[39] left lying upon the chests in the hall. Lola's playing of the piano is presented as loud and impatient. Noise seems to exist in the house as an extra spatial dimension, helping to create an atmosphere which is hard, bright and the reverse of restful.

Typical of the way in which spatial imagery is used to reinforce the idea of the loss of the self is the occasion on which the father remarks upon the extent to which his daughter's voice has altered. When she was a little girl, she had spoken softly and had even stuttered, but now "whatever she said - even if it was only 'Jam, please, father', her voice rang out as though she were on the stage"[40] (my emphasis). This new harsh voice suggests the victory of the persona, with consequent domination from the harsh and masculine animus within; the stutter, the dying phase of the true self. The mask has become so integral an aspect of the personality that it is evident even in such an everyday situation as a request to pass the jam. The inference implied by the simile of the stage is obvious. In the same way, when the father suggests that he is too tired to change for dinner, the girls vehemently demur, declaring that it would look "so very out of the picture"[41] if he were to remain in his working clothes. These images, conceived in spatial terms, are significant. The family lives a life with as little depth as is implied by the images of stage-show and picture. The essence of their living is turned outward, for public show.

The slow journey into the self which constitutes the process

of individuation is matched by the slowed-up narrative pace, as Mr Neave makes his way from office to home. The curious solidity of air and physical obstacles encountered on the walk serves to suggest the fatigue of the protagonist, and the fact that his vital force is at a low ebb. The stress laid upon the fact that he has to "press" through the swing doors, and the clear articulation of the steps he has to descend, suggests that their negotiation in itself constitutes an effort. The fact that he is moving towards despair is suggested by his inability to respond to the joy of Spring, his dissipation of nervous energy reflected in imagined but irritable movements with his stick, and the loss of buoyancy suggested by the fact of his finding the air itself to have grown "heavy and solid like water".[42] All the spatial details of this walk towards heightened awareness are given an added dimension by the statement that it had been "a day like other days at the office. Nothing special had happened. Harold hadn't come back from lunch until close on four".[43] Thus is it signalled to the reader that the defection of the protagonist's son is but one incident in a series, that the day is one of many similar in their essence, and that the journey towards individuation has been initiated by long-standing disappointment at the conduct of an unsatisfactory son.

Especially interesting is the use of space, presented through inner action as the protagonist dozes in an armchair, while his wife and daughters chatter; later this is continued as he rests for a moment in the dressing-room before going down to dinner. The inner action presented begins in waking phantasy and grows increasingly dream-like until the sequence becomes part of a dream proper. Depersonalized, the protagonist watches a little figure whom he does

not initially recognize as himself: "And somewhere at the back of everything he was watching a little withered and ancient man climbing up endless flights of stairs. Who was he?"[44] The image is typical of the author's presentation of space in phantasy, following an initially vague impression ("somewhere at the back of everything"), by intensely imagined detail.

This endless climbing by the struggling and unrecognised phantasy figure may be related back to the long climb up the hill, in which, with every step, financial commitments had seemed to weigh more heavily. Later, watching the same phantasy figure, the protagonist notices that his legs resemble a spider's. His position in actual space has by now changed to the dressing-room, and as he watches the climbing figure with impersonal interest, he becomes suddenly aware that its identity is one with his own. Thus he comes to ponder the fact that his family, so widely acclaimed as "ideal", leaves him to climb endless stairways without pity or assistance.

Distressing but accurate thoughts concerning the quality of his son turn the dream in the direction of nightmare. As the phantasy figure is dehumanized from man to spider the spatial concept of a staircase fades away. Both choice of word and sentence structure convey the idea that the spider swings down on a web: "Down, down went the little old spider."[45] Thus delicately are the spatial relationships of the encroaching phantasy realm conveyed.

As Mr Neave, in the horror of nightmare, watches his spider self make its way back to the office, a rapid narrative pace forms a contrast to that used to describe the difficult walk home. The spider self slips back to its sphere of useful activity with consummate ease.

In this dream sequence, the process of individuation seems to continue at a subliminal level. The protagonist awakens to a moment's contemplation of a vanished life and habitat, and a self he might have been if he had not made a certain farewell, as a result of which he had said good-bye to one who should have shaped his reality. The opening of his dressing-room door disrupts the presentation of this significant memory. The individuation process completes itself as he realises that "there had been some terrible mistake. She was his wife, that little pale girl, and all the rest of his life had been a dream."[46]

The reader is not shown the protagonist's descent to a situation from which, despite his new awareness, there is little chance of escape.

Life of Ma Parker

The protagonist of this story is presented just after having been afflicted by a devastating personal loss. She has been conditioned from early childhood to accept hardship; the reader sees her in the hours during which the cruellest of deprivations, that of the grandchild she loved beyond all else, is becoming increasingly realized. A clear awareness of the finality of death is the illumination towards which Mrs Parker moves as she cleans and tidies her employer's flat. The suffering which accompanies this realization constitutes a limiting situation. The reader is not shown the quality of the protagonist's future adjustment. Instead, he witnesses the breakdown of her restraint, of her courageously controlled system of habits, which has thus far provided a kind of opiate against sorrow.

By cultivating a devoted and meticulous "working" self Mrs Parker

has , in the past, found a measure of escape from the anguish imposed upon her by private sorrows. The dénouement of the story shows the break-through of this anguish. The working self of the protagonist can no longer hold it in abeyance while she cleans and orders the impedimenta imposed by the chaos of another's living. This process is emphasized in spatial terms through the protagonist's abandonment of her careful attention to the ordering of objects within the flat, and her movement out into the cold, unlimited emptiness of the street; here the fact that there is no refuge from pain ("There was nowhere")[47] is fully realized through the comfortless accompaniments of rain, icy wind, and lack of personal privacy. No solace is offered to the reader in the sense of an adjustment to sorrow. He is left as lonely as the protagonist in the contemplation of her anguish.

The protagonist is shown as one whom experience has been unable to tarnish. Retaining the innocence of her childhood self, she has been able to give out love and strength, accepting the indifference of an unfeeling natural order with magnanimity. We are shown the point at which this courageous resistance is stretched to the breaking point. The indifference of a universe so courageously accepted has proved to be almost more than a gallant spirit can endure.

A sharp though understated contrast is drawn between the protagonist and her employer, the "literary gentleman". Mrs Parker is depicted as one who has in no way attempted to get rid of herself in favour of an idealized image. On the contrary, she is shown as one who has turned the "alive, unique, personal center of [the] self, the only part that can, and wants to, grow" outwards, towards those who need her warm and vital force.[48] The literary gentleman,

significantly afforded no more personal title, is depicted very much as a persona who has sacrificed his inner warmth and vitality to the assumption of the idealized image implied by the adopted self-conscious literary role. The title, with is emphasis on Ma Parker's association with life, invites the reader tc follow the tension to the opposite pole of the literary gentleman's spiritual death. This is underlined by such details as his chaotic living, his lack of tact, and his inability to visualize the lives of lower social strata in any but picture-book terms.

The protagonist might have been expected to find relief rather than an intensification of grief in the process of cleaning the flat. At the outset, however, two obstacles are encountered, moving her towards a resurgence of distress. Both these obstacles are firmly presented in space.

The first is her employer himself, solidly present in the "dark little hall"[49] through which she enters the flat. Before she can reach the healing discipline of work, she has to run the gauntlet of his tactless remarks. Not unkindly intended, these are a measure of his withdrawal from authenticity, and his inability to visualize Mrs Parker as a Thou, a fellow human being. On the one occasion when, through style indirect libre, the reader is allowed to enter the consciousness of the literary gentleman, we find that he does not think of her in human terms. "Poor old bird! She did look dashed."[50] This thought propels him towards the well-meant, but singularly unfortunate: "I hope the funeral was a-a-success." Having delivered this, he remarks aloud, as if alone, "Overcome, I suppose",[51] and returns to his breakfast. His flippant tone, obvious inability to feel and imagine, and later his withdrawal

to ink and paper, suggests a withdrawal from life towards an artistic persona. It has been suggested that the author erred as an artist in making the literary gentleman speak as he did.[52] His behaviour gains credibility, however, when viewed as resulting from the withdrawal of energy from the true centre of the self towards that of an idealized image.[53]

Thus the dehumanized literary gentleman is presented as part of the spatial detail, a barrier to be passed, and to hurt in the process. The second barrier is also presented as an element of spatial detail. Mrs Parker has to remove her boots, an exceedingly painful process. The distress of these encounters sets memory into motion as one kind of agony engenders remembrances of another. The memories which are conjured into being as a result become, eventually, too hurtful to be endured.

The setting of the story is divided into four entities. The narrated present is confined to the interior of the flat and the eventual flight to the street outside it. Such movement is typical of the progress through space accompanying a major change in the awareness of Katherine Mansfield's characters. Detail is presented with irony. Thus it is while the protagonist is making the literary gentleman's bed that the remembered vision of Lennie on his death-bed overcomes her. Spatial detail of the street is conveyed through sharp and painful images. "The men walked like scissors".[54] The wind's blowing the protagonist's apron out "into a balloon"[55] is an ironic reminder of the emptiness of one who has borne life, and been bereft of it.

Co-existent, but presented through flash-backs to recent memories of the past, is the interior of Mrs Parker's present dwelling,

where the brief impressionistic offering of detail suggests the same patient struggle against imposed disorder as is evidenced by her efforts in the "literary gentleman's" flat. "And then the egg-cup of ink would come off the dresser..."[56]

The fourth group, presented through montage of time, involves interiors which are remembered from periods of time ranging from the remote posterior to the narrated present - the childhood home at Stratford, the bakery, the first "place" in London, etc. These memories from the past are presented with an intensity related to the evocative power of past sensation. Thus the essential quality of the home at Stratford is resurrected through careful selection of spatial detail; the reader is shown the fireplace, the stars "seen through the chimley",[57] the side of bacon suspended from the ceiling, and a bush beside the door with its associated experience of scent. This brief selection of significant detail, powerfully suggested, succeeds in conveying the atmosphere of the long-vanished home and mother, and in furnishing a possible reason for the ontological security of the protagonist.

While Mrs Parker, for her employer, is not quite human (for him she is a "hag" or an "old bird"), her attitude towards him shows feeling. He is "her gentleman"[58] and she pities him for having none other than paid labour to look after him. These attitudes, together with the patient skill with which she restores order to the untidiness engendered by his careless living, suggests her wholeness of personality. The protagonist's courageous acceptance seems to arise in some measure from an intuitive awareness of cosmic design. Thus, as a little girl, she watches the stars through the chimney; and, even in the midst of her adult grief, her vision is

lifted from mundane preoccupations to a glimpse out of the "smudgy" window of the "immense expanse of sad-looking sky"[59] where the clouds, where they are visible, look "very worn,... frayed at the edges, with holes in them, or dark stains like tea".[60] Such a view of remote space through the eyes of the protagonist suggests not only a certain distortion of perception in accordance with a saddened view, but also an ability to see the order of things in perspective. A remarkable power of uplifted vision is suggested by her examination of the great beyond through chimney and small obscure window. This surprising charwoman refuses to take the universal background for granted. The perspective which, despite all obstacles, she succeeds in establishing for her view transcends the limitations imposed upon her by circumstance, social milieu and education. While the story remains open-ended, the quality of her existence as presented in her past and present living suggests that the state of desolation to which she has been brought by suffering may not interfere with the authenticity of her existence. R.D. Laing quotes Kafka as saying: "You can hold yourself back from the sufferings of this world - this is something you are free to do and is in accord with your nature, but perhaps precisely this holding back is the only suffering you are able to avoid."[61] These words seem to express the essence of the contrasts imposed by the relationships presented in the story. The suffering of the gentleman, who does not seem to suffer at all, may finally surpass that of Ma Parker, broken as she is through having given all. The inauthenticity of his easy existence forms an ironic opposite to the beauty which may be seen to exist in the protagonist's suffering; even though the quality of this suffering may be so painful as to render its immediate appearance ugly.[62]

A Suburban Fairy Tale

This short story is a fable, its central ideas to be found in a symbolic representation of suburban materialism, and the inauthenticity of existence implicit in a turning away from spiritual towards material values.[63]

Mr and Mrs B., significantly left nameless, are interested in food and good living. So absorbed are they in the good things which their post World War I suburban life has made readily available that they seem to be incapable of realising their little son as a person. Thus they refer to him in terms of the animal kingdom and hardly seem to listen to what he says when he speaks to them. Their bearing towards him suggests that they are incapable of an I-Thou relationship.[64] The state of inauthenticity in which they live is further evidenced by their concern with the trivial aspects of everyday living.

Contrast of ideas in this story is supported by opposition of form and size. On the one hand we have the big, the full and the bloated; on the other, the undersized, the starved and the lost. The shapes and contours which are associated with the former category (such as the "red" interior of the well-appointed lounge, the "thick" curtains and the rounded contours of the parents themselves) seem to be linked with the growing materialism of the century, the latter with spiritual starvation and loss.

Implicit in the contrast is the turning of the self towards the gross values of society and the mask worn by the modern middle classes. The "desirable" self is a persona, turned towards solidity of role and the satisfaction of instinctual desires, decorously veiled as middle-class respectability.

At the same time that three-dimensional shapes are counterpoised (the bloated and full against the astringent and spare) so is there a contrast posed between areas. Thus the inside of the house seems to symbolize the parents' visceral and materialistic preoccupations; the outside, the natural world,which is beyond their cognizance.

Snug, safe and insatiable in their greed, Mr and Mrs B. dwell incessantly upon the pleasurable aspects of food. The interior of this suburban dwelling is filled by the succulent mental images which hang between them as well as by their growing rotundity of form. Food and good living constitute the essence of their existence.

So fixed are their interests that they perceive their little son in images of food. In terms of the spatial dichotomy noted, however, he does not belong with them in the interior of the house. "He was no fat little trot, no dumpling, no firm little pudding."[65] The materialism in which the parents' existence is invested is emphasized through their negative perceptions of their son in terms of foodstuffs. With their gaze fixed within, they are unable to notice that he belongs, really, with the bird-like shapes outside. He is "undersized for his age", and his legs are "like macaroni".[66]

Ironically, in this safe suburban "crib", the child feels that "everything is too big and violent".[67] With such plumpness, baroque shapes of food and archetypal unleashings of energy at a primitive oral level, he is dwarfed and overpowered. "Everything knocked him over, took the wind out of his feeble sails and left him gasping and frightened."[68]

The child's rejection of his parents' manner of existence is conveyed in spatial images. Moving away from them across the room,

he drops the food which they have forced upon him into a china flower pot near to the window. After this surreptitious gesture of defiance, he turns to them again, begging them to open the window. When, characteristically, they refuse, he slips behind a curtain - a thick one, separating him from them by a substantial spatial dimension. While he thus distances himself from them, and draws nearer to the world outside, the parents' attention is centred, not upon the withdrawal of their child, but upon cheese, "a glut of it - whole cheeses revolved in their air between them like celestial bodies".[68] This use of food phantasized in terms of space suggests the filling of their horizons, and the ironic simile emphasizes the centring of their essence upon food.

The child makes a last effort to share his view with his parents. Outside, strange things are happening - the sparrows are changing into little boys. But the interest of the parents is restricted by the four walls of their suburban house. While the child begs his father to attend to the outside, and the wonderful transformation in progress there, Mr B is occupied with his own thoughts, rationalizing an uneasy twinge of conscience with regard to poverty and want in the forbidden area beyond his own comfortable orbit of living. As the child gains the exterior, the parents are still seated at the table, uncertain in their preoccupied manner of thinking as to whether little B. is in fact a child or a pet. Thus, as he slips away from them, Mrs B. calls him "my pet", and Mr B., addressing him as "Rover", looks for him under the table-cloth, as if he were a dog.[69]

The world beyond the house, when the parents at last look through the window, is empty. The increased distancing implied by the final lines of the story brings home to the reader the fact that

this emptiness is final. "But it was too late. The little boys were changed into sparrows again, and away they flew - out of sight - out of call."[70]

With a sudden reversal of values, Mr and Mrs B. would give all, not only for their son, but for all the lost children outside.

This story, written in 1917, has received little critical attention. Its dichotomy of values, underlined by simple contrasts of shapes and spatial areas, seems visionary in the insight suggested into the relationships between the century's children and their parents. Thus it seems to have some of the simplicity and strength of an archetypal legend.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER III

[1]Kleine, "An Eden for Insiders ",p. 206.

[2]Vivienne Mylne, "Illusion and the Novel ",British Journal of Aesthetics, VI (1966), 142-151.

[3]Journal, p. 257.

[4]Ibid., p. 287.

[5]Letters, I, 119.

[6]Collected Stories, p. 561.

[7]Ibid., p. 735.

[8]Ibid., p. 718.

[9]Ibid., p. 757.

[10]Ibid., p. 675.

[11]Ibid., p. 678.

[12]Ibid., p. 675.

[13]Ibid., p. 582.

[14]Jung, Two Essays, p. 205.

[15]Collected Stories, p. 588.

[16]Ibid., p. 422.

[17]"The Garden-Party ",Ibid., p. 245.

[18]"The Doll's House ",Ibid., p. 321.

[19]Ibid., p. 628.

[20]Ibid., p. 465.

[21]"The Stranger ",Ibid., p. 350.

[22]"The Doll's House ", Ibid., p. 393.

[23]"The Garden-Party ", Ibid., p. 245.

[24]"The Stranger ", Ibid., p. 350.

[25]"The Wind Blows ", Ibid., p. 106.

[26]Ibid., p. 469.

[27]"Prelude ", Ibid., p. 59.

[28]v supra, pp. 47-55.

[29]Journal, p. 93.

[30]Letters, I, 119.

[31]Collected Stories, p. 368.

[32]v Jung, Two Essays, pp. 173-4.

[33]Collected Stories, p. 301.

[34]Ibid., p. 660.

[35]v Søren Kierkegaard, The Sickness Unto Death, trans. by Walter Lowrie (London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1944), pp. 39-41.

[36]Collected Stories, p. 370.

[37]Ibid., p. 371.

[38]Ibid., p. 370.

[39]Ibid., p. 371.

[40]Ibid., p. 372.

[41]Ibid., p. 373.

[42]Ibid., p. 368.

[43]Ibid.

[44]Ibid., p. 373.

[45]Ibid., p. 374.

[46]Ibid., p. 375.

[47]Ibid., p. 309.

[48]Horney, Neurosis and Human Growth, p. 155.

[49]Collected Stories, p. 301.

[50]Ibid., p. 302.

[51]Ibid.

[52]O'Connor, The Lonely Voice, p. 134.

[53]v Jung, Two Essays, p. 173.

[54]Ibid., p. 308.

[55]Ibid., p. 309.

[56]Ibid., p. 306.

[57]Ibid., p. 304.

[58]Ibid., p. 301.

[59]Ibid., p. 301.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Cited by Laing, The Divided Self, p. 78.

[62]v Letters, II, 195.

[63]Collected Stories, p. 660.

[64]The way to authenticity, as suggested by Martin Buber, lies in constant effort to maintain the difficult I-Thou relationship with one's fellow men.

v also Will Herberg, ed., "I and Thou ", in The Writings of Martin Buber, Meridian Books (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, 1956; rpt. 1970), pp. 46-55.

[65] *Collected Stories*, p. 661.

[66] *Ibid.*

[67] *Ibid.*

[68] *Ibid.*

[69] *Ibid.*, p. 663.

[70] *Ibid.*, p. 664.

CHAPTER IV

THE FUNCTION OF TIME

David Daiches stresses the severity of the discipline imposed upon herself by Katherine Mansfield in her attempt to find artistic integrity through coaxing the "deepest truth out of the idea".[1] For the author, this means the truth not only for the reader, but also for the characters in the fictional world. Thus the search for the "deepest truth" of a presented situation is the framework upon which the time structure of the finest stories is subtended.[2]

All Katherine Mansfield's stories, even the earliest, show mastery in the organization of this difficult function. Antony Alpers has drawn attention to the skill with which the youthful author managed three levels of time in "The Tiredness of Rosabel".[3] That which Katherine Mansfield herself termed a "very subtle variation of 'tense'"[4] became a feature of her work. In stories such as "A Dill Pickle",[5] "Je ne Parle pas Francais"[6] and "The Daughters of the Late Colonel",[7] the narrated present is fragmented not only that the past may be invoked but also to allow the introduction of an extra dimension of phantasy. During the course of this chapter, an attempt will be made to show that these two last mentioned levels of time, as well as that of the narrated present, are used in such a way as to emphasize the existence within some of the characters of true and false selves.

It is characteristic of Katherine Mansfield's short stories that the outer action of the narrated present seems to be confined to the commonplace; even, at times, the trivial or banal. That the

situation should relate to the world of the everyday seems to be a feature which the stories have in common, whether they came into existence as a "cry against corruption" or as a result of the author's later source of inspiration, namely, a sense of the mysterious beauty of the world.[8]

Both Heidegger and Jaspers see the world of everyday trivialities as a threat to man. Absorbing his energies, routine matters tend to engross his mind so that he is in danger of living out his life without any idea of the nature of Being. This would result in inauthenticity of existence.[9]

Man, when immersed in this state, is in danger of suffering a loss of the self, as he becomes the mask which he assumes for his working or social relationships, or becomes immersed in the satisfaction of his instincts. Engrossed in the routine of the day, he has neither time nor inclination to consider the possibilities of Being, or the limited quality of his own mode of existence.

Katherine Mansfield's method for seeking the deepest kind of truth within a situation seems to have involved an examination of the individual in the setting of this everyday, inevitable, but threatening plane of existence. It is a misfortune intrinsic to the human condition that one is "thrown" into it. In the early stories in which the innocent are sharply distinguished from the corrupt, the latter are shown as entrenched in inauthenticity; they have given themselves over to it, and those who have become sufficiently corrupt ensnare others as well. The return to past levels of time is often incisive in these stories, and bears a dynamic relationship to the spiritual state of the character as shown in the narrated present. In "Je ne Parle pas Francais", the

earliest level of time presented shows a significant point in the life of Raoul Duquette.[10] At this stage he is corrupted. Subsequently, during the various levels of time which are selected for presentation, the protagonist is shown in the process of trying to assume a number of false identities. Although the central idea of the story implies a certain freedom of choice, the chance of a regenerative experience is thrown aside. The false selves of the protagonist are too deeply involved in superficialities, with the result that he rejects the chance of effecting a "leap" into a more authentic mode of existence. The corrupted child of ten has become the arch-corrupter, and, although the window through which one may see one's dasein as being rooted in Being has opened for a moment,[11] the traumatic experiences of the past exert an influence to render ineffective the impulse towards authenticity. Only at a phantasy level can the protagonist envisage a more authentic mode of existence.

The time structure of stories such as "A Dill Pickle",[12] "Poison",[13] "A Married Man's Story"[14] and "Life of Ma Parker"[15] seems to be based upon a paradigm which is the same in essence. It makes no difference that the last portrays a self which is more whole, an existence which has moved towards authenticity, whereas the others portray selves which are wasted or given over to evil. The dynamic relationship of the past to the present, and the inevitability with which the past reaches into, and limits, the existential status of the present, are the salient features. That men and women have free choice towards good or evil, authentic or inauthentic existence, is conceded by the author and forms an important aspect of the themes of the stories. But the cards seem to be stacked against the better choice, occasions for which are shown as occurring but once or twice

in a life-time; while the apparent freedom with which the individual presented responds to the precious opportunity appears to be fatefully influenced by experiences encountered in the past.

The narrated present of those stories which the author suggests were written in response to a different "appearance of things"[16] also presents the threatening quality of everyday living; but the emphasis is no longer on the corrupt ones who tempt the innocent from the possibility of authentic living, or who inflict mortal hurt upon those who have retained their childlike integrity. The dangers of inauthenticity never cease to constitute a menace; and each individual is threatened, to some extent, at least. The innocent are still at the mercy of the experienced, but the corrupt ones are no longer presented as a race apart. The world of the everyday holds for them, too, the possibility of a break-through to authentic living. No longer are platforms of time depicted as clear and separate, over and done with, but rather as exerting from their submerged depths a fateful influence for the weal or woe of the individual's present. Time, to a far greater extent, is treated as being in a state of flux. In these stories the individual is shown as on the brink; poised, as it were, between a possible leap towards or withdrawal from authenticity. The outlook, though more hopeful, is still alarming. At any moment of the least convenient day, the human creature may be confronted with a limiting experience. Thus Leila is invited to contemplate her own mortality on the occasion of her first ball,[17] and Laura is called to the contemplation of the mystery of death on an occasion of family celebration.[18] That the moment is seldom the one which the individual would have chosen as appropriate to the reception of so momentous a challenge is basic

to the informing principle of such stories. Katherine Mansfield's explication of the time factor in "The Garden-Party" shows the extent to which the coincidence of time is an integral factor: "She [Laura] feels that things ought to happen differently. First one and then another. But life isn't like that. We haven't the ordering of it. Laura says, 'But all these things must not happen at once.' And Life answers, 'Why not? How are they divided from each other?' And they do all happen, it is inevitable. And it seems to me there is beauty in that inevitability."[19]

Aristotle suggested that action should move forward in time; from beginning, to middle, to end.[20] Katherine Mansfield's departure from this pattern is apparent rather than actual. It is true that in many of the later stories she is inclined, as a critic has pointed out, to "begin, as it were, with a plop, as the situation drops into the reader's consciousness".[21] Stories such as "Life of Ma Parker",[22] "The Fly"[23] and "The Stranger"[24] begin in this way. But inner action as reflected through figural presentation supplies whatever information is needed as to the beginnings of the protagonist's mental or existential state. With montage or time-shifts introducing both the remembered past and an imagined present or future, the narrative pace of the stories is usually slow. The author's interest is in a minute examination of the consciousness of the present, and the aspects of memory or phantasy which pertain to it. Thus the acceleration of narrative pace engendered by report is usually absent. The stories are typically open-ended in that problems are neither solved nor neatly rounded off. However, the narrated present moves to an aesthetically satisfying state of closure; at the same time, the illumination towards which the narrated present has moved (whether

rejected or received by the character in the fictional world for whom it is relevant) opens up richly suggestive vistas with regard to that figure's existential future. Thus the time structure contains complex perspectives, and constitutes a variation of, rather than a departure from, Aristotle's suggested order.

The treatment of time as part of an extended sequence emphasizes the impressionistic quality of Katherine Mansfield's art. Frieder Busch points out that no less than three of the stories open with the conjunction "and".[25] Thus time is protracted both backwards, through the accumulative technique of the opening phrases, and forwards through the technique of the open end. Mendilow views impressionistic design as one of the distinctive features of twentieth century fiction in which the writer, "confronted with the futility of the 'irritable reaching after fact and reason' ... is forced to discard the conceptual view of life in terms of stasis ...[and] instead adopt[s] the perceptual view of life in terms of flow".[26]

Not only does the time structure of the later stories show coincidence with the author's developing metaphysic, whereby good and evil, innocence and corruption, cease to be regarded so much as static poles and come to be envisaged as a state of flux; at the same time, her increasingly sophisticated techniques place her in the vanguard of the century's innovators, as becomes apparent when her stories (of which the last were written in 1922) are examined against the background of critical comment upon the short story form, and fiction in general, some decades later. It has been pointed out, for instance, that the twentieth century short story has abandoned the logical development of plot structure for an emphasis on "subsurface thinking", which presupposes a narrated present broken

in order to allow the exploration of "associate linkages, personal memories and fears and faiths".[27] A.A. Mendilow, stressing the manner in which Bergsonian thinking has influenced the modern novelist towards seeing time as a state of flux, suggests that the attempt to render mental processes with fidelity will result in a radically altered time structure, with "flashes of the past [jerking] in and out of [the characters'] consciousness, telescoping, coalescing, disintegrating, breaking out of sequence, starting off chains of unpredictable and sometimes untraceable associations".[28]

The final phrase quoted from Mendilow does not seem to be applicable to the works of this author, the time structure of whose stories is held firmly together by the strength of the unifying quest -- that for the "deepest truth" of the situation. The protagonist of "A Dill Pickle" remembers only that which sheds light upon the quality of her past relationship with the man she has met by chance in the setting of the narrated present, and she imagines only what might have been if she had not underestimated the quality of his love.[29] It is those incidents from the past which relate to the genesis and growth of his own corruption which are remembered by Raoul Duquette; while the phantasy sequences which are presented relate to his imaginative projections of a quality of existence which his false self has rendered him too listless to realise.[30]

The three stories chosen for detailed study along the perspective of time are all sophisticated in technique and seem to relate to this function in their very essence. "The Daughters of the Late Colonel"[31] combines the techniques of montage and the time-shift, and is constructed about temporal symbols; that "At the Bay"[32]

and "Sun and Moon"[33] are both constructed upon the idea of archetypal cycles of time is borne out by the choice of titles as well as the implications of the action. Thus each of these stories was chosen in accordance with the promise held within them of an interesting result arising from an examination according to this function.

The Daughters of the Late Colonel

In a sense it would be no exaggeration to suggest that the subject of this story is time. It begins and ends with explicit emphasis upon the concept, and, within the delicately fluctuating sequences which constitute the "chapters", symbols as well as linguistic devices hold time, in its various aspects, unremittingly before the attention of the reader.

"The week after was one of the busiest weeks of their lives."[34] The opening sentence, with the significant "after" relating back to the preceding death incident (and thus establishing the impressionistic technique), defines the time period of the narrated present. The carefully chosen words establish this particular week as part of a serialistic pattern, composed of others which are different from, but too much resembling, the week which is submitted to the reader's scrutiny. For, as a recent critic has pointed out, the type of activity characterizing this "busiest" of weeks ironically signals the "utter deprivation" of the sisters' lives.[35]

The significantly worded title reinforces the idea implicit in the opening sentence (as well as in the story as a whole) that the shape of the present has been irretrievably affected by the influence of the father. Thus the time-treatment of the story opens

up a mythic dimension. "For it is always is, however much we may say 'It was'. Thus speaks the myth."[36] The fact that Josephine and Constantia have been, and are, condemned to spend their lives as daughters has locked them within a dimension of the timeless as surely as Mann's isolation of his characters in a tuberculosis sanatorium (which constitutes the setting of The Magic Mountain) insulates them from the "outer world and hence from time".[37] This state of imprisonment in suspended time is clearly shown in the eighth "chapter" of the story in which, significantly, through Josephine's uncertainty as to what is to be done with her late father's gold watch, the reader is returned to a dramatic presentation of one of Cyril's visits, in time past. On this occasion, the young man is shown as being anxiously concerned with time and its passage. When he fears that the aunts' clock may be slow, both Josephine and Constantia are shown as cut off from any sharp sense of time. Josephine reassuringly remarks that Cyril's grandfather will not expect him to stay "very long".[38] As for Constantia, she is shown as "still gazing at the clock" and as being unable to decide whether "it was fast or slow".[39] Josephine's insistence that her father will be interested in hearing that his absent son is still very fond of the meringues suggests that she is as lost in the blind alleys of time as her sister. Significantly, the sisters decide to send the watch to Cyril. The scene has been presented through Josephine's memory - a fact delicately conveyed through her comment, as if she has been contemplating the re-enactment of the scene: "Yes, I shall send Cyril the watch". Constantia's reply suggests that, vague as she is, the discrepancy between her time sense and Cyril's has not failed to impress her. "I seem to remember last time he came there was some little trouble about the time."[40]

The story ends,as it begins, with emphasis on time. The "was" can never be extinguished.[41] It has obliterated all hope of a different future for the sisters. In the tentative turning towards the possibility of change, they are shown as being as firmly imprisoned within the timeless as before. Their new independence brought about through the death of their father cannot free them from this particular tyranny. Neither can shake herself free. Constantia, contemplating the secretive Buddha on the mantelpiece, turns from its knowing smile with "one of her vague gestures". She wants to tell Josephine "something frightfully important, about-about the future and what ..." but the inception of the thought, never to be precisely formulated, is as far as she can get.[42] Josephine interrupts her inarticulate attempt with "I was wondering if now". Neither can proceed. Their inability to break free is delicately conveyed through verb tenses and faltering dialogue. With Josephine's final acceptance, the tense of the verb changes from imperfect to perfect. ("I was wondering if now -" followed by "I've forgotten too".)[43] She, like the reader, has been shown the "deepest truth in the idea",[44] as the sun, archetypal symbol of the passage of time, is obscured behind a cloud. There is no hope of a renewal of life for the sisters.

Thus, through a consideration of the function of time, we are brought face to face with the central idea of the story, so easy to miss beneath the comic overtones of the outer action. Distressed at public reaction to the story which assumed that her attitude to the two sisters was one of ridicule, Katherine Mansfield commented as follows: "It's almost terrifying to be so misunderstood. There was a moment when I first had 'the idea' when I saw the two sisters

as amusing. But the moment I looked deeper ... I bowed down to the beauty that was hidden in their lives and to discover that was all my desire...."[45] Saralyn Daly suggests that it is because the condition of the sisters is "absurd" that it has been presented through a "series of comic scenes".[46] While there is no doubt that this is in some measure true, the condition of the sisters thus presented is very different from the writer's view of an absurd existence as suggested in such early works as "Frau Brechenmacher Attends a Wedding" and "The Woman at the Store". The tormented query as to the meaning of existence which renders Frau Brechenmacher pitiful and the woman at the store obscene has given way to a quiet acceptance of the imposed order by Josephine and Constantia, which lends dignity to their fumblings, while it renders their sacrifice beautiful. The two sisters are among the exploited; but there is no hint of anger against the exploiter, either in the tone of their own utterances, or in the overall tone as a whole. Thus has the author's vision transcended that which formerly found expression as a "cry against corruption".[48] In suffering the deprivation which is part of their destiny the sisters, after a moment's hopeful fluttering, achieve acceptance. In this quiet acceptance there is beauty.

It would be tempting, on a superficial level, to view the sisters as personae, forced to an existence structured for them by their expected social roles. However, the idea seems to be that the sisters have been robbed of life, rather than that they have been corrupted, or forced to assume false selves. "The thieving sun touched Josephine gently."[49] Time has been stolen from them, but has not stripped them of their inner integrity. Thus the selected incidents of the past to which the technique of montage of time

directs the reader are of an entirely different kind and function from those presented in "Je ne Parle pas Francais", or "A Married Man's Story". No traumatic incidents of childhood are shown. The past as revealed is one which has inhibited rather than warped the sisters' spiritual growth. In their emotional immaturity, as in their "niceness" of outlook, they have remained young adolescents; not very different, in the narrated present, from the two girls who had giggled together until their "beds had simply heaved", in one of the few glimpses of their childhood which is presented.[50]

The central idea of the story, then, is directed towards the concept of maimed rather than corrupted personalities. The sisters are in fact singularly free of the touch of personal corruption. Corrupting forces have shaped, but not tainted them. Imprisoned in time, they have retained the beauty of eternal childhood, and it is the innocence of this childlike quality in their middle age that the author had recorded with a fidelity which has caused some readers to accuse her of satirizing characters for whom, as a careful consideration of tone and time structure suggests, she had deep compassion.

Hidden within Constantia is, not a false self, but a different self which has not been allowed to develop. It is she who gathers the resolution to lock their father's cupboard rather than face the ordeal of an immediate sorting of his effects. Her "awful callous smile"[51] as she does so reminds Josephine of a far-off and surprising occasion when Constantia had "pushed Benny into the round pond".[52] It is Constantia who has a "favourite Buddha" on the mantelpiece, and who, under the influence of the full moon, has "crept out of bed in her nightgown ... and lain on the floor with her arms

outstretched, as if crucified".[53] To Constantia, that life which has been spent "running out, bringing things home in bags, getting things on approval ... arranging father's trays and trying not to annoy father" seems "to have happened in a kind of tunnel. It wasn't real."[54] The richer, more creative self in Constantia is the self she might have been, the self which she has sacrificed through finding whatever authenticity she has achieved through sacrifice to another. It is this hidden but potentially adventurous self (which only comes out of the tunnel "into the moonlight or by the sea or into a thunderstorm"[55]) which she feels as her true being, and which has been sacrificed beyond resurrection. That there is a comparable entity lurking within the more practical Josephine is suggested more obliquely, through Josephine's identification of herself with the young sparrows which she hears chirping on the window ledge. Delicately, through choice of word and sentence structure, is the yearning of Josephine's inner self rendered. "Yeep - eyeep - yeep. But Josephine felt they were not sparrows, not on the window ledge. It was inside her, that queer little crying noise. Yeep - eyeep - yeep. Ah. What was it crying, so weak and forlorn?"[56]

The strange glow of the sun as it deepens "until it shone almost golden"[57] upon the Indian carpet seems to generate a certain magic whereby these lost selves are almost allowed to reach the surface. The mandala-like quality of the glowing square on the carpet, numinous as the "stone and gilt image" upon the mantelpiece, has already been noted.[58] The symbols of the East, Buddha and carpet, seem to suggest that there, perhaps, the suspension of time which forms their prison might have had some different value.

The Buddha "knew something; he had a secret".[59] Perhaps this undisclosed secret holds a connection with the long view of the unobtrusive narrator, which suggests some mysterious beauty in the final recognition whereby hope of life's renewal is extinguished for the two reflecting intelligences.

At the Bay

The great natural archetypes of the diurnal cycle and the sea are the symbols around which "At the Bay" seems to have evolved form and time structure.[60] The story opens with the words, "Very early morning",[61] which refer to a time when the sun has not yet risen, and closes after its setting, with the words, "All was still".[62] The "sleepy sea" is still hidden by a mist in the initial chapter; at the close it sounds "deep, troubled....as though it waked out of a dark dream".[63] Throughout the twelve divisions of the story, the sea sounds, and the movement of the sun suggests the waxing and waning of the day.[64] At breakfast, it "streams" through the open window, so that "everything on the table flashed and glittered".[65] During the time that Kezia and her grandmother take their siesta together, "the sun beat[s] down,... hot and fiery on the fine sand ..."[66] When Alice goes out to afternoon tea, the "sun is still full on the garden".[67] During the time that the children spend playing in the warehouse, the sunset has "blazed and died".[68] Stanley's return from the office and Beryl's encounter with Harry Kember take place after dark. Only once is clock-time obliquely mentioned;[69] throughout it is inferred by the passage of sun and moon across the sky.

This cosmic rendering of the day's progress emphasizes the temporal perspective established by the natural cycle upon which

the rhythm of the story is based. A.A. Mendilow, describing the technique of serialistic patterns which Thomas Mann called "Time Coulisses", suggests that "each character is not only an individual living out his time but also one configuration of an endless series extending back to the dawn of humanity".[70] Such a definition could have been tailor-made for "At the Bay", in which the members of the family, each living through the daily experiences characteristic of his age or family position, acquire mythic as well as individual status. Each character in a sense is an "Everyman", living through experiences both individual and typical of mankind. A critic has suggested that the story "does not end at all; it merely stops".[71] It would seem more accurate, perhaps, to say that with the end of the waking day it pauses to imply, with the inevitable renewal of the cycle, the imminence of the future as well as of the past. Don W. Kleine, noting, as have others, the pastoral dimension of the New Zealand settings, acknowledges the mythic quality of the characters' encounter with experience in his conclusion that although the writer's "creative feat seems recondite ... in tending us the gift of ourselves it manifests the ambiguous generosity of memorable art".[72] The situation which is explored for the "deepest truth" for both characters and reader is that of a family - three generations and a servant - living through a day, not of crisis, but of very ordinary events. Yet, in eleven of the twelve "chapters" presented, a character is shown as encountering a challenge - a moment of existential choice - which, if he is capable of accepting the illumination offered, will open the door towards authenticity and the adventure of becoming the true and unique self he should be.

Thus the majestic, unhurried order of sea, sky, shepherd and

dissolving mist, sheep-dog and sheep, which is established as the pastoral background, is disrupted by Stanley Burnell who, bursting forth from the bungalow, makes his boisterous way towards the water. Stanley, perceptively dubbed "Mr Businessman" by his wife, is developing very much along the lines of a persona.[73] Later in the day, when the reader is allowed access to the thoughts of Linda Burnell, we become conscious that she is well aware of the loss of the self which threatens him. Her Stanley - the Stanley she loves - is seldom apparent. He is becoming subordinate to the persona. The Stanley she loves is "not the Stanley whom everybody saw, not the everyday Stanley; but a timid, sensitive, innocent Stanley ... But the trouble was ... she saw her Stanley so seldom."[74] Linda understands instinctively that she stands between Stanley and the threatened loss of the self, as implied by such factors as the growing importance in his life of his position in the office and of money-making; with the consequent movement towards inauthenticity of existence. His obsession with clock-time distinguishes him from the other characters presented. It has been observed by a critic that "an industrialized and mechanized society has become increasingly conscious"[75] of the measurement of time by the clock. This comment sheds light upon the contrast between Stanley, his interests orientated towards the commercial world, and the idyllic concerns of those whom he leaves behind him each morning. Thus he is oblivious of the beauty of the morning - it is the fact that he is, or thinks he is, "first man in as usual" that concerns him. His remarks to Jonathan Trout, who tries to tell him of his dream, are revealing. "I've no time to - to - to fool about. I want to get this over. I'm in a hurry. I've work to do this morning - see?"[76]

The sea for Stanley is nothing but a convenience - a bracing experience, contributing to his bodily health and well-being, that he may be in better trim to make money. Stanley's departure from the house is shown to be, as Linda once predicted, "very high pressure indeed".[77] Thus he bullies the family with his minute-by-minute dissection of time at breakfast, and "punishes" Linda by shouting to her that he has "no time to say goodbye" as he rushes out to the coach.[78] Returning after sunset, Stanley is still in a hurry - to apologise to Linda for having left her so abruptly. Ironically, he has been through "the hell of a day",[79] wondering whether a wire of apology would reach her before he did; this agony of mind has arisen as a result of a transgression, initiated through his obsession with clock time, but entirely unnoticed by Linda. Thus Stanley's sense of time keeps him in a state of irritability and nervous tension. He is effectively cut off from the type of mental atmosphere which would allow contemplation, or the development of a meaningful relationship with Being. His anxiety over time as measured by the clock, relating as it does to his identification with the business persona, "brings for him only 'anguish and anger'".[80]

Jonathan Trout, though with a deep sense of frustration at the necessity of spending "all the best years of one's life sitting on a stool from nine to five, scratching in somebody's ledger",[81] is presented as being in a state of greater harmony with the natural world. Instead of manipulating the sea as does Stanley, he floats in it, and lets it "rock his long, skinny body".[82] Allowing himself to be carried back and forth by the waves, he shows his rejection of clock-time. "That was the way to live - carelessly,

recklessly, spending oneself."[83] Yet Jonathan shows himself to be lost in the absurd - to have little sense of the adventure of living. His natural rhythm is wrong - he eventually finds that he has stayed in the sea "too long". Later, as the sun sets, he explains his feelings of the absurdity of his existence to Linda. "I'm like an insect that's flown into the room of its own accord. I dash against the walls, dash against the windows,... do everything on God's earth ... except fly out again."[83] Some defect of will has caused Jonathan to reject, in his own way, full authenticity of existence. Thus he is shown as one who has refused the message which might have acted as a cipher from transcendence. In writing of the philosophy of Jaspers, Ernst Breisach describes the individual who ignores or veils ciphers thus offered in terms which seem apposite to the existential state of this character: "He can act as if he has not heard it, and live day to day; he can become a nihilist, declaring everything senseless. Such a response leads to a life lacking in authenticity. One remains estranged from what one could become, and from transcendence."[84] To the perceptive and sensitive Linda, Jonathan has become "like a weed".[85]

Not only at the midpoint of the linear design of this finely proportioned story, but also of the sun's meridian (and thus the hour of maximum illumination), are the "chapters" in which mother and daughter, Linda and Kezia Burnell, encounter limiting situations; and, by accepting the message from transcendence, move towards authenticity. Typically, these experiences, momentous in the spiritual development of the character concerned, remain private to each one. Close ties of blood and environment in no way obviate the privacy of individual experience. Kezia's experience, softened

by the presence of the ontologically secure and beloved grandmother, is that of the realization and acceptance of her own mortality. The grandmother, in helping her towards it, is forced to reaffirm the same acceptance in herself. As Kezia watches her grandmother looking "back, back ... down the years",[86] the discrepancy in psychological time[87] for each of the experiencing characters - between the moment of contemplation and the remaining span of her being - is implied. Kezia's immediate reaction is one of incredulity, the grandmother's of sadness. Both dissolve into laughter as Kezia urges the grandmother to "say never".[88] Although the episode ends with both having forgotten what the "never" was about, tone and intensity, as well as slowed-up narrative pace, suggest the significance of the moment for grandmother and child alike.

Linda moves from that sense of the absurd which clouded her vision in "Prelude" towards the "deepest truth" which is to lend beauty to her future. This time it is flowers (rather than moths flying towards the lamplight)[89] that she contemplates. "Pretty - yes,... But as soon as they flowered, they fell and were scattered.... Why, then, flower at all?"[90] So runs her mind as the sun mounts high, and her spirit progresses towards an answer to the question. Linda's most threatening existential problem has lain in the fact that, while forced into the role of a mother, she has been unable to invest her selfhood in it. Now she finds that she does love her baby son after all. The description of the flower, into which she gazes so intently immediately before achieving new insight into the self, is strongly reminiscent of the archetypal symbol as suggested in The Secret of the Golden Flower.[91] "Each pale yellow petal shone as if each was the careful work of a loving hand. The tiny

tongue in the centre gave it the shape of a bell."[92] Shape, light, and numinous quality combine to give the impression of a mandala.[93] The time-sequence of the story is designed so that Linda proceeds from her steady gaze into the flower to new knowledge of the self. This miraculous "becoming" does much to solve the problems of her uncertainty as to her identity, and the meaning of her life, both of which were shown as impinging upon her so threateningly in "Prelude". In "At the Bay" she is shown as moving towards a feeling of responsibility towards those whose lives are tied to hers. As she learns to relate to her fellow beings, particularly those who are dependent upon her, she moves towards authenticity of existence.

The parallel between the experiences of the two young girls, Alice and Beryl, is such as to mock the social distance between them. Both, in the seemingly secure world of everyday contacts, encounter, and are terror-stricken by, a confrontation with evil. Both manage to retreat and to guard the integrity of the self for that day at least. Alice, recoiling from one who has rejected the responsibility of human claims ("Freedom's Best! "),[94] escapes to the safe haven of her kitchen. Beryl, despite her struggle to become the true self which eludes her so easily, is tempted through her twin weaknesses of vanity and awakening sex. Both Mr and Mrs Harry Kember exude an aura of evil, and something warns Beryl just in time from obeying the mingled insinuations of their suggestions. The self which is unique, and yearns towards beauty, helps her to draw back from the perilous verge.[95]

Slight as these experiences may seem, they gain significance when viewed as private dangers which constitute a threat to individual integrity each day. Such dangers remain unknown to all

but the one who has experienced them. These encounters serve to illustrate such ideas as are held by Jaspers, who sees authenticity as a state never to be safely attained; rather, it retreats as the individual strives to reach it, leading him ever on towards new horizons. Messages from the encompassing transcendence signal to those who do not turn away from, or flinch from deciphering, the coded message.[96]

Moral values as presented in the fictional world of this story, like time, have ceased to show clear-cut divisions. Time's flow, like that of good and evil, waxes and wanes with the ebb and flow of the tide, or the rhythm of light and darkness. The lack of a clear-cut boundary between that which may be categorized as good, and that which may be pronounced to be evil, is reflected in the delicate shifts of time; while the similarities of the experiences encountered by young and old, mistress and maid, emphasize the superficial quality of the difference sometimes held to be important by those who belong to the inescapable brotherhood implied by the human condition.

Sun and Moon

The narrated present of "Sun and Moon"[97] is confined to an afternoon and an evening, covering the preparations for, and progress of, a party. The fictional world is presented entirely through the camera-like eye of Sun, the elder of the two children. Sun's age is not given, but both dialogue and the special quality of his vision indicate that he is very young.[98]

There is no fragmentation of time. In this story, the narrated present amounts to what would be presented as the earliest level

divulged through montage in a story featuring a state of adult corruption, as in "Je ne Parle pas Francais". Thus in the present story we are shown what could be the beginnings of a loss of the self, and it is an interesting dimension of the story that it contains subtle implications for the future of the young protagonist. These implications hang heavily in suspense, but are left open. The Sun rises and the surprised but perceptive gaze of the child sees, with a startled clarity, the disquietening concomitants of inauthentic living. Thus we are shown the particular point of time at which innocence takes a last look and comes to an end.

One by one the pretty perceptual details organize themselves into meaningful wholes - thus the flower pots that look like hats are clearly recognized by the protagonist as flower pots, as distinct from the still innocent conceptualizations of Moon, who "thought that they were hats".[99] The rising intelligence of Sun is aware of the essential differences between the quality of his vision, and that of Moon. She "never knew the difference between real things and not real ones".[100] Hence the allegorical force of the title, which needs no further underlining.

Narrative pace is slow as Sun looks and wonders and, organizing perceptual cues, sorts out the essential differences between his concepts as now, compared with his Moon-like vision of before. Throughout the narrative an extra dimension is provided by this double view of Sun's, who saw as Moon saw so short a time before that he is able to cognize her view, and compare it with his own.

During the hours presented, many new perceptual details are observed by Sun. He watches, for example, the activities of the piano-tuner, and the reader knows that the confused impressions will

later become meaningful. The process has started, and will continue. Soon he will know the difference between a concert, and the tuning of a piano, as already he knows that a flower pot is not a hat. Soon he will know why his father was so jolly and why his mother's dress was "right off at one side".[101] Too soon he will know why everything that had been so charming has become ugly and spoilt. The story closes, as indeed it must, with the moment at which he does make a primitive judgment on all he has so wonderingly perceived. The end of a childish view has arrived, when Sun gives a "loud wail" and pronounces everything to be "horrid - horrid - horrid".[102]

The observant neutrality of the tone of the figural reflector changes to a half-indulgent contempt when the focus shifts to the perceptions and behaviour of Moon. Moon "makes a silly of herself".[103] Still implicitly trustful, she "put her arms in front of everybody and said: 'My Daddy must carry me.'"[104] In the intricate sphere of family relationships, the sun has set and the moon has risen. This may to some extent be the precipitating factor in Sun's growing clarity of vision. Moon is spoiled and petted, Sun is pushed aside, and does not mind "much".[105] Sun no longer has unlimited confidence in the adult world. He wonders why the Cook is "being so nice",[106] he is aware that all grown ups are not equally trustworthy, and that the "little grey man with long grey whiskers"[107] is somehow more genuine than the rest. Disillusionment moves to a climax as he gains awareness of the essential inauthenticity of his own parents' living.

As distinct from the close-up figural point of view with its implications for the straightforward treatment of time within

the narrated present, the work-tone of the unobtrusive author-narrator implies considerable distance, with the power to see the few seemingly unimportant hours recorded as part of the rhythm of human development and the lives, not only of the two children presented, but of the human race. That the concept behind this story is archetypal is suggested by the choice of names with cyclical implications, emphasized by their positioning as title. What is happening to Sun will happen to Moon, and to countless children afterwards. Not a name is particularized within the story, all characters being presented in a dimension which may be indefinitely extended. The situation is representative of the human condition, at any rate within the exigencies of the twentieth century Western world. The parents are _personae_, caught up within the falsities of social living. Their existence, like that of most of their guests, is presented as typically inauthentic. The children are hardly perceived as human - they are to be "seen and go back again".[108] Moon is a "picture of a powder puff", Sun is dressed up in some alien costume. The two are designated variously by the guests as "ducks, ... lambs ... sweets ... pets",[109] anything but human children. The _I-Thou_ relationship of the authentic existence, as designated by Buber, is entirely lacking. The children become objects, to be admired and then banished. An old lady calls Sun a "poppet"; then, betraying the fact that for her he is not real, "rapped him on the head with something hard".[110] The mother sees them as birds, the father as puppies. Only the little grey man is different. For him Sun seems to be a "_Thou_". His manner of greeting him shows his recognition of the child's human quality; instead of greeting him in animal terms, he implies Sun's

distinction quite clearly by asking him whether he likes dogs. He is the "only one man that Sun really liked". The reason is carefully left unstated. At the moment it is no clearer to Sun than the reason for the piano-tuner's antics. But later, as the child watches the adult party-goers in orbit round the table, it is the little grey man who is presented as sharing Sun's vision. He, like Sun, finds beauty in the little house. And as Sun's consciousness lapses into sleep, it is he who draws near and shows that he has appreciated the centre of Sun's interest, the small grey nut.

Buber shows it as part of the tragic but inescapable destiny of man that every Thou must become an It. Evil, thus, is not the I-It relationship, which cannot be avoided, but the giving up of oneself to its dominion. It calls for ceaseless effort on the part of the individual to strive to maintain the I-Thou. He who allows himself to be dominated by the I-It enters the condition of estrangement.

Buber stresses the fact that estrangement takes place not only between man and his fellow men, or man and God, but between man and himself, and implies that the struggle to lead an authentic existence involves a never-ending struggle to remain a true self.[111] The loss of the self which characterizes the majority of the adults at the party is clearly shown. Dialogue and action as rendered through the filter of Sun's clear consciousness show mask and anima in possession, and the reference to the crowd as being "like beetles"[112] is highly typical of Katherine Mansfield's rendering of alienation from the self. The undiluted ray of Sun's insight concentrates finally upon mother and father alone, so that

their inauthenticity is shown with added intensity. With Moon's trusting gaze still directed towards them with an innocence which renders Sun's new clarity of vision the more devastating, he sees them unmasked. They are drunk, destructive, and lustful. At the same time his appraising gaze falls upon the ruins of all that has been so delightful - the tawdry remains of cake, sweets, table decorations.

Whether a loss of the self is implied for Sun or Moon, or both, is left open. The story invites speculation and does not strive to provide answers. The moment presented is aptly described by Virginia Woolf's phrase as embodying "that very jar on the nerves, the thing itself before it has been made anything".[113]

The cosmic associations of the names allocated to the children, the implied dimension of endlessly revolving cycles, the extended implications of the fall from innocence and the beginning of a different view - all these perspectives are allowed by the artist's distance from the scene with which, by a stroke of paradoxical genius, she brings the reader into close and astonished contact by her choice of a young child's point of view. Among the striking aspects of the time structure, not least is the choice of a moment that is both a beginning and an end. The end of Sun's innocence is a beginning. Night ends with the sun's rising. A quotation from Gide may be appositely applied to the time structure of this story: "I consider that life never presents us with anything which may not be looked upon as a fresh starting point, no less than as a termination. 'Might be continued' - these are the words with which I should like to finish my Coiners."[114]

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER IV

[1]Daiches, New Literary Values, p. 85.

[2]v Journal, p. 257.

[3]Alpers, Katherine Mansfield, p. 108.

[4]Journal, p. 271.

[5]Collected Stories, p. 167.

[6]Ibid., p. 60.

[7]Ibid., p. 262.

[8]v Letters, I, 119.

[9]v Breisach, Modern Existentialism, p. 197.

[10]Collected Stories, p. 60.

[11]v Breisach, Modern Existentialism, pp. 77-94.

[12]Collected Stories, p. 167.

[13]Ibid., p. 685.

[14]Ibid., p. 432.

[15]Ibid., p. 301.

[16]Journal, p. 93.

[17]"Her First Ball", Collected Stories, p. 336.

[18]"The Garden-Party", Ibid., p. 245.

[19]Letters, II, 196.

[20]Fergusson, Aristotle's Poetics, p. 65.

[21]Alfred C. Ward, Aspects of the Modern Short Story : English and American (London: University of London Press, Ltd., 1924), p. 284.

[22]Collected Stories, p. 301.

[23]Ibid., p. 422.

[24]Ibid., p. 350.

[25]Busch, "Literary Impressionism ", p. 62.

[26]A.A. Mendilow, Time and the Novel (New York: Humanities Press, 1952), p. 153. (Mendilow cites Keats's letter to his brother, dated 21 Dec., 1817).

[27]Bonaro Overstreet, "Little Story, What Now? ", Saturday Review of Literature, XXIV (Nov. 22, 1941), quoted in Eugene Current-Garcia and Walter R. Patrick, What is the Short Story? Case Studies in the Development of a Literary Form (Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1961), pp. 97-101.

[28]Mendilow, Time and the Novel, p. 221.

[29]Collected Stories, p. 167.

[30]"Je ne Parle pas Francais ", Collected Stories, p. 60.

[31]Ibid., p. 262.

[32]Ibid., p. 205.

[33]Ibid., p. 153.

[34]Ibid., p. 262.

[35]Daly, Katherine Mansfield, p. 106.

[36]Thomas Mann, "Tales of Jacob ", cited by Mendilow, Time and the Novel, p. 140.

[37]v Mendilow, Time and the Novel, p. 136.

[38]Collected Stories, p. 276. Emphasis mine.

[39]Ibid., p. 276.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 278.

[41] *v supra*, n. 36.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 284.

[43] *Ibid.*, pp. 284-5.

[44] *v supra*, n. 1.

[45] *Letters*, II, 120.

[46] Daly, *Katherine Mansfield*, p. 106.

[47] *Letters*, I, 119.

[48] *Collected Stories*, p. 283.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 262.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 272.

[51] *Ibid.*, p. 284.

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] *Ibid.*

[54] *Ibid.*

[55] *Ibid.*, p. 283.

[56] *Ibid.*, p. 282.

[57] *Ibid.*

[58] *v supra*, p. 15.

[59] *Ibid.*, p. 282.

[60] *v* Celeste Turner Wright, "Darkness as a Symbol ", *Modern Philology*, L-LI (1954), p. 204.

The present writer is indebted to Miss Wright for the suggestion that in Katherine Mansfield's stories, the symbol is often the "core of the narrative; the story seems to grow up round them".

[61]*Collected Stories*, p. 205.

[62]*Ibid.*, p. 245.

[63]*Ibid.*

[64]*v* Ward, *Aspects of the Modern Short Story*, p. 295.
The present writer is indebted to this critic for the insight afforded by his observation that the division of the story into twelve "chapters" reinforces the relationship of the structure to the diurnal cycle.

[65]*Collected Stories*, p. 211.

[66]*Ibid.*, p. 224.

[67]*Ibid.*, p. 227.

[68]*Ibid.*, p. 234.

[69]*Ibid.*, p. 216.

[70]Mendilow, *Time and the Novel*, p. 141.

[71]Berkman, *Katherine Mansfield*, p. 156.

[72]Kleine, "An Eden for Insiders ", p. 209.

[73]*v* "Prelude ", *Collected Stories*, p. 23.

[74]*v* "At the Bay ", *Ibid.*, pp. 211-2.

[75]Margaret Church, *Time and Reality* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1949; rpt. 1962), p. 27.

[76]*Collected Stories*, p. 209.

[77]*v* "Prelude-", *Ibid.*, p. 26.

[78]"At the Bay ", *Ibid.*, p. 211.

[79]*Ibid.*, p. 240.

[80]Church, *Time and Reality*, p. 28.

[81]*Collected Stories*, p. 237.

[82] *Ibid.*, p. 209.

[83] *Ibid.*, p. 237.

[84] Breisach, *Modern Existentialism*, p. 122.

[85] *Collected Stories*, p. 226.

[86] *Ibid.*, p. 226.

[87] Church, *Time and Reality*, p. 118.

[88] *Collected Stories*, p. 227.

[89] *v* "Prelude", *Ibid.*, p. 52.

[90] *Ibid.*, p. 221.

[91] *v* Jung, *Alchemical Studies*, pp. 23-30.

[92] *Collected Stories*, p. 221.

[93] *v supra*, p.15.

[94] *Collected Stories*, p. 231.

[95] *Ibid.*, pp. 220; 224.

[96] Breisach, *Modern Existentialism*, pp. 122-4.

[97] *Collected Stories*, p. 153.

[98] *v* Letters, I, 127.
Katherine Mansfield, in a letter to J.M.M., explains that she dreamed the story, "even down to its name". She goes on to specify the age of the protagonist: "I saw a supper table with the eyes of five...."

[99] *Collected Stories*, p. 154.

[100] *Ibid.*

[101] *Ibid.*, p. 159.

[102] *Ibid.*, p. 160.

[103] *Ibid.*, p. 158.

[104] *Ibid.*

[105] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

[106] *Ibid.*, p. 155.

[107] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

[108] *Ibid.*, p. 156.

[109] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

[110] *Ibid.*

[111] Breisach, *Modern Existentialism*, p. 164.

[112] *Collected Stories*, p. 157.

[113] Virginia Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, Penguin Modern Classics (London: The Hogarth Press, 1927), p. 219.

[114] André Gide, *The Counterfeiters*, cited by Mendilow, *Time and the Novel*, p. 209.

CHAPTER V

THE FUNCTION OF ACTION

It has been suggested that an important aspect of Katherine Mansfield's influence upon the art of the short story has amounted, virtually, to the extraction of the plot.[1] Whether this should be accepted as valid comment will depend to some extent upon the concept of plot against which the stories are measured. Katherine Mansfield herself showed impatience with traditional concepts, displaying a less than amused contempt for an editor who had written asking her to contribute to an anthology of stories he was about to bring out, and informing her that "the more 'plotty' a story" she could produce "the better".[2] Despite the apparent absence of plot in this sense, the handling of action in a Mansfield short story epitomizes many of the innovations now considered axiomatic for the form of the twentieth century short story.[3]

Thus Katherine Mansfield's influence with regard to action was not so much in the direction of the extraction of plot as in the reshaping of it, in accordance with the ascendant Zeitgeist of the century. An attempt will be made in this chapter to examine some of the changes which distinguish twentieth century fiction in general, and the short story in particular, and to show how these innovations (many of them formulated after her death) are present in Katherine Mansfield's works.

Bonaro Overstreet has suggested that the distinctive mark of the twentieth century short story is the disappearance of the sequential development of outer action towards a climax. Thus

outer action is only significant insofar as it illumines the "mental and emotional states that have bred it".[4] Austin M. Wright, expressing this tendency in terms of technique, suggests that the size of the plot has become greatly diminished as the reversal moves into focus as the centre of the story; thus the plot has shown a tendency to become static about a moment of illumination.[5] In this respect Katherine Mansfield's stories show her to have been in the vanguard of her time. In stories which typically present situations inconsiderable in themselves, the moment of illumination is likely to result from some small everyday event rather than a crisis of magnitude. A friend calls at an inopportune moment. The protagonist, overcoming an impulse to aversion, shows human warmth and, in so doing, moves towards authenticity of existence as she realizes the hurt she might so easily have inflicted upon a fellow being who loves her.[6] Sunrise to sunset at a sea-side retreat involves the members of a family in individual experiences, unexceptional in themselves, which enable them to reassess their relationships with each other, with mortality, the nature of evil and the quality of Being.[7] A young girl at her first ball encounters a stranger who whispers to her of her mortality, bringing her to a moment of realization from which she shrinks in dismay.[8]

Thus the illumination usually centres upon some change in the character's state of inner being. So understated is the moment of clearer perception, and so objectively is it presented, that it is easy for the reader to miss it altogether. A recent critic has commented upon the difficulty of paraphrasing a Mansfield short story.[9] Even in terms of inner action, upon which the interest is usually centred, the essence of the action does not lend itself to

expression in words other than those so carefully chosen by the author.

In seeking to discover, for her characters as well as for her readers, the "deepest truth"[10] to be found in a situation, the author emphasized the fact that this truth should be revealed - never directly "told".[11] The character should be shown in some situation in which he moves towards, or away from, heightened awareness of the truth. Such quests must be presented with a minimum of authorial didacticism. "The author who sets out to write a novel with a purpose must content himself with being a little less than an artist, a little more than a preacher. To accept life, and by thus accepting it, to present us with the problem";[12] such, as she stated in a book review, was the only manner of presenting a problem consistent with artistic integrity.

In a passage highly apposite to the plots of Katherine Mansfield's stories, Scholes and Kellogg suggest that as the twentieth century turned its interests inward, time became an integral feature in the genesis of plot. Such plots would be based not so much upon a "stasis of concluded action as upon a stasis of illumination".[13] This tendency will lead to narratives which are open-ended, with action which, left unresolved, suggests extension into the future. The action of "At the Bay"[14] is subtended upon the diurnal cycle; both type of incident presented, and time structure, invited the idea of recurrent rhythms. "Sun and Moon",[15] "Mr Reginald Peacock's Day"[16] and "The Daughters of the Late Colonel"[17] are other stories in which the outer action, presented against the framework of an archetypal cycle of time, combines with the open-ended quality of the action to invite the reader to extend

the action into the future.

In a scheme which has been described as an "unnervingly thorough" attempt to classify all plots through a consideration of the type of the hero, Northrop Frye, re-interpreting Aristotle on a Jungian basis, divides fiction into five categories, and suggests that in European fiction the centre of gravity has shifted down the list during the preceding fifteen centuries.[18] If the hero, a god or demigod, be superior in kind to mankind, the story should be classified as a myth. If the hero be superior in environment, but similar in kind to the rest of mankind, the genre will be that of a legend or folk tale. If the hero should be superior to his fellows in degree, but not in environment, the story will be of the high mimetic mode and the work an epic or tragedy. If the hero is on a level with his fellows, both in degree and environment, the work will be of the low mimetic mode and its genre will be that of comedy or realistic fiction. If the hero is lower in degree than the reader, who is thus able to look down on protagonist's movements with sympathy or scorn, the work will be of the ironic mode. While some of Katherine Mansfield's early stories, such as those set in the German pension, would seem to belong to the low mimetic mode, the tendency in later works seems to be towards the ironic.

Ralph Freeman has suggested the term "lyrical novel" as applicable to examples of the genre in which action is focused upon inner life.[19] Such plots, rendered with intensity, stress symbolic rather than mimetic values. It would seem that Freeman's concept could be extended from the novel to the short stories of Katherine Mansfield. Conrad Aiken, writing in 1921, made the point that she "writes the short story with the resources and intention of lyrical

poetry",[20] a point which has been reiterated by Middleton Murry and other critics. Celeste Turner Wright has commented upon the manner in which the plots of Katherine Mansfield's stories related to the symbols occurring within them. These symbols often appear as "the core of the narrative; the story seems to grow up round [it]".[21] Thus a story such as "The Voyage",[22] in which both outer and inner action may appear slight at a first reading, gains intensity and power from the value of the symbol which carries the story's informing ideas.

In an influential article on the concept of plot, R.S. Crane classifies types of plot according to whether action, character or thought has received the major stress in the construction. Rather than as a framework upon which the action is unfolded, he suggests that plot should be regarded as a "temporal synthesis" in which each structural unit is subordinated to the formation of an organic whole. Thus the plot may be regarded as an "informing principle" which the critic should "grasp as clearly as possible for any work he proposes to examine before he can deal adequately with the questions raised by its parts".[23]

Norman Friedman is of the opinion that, while the plot of a given story will be unlikely to fit neatly into any category of Crane's trichotomy, one of the aspects will usually predominate sufficiently clearly to justify a classification of the plot according to one of the suggested typologies.[24] Friedman advises the critic to consider the major change effected in the protagonist's fortune, character or thought in order to decide upon the major direction of the plot.

A consideration of the type of change effected in the case of

Katherine Mansfield's stories suggests that many of them could appropriately be categorized as having been constructed upon "Plots of Thought". Friedman, subdividing Crane's divisions, suggests a fourfold classification of plots of thought, according to whether the protagonist learns a better system of thought, moves towards a revelation of the truth, changes his attitudes and ideas about some other person, or loses faith in a set of ideals initially held. These he designates respectively as Plots of Education, Plots of Revelation, Affective Plots, and Plots of Disillusionment.

The protagonist of a Mansfield story is frequently shown as moving towards a "new and better system of thought", although a pessimistic and stubbornly truthful aspect of the author's vision suggests that the newly realized truth is likely to be perceived in snatches, and to recede before the negating influence of everyday living. Thus Beryl is shown as moving towards recognition of the superior quality of her "real" self and the life, so "rich and mysterious and good", implied by its ascendance; but her response to Kezia's arrival with a message from below: "Mother says will you please come down? Father is home with a man and lunch is ready."[25] signals that she is soon to be engulfed once more in the stultifying realm in which the false self is dominant.

As Crane's terminology implies, the educative process takes place within the mind, and the situation which initiates the train of thought culminating in enhanced knowledge of the self or existential status is merely the precipitating factor. In accordance with the open-ended quality of such plots, the implications for the future are suggested or obliquely implied. At times, as in the case of Kezia in "The Doll's House"[26] and Laura in "The Garden-Party",[27]

an inquiring aspect of the protagonist's mind causes her to reject ready-made systems of thought and to make her way towards plumbing new depths of experience with an obstinate integrity of purpose. Such movement is towards transcendence - the protagonist is learning about the possibilities of a more authentic manner of existence, and is shown, in fact, to be in the process of making the adventurous "leap" towards it. Again, the open-ended structure suggests that such progress is not final. Ciphers have been received from outer horizons, and, on the occasions shown in these two stories, not rejected. None the less, the movement towards authenticity implies a never-ending progress.

In the "Plot of Revelation", the protagonist, lacking knowledge, must discover a certain truth before he can modify his view. The protagonist of "Taking the Veil"[28] has accepted the love of those close to her and has taken it for granted. A highly unobtrusive narrator, having provided a few essential details, withdraws to allow the consciousness of the youthful, impressionable, but tenderly-conceived protagonist to reflect the action of the story, which takes place almost entirely on an imaginary level. The revelation accorded to Edna, as a result of her imagined life and death in a convent as Sister Angela, enables her to grasp hold of the fact that the warmth and truth of real-life human relationships are superior to those offered by a phantasm. The story, written during the last year of the author's life,[29] affirms a belief in the power of the real self to assert itself in time, which stands out in contrast to the pessimistic view afforded by those stories in which the protagonist looks back across the years with regret towards the life he has relinquished as a result of the loss of

the self.

Such stories as "A Cup of Tea",[30] "The Little Governess",[31] "Bliss"[32] and "A Dill Pickle"[33] have plots which might be described as affective in that the protagonist moves towards some altered view of another person. At the same time, as a sombre accompaniment to the progression, the protagonist may, or may not, move towards added insight into the self. Stories in which such a gain in self-awareness occurs to a marked degree could be categorized at least partially as "Education Plots".

"Life of Ma Parker"[34] and "Miss Brill"[35] are among those stories which might be classified as "Plots of Disillusionment". A final and particularly cruel bereavement deprives Mrs Parker of that which has given her the courage to order her existence. The reader is left to ponder the future which awaits one who has given generously of her love and is now faced with emptiness. Miss Brill, courageously asserting her right to a part, however much that of a spectator, in the rich human pageant, is deprived of her joy and ushered towards estrangement by a remark overheard by chance.

Although a change of the mental attitude of the protagonist is typical of most of the stories, there are exceptions. In "The Lady's Maid",[36] neither character, fortune nor plot undergoes change as the narrator unfolds her story. The illumination is for the reader, while the innocent narrator remains as little aware of the beauty which lies in her life of selfless service as she is of her exploitation at the hands of her employer. The narrator of "The Canary"[37] has grasped the essence of authentic living in that she understands the necessity for the human spirit to turn outwards in love towards some other than the self. In so doing, she has

achieved true selfhood, and offers the insight she has achieved to the reader. These stories, eluding definition on Crane's scale, may well have marked the beginning of a different kind of relationship between fictional world and reader.

Thus the typical Mansfield plot is one of thought, with characters offered illumination which, if accepted, may lead to authenticity of existence. The open-ended quality of the plots leaves the future to be imagined in accordance with that which has been shown. The type of change depicted is neither dramatic nor final. The revelatory experiences leave the characters moving on towards authentic existence, but encountering many set-backs on the way. The type of revelatory experience granted to the characters suggests that for the author, as for Heidegger, authenticity requires recognition of the mystery of Being, and of the final great mystery of Nothingness. Only through such knowledge can he emerge from the inauthenticity of existence implied by a life given over to the trivial concerns of day-to-day living. The open-ended movement of the plots suggests that, as for Jaspers, so, in the author's metaphysic, authenticity is not a state, but a becoming.

The four stories to be discussed more fully with regard to action have been selected as of interest in the development of the author's handling of this function. "The Woman at the Store"[38] (1911) is an early example of a story set in New Zealand. It indicates, in the opinion of D.M. Davin, a direction in which the author's talent might have developed had she remained on her native island.[39] "The Wind Blows",[40] written in 1915, has been selected as an example of a story which scarcely seems to have a plot, unless the reader looks beyond the idea of a mechanical contrivance

of events, towards the Aristotelian idea of action as the "soul" of fiction.[41] "The Garden-Party"[42] (1921) has been selected as an example of the author's mature work, in which the interest is very much centred upon the "movement of the mind or soul rather than upon external events";[43] "The Fly",[44] which was among the last stories written by the author before her death, is an example of a story in which brevity of action, both outer and inner, in no way detracts from the truth or intensity of the spiritual movement presented.

The Woman at the Store

This story, like "Millie" and "Ole Underwood", has a pervasive aura of violence uncommon in the more mature stories where this quality, if present, is less overt.[45] Although the violent action has taken place prior to the narrated present, and is only to be disclosed in the final paragraphs through the oblique and painful medium of a child's drawing, its aura has transformed the isolated store into a kind of rustic inferno, where the woman and her child act out an absurd existence, of which indeed it might be said that "anything is permitted and nothing is hateful".[46]

It is this state of despair (the "sickness unto death" described by Kierkegaard) which, rather than the violence of the past, constitutes the informing principle of the story, and which enables a compassionate overall tone to transcend the callous gaze of the narrator, who minutely describes what she sees. The intensity with which the desperation of the protagonist impresses the narrator, as she watches her thrashing about for a meaning to her living ("Wot for?"), is a subtle and typical device for suggesting that the

narrator's observations will cause her future anguish.

The protagonist, her child a pathetic echo of her, is shown as having suffered a loss of the self. "Looking at her, you felt there was nothing but sticks and wires under that pinafore."[47] The woman is depicted as a dehumanized puppet, and the description of her suggests that she has long since given up the living and vital centre of the self. That this process had begun long before the incident of murder is indicated by the information furnished by Joe, which suggests a loss of the self in favour of the "shadow".[48] That the child, educated by the mother, has already given herself over to forces which rule her from within is suggested by the vitality, vulgarity and "lunatic cleverness" of her drawings.[49]

Since the protagonist's desperate seeking represents at least an attempt to move towards awareness, the plot could be classified as a Plot of Thought, with the protagonist losing whatever faith or belief she might some time have had. On Friedman's finer scale this could be considered as a plot of disillusionment. This early story is one of the few works by this author which could be classified as a plot of fortune. Friedman describes such plots as having "a brooding sense of human frailty and futility [which] pervades the whole, leaving one with only a frustrated feeling of pity, sorrow and loss in the face of the inscrutably deterministic steam-roller of circumstances".[50] According to Northrop Frye's scheme, the mode should be classified as ironic, with narrator and reader looking down upon two lost and hopeless human creatures.

The movement of the spirit of the protagonist -- who sought the truth, and, aided by human indifference, failed to find it - is ironically reflected in that of the narrator, who chances upon a

scene, describes it, fails to feel pity, and rides away. The intensity of the presentation, together with the lack of a closed ending, suggests that for her, revelation could follow at some future date. For the moment, for all her detailed and intense perception of the scene, the implication is that she remains as blind as the protagonist; in the absence of a spark of sympathetic feeling, even towards the child, the inauthenticity of her own existence is suggested.

If the informing principle of the plot succeeds in awakening the awareness of the reader, the narrator, too, will be perceived as cast in the ironic mode. In a sense she could almost be viewed as the protagonist, moving away from a potentially revelatory experience which, in time, may help her to transcend the limitation of her view, and to move towards a more authentic manner of existence.

The Wind Blows

If the events presented in this story are considered in terms of the "final end which everything in the work ... must be made, directly and indirectly, to serve",[51] the reader will not fall into the error of regarding it as a "set of trivial happenings, just thrown together".[52]

A sequence of events is presented against the agitated background of a noisy and violent wind. The incidents presented are in themselves inconsiderable. That which unifies them and gives them direction is the difference between the protagonist's reactions to the confusion of the natural world when, as initially presented, she is alone; and later in the insulating presence of a beloved brother. Thus the protagonist awakens to a profound sense of the disorder,

ugliness, confusion and panic of non-control. She sees life as "hideous ... simply revolting".[53] Even her mental picture of the Beethoven movement she is to play at her music lesson reflects the uneasy quality of her perception as she hears it with "trills long and terrible like little rolling drums".[54] She is rude to her mother and dissolves into tears at the kindness of her music master. The universe, the protagonist's surroundings, are frightening, and this fear is heightened by, as well as contained in, the "wind, the wind"[55] outside. But, "Hook on," says a beloved voice, and "heads bent, their legs just touching",[56] two human creatures are united by bonds of fellowship and love which enable them to bridge the lonely void. No longer is the wind terrible. The universe, in the security furnished by a genuine human relationship, ceases to be a stranger, and becomes an exhilarating invitation to adventure.

The nature of human isolation, and the possibility of its alleviation through the bonds of love, is the theme towards which action and other structural elements combine. The end is left open as far as outer action is concerned. But the final mystery of love, of human friendship, of all that is beautiful within the framework imposed by the universal design, is contained in the symbol of the departing ship, with "those two" hidden by the darkness which "stretches a wing over the tumbling water".[57]

The story is organized about symbols of the natural world (the wind, the sea) and man's loneliness (the island and the departing ship) and is lyrically conceived. Despite other dissimilarities, the informing principle is close to that of "The Woman at the Store." Ineach, the universe is intimidating in

essence, a hostile and powerful stranger. Human fellowship, in the one case given, in the other withheld, is the only power capable of lifting existence above the absurd, and of giving it meaning. The presence of a beloved fellow-traveller saves the protagonist of "The Wind Blows" from the void as, stumbling towards authenticity, she receives, in her vision of the future, ciphers of mortality. Side by side, Matilda and her brother are enabled for a moment to escape from the confusion of everyday events and accept the challenge to become true selves in the journey towards transcendence. The plot is one of thought, with both reader and protagonist moving towards revelation. The initial fear and confusion of the protagonist invite the reader to adopt an Olympian stance, thus rendering the mode ironic. As the reader comes to identify with Matilda, apprehending himself a fellow-traveller, the mode gains added ironic strength as he sees himself in terms of the protagonist - an infinitesmal rebel against the confusion implied by an almighty force.

The Garden-Party

A spatial metaphor has been suggested by Nicolai Hartmann to facilitate the understanding of the layers which exist within a short story.[58] The outermost layer is that of the presented action, with the emphasis centred upon outer action. If the story has depth, this layer will be transparent. Through the action will be suggested or revealed the informing ideas of the story. Such ideas, if the story succeeds in capturing the truth, contain validity irrespective of the discipline which may be applied to them as a means of interpretation. If a true fictional world be presented,

psychological, philosophical, sociological interpretations and others will all yield possible insights to be perceived through the presented layer of the situation and action. The third layer, that of the enveloping action, relates to the extension of the presented action to the life of the character in whom the interest is centred before and after the situation presented in the story. Katherine Mansfield's stories, with their impressionistic openings implying an accumulation of past detail, and their open endings inviting speculation with regard to the protagonist's future, are rich in this layer of enveloping action. This aspect of the stories has been more fully considered in Chapter IV of this thesis.

The transparency of the stories is such that at times it constitutes an apparent weakness. The action is apt to be so delicate, and the underlying idea so much the real interest of the story, that the indifferent reader is apt to dismiss the action as inconsiderable. Despite the clear quality of the transparency, the understatement of the entire structure is such that the underlying layers of meaning may easily be missed. Markedly lacking in didacticism, the stories epitomize the artistic attitude of the author, whose "long look at life"[59] did not imply the spelling out of a moral. The moral, insofar as it is a part of the truth, will be there, none the less. This type of presentation demands a great deal of the reader. If insensitive, unsophisticated or careless, he will tend to remain impervious to the transparency and so unreceptive to the deeper meaning.

Thus it is that a story such as "The Garden-Party" may appear to have little in the way of plot until the reader, reaching through the outer layers to the movement of the spirit which informs it, is

able to grasp the shape of the action, which is firmly rooted in character and time. Only a character of the sensibility of a Laura would be able to embark upon, or learn from, an experience such as that presented. At the same time, the plot depends to a large extent upon relationships of time. As Don W. Kleine has pointed out, the story centres upon the fact that "disconcerting messages" arrive at "inopportune moments".[60] Laura, under social pressure to be gracious and gay, receives ciphers from outer horizons. The decoding of the messages received involves her in the necessity to formulate a judgment between the relative importance of social obligations and an invitation to contemplate the mystery of death; though the death be that of a stranger; and, moreover, a stranger of inferior social status.

The tension upon which the action is subtended centres upon Laura's choice between the rejection of the message, in which case she will please her family by involving herself wholeheartedly in the preparation for, and festivities of, the garden-party; and the acceptance of its call, in which case she may strike out on her own towards a new manner of existence.

The pressure exerted upon Laura by social obligation almost prompts her to forsake her true self and to move in the direction of a self which is centred upon the trivial. Dismissing the promptings of her inner spirit as selfish, Laura almost loses her opportunity for transcendent experience. Donning the pretty hat, symbol of the party atmosphere and of everyday concerns, she forces herself to disregard the message, thus moving towards a loss of the self. Alienation of the self in the direction of the collective corresponds, according to Jung, to "a social idea". He adds that this passes for

"social duty and virtue".[61] In this instance, social pressure inclines Laura towards her duties as a hostess and a daughter of the family. Death, particularly when pertaining to a stranger of inferior social standing, should not be allowed to intrude.

The movement of Laura's spirit is from a state of sensibility towards one of an enriched awareness. Paying the price of, as well as reaping the reward for, heightened sensitivity and intelligence, she alone is concerned about the feelings of the workmen on the premises, and feels anguish at the fate of an unknown outside her sphere.

Almost accidentally, she is given a second chance. It is, ironically, at the behest of her mother (who has, in every way, conspired to prevent Laura's progress towards this particular experience) that she undertakes the journey from the tawdry remains of the party splendour towards the contemplation of life's final mystery. The walk involves a painful progression. Laura bears the symbols of inauthenticity with her, both outwardly in the form of her inappropriate costume and the basket of left-overs from the party, and inwardly, as the reader is allowed to gauge through access to her thoughts: "And it seemed to her that kisses, voices, tinkling spoons, laughter, the smell of crushed grass were somehow inside her."[62]

The idea of taking left-overs from a party to the newly bereaved would only seem possible to one with little concept of the I-Thou relationship. Laura's mother, imbued with a sense of her social superiority, has little feeling for the recipients of her bounty, as people. Laura's sensibility renders her aware of this fact. Revelation of her consciousness indicates the depth of

her misgivings: "She wished now she had put on a coat. How her frock shone! And the big hat with the velvet streamer - if only it was another hat! Were the people looking at her? They must be. It was a mistake to have come; she knew all along it was a mistake. Should she go back even now?"[63] Despite the promptings of a wiser self, she proceeds. The self which persists in the tasteless mission is the one towards which her family and social pressures have been forcing her.

The moment of transcendent experience arrives despite the difficulties encountered on the way. It is a moment foreseen and almost precluded by Laura's mother. The confrontation with youthful and peaceful death constitutes, for Laura, a limiting experience. She is shown as gaining new insight into the order of existence as the reader, allowed to share the experience with her, penetrates her consciousness, to gain evidence of a new and unerring perspective. The mandala-like effect of death, presented as "so remote, so peaceful", surrounded by squared shape of bed and room,has been noted elsewhere.[64] Laura, liberated by the archetypal experience, moves towards the realization of true selfhood and authentic values: "What did garden-parties and baskets and lace frocks matter to him? He was far from all those things. He was wonderful, beautiful. While they were laughing and while the band was playing, this marvel had come to the lane."[65] The thought sequence, rendered through style indirect libre, suggests growing confidence as the protagonist, brought to a boundary, effects the existential "leap" necessary for an altered sense of proportion. As her vision moves from doubt to affirmation, Laura finds confidence in the wisdom of the inner self. In learning which voice to obey, she moves towards authenticity.

The plot is one of thought, with protagonist and reader moving simultaneously towards a contemplation of the essence of Being. The artistic integrity with which the plot is handled is heightened by means of the slight anti-climax, whereby Laura and the reader move away from the transcendent moment, towards the inevitable return to the everyday. The true self which exists within Laura has looked upon a "fragment of existence withdrawn from time".[66] The everyday, false self, the enveloping layer of the story gently implies, is bound to reassert itself; but the inner self has "contemplated the essence of things"[67] and will remain mindful of the vision. The implication derived from the open ending of the story is that of a richer state of being for Laura who, retaining strength and knowledge from the encounter presented, is likely to respond to the challenge of the next situation which dares her to the adventure of becoming her true self.

The Fly

It has been pointed out that the action of this story can be divided into symmetrical time phases; two major ones, separated from each other by the departure of old Woodifield, whose visit to the protagonist has comprised the opening section. Each of these may be subdivided into phases relating to the fictional present and the past, presented through "flashbacks" in the two inner phases.[68]

The story is remarkable in that, although the plot makes sense only in terms of an inward look into the self, the concentration is to a large extent upon outer rather than inner action. Style indirect libre takes us into the protagonist's mind after Woodifield has left the office, when the former, unable to mourn,

thinks about his dead son. Only in this one of the four sections is the light focused upon inner action. The impressionistic technique is reminiscent of that of the ballad, in that the light leaps and lingers, and, in order to express the movement of the protagonist's spirit, the author has found physical correlatives. Hence the painful incident of the fly.

Since Sylvia Berkman suggested in 1951 that the symbolism in this story is confused,[69] a number of critics have attempted explications challenging her view.[70] The tendency among more recent commentators has been to suggest a relationship between the destructive actions of the protagonist and his inability to accept the fact of mortality. Saralyn Daly, for instance, sees in the protagonist's destructive and sadistic behaviour a desire to deny his identity with "all those who move towards death".[71] While in general agreement with this view, the present writer would suggest that enriched meaning accrues to the central symbol if it be viewed as containing the idea of the final annihilation of the protagonist's true self.

Spatial limitations imposed upon the action are remarkable and highly suggestive of the spiritual straitjacket into which the protagonist's inauthentic mode of existence has led him. Almost for the entire length of the story, the protagonist remains in his seat behind his office desk. Only for one moment does he rise from it, to escort Woodifield to the door. Much of the outer action is presented through direct scene and dialogue. Even in the two final paragraphs, the reader is given insight into the protagonist's despair through correlatives of speech and movement. An exception to the dramatic mode of the presentation of the final scene lies

in one beautifully placed authorial comment, so felicitously expressed that it is difficult to feel it as an intrusion. The fact that the technique used at this point is that of authorial omniscience is in itself both interesting and significant. The plot moves towards recognition, both for the reader and the protagonist. The boss[72] moves towards individuation; towards insight into himself, as one involved in a living death, whereby he exists as a persona, for whom the office, its luxurious fittings and the authority of his position, has come to mean the beginning and end of existence. Recognition is achieved by the reader, but not by the protagonist. Hence the necessity for the author's guiding presence.

The loss of the self which has entrenched the boss within inauthenticity seems to have begun long before the death of his son. "Ever since his birth the boss had worked at building up this business for him; it had no other meaning if it was not for the boy. Life itself had no other meaning."[73] The last sentence suggests that the penultimate might be read with irony, inviting reversal of its meaning. The boy had come to have little meaning other than in terms of the business. The son had become, for the father, an object; a symbol of his own inauthentic living, the mask which, divorced from its human quality, had gained significance in terms of the stereotype of a successful businessman. Hence the inability of the father to realise his son as human, subject in death to the corruption and decay implied by the human condition. He persists in his father's imagination as a lifeless puppet: "For it was strange. Although over six years had passed away, the boss never thought of the boy except as lying unchanged, unblemished in his

uniform, asleep for ever."[74]

In the callous and deliberate destruction of a living creature which constitutes the final phase of the outer action of the story the boss (the persona) is merely carrying out a symbolic re-enactment of that which he has already done to himself, and was probably in the process of attempting to do, to his son; to kill the warm and vital centre of the true personality and to impose the facade of the successful businessman in its place.

This insight, however, is too terrible to be allowed to reach consciousness on the part of the protagonist. Thus the very subtle presentation through outer action, which constitutes a physical correlative denoting the acting out of the inner knowledge, which the boss's conscious mind is unable to stand. The killing of the fly acts, to some extent, as a catharsis. Individuation is almost achieved -- sufficiently so to jar the boss to the depths of his being. Hence the strangely effective selection of the adjective "grinding" to convey his state of wretchedness. The approach of self knowledge, of the realization of the futility of his existence and his lack of love for his dead son, is too terrifying to be allowed to reach consciousness. Hence the necessity for the brief authorial intrusion in the sentence which, in its movement towards and then away from self awareness, forms the pivot of the story. "But such a grinding feeling of wretchedness seized him that he felt positively frightened."[75] In this single sentence, the overall tone reveals compassion of a high order, rendering it difficult to understand Saralyn Daly's comment, that there is "neither humour nor compassion"[76] in the story. Fear and insight fade as the protagonist resorts to his bullying role as boss. But the narrator's watchful eye has recorded his misery, and, in so doing, has touched the ugly

scene with sorrow.

That the true self was gallant and struggled for existence is implied by the details presented in that part of the action which constitutes the destruction of the fly. The sympathy implied by the overall tone is for the fly, a gay and gallant particle of creation, its quality as a living creature both recognized and emphasized by the protagonist. It is with conscious regret that he obeys his death-dealing impulse. "He's a plucky little devil, thought the boss, and he felt a real admiration for the fly's courage. That was the way to tackle things; that was the right spirit."[77] His concern for the fly is tender as, trying it to the utmost, he succeeds in extinguishing the fragile spark.

In "Je ne Parle pas Francais",[78] Raoul Duquette is shown as clearly aware of his true self, though powerless to unite the false and dominant self with it. The protagonist of "The Fly", denied this awareness, deals darkly with the symbol of the self which struggles for existence but has been sentenced to annihilation long since.

An interesting feature of the action as presented is that, apart from speech, almost all external action on the part of the protagonist is centred upon his eyes and hands, particularly the latter. It is as if the corporeal body has become petrified, and only the hands have remained alive. They are used very much as tools - to wield a paper knife, to unlock a cupboard, to cover the face; and finally, to tease, torment and deprive a delicate creature of its life.

The hands are shown as automata, divorced from the centre of the self. Thus they cover a face to hide tears which will not flow; they kill despite an inner self which pities, but is not strong

enough to save, a living creature.

Close attention to the function of action, and the application of certain Jungian ideas as an aid to the interpretation of the story, places the reader in a position to gain insight into the symbolism. It has already been noted that the action, as it moves towards its climax, becomes centred within an increasingly restricted spatial area. Looking down upon this area from the protagonist's point of observation, one begins to see the configuration which meets his downward gaze in terms of a mandala image. There before him is the squared surface area of the desk and, concentric within it, the four-sided area of the blotting-paper. The surface of this pattern is interrupted by several objects of such a kind as to signify the tenor of the protagonist's living; ink-pot and pen, paper knife and bell, symbols of his persona and his power. The action, which at this stage of the story finds its focal point in the minutely described death-struggles of the fly, takes place at the very heart of the mandala design. Thus the protagonist looks down upon, and annhilates, a tiny living creature, described in such terms as to dignify its status to that of a symbol of life; the extinction of which is effected in the centre of a design which may be taken as representative of the archetype of the self.

The actions of the fly are described in extraordinary terms. An image of stone moving over and under a scythe, invoking connotations of the earth, the reaper, the spark of life itself, is used to describe the "immense" and solemn task of the cleansing of the ink from its wings. The fly both loses and retains its fly-like quality. It "[seems] to stand on the tips of its toes".

It "succeed[s] at last [in] sitting down".[79] The comparison of its actions in cleansing its face to those of a "minute cat" strengthens the mysterious power with which it is invested as a symbol of resilient life. The fly, however, resurrects itself but six times - a significant number in the time structure of the fictional world - before life is extinguished.

The protagonist is carried, perhaps by the power of the archetypal design which confronts him, to the very point of individuation. But, instead of allowing the process to reach its conclusion, he defiles the centre of life (and of the self) by the perpetration of a deliberate act of destruction. Thus, as he inflicts death in the form of "a great heavy drop", and "yet another dark drop" he destroys not only the fly, the symbol of life, but darkens the centre in which, even six years after the death of his son, he might have rekindled the light of the self.

Inability to recall an experience so intensely felt and intimately enacted suggests a powerful annihilating agent. It is not surprising that the protagonist cannot remember. For "the life of him" - the life of the false self which is now the master - has willed that this should be so. The action of the story culminates in the protagonist's failure to respond to a limiting situation; suffering, death, guilt, a chance to find knowledge of the self; all the ingredients are there which might have initiated a reassessment of his living, and a move towards a greater measure of authenticity.

However, we are shown no change. The mask, if it has shifted for a moment, is firmly replaced. Outer action as presented at the end of this open-ended story is significant. The future will

continue as before. Recognition has been vouchsafed and rejected; the loss of the self will endure.

The plot, in which the protagonist moves towards new vision, and then rejects it, is difficult to classify in terms of Crane's trichotomy. The reader is moved towards the contemplation of a truth from which the protagonist recoils. For a reader who is able to apprehend the quality of the revelation rejected by the protagonist, the work may seem to be cast in the ironic mode.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

[1]v Kleine, "An Eden for Insiders", p. 203.

[2]Letters, II, 152.

[3]v Daly, Katherine Mansfield, p. 113.

[4]Overstreet, "Little Story, What Now? ", p. 4.

[5]Wright, The American Short Story in the Twenties, p. 266.

[6]"Psychology ", Collected Stories, p. 111.

[7]"At the Bay ", Ibid., p. 205.

[8]"Her First Ball ", Ibid., p. 336.

[9]Nariman Hormasji, Katherine Mansfield: An Appraisal (London, Auckland: Collins Bros. & Co., 1967), p. 87.

[10]Journal, p. 257.

[11]Ibid., p. 271.

[12]Katherine Mansfield, "Kensingtonia ", review of A Remedy Against Sin, by W.B. Maxwell, in the Athenaeum, April 23, 1920, p. 543.

[13]Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 235.

[14]Collected Stories, p. 205.

[15]Ibid., p. 153.

[16]Ibid., p. 144.

[17]Ibid., p. 262.

[18]Elizabeth Dipple, Plot, Critical Idiom Series No 12, ed. by John D. Jump (London: Methuen, 1970), p. 23.

[19]Ibid., p. 37.

[20]Ian A. Gordon, Katherine Mansfield, Writers and their Work Series, No 49 (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1954; rpt. 1955), p. 25.

[21]Wright, "Darkness as a Symbol ", p. 204.

[22]Collected Stories, p. 321.

[23]R.S. Crane, "The Concept of Plot and the Plot of 'Tom Jones' ", rpt. in The Theory of the Novel, ed. by Philip Stevick (New York: The Free Press, 1967), 141-145.

[24]Norman Friedman, "Forms of the Plot ", Journal of General Education, VIII (July, 1955), 241-253.

[25]"Prelude ", Collected Stories, p. 59.

[26]Ibid., p. 393.

[27]Ibid., p. 245.

[28]Ibid., p. 417.

[29]Journal, p. 290.

[30]Collected Stories, p. 408.

[31]Ibid., p. 174.

[32]Ibid., p. 91.

[33]Ibid., p. 167.

[34]Ibid., p. 301.

[35]Ibid., p. 330.

[36]Ibid., p. 375.

[37]Ibid., p. 428.

[38]Ibid., p. 561.

[39]Katherine Mansfield, Selected Stories, Introduced by D.M. Davin, The World's Classics, No 539 (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. xiii.

[40] Collected Stories, p. 106.

[41] Fergusson, ed., Aristotle's Poetics, p. 63.

[42] Collected Stories, p. 561.

[43] Dipple, Plot, p. 3.

[44] Collected Stories, p. 422.

[45] v Daly, Katherine Mansfield, p. 51.

[46] Albert Camus, The Myth of Sisyphus, trans. by Justin O'Brien (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1955), p. 89.

[47] Collected Stories, p. 564.

[48] v Jung, Two Essays, p. 25.

[49] Collected Stories, p. 570.

[50] Friedman, "Forms of the Plot ", p. 158.

[51] Crane, "The Concept of Plot.", p. 144.

[52] v Journal, p. 284.

[53] Collected Stories, p. 107.

[54] Ibid., p. 106.

[55] Ibid., p. 109.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid., p. 110.

[58] v Ruthrof, "Death Situations in the Short Story ", pp. 192-4.

[59] Letters, II, 152.

[60] Kleine, "An Eden for Insiders ", p. 207.

[61] Jung, Two Essays, p. 173.

[62]Collected Stories, p. 259.

[63]Ibid.

[64]v supra, p. 68.

[65]Ibid., p. 261.

[66]Marcel Proust, Time Regained, trans. by Andreas Mayor, Remembrance of Things Past, Vol. XII (London: Chatto & Windus, 1970), p. 234.

[67]Ibid., p. 235.

[68]Ruthrof, "Death Situations in the Short Story ", p. 230.

[69]Berkman, Katherine Mansfield, p. 194.

[70]v Pauline P. Bell, "Mansfield's 'The Fly' ", Explicator, XIX (1960-1), Item 20.

Bateson and Shahevitch, "The Fly ", 39-53.

J. Rea, "Mansfield's 'The Fly' ", Explicator, XXIII (May 1965), Item 68.

A. Iversen, "Life and Letters: 'Katherine Mansfield Drawing on Kathleen Beauchamp-'", English Studies, LII (1971), 44-54.

[71]Daly, Katherine Mansfield, p. 109.

[72]The author, throughout the story, refers to the protagonist as the boss [sic]. In this discussion, the present writer has followed the practice of the author; thus inverted commas have not been used.

[73]Collected Stories, p. 426.

[74]Ibid., p. 425.

[75]Ibid., p. 428.

[76]Daly, Katherine Mansfield, p. 109.

[77]Collected Stories, p. 427.

[78]Ibid., p. 60.

[79]Ibid., p. 427.

CHAPTER VI

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION

There has been some measure of disagreement among critics with regard to the extent of Katherine Mansfield's skill as a delineator of character. H.E. Bates, writing in the third decade after the author's death, suggests that she fails to develop her characters; instead, she "catches" at them in a process whereby she "extracts ... a moment or two of self-revelation".[1] Elizabeth Bowen, in stating that she has heard characterization named as Katherine Mansfield's weak point, dissociates herself from the view, and mentions that the brevity of the short story form does not allow for the detailed exploration or gradual development of character.[2] In general, it would seem true to say that, as critical interest in the modern short story as a distinctive genre has mounted, Katherine Mansfield's methods of presenting character have gained recognition insofar as they are appropriate to the exigencies of the form.

Elizabeth Bowen, paying tribute to the "devastating effect" with which she causes her characters to "expose" themselves, emphasizes the fact that Katherine Mansfield's method of presenting character is essentially dramatic. Thus she "seldom describes" a character, and "never dissects" one.[3] Instead, through dialogue, incident or thought she causes them to reveal themselves to the reader, in a manner which recalls the famous questions posed by Henry James: "What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character?" [4] Aristotle, defining character as "habitual action", reminds his readers that

the work of art is an imitation, not of men, but of action, and stresses the integral relationship between character and action.[5] Through strict economy of selection, Katherine Mansfield presents incident, inner action and habitual action in such a way as to establish a powerful sense of character within the limits imposed by the brevity of the form.

Frieder Busch, in commenting upon Katherine Mansfield's success in achieving characterization through the presentation of habitual action, comments upon the economy with which she fixes a mannerism or a gesture as a part of a character's aura. When, in "This Flower", she mentions that Roy came in, "smiling his half smile", the use of the possessive adjective suggests that the half smile is essentially a personal idiosyncracy of Roy's.[6] Miss Anderson, in "The Dove's Nest", by "laughing her light, nervous laugh", establishes the quality of her personality.[7] When Edie Bengel addresses herself with passion to her piano, and we are told that this "is her way of getting over her nervousness and her way too of praying", the reader is made aware, through tense of verb and the firm repetition of the possessive adjective, that this is habitual action and conveys the essence of the character.[8]

The fact that Katherine Mansfield's method of characterization is closely related to her use of point of view has been recognized by a number of critics. André Maurois, as early as 1936, showed awareness of the fact that she restricts the presentation of her characters to that which can be revealed through their own "thoughts and remarks" at a significant moment.[9] Ian Gordon[10] and Dorothy M. Hoare are among the critics who have stressed her ability to illumine character from within. The latter, in pointing out that this aspect of her technique allows her to represent widely divergent

character types with fidelity, compares her achievement in this respect favourably to that of her illustrious contemporaries, E.M. Forster and Virginia Woolf, whose characters tend to think and speak in the idiom of their respective creators.[11]

H.E. Bates suggests that there are times in Katherine Mansfield's stories when the "voice of the narrator may become confused ... with the voice of the character".[12] Sylvia Berkman, noticing the same tendency, considers it a strength rather than a weakness. Discussing "A Cup of Tea", Miss Berkman suggests that the narrator, in adopting the "very cadence" used later for the presentation of the protagonist's thoughts, finds an added means of "exposure", which undercuts the quality of Rosemary Fell's "brittle shallow sophistication".[13] Katherine Mansfield's account of the "kind of possession" which took hold of her when she was composing "The Voyage" gives insight into the manner in which some vestige of the quality of the character's personality might indeed linger with the creator, colouring the intervening narrative with the aura of the character, so that the story as a whole would create a sense of the character, not only through that character's thoughts and actions, but through the atmosphere which pervades the surrounding narrative. "One moment I had a little bun of silk-white hair ... and the next I was Fenella."[14] In what has been described as the "no-man's land" between the voice of the narrator and the thoughts of the character as presented through <u>style indirect libre</u>,[15] the tones of the latter might indeed remain with the narrator, when the personality of the character has been so intimately imagined by the creator.

Don W. Kleine, in indicating areas in which Katherine

Mansfield's technical innovations have widened the horizons of the short story, suggests that, through her skill in using interior monologue, she "revealed the hitherto unsuspected inflexibility of the short story form, opening to it new modes of character revelation".[16] Yuan-shu Yen considers that Katherine Mansfield's style is in itself an important method of characterization. In his opinion, to postulate a typical "Mansfield style" is to fall into the error of "simplistic judgment which may arise from a casual reading of her stories".[17] There is, in Yuan-shu Yen's opinion, no typical style characteristic of this writer, since she achieves differences in style in keeping with the integrity of each created character. A consideration of the diction, imagery, thought and idiom used in describing the same seaside world through the perceptions of Alice, the maid, and such characters as Beryl Fairfield and Stanley Burnell, illustrates this point.[18] In "Honeymoon", the distinctive characters of the young husband and wife are implied through the reactions of each to a shared experience of listening to music and looking out upon a view of the sea. Fanny's thoughts are of human suffering and cruelty, and the beauty she experiences causes her to ponder the problem of whether anyone has the right to feel really happy. George's reaction is one of exhilaration at a general sense of physical well-being. "There was nothing like the sea for making a chap feel fit."[19] Fanny notices that the sea "lap[s] the land as though it loved it".[20] The style of the presentation varies according to the life-style of the perceiving intelligence. The sense of character thus created is so strong that the perceptive reader is aware, without a guiding word from the narrator, that the two young people, at

present so much in love, are incompatible in essence.

The attitude which enables the writer to project his sensibility into that of the character, arising as it does from the desire to depict the inward life, is, in the opinion of Scholes and Kellogg, the attitude which marks the rise of the novel.[21] The presentation of character in Katherine Mansfield's later and longer stories does seem essentially novelistic in method. Whatever the length of the story, it would probably be true to say that, although by its nature the short story is antagonistic to the gradual development of a character, the protagonist tends to be shown at a significant point of a developmental process which may be inferred, past and present. In this somewhat specialized sense, the protagonist in Katherine Mansfield's short stories is seldom a "flat" character.[22] We are shown the moment of change, reversal or recognition, so that the protagonist does surprise the reader, those in the fictional world, and often himself. The process of growth and change is implied, having taken place behind the scenes, as it were. We are shown the short culminating stretch of this development, with past periods possibly superimposed by means of flash-backs into the past. With the recognition or reversal implicit in the dénouement of the story there comes, very often, some new insight into the nature of the protagonist's self or the quality of his existence.

Earlier Mansfield stories such as "The Woman at the Store", "Millie" and "Ole Underwood" may suggest a tendency towards a more expansive presentation of character - the character "flat" and a definite type, as in the case of Mr Collins or Wilkins Micawber. Such a presentation tends towards dehumanization. The "round"

characters of the later stories are very much members of the human family. Kezia, for example, has her distinguishing characteristics (she is sensitive and perceptive to an unusual degree) but at the same time she is very much an "Everychild". The hurts she suffers are typical of those of all children at the hands of careless adults, and the threats to her innocence represent those of adult worldly wisdom to the innocence of each child. Similarly Linda may be seen as a representative of many young wives, Beryl as "Everygirl" on the threshold of adult life.[23] In the finest stories, which explore the nature of existence and the human condition, the characterization moves away from idiosyncratic definition of character towards the mythic and the archetypal. Paradoxical as it may seem in an art form so diminutive, there is something of the saga or the epic in a number of Mansfield stories. Since the author is preoccupied with universals, names are dispensed with and the stories are not particularized with regard to time, place, or descriptions of physical appearance.[24] Scholes and Kellogg, in drawing attention to the mythic and archetypal nature of the characters in forms such as the saga and epic, contrast Don Quixote and Isabel Archer: "Don Quixote is not a character as Isabel Archer is. There is more of myth ... in Don Quixote ... there is more of mimesis in her. She may be quixotic but he is Quixote. She may be typical but he is archetypical. Yet, in their different ways, they both live."[25]

In suggesting that, in the light of this distinction, the important characters of Katherine Mansfield's finest stories may be classed with Don Quixote rather than Isabel Archer the question arises as to whether it is typical of these characters to be shown

as threatened by a loss of the self, or as having to fight towards an authentic existence. These concepts seem to run through the body of the stories as universal threats inherent in the human condition, and those on whose struggle the light is especially trained seem often to fit the category of the mythic rather than the particularized character. A father who has withered and died within himself,[26] a father who has wasted his life in furnishing his family with the means to centre their lives upon materialistic values,[27] a father who regards his daughters as objects to minister to his every need[28] - such are the father figures of Katherine Mansfield's temporal and social milieu, and so they appear in her stories. Although exceptions will be found to the rule, it seems possible to say that where a loss of the self threatens a major figure in the fictional world, such characters seem to be mythic rather than mimetic in the mode of their characterization.

An attempt to categorize Katherine Mansfield's characters according to typologies leads to the conclusion that factors such as age, social standing, external appearance, physical condition or environmental setting are relatively unimportant as compared with the general idea that all are members of the human family. The author seems to have seen it as endemic to humanity that people should be divided and torn within themselves, and that a false self should take possession of the fragile human spirit, luring it towards falsity of living and inauthenticity of existence. Love of a fellow creature, a turning outwards of the spirit towards others, an attempt to order one's existence towards order and truth; these seem to be the safeguard to a threat which is shown, not only as universal, but as never-ending. Thus the stories show that the true self must

guard constantly against the onslaughts of the false; and authentic living demands unceasing effort, for it is easy to slip back towards inauthenticity. Here Katherine Mansfield's thinking may be compared to that of Jaspers and Heidegger, who suggest that authenticity is a process rather than an attainable state of being.

With regard to an attempt to establish a typology on the basis of age, it would seem that the writer had a special respect for grandmothers, in that those depicted in the New Zealand stories,[28] as well as in "The Voyage"[29] and in "Life of Ma Parker",[30] are exceptionally fine people, who seem to have transcended the threats to the self inherent in the human condition, and to be as near as one is likely to find to authenticity. It would be reasonable to suppose that she saw the elderly as having learned to reject the false and facile, but a consideration of other stories suggests that it is character rather than age which renders these grandmothers so admirable. To balance them, there is Colonel Pinner,[31] the mistress in "The Lady's Maid",[32] and Mr Neave in "An Ideal Family".[33] The old as well as the young may be threatened by a loss of the self; they may, or may not, be capable of recognizing their own falsity, or lack of authenticity.

That, regardless of age or experience, living implies a movement towards, but never rest at, authenticity is shown by such stories as "Life of Ma Parker", in which the protagonist has to fight against the emptiness which finally surrounds her. Even the grandmother in "At the Bay" shows a moment's recoil from her usual steady view when Kezia forces her to look upon the fact of her own death.[34] Mr Neave moves towards,[35] the protagonist of "The Fly" recoils from, the recognition of inauthenticity. At every age level

the struggle is shown as in progress. Childhood innocence is threatened by the worldly wisdom of its elders, the special innocence of the old is assailed by thoughtless and light-hearted youth, contemporaries may threaten each other. Raoul Duquette, looking back, dates the loss of his true self from the age of ten, when he was seduced by a negro laundress.[36] Beryl Fairfax, in early adulthood, can hardly remember the few occasions when she has been able to be the self she knows is truly hers.[37] Isabel, a young mother with two children,[38] Mr Neave, the father in "The Fly", the protagonist in "A Married Man's Story"[39]: all recognize, or turn away from the recognition of, the loss of the true self to the false; and all seem powerless to avert this fate, despite complete, or partial recognition. The characters mentioned above are at very different chronological stages of their lives' progress.

In the same way, it becomes apparent that wholeness of personality and authenticity of living cut across social class. In this respect, Mrs Parker, the London char, may be favourably compared with the literary gentleman,[40] the lady's maid with her mistress.[41] Again, one might be tempted to the hasty conclusion that the poor and hard-working are shown as more inclined towards true selfhood, and as leading existences more authentic, than the rich or the socially élite. There may be some tendency to see the poor as nearer to authenticity, and more ordered in their manner of existence, than the leisured classes; but that this is more a matter of circumstance and character than of social class as such, is suggested by differences in this respect among the members of a particular family, similarly placed as far as sociological factors are concerned. The various members of the Burnell family, the Neave family, and the

Sheridans, may be quoted in illustration of this point.

Critics have distinguished between those stories with a New Zealand, as opposed to a London, setting; to the detriment of the latter. V.S. Pritchett, broadcasting in 1946, referred to the stories set in London as the "semi-sophisticated ones about London love affairs".[42] Elizabeth Bowen, commenting upon the characterization of the London stories, remarks that the author's portraits of sophisticates are drawn "sharply, with satire; they are animated, expressive but two-dimensional". Thus the London intellectuals are presented as types rather than individuals, to the "impoverishment of the London stories".[43] These stories, as well as others written before a profound experience in Katherine Mansfield's life caused her to acquire a different kind of vision,[44] seem to have derived their power from anger; to repeat her own phrase, they were motivated by a "cry against corruption".[45] Katherine Mansfield saw certain people as being despicable, usually because they preyed on others or refused them love. Such characters are often delineated (in the London stories, and in others which have an urban setting) as _personae_ – people who have become the mask they once assumed, and who have thus lost the self which is warm, vital and human. Among such characters are the literary gentleman in "Life of Ma Parker", the literary friends in "Bliss" and "Marriage à la Mode", Raoul Duquette (in this case a more sympathetically drawn portrait), the protagonist in "Mr Reginald Peacock's Day"[46] and the parents in "Sun and Moon"[47] and "A Suburban Fairy Tale".[48] (The predominance of the literary and artistic élite in the list above tempts one to hazard the idea that, if a typology is to be found, it is in the direction of a well established _persona_ in the

case of those successfully practising these callings.) Miss Bowen has astutely abstracted this tendency, in her observation: "The divorce of the intelligentsia from real life tends to be with her an obsessive subject."[49]

It was stories such as these that earned for the writer the criticism tendered by J.C. Squire - that she "refused to abandon herself in sympathy".[50] Perceiving this to be just, the author wrote to Squire, thanking him for showing her "so exactly where" she "had failed", and "so exactly" what she "ought to do".[51] The fault thus made clear was a tendency to typify characters too rigidly as either sinned against or sinning, as either innocent or corrupt. The corrupt ones, rousing her to anger on behalf of the innocent, forfeited her compassion, with resultant foreshortening of perspective and, at times, alienation of the reader. Fine as these stories are, they fall short of the insight attained in the later work, in which no character is depicted as completely good or completely bad; and where even those who seem to be ontologically secure are shown as threatened by alienation. The author's handling of character and of the idea of the loss of the self seems to change as she came to see the universe, not so much as subject to hard and fast ethical rules,but rather as in a state of eternal flux. In the rural world of the later New Zealand stories, there is no absolute distinction between the corrupt who exercise evil and the innocent who suffer through contact with them. The author's renewed vision made possible the view that the corrupt were once innocent, and might become so again; while the human condition is such that none may escape the role of contaminator altogether. Thus Beryl is as much to be pitied as Kezia,[52] Linda as Stanley Burnell.[53]

Had the London stories been written at this time, the differences between rural and urban stories might have been less apparent. If differences be found between characters alienated from the self as delineated in urban settings and those in rural settings (with the stories set in urban areas presenting individuals in whom the loss is final, without hope of regeneration, negating all goodness) the chances are that the contrast is due not so much to geographical or sociological factors as to the author's altered view.

Such differences, then, tend to cut across typologies based on contrasts in external factors such as age, health, habitat, social class and professional interests. In the early satirical studies, it may well be possible to detect an astringent quality in the portraits of the intellectually élite, in that they are shown as becoming the masks they have assumed, with consequent loss of humanity. A distinction may be drawn between such characters and those of the later stories with rural settings. It is difficult to form a conclusive opinion with regard to the extent to which this may have been due to a different way of looking at people in the New Zealand of the writer's childhood, and the new world which she experienced in young adulthood; and how much to an altered way of looking at things, which caused her to see all human beings as threatened, and subject to the difficulties inherent in the state of being human.

The stories chosen for detailed consideration reflect variations in the author's method of presenting character. "The Little Girl"[54] has been selected as an example of her earlier method; although the authorial narrator is rather less reticent with regard

to editorial comment upon the characters than will be the case in later stories, the tendency of the narrator to withdraw in favour of figural presentation is already apparent. "Poison",[55] written in 1921, is an example of a first person narrative in which a fallible narrator provides an interesting double focus, as he reveals his own character, and that of his beloved, through a consciousness initially distorted, but developing towards a clearer view. "The Doll's House",[56] completed in October, 1921, near the end of the author's life, represents the summit of her skill in mediating character by means of dramatic presentation. A discreet narrator withdraws whenever possible to allow those in the fictional world to expose themselves and throw light upon one another through thought, word and outer action.

The Little Girl

This story was written in 1912, and the characterization of the father and of Kezia is of particular interest. An authorial narrator plunges the reader straight into a sense of the fearful and awe-inspiring qualities of the father as perceived by a young child. The narrator comments more explicitly than is the case in later stories. Thus, while Kezia reveals her fear by stuttering, and the father reveals his impatience with her weakness by his mimicking of her, the narrator adds to that which is dramatically revealed by means of comment: "She never stuttered with other people ... but only with father, because she was trying so hard to say the words properly."[57]

Despite such authorial intrusion, the figures in the fictional world furnish the reader with a good deal of the information

necessary to establish a sense of their characters. This is rendered through dialogue more frequently than through style indirect libre. Thus the father shows himself as overwhelming Kezia, not through deliberate unkindness, but through his proclivities to harp, to be over-alert as to her weaknesses, and to direct her activities to the point of bullying. "Here, Kezia, carry my teacup back to the table - carefully; your hands jog like an old lady's. And try to keep your handkerchief in your pocket, not up your sleeve." A sense of Kezia's nervousness, as well as of her father's blustering, is created by his words. Kezia is allowed to reveal her own nervous sensibility as well as the effect of these words through her painfully articulated reply: "Y - y - yes, father."[58]

In describing a visit to church made by Kezia and her father, the narrator withdraws, allowing the essence of the father to be presented through his effect upon the observing child who watches while he makes "little notes during the sermon ... - his eyes narrowed to a slit - one hand beating a silent tattoo on the pew ledge. He said his prayers so loudly she was certain God heard him above the clergyman".[59]

The presence of the narrator is revealed through the present participle "watching", and the phrase "she was certain", through which entry is effected into Kezia's thoughts. Despite this, the passage moves towards figural presentation of character. The detailed description of gesture and action which denotes the father's fierce concentration, his meticulous attention to the matter in hand, his suppressed energy, indicated through Kezia's awareness of the activity of his hands, the volume of his voice raised in

prayer; all these pointers to his character are revealed through the perceptive eyes of the child.

The father, characterized to a considerable extent from without, is also allowed to reveal himself by means of his actions and words; and particularly through the details regarding his actions and appearance as rendered through the consciousness of Kezia. On occasion, some additional information is furnished by the authorial narrator. The superior knowledge of the narrator, who knows in advance that of which Kezia gains awareness at the end of the story, tones down the presentation of this character, so that the reader realizes, long before Kezia does, that he is rough and overwhelming in his manner rather than deliberately unkind.

Kezia, characterized from without and from within, is revealed through her words, actions, perceptions, fears, dreams, and thoughts about other people. On one occasion, through dialogue, we are given a glimpse of her physical appearance. "Don't stare so, Kezia - you look like a little brown owl."[60] This detail is presented through her father's eyes, and has the effect of a double exposure, showing the reader his view of her, and her sensitive reaction to this view.

Towards the end of the story, Kezia's thoughts about her father are presented through <u>style indirect libre</u> (thus proving that the writer moves into her characters' minds at an earlier date than is suggested by Ian A. Gordon, who states that this first happened in the case of "The Indiscreet Journey", in 1915).[61] "Poor Father! Not so big, after all - and with no one to look after him.... He was harder than the grandmother, but it was a nice hardness.... And every day he had to work and was too tired to be Mr Macdonald....

She had torn up his beautiful writing."[62] The thought sequence tells the reader as much about Kezia as it does about her father. It shows her power of assessment, of compassion, understanding and forgiveness.

The story, simpler in texture than many of those which follow, is interesting as a fore-runner of later complexities. Image and poetic symbol, important for characterization as well as for theme in later stories, is lacking. Authorial comment, while an aid to characterization, is sparingly used. Detail, authorially and figurally presented, is a useful adjunct. Direct scenic presentation of dialogue and action is an important method of rendering character, exposing at once the subject and (when it is human) the object perceived or discussed. Style indirect libre is used, the thought sequence thus rendered illuminating both thinker and object of thought.

The action of the story shows a child being punished for an unfortunate mistake, perpetrated in innocence and through generosity of spirit. The result could have been a movement away from the trusting self which committed the deed. A loss of candour and spontaneity is indeed perceptible, for the child who, on first being questioned about the loss of the paper, so readily admits that she "tore them up for my surprise"[63] is shown in a later encounter as reacting with guilt. On that occasion she "whipped both hands behind her back, and a red colour flew into her cheeks".[64] The protagonist is shown at the beginning of a process which may well result in a loss of the self; at the close of the story, the reader is shown an act of kindness directed towards the protagonist by the one who has administered so grievous a wound to the developing

spirit. The reader is left to ponder the fact that this act may do much to arrest the process which has been set into motion. The open-ended story leaves the child with added knowledge as to the complexity of human relationships, and the impossibility of forming absolute judgments as to the nature of a fellow being.

Poison

Middleton Murry excluded this story from the collection entitled The Garden-Party because he thought it "not wholly successful". Later, he came to consider it a "little masterpiece".[65] The story is subtly presented through a fallible first person narrator whose awareness as to the truth regarding his beloved, Beatrice, and his own relationship with her alters during the course of the story. The characterization of the narrator-protagonist, as well as that of Beatrice, has to be gauged through the reader's awareness of his initially clouded, but gradually clearing, vision.

The theme of the story is intimately related to the character of Beatrice and the effect which this has upon that of the protagonist who, as a result of his infatuation, seems to have suffered a loss of the self and to have become involved in an inauthentic mode of existence. There is hardly a word used or a fact presented which does not relate to the characterization upon which the central ideas of the story are subtended.

Thus the narrator selects for initial presentation the fact that "the post was very late".[66] The following sentence indicates profound disappointment at this non-arrival. Carefully chosen words indicate that the walk from which the protagonist and Beatrice have just returned has been dominated by a longing for the post to

an extent not fully apprehended by the narrator. The adverbial clause of time which initiates the second sentence of the story subordinates the walk itself to the fact of the non-arrival of the post. The presence of the adverb "still" signals prolonged expectation, impatience and disappointment. Hindsight enables the reader to discern that it was not the narrator who was so eagerly awaiting a letter. The naïveté of the narrator has thus been deftly established. He is innocent not only as to the true centre of Beatrice's interest but also as to the manner in which her demands have acquired dominion over his will. The fact that, despite his lack of awareness, at some level of his being he realizes a threat to their relationship in her anxiety for a letter is indicated through his relief when the post is found to consist of a newspaper only. The opening two sentences characterize Beatrice as dominant, impatient, and demanding; they reveal the narrator as submissive to her every wish, and oblivious of both her dominance and his own true wishes and desires. The ascendency of Beatrice is reinforced by Annette's "Pas encore, Madame."[67] The shrewd French maid knows well for whom it is that the post is important, while the "encore" suggests the urgent accumulation of unsatisfied expectation. Beatrice is shown as continuing to harp upon the non-arrival of the post; this, together with her peremptory command to the narrator ("Put those things down, dearest"), reinforces the impressions already signalled of her dominance, persistence, and the degree to which she is herself a prey to powerful inner tensions. The question tendered by the narrator in return ("Where would you like them ...?")[68] helps to mark the degree to which he is without autonomous direction. He defers to her authority in

every particular.

Depth is added to the characterization of Beatrice through details of dress, physical appearance and surroundings. By means of the precision and coherence of these details, the character of Beatrice is clearly defined, and the narrator gains the confidence of the reader. The power of her personality is suggested by the fact that she elicits a reaction from those around her, not only of submission, but of fear. Thus Annette "scurries" back to her kitchen after having delivered unhappy tidings, and the narrator, discounting her words ("Anywhere - Silly.")[69] would rather "have stood holding the squat liqueur bottle ... for years, ... than risk giving another tiny shock to her exquisite sense of order".[70] The use of the word "another" in this context is typical of the accumulation of implied detail which is part of the writer's impressionistic method of presenting character within the confines to which the short story limits her.

Beatrice is revealed, however, not only through the voice of the narrator-protagonist, but through her own accents, which break in, in frequent duologue. Tension is thus created between the character of Beatrice, as presented by the bemused and enchanted narrator, and the harsh cold accents of her own interpolations. The reader should soon become aware that, despite his intelligence, the accuracy of his observation, and his eye for detail and nuance, the narrator is not to be relied upon.

Adumbrated tensions are superimposed as the reader becomes aware of the multiplicity of selves implied for the narrator, while, in the characterization of Beatrice, some suggestion of a similar state of division is discernible. For Beatrice declares that she

has been poisoned - in a large initial does administered by her first husband, and in subtle doses contributed by the second. This situation implies a self which existed prior to the first dose as well as the selves, contaminated to varying degrees, leading up to that of the fictional present. The plot of the story is indeed informed by character and time, the contagious quality of corruption constituting an important aspect of the theme. An essential implication is the idea that the poisoned has become the poisoner, and will spread the contamination in her turn.

The movement of the spirit of the protagonist-narrator is towards recognition - a suspension of his blindness as to both the true quality of his beloved and his own obscured view. This heightened awareness is postponed until, in four short final sentences, it presents itself, is looked at askance, and gains acceptance. There is, therefore, a discrepancy of awareness between narrating and experiencing self. In addition to this duality, the experiencing self is aware of a lost and more innocent self, one far removed from the sophisticated nonentity who allows his thoughts to be formed and his decisions made for him. Once again, impressionistic devices for suggesting character, and a state of spiritual bondage, are illustrated by the use of "And" as the initial word of the paragraph, followed by the modifying "of course" which suggests an accumulation of the reactions characteristic of the state indicated: "And of course I agreed, though privately, in the depths of my heart, I would have given my soul to have stood beside her in a large, yes, a large, fashionable church, crammed with people ..."[71]

Apart from this lost self, for which the tone of the narrator

suggests a certain secret regret, a disregarded self stands beside him, observing far more minutely than the narrator's state of thraldom allows him to acknowledge. The presence of this perceptive, alert, but disregarded witness is betrayed in such a statement as: "She put her arm round my neck; the other hand softly, terribly, brushed back my hair."[72] (Emphasis mine.) The interior monologue through which the narrator presents his view of Beatrice as the epitome of womanhood finds expression in images such as that of the "shadow that fell across the quivering gold of the shutters"; her elusive quality is suggested through his presentation of her as one obscurely glimpsed as she "sang in the tall house with the tulle curtains". His sense of her ruthless independence is implied by the idea of her steps as those which "pass your door". The fact that the protagonist, at some level of his being, is able to recognise her as someone whose demands are likely to constitute a threat is suggested by the image he selects to convey the measure of his devotion. For her, he would "gladly, willingly, have dived for an orange into the jaws of a crocodile".[73]

Thus the imagery through which the narrator's estimate of his beloved is conveyed holds an ominous note, and provides evidence as to the intuitive quality of the perceiving self, held in abeyance by the experiencing self of the narrator. Through verbal irony he betrays his unacknowledged awareness of his insecurity. When no letter arrives, he is "wild with joy".[74] When Beatrice declares the extent of her love for him, for all his declared reaction of "bliss", he finds her words so painful that he hastens to cut short her utterance. "You sound as if you were saying goodbye." Thus there is a notable discrepancy between the narrator's

powers of perception, and his interpretation of his own percepts.

The narrator, sensitive but deliberately obtuse, selects images and symbols which reflect intuitive knowledge, but fails to appreciate their significance. Instead, he interprets them within the framework of his desired view of the beloved. For instance, he emphasizes Beatrice's predilection for pearls without a sense of their traditional associations. It is a subtle dimension of the characterization of both protagonist and Beatrice that the association persists for the reader and is highly appropriate to the character as presented. When Beatrice, well within the grip of evil,[75] sees the postman as a "blue beetle", she communicates her view to the receptive narrator, thus illustrating the process of inoculation in a manner which acquires sinister significance when considered in the light of title and theme.

The delicacy of the characterization of this story, so intimately related to the point of view, is rendered the more intricate when viewed in the light of the representation of a multiplicity of selves in each of the characters. The fact that so perceptive a critic as Middleton Murry took time to realize the depth of the story suggests the need for close reading. "Poison" constitutes a study in moral infection, arising insidiously, and leading towards a loss of the self which not only renders the life of the protagonist inauthentic but which must also inevitably infect others. Although the protagonist approaches awareness as to his plight and the source of his infection, the open-ended quality of the story leaves the reader in doubt as to whether he will find the strength of will necessary to liberate himself from his bondage.

The Doll's House

This short story is symmetrical in structure, with character combining with other elements to reinforce the theme.[76] An important aspect of the ideas presented is the tendency of the adult world to impinge upon that of childhood; thus adult inauthenticity, with its values derived from ready-made systems, and its characteristic lack of spontaneity of response to those who have been categorized according to a caste system, prevents the children from developing into the selves they would be capable of becoming were they permitted to follow their natural impulses.

The adult group is characterized collectively, with attitudes, tensions, and movement towards inauthenticity gaining more precise definition in the presentation of Aunt Beryl; the children of the Burnell milieu are characterized as a separate but conforming group, following upon the lines ordained by imitation and education. One among them, however, is brought into sharper relief - the rebel, Kezia. The story shows a moment of adventurous living on the part of the child protagonist; impelled by compassion, she disregards ready-made attitudes and, through refusing to conform, moves bravely out towards the adventure of authentic existence. The dénouement of the story focuses upon the conflict between childhood innocence and adult experience, with the latter outwardly victorious but the former having achieved the all-important "leap", none the less. The two little Kelveys are "shooed" away from the sacred precincts of Burnell respectability, but not before Kezia has succeeded in sharing with "our Else" (the epitome of the outcast and despised) her vision of the symbol of life and warmth. "Our Else" has been enabled to see the little lamp.

A tactful omniscient narrator, assuming universal knowledge of the Burnell milieu, transports the reader to the very centre of the fictional world, where he is confronted with the basic symbol of the story - the doll's house. The microcosm of the doll's house is the focal point through which the difference between adult and child view of the world is first made apparent. The narrator effaces himself behind adult appraisal, which is grudging and lacking in generosity. Although lip-service is paid to Mrs Hay's kindness in having presented the children with so generous a gift, irritation at its inconvenient nature is to be sensed below the surface. Such attitudes find definition in the revealing glimpse of Aunt Beryl. She betrays her own lack-lustre mode of existence, as well as the values of the world she represents, through her joyless concentration upon the smell of paint, which is "enough to make anyone seriously ill".[77] In general, her reaction to the doll's house shows a grudging and limited response.

The reader is transported rapidly from this adult view to the delighted and minute appraisal of the children. Just as the unenthusiastic outlook of the adult group narrows to the particularization of Aunt Beryl's response, so the attentive gaze of the children is finally narrowed down to that of Kezia, whose perception of the small-scale world implied by the doll's house is especially open to the significance of the central symbol of the lamp. A subtle aspect of the characterization lies in the fact that the only other sensibility truly open to the significance of this symbol is that which presents so unpromising an exterior and which resides in the outcast of outcasts - the smaller of the two Kelveys.

Characterization, then, is effected through an omniscient narrator who, intruding minimally, moves skilfully and unobtrusively into the consciousness, not only of individual characters, but also of the collective groups. Beryl in particular[78] is shown as threatened by a loss of the self in the direction of the animus, as is suggested by her harsh and over-bearing manner.[79] Such symbols as the doll's house itself and the little lamp reinforce characterization through the perceptions of, and responses to, them, as evinced both by groups on the one hand, and by individuals on the other.

The dénouement is presented through a close-up dramatic view of Beryl, in which she reveals herself, her conflicts, and her movement towards inauthenticity through dialogue and action. The narrator intrudes only to give added definition to the cadences of her voice. Aunt Beryl, "cold and proud", is shown as being in the grip of a false self. She talks about the little Kelveys as if they are insensate beings, as she "shoo[s] them out as if they [are] chickens".[80] This suggests that, for her, all possibility of an I-Thou relationship has been precluded by the acceptance of judgments arising from a rigid adherence to a caste system. She has no sense of the Kelveys as human, or as worthy of the Thou. Buber suggests that to give oneself up to the powers of the I-It, without attempting to struggle against the too-human tendency, is to enter into a state of inauthenticity. Movement into Aunt Beryl's mind allows the reader to see how much her behaviour is due to the fact that she is driven by forces she does not understand. Thus the state of alienation in which she is presented does not preclude sympathy. She is shown as human, despite her present

lack of humanity. Thus her character is conceived with a depth of compassion which was not present in the delineation of characters such as Mr Reginald Peacock, and the young intellectuals in "Bliss" and "Marriage à la Mode", who, like Beryl, are presented as suffering from a loss of the self.

The moment of decision, in which Kezia finds strength to make the "leap" necessary to liberate her from the ready-made systems of thought imposed upon her by group norms, is achieved with considerable tact. It has been pointed out that Katherine Mansfield conveys a great deal through that which she omits.[81] In this instance, the narrator informs us that "Isabel and Lottie, who liked visitors, went up to change their pinafores".[82] The omission of Kezia's name from this sentence reveals as much about her character as it does about the nature of her two sisters. Her growing dislike of social occasions and outward show is implied as, instead of accompanying her sisters upstairs to change, she "thieve[s]" out at the back of the house. Again, both characterization and existential dilemma are conveyed through choice of diction. The verb "thieved" suggests her independence of spirit, her natural anxiety, and, at the same time, the extent of her courage and her preparedness for revolt. As the little Kelveys draw near, her instinct is to obey authority, and to remove herself from the embarrassment of a probable encounter. Thus, she hesitates, as the shadows of the children draw nearer. As the responsibility implied by personal choice approaches her, Kezia achieves the existentialist "leap" by swinging out upon the gate to meet the challenger. Character, as well as the move towards authenticity, is implied by each short and pregnant sentence: "Kezia clambered back on the gate; she

had made up her mind; she swung out.

'Hullo' she said to the passing Kelveys."[83]

Characterization of the subsidiary characters is achieved by means of brief impressionistic strokes. The essence of "our Else's" physical presence, as well as of her spirit, is conveyed in terms of bird images. Thus she is described as a "tiny wishbone of a child" and as looking like a "little white owl".[84] Lena Logan is effectively evoked in one flash achieved through synecdoche. Thus we are told that her "little eyes snapped"[85] as she thought of an appropriate plan for tormenting the washerwoman's children. Lil's essential quality is presented through such detail as that of her ill-fitting clothes, her "big freckles" and the picture presented of her tender solicitude towards her younger sister; as well as by means of the "silly shamefaced smile"[86] which is rendered a permanent attribute through the use of the possessive adjective "her".[87]

Thus, in this story, groups, as well as individual members of them, are economically evoked through carefully chosen diction, habitual or relevant action and impressionistic glimpses conveying detail selected to suggest physical and spiritual essence. Kezia and her aunt are shown as detaching themselves from the group to which each belongs; in this way, each is rendered distinctive from the others of her generation, through her powerfully suggested individuality, and the characteristic quality of her personal dilemma and choice. Beryl, however much she may be an individual, embodies the attitudes of her group, strengthened and lent asperity through the impelling force of her personal conflicts. Kezia is shown as a spectator to attitudes and activities which she contemplates,

examines and rejects. In her ability to achieve such freedom of choice, she renders herself distinctive in her powers of independent judgment, and finds an added measure of self-knowledge. Such insight into the nature of the self, described by Jung as individuation, leads, in his opinion, to the realization of the true self.[88] In forming an independent judgment, in which she ignores the pressure of the group which inclines her to regard the Kelveys as It's, she moves towards the I-Thou relationship, and authentic existence.

The two main characters presented gain mythic, as well as particular, dimension as each is shown as beset by the forces of evil in the midst of an everyday situation. A child proves herself to be capable of intelligent and compassionate disobedience; thus does she vindicate the potentiality of the human spirit for generosity of response. Aunt Beryl, harassed by private worries and inner tensions, allows herself to become the guardian and executor of group pressures. She is, temporarily at least, in a state of spiritual blindness which amounts to alienation of the self.

Attention directed to the function of characterization suggests that the impetus towards authenticity (or its opposite) depends upon an interesting balance of character and circumstance. Inner tensions which Beryl can neither understand nor control impel her away from the self she longs to be. A happier Beryl, instead of clutching at the security implied by unthinking allegiance to group norms and ready-made thinking, might have reacted differently towards Kezia and the two stray children. Kezia is helped towards authenticity by her capacity for compassion, as well

as for independent judgment, but the outcome of the moment of her choice is presented as by no means a foregone conclusion. Each character walks along the edge of a precipice. Character sets the possibilities; but circumstance decrees whether or not these will be realized.

It has been said of "The Fly" that, within the compass of some two and a half thousand words, the author has succeeded in presenting a statement concerning the condition of man which could not have been achieved by some writers within the pages of a full-length novel.[89] The depth of its philosophical implications suggests that it would be true to say the same of "The Doll's House", which, like the story fore-mentioned, was one of the final half dozen which the author was able to complete.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VI

[1]Bates, The Modern Short Story, p. 130.

[2]Bowen, Introduction to Stories, pp. i-xxv.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Henry James, "The Art of Fiction ", cited by Wellek and Warren, Theory of Literature, p. 216.

[5]Fergusson, ed., Aristotle's Poetics, p. 22.

[6]Busch, "Literary Impressionism ",p. 73.

[7] Collected Stories, p. 457.

[8]"Weak Heart ",Ibid., p. 514.

[9]Maurois, Poets and Prophets, p. 237.

[10]Gordon, Katherine Mansfield, p. 10.

[11]Hoare, Some Studies in the Modern Novel, p. 151.

[12]Bates, The Modern Short Story, p. 130.

[13]Berkman, Katherine Mansfield, p. 180.

[14]Letters, II, 196.

[15]Busch, "Literary Impressionism ",p. 64.

[16]Don W. Kleine, "Method and Meaning in the Short Stories of Katherine Mansfield ", Dissertation Abstracts, XXII (1967), 2397A. (University of Michigan.)

[17]Yen, "Katherine Mansfield's Use of Point of View ",p. 674A.

[18]v "At the Bay ", Collected Stories, pp. 208; 220; 228.

[19]Ibid., p. 40.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Scholes and Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative, p. 191.

[22]v Forster, Aspects of the Novel, pp. 93-101.

[23]v "Prelude ", Collected Stories, p. 11.
"At the Bay ", Ibid., p. 205.
"The Doll's House ", Ibid., p. 393.

[24]v "Six Years After ", Ibid., p. 465.
"Sun and Moon ", Ibid., p. 153.
"A Suburban Fairy Tale ", Ibid., p. 660.

[25] Scholes and Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative, p. 160.

[26]"The Fly ", Collected Stories, p. 422.

[27]"An Ideal Family ", Ibid., p. 368.

[28]"The Daughters of the Late Colonel ", Ibid., p. 262.

[29]Ibid., p. 321.

[30]Ibid., p. 301.

[31]v "The Daughters of the Late Colonel ", Ibid., p. 262.

[32]Ibid., p. 375.

[33]Ibid., p. 368.

[34]v Ibid., pp. 225-7.

[35]"An Ideal Family ", Ibid., p. 368.

[36]"Je ne Parle pas Francais ", Ibid., p. 66.

[37]"Prelude," Ibid., p. 59.

[38]"Marriage à la Mode ", Ibid., p. 309.

[39]Ibid., p. 432.

[40]"Life of Ma Parker.", Ibid., p. 301.

[41]"The Lady's Maid, ", Ibid., p. 375.

[42]V.S. Pritchett, cited by John Middleton Murry, Katherine Mansfield and Other Literary Portraits (London: Peter Nevill Limited, 1949), p. 7.

[43]Bowen, Introduction to Stories, pp. i-xxv.

[44]The death of her brother in 1916. v Journal, p. 86.

[45]Letters, I, 119.

[46]Collected Stories, p. 144.

[47]Ibid., p. 153.

[48]Ibid., p. 660.

[49]Bowen, Introduction to Stories, p. xxi.

[50]J.C. Squire, Review of Bliss in The Observer, Jan. 23, 1921, cited by Alpers, Katherine Mansfield, p. 300.

[51]Ibid., p. 300.

[52]v "The Doll's House ", Collected Stories, p. 393.

[53]v "Prelude.", Ibid., p. 11.

[54]Collected Stories, p. 577.

[55]Ibid., p. 685.

[56]Ibid., p. 393.

[57]Ibid., p. 578.

[58]Ibid.

[59]Ibid., p. 579.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Gordon, Katherine Mansfield, p. 10.

[62]Collected Stories, p. 582.

[63]Ibid., p. 579.

[64]Ibid., p. 580.

[65]v Collected Stories, p. 523.

[66]Ibid., p. 685.

[67]Ibid.

[68]Ibid.

[69]Ibid., p. 686.

[70]Ibid.

[71]Ibid.

[72]Ibid., p. 687.

[73]Ibid., p. 687.

[74]Ibid., p. 689.

[75]v Ibid., p. 690. Beatrice herself shows knowledge of the fact that she has been "poisoned".

[76]Ibid., p. 393.

[77]Ibid.

[78]Ibid., p. 400.

[79]Jung, Two Essays, p. 173.

[80]Collected Stories, p. 400.

[81]Bates, The Modern Short Story, p. 128.

[82]Collected Stories, p. 399.

[83]Ibid.

[84] *Ibid.*, p. 396.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 398.

[86] *Ibid.*, p. 397.

[87] v Busch, "Literary Impressionism ", p. 73.

[88] Jung, *Two Essays*, p. 173.

[89] Hormasji, *Katherine Mansfield*, p. 117.

CHAPTER VII

THE FUNCTION OF ATMOSPHERE

In the final chapters of this thesis, the functions of atmosphere and tone will be considered, after which an attempt will be made to formulate the author's metaphysic. In each of these chapters an evolutionary approach will be adopted. The body of the work as a whole will be examined with a view to establishing the manner in which, in each of these respects, the author's powers developed.

Once again it must be stressed that repetition is unavoidable in a work of this nature. The early death of the author curtailed the volume of the work she was able to produce; thus a study of her work will necessarily concentrate upon an intensive study of a limited number of stories. Certain of these, particularly those which represent the height of her mature artistic achievement, are of outstanding interest with regard to both technique and ideas presented. It is therefore inevitable that such stories should receive reiterated attention, according to whichever of the structural functions is under consideration. Then again, the subject of this thesis sets up the requirement that certain ideas, where they occur implicitly or explicitly in the stories, should be singled out for particular attention. Stories in which central or subsidiary ideas involve the concepts of self-alienation, authenticity or inauthenticity of existence, must be considered from more than one structural perspective. Not only the same stories, but selected incidents and situations within them, have

been found to recur as centres of interest.

Atmosphere amounts to a pervasive emotional effect which emanates from the various structural elements and clings to the story as a whole. It has been defined as "the emotional effect of the physical setting and external action or the psychological aspect of character and internal action".[1] Such a definition reflects the fact that a study of the function cannot be effected without recourse to material already presented, particularly within the chapters on space, action and character; and, since it includes a study of point of view, narrative situation.

The point has been made that, in the case of certain types of short stories, the emphasis is less upon the purveyance of ideas than upon the creation of atmosphere. Horror stories, in which the interest lies not in the examination of human conduct, but in supplying the reader with a thrill of horror, are of this type.[2] It is doubtful whether Katherine Mansfield, even in her earliest work, sought to create atmosphere for its own sake. From the outset she was interested in the mysterious creature who is man. The evolving atmospheric effects of her stories arise from her changing view of man's condition and the measure of dignity she accords him in the exigencies of his career as a sentient being.

As the author's view of man alters to one of acceptance, both of his frailties and the limitations imposed upon him by his condition, the atmosphere of the stories changes considerably. Many of the mature stories turn upon limiting situations. A situation is presented in which a character is afforded an opportunity to change the quality of his awareness, and hence, possibly, the flavour of his existence. Such an opportunity may be accepted or

rejected. A contrast exists in the atmospheric aura which clings to the authentic, and the inauthentic, states of existence which, in such stories, constitute the character's choice. This point will receive more detailed consideration at a later stage of this chapter.

Many of the early stories which constitute the German Pension series are sketches rather than short stories; the atmosphere, like the characters and action, is static. The first person narrator of "The Baron"[3] might discover that the noble guest at the pension often secludes himself in his room the better to ingest and digest his food; but the answer to the mystery which intrigues her as to the reason for his exclusive habits constitutes no revelatory shock. Details of food, and particularly of the manner of eating it, set up the atmosphere from the beginning. Spatial details, as well as characterization, combine to create an atmosphere dominated by a consuming interest in food. "I looked at the First of the Barons. He was eating salad - taking a whole lettuce leaf on his fork and absorbing it slowly, rabbit-wise - a fascinating process to watch."[4] Through such detail of action, characterization and setting, the atmosphere of the manner of existence of the Baron is suggested, as well as that of the contemptuous narrator.

The atmosphere of those stories of this volume which are presented through a first person narrator is evoked through the presentation of an unpleasant, almost repulsive, environment. An alien looking down upon a race of (to her) unattractive foreigners, the narrator, by means of selection and presentation of detail, evokes an atmosphere which is coloured by her revulsion from their manners and customs. "Germans at Meat" quickly sets up an atmos-

phere pervaded by an intense, almost gloating, interest in bodily functions and food. Thus the story opens with the sentence "Bread soup was placed upon the table."[5] Spatial detail (presented about a dining room table), and characterization, combine to set up an atmosphere of an almost bestial preoccupation with food and the processes of digestion. Thus Herr Rat soon starts to furnish details about his "magen" which has not been in order for some days. The widow picks her teeth with a hairpin which she subsequently replaces in the topknot of hair on her head. Herr Hoffman, as he imbibes his beer, details not only the manner in which he sweats as a result but also the fact that he enjoys so doing. The atmosphere of the narrator's contempt, and her withdrawal, is conveyed not only through the selection of detail but also through the physical distancing of herself from those who excite her scorn. "I closed the door after me."[6] Thus the atmosphere set up by the narrator's disdain constitutes a framework through which the absurdity of the human condition is emphasized as it mingles with the emotional effect created by the details of the self-indulgent habits of the pensioners.

The people depicted in these stories are presented as engaged in the small intimacies of daily living. Such domestic activities as sitting round a dining-room table, eating and talking, going for walks, gossip and knitting, constitute the detail of incident and setting. Such presentation of detail could have generated an atmosphere of warmth, affection and cheerful living. But emotional effects of this kind are noticeably absent. The incidents, selected and mediated through the malicious ill-humour of the narrator, generate an atmosphere of unlovely humanity preoccupied with visceral and egotistical concerns.

David Daiches remarks that, although exceptions do occur, Katherine Mansfield, in seeking the deepest implications of a situation for her characters, almost always saw this as holding the possibility of change.[7] When such change forms a salient feature of the stories, an alteration of atmosphere emphasizes the difference between one aspect of the presented situation and the other. In later stories, the change often turns upon a limiting situation. Suffering, grief, an encounter with death or some idea of death brings a character to a point where he or she is moved to review the manner of his existence and to see it as inauthentic. He may accept the knowledge and move towards the attainment of true selfhood; or he may find the idea too painful, blinding himself to its implications, and leaving the reader to ponder the characteristic atmospheric aura of the chosen and rejected existential possibilities.

Certain of these early stories foreshadow the skill with which alteration of atmosphere serves to emphasize an altered concept of living. In "The Luft Bad", the typical atmosphere of a debased interest in flesh and the trivialities of living combines with that engendered by spiritual emptiness.[8] Details of space and characterization combine to set the atmosphere. "A high wooden wall compasses us all about."[9] The women bathers, thus partitioned off from their male counterparts and the natural world ("the pine trees look down a little superciliously"),[10] engage in dialogue which rapidly establishes the atmosphere of their minds, their interests and the inauthenticity of their living. The Hungarian lady gloats over the details of her second husband's death agony, the young Russian contorts her body in a dance which has no beauty (after which the detail is given that she perspires "splendidly"),

and a little girl furnishes graceless details about Frau Hauptman, who has come out in spots as a result of nerves and whose front teeth have the distinction of each being mounted upon a separate plate.[11] Repelled by the atmosphere established through her observations of sick and silly women, the narrator escapes to a swing. A remarkable contrast in atmosphere is achieved through the use of this device, spatially conceived. The swing carries her into a fresher and sweeter atmosphere as she feels the air, "sweet and cool, rushing past [her] body. Above, white clouds trailed delicately through the blue sky. From the pine forest streamed a wild perfume..."[12] A breath of the atmosphere of the natural world has been captured by means of the unusual perspective allowed by the movement of the swing. A similar change takes place in the atmosphere of the narrator's mental world. "I felt so light and free and happy - so childish."[13]

An aura of the absurd clings to the presented worlds of "Frau Brechenmacher Attends a Wedding"[14] and "The Woman at the Store".[15] The protagonist of each of these stories seeks a meaning for her life, and fails to find it. The atmosphere of the latter story is particularly oppressive, pervaded, as it seems to be, by a sense of hopelessness and universal disease. As the travellers, among whom is the narrator, approach the rustic hell which forms the setting of the blighted existence of the protagonist and her child, the heat is presented as abnormal, and the wind as malignant, blowing white dust into their faces and causing their skins to become itchy and sore. The atmosphere of the natural world is harsh and discordant, as conveyed through such detail as the song of the lark, which sounds "shrill" and as though "slate

pencils [are] scraping over its surface".[16] The story is remarkable in that not a single detail is directed towards a mitigation of the sense of hopelessness, disease and sin. The dog is yellow and mangy, the child perverted, and the garden path is graced by cabbages, which grow on either side of it, and which smell like "stale dishwater".[17] No spiritual regeneration is possible for the protagonist whose actions have carried her beyond the point of return. The atmosphere created by setting and action reflects the hopelessness of her condition.

"Millie" is an early and interesting example of a story which hinges upon a limiting situation.[18] Moved by a sudden confrontation with a young human being who is desperate and proscribed, Millie almost lifts herself above the limitations of her everyday world, to achieve a new authenticity of existence. The atmosphere of the tenor of her life is suggested in terms of a dusty and unsympathetic natural world, and an interior setting dominated by detail of ash, fly-specked mirror, packing-case furniture and a relentlessly ticking clock. That Millie has some longings for a different style of living is suggested by her interest in the pictures on the wall. As pity moves the protagonist towards the change in awareness which could lead to her becoming a better self, a marked change in atmosphere is effected. Attention is switched from the unattractive interior and surroundings to the aura created by a compassionate human relationship. Thus setting recedes in importance as Millie attends to the "dreadful frightened face" of the fugitive, and breaks pieces of bread and butter into little pieces and feeds them to him. As the protagonist retreats from the chance of transcendence offered to her, she regresses to a level

akin to madness. The atmosphere is one of primitive atavism as the *animus* takes possession. The final sickness of Millie's soul establishes its atmospheric aura through such detail as that of her dervish-like dance in the dust, accompanied by wild shrieks of laughter and the "jigging" light of the lantern.[19] "Millie", written in 1913, suggests a metaphysic acknowledging the possibility of the co-existence of corruption and goodness within one character. The breadth of vision implied by this acceptance seems to have been obscured for a while by a more cynical and pessimistic view of human evil. It emerges again in the final stories which, turning upon limiting situations, suggest a delicate balance between the potentialities for good and evil as germane to man's dilemma.

It is suggested here, as elsewhere in this thesis, that the author's view of human corruption altered as her world view matured. Particularly at the time she wrote the stories set in London, she seems to have seen the corrupt as a race apart. A distinctive atmospheric aura clings to such characters. These corrupt ones are frequently depicted as *personae*; mask-like false selves, surrounded by an atmosphere of inauthenticity and brittle living. In "Life of Ma Parker" the atmosphere of the literary gentleman's inauthentic manner of living is suggested through his lack of a more intimate appellation, the untidiness of his living and his failure to show understanding, or more than the most perfunctory pity, for another's sorrow.[20] The atmosphere of Monica Tyrell's[21] self-centred and heartless existence is suggested through detail of the surrounding universe, with which she is sadly at variance ("A wild white morning, a tearing, rocking wind"),[22] and her perceptions of it: "Monica caught a glimpse of a huge pale sky and a cloud like

a torn shirt dragging across before she hid her eyes with her sleeve."[23] This quotation furnishes an example of Katherine Mansfield's skill in suggesting the atmosphere of a character's manner of existence through figural presentation of imagery. Monica's perceptions of a sad and disintegrating universe may be likened to the technique of a Rorsach Test. The same example provides an illustration of the author's impressionistic manner of suggesting atmosphere. The atmosphere of a situation or a way of life is vividly insinuated by means of one telling stroke achieved through image, gesture or symbol.

So characteristic is the atmosphere which surrounds inauthentic existence that the experienced reader gains knowledge of a character's state of alienation from the self through a few details of habits, activities and surroundings. Thus we are told that Rosemary Fell was "young, brilliant, extremely modern, exquisitely well dressed ... and her parties were the most delicious mixture of the really important people and ... artists - quaint creatures, discoveries of hers, some of them too terrifying for words, but others quite presentable and amusing".[24] The flavour of the protagonist's existence, as well as the essential atmosphere of her interests and her mind, has been established in a few selected details; presented, as Sylvia Berkman has pointed out, by a narrator who seems to have assumed something of the patterning of the protagonist's own thought rhythms.[25]

The true self, and authenticity of existence, are similarly presented with characteristic atmospheric flavour. Characters who are moving towards true selfhood are shown as exercising control over their surroundings and as having achieved a certain order in their physical and mental living. Mrs Parker,[26] Mrs Fairfield,[27]

and the grandmother of "The Voyage"[28] are thus portrayed. A contrast is effected between the atmosphere which surrounds the living of Mrs Parker and that of her employer. Thus she quietly tidies the disorder incurred through his careless and self-centred living. His flat is compared to a "gigantic dustbin", and we are told that "even the floor was littered with toast crusts, envelopes, cigarette ends".[29] Mrs Parker, as she sweeps and tidies, has time to look out through a small smudgy window at an "immense expanse of sad-looking sky".[30] In such detail is the essence of the manner of her existence conveyed. Even the atmosphere of a long-vanished childhood home at Stratford, and of a mother who must have conditioned her future, is conveyed through one or two brief details furnished during a flash-back. "'Mother always 'ad 'er side of bacon 'anging from the ceiling.' And there was something - a bush, there was - at the front door, that smelt ever so nice."[31] Thus, though detail of space, scent, and the habits of a long-dead mother, the atmosphere of a vanished home is established. The incorruptibility of Ian French is suggested through his imperviousness in the face of repeated approaches by shallow and silly women, the neat order of his studio and his daily living, his selected percepts of the girl who lives opposite, and the innocence of the lie which he tells in an effort to approach her.[32] The atmosphere of his life as a dreamer is established through such detail as his naive forgetfulness of the physical properties of a falling egg. Again, through character, habit and spatial relationships, the flavour of a manner of living is vividly invoked.

A situation involving the possibility of change is presented in "Marriage à la Mode".[33] Isabel is shown at what could well be

the moment of choice between an authentic and inauthentic mode of existence. Each of these states, as possible for her, is presented in terms of atmospheric aura. William, Isabel's husband, remembers her on country holidays in the days before she met the crowd of smart young people who have tempted her towards inauthenticity. In those days she "wore a jersey and her hair in a plait". At night they slept in an "immense feather bed with their feet locked together".[34] Not only the atmosphere of Isabel's former way of life, but of the relationship which previously existed between her and William, is thus suggested. That atmosphere which characterizes the life-style of the new Isabel is quite different. It is created through detail of space, dialogue and characterization. "Isabel sat on a painted stool before the dressing-table that was strewn with little black and green boxes."[35] New habits, new interests, a new way of life are suggested by means of the detail. Thus, in the author's words, detail is used "not for the sake of detail, but for the life in the life of it".[36] Isabel makes her choice, and sees herself clearly, even as she makes it. She knows herself for what she is: "shallow, tinkling, vain...."[37] In this story, as in others, the atmosphere of the chosen present is projected through a layer of regret for what might have been. This feature is present in stories such as "Life of Ma Parker" and "Je ne Parle pas Francais",[38] in which montage of time is a notable aspect of the technique. In the case of the former, happier pictures of the past are filtered through regret for what must be; in the case of the latter, the atmospheric accompaniments of the false self (which is in possession), are rendered poignant through the presentation of an entirely different atmosphere, which evokes the lost self, apprehended and ineffectually

mourned by the protagonist.

Regret is the dominant atmospheric emotion associated with the loss of the self, and the spatial images in terms of which this loss is presented are usually strongly imbued with this quality. Thus Beryl sees the real Beryl as a shadow, "faint and unsubstantial". It is a light towards which she aspires but which she cannot reach. "What was there of her except the radiance?"[39] This same quality of elusiveness, intangibility and regret colours the vision which Raoul Duquette has of his true and false selves. In the case of this character, older and more seriously corrupted than Beryl, the lost self is frantic. He sees it as "chasing up and down in the dark out there", and dashing off "distracted".[40] When he visualizes the lost self as existing side by side with Mouse, the pictures are tender and dream-like, evoked by music, and existing in imagined spatial dimensions which are presented as natural and untainted. The contrast between this atmosphere and that of the sleazy café existence as a pimp and poseur is rendered the more significant through the contrast between the atmosphere of his actual present and that which he projects as the companion of Mouse, eating wild strawberries, or walking home together under the same wet umbrella.[41] Sorrow combined with dread colours the image Mr Neave sees of the only self which exists in his present - a "little old spider", swinging down from the front of the house, and off on his compulsive scramble back to the office;[42] in contrast, the atmosphere is established of the self he might have been by means of detail of a long-past farewell on the porch "half hidden by a passion-vine, that drooped sorrowful, mournful, as though it understood".[43] Here again, atmosphere is established by means of spatial detail, projected

through memory or imagination. The technique used to establish the atmosphere of the false self seems to be predominantly that of spatial image and outer action; that of the true self, spatial image or symbol as presented through inner action in the form of memory or imagination.

The clear distinction between the atmospheric aura of the true and false self within the span of one human existence is clearly established in the foregoing stories; through them it may be seen that the author no longer seems to see innocence and corruption as mutually exclusive; they may exist, though clearly differentiated, within one human breast. In the final stories good and evil are more intimately intermingled. In such stories, it would be true to say that, where an atmosphere of beauty and goodness exists, it is never without a darker strain. The perception of beauty cannot be absolute; it is marred by the inevitable difficulties of the viewer's existence. Linda Burnell, in observing the transient beauty of a flower, remembers that in its very essence the idea of waste is inherent;[44] the music from Edie Bengel's piano suggests that life does not last long.[45] The protagonist of "The Canary" hears the sadness of living creation intermingled with the song of the bird.[46] The reader may be reminded of the author's statement, that "beauty triumphs over ugliness in life.... And that marvellous triumph is what I long to express".[47] In expressing this triumph, the author does not fail to suggest the atmosphere of blight with which, for her, beauty was inevitably associated.

It would probably be true to say that the full maturity of Katherine Mansfield's powers is associated with those stories which turn upon a limiting situation. A moment of discovery (Aristotle's

anagnorisis) may, if the protagonist is brave enough to accept that which becomes clear for him, lead to a peripetia, involving a change in his manner of existence. It is characteristic of the writer at the maturity of her vision to show the states of authentic and inauthentic existence as separated by a hair's breadth. In these stories, the atmospheric auras typical of each of these states are closely intermingled; yet each retains something of its distinct flavour. As a character moves towards authenticity, something of the inauthentic is likely to cling to him. If he makes the wrong decision, that will remain which reminds the reader that he is human and capable of grandeur even as he moves towards sin. In "The Fly", the atmosphere of inauthenticity has been established by means of the details of the protagonist's luxuriously furnished apartment, and such of his actions as show that he has little regard for people or any other form of life.[48] A limiting situation involving the wanton destruction of a living creature brings him to the verge. He is within the compass of self-knowledge and possible regeneration. However, the protagonist rejects the end product of the process of individuation, and blinds himself to his own true nature. In the single sentence, "But such a grinding feeling of wretchedness seized him that he felt positively frightened",[49] the atmosphere of his plight as a human being is established. In "The Garden-Party", Laura walks towards her transcendent experience accompanied by bric-à-brac which epitomises the atmosphere of the inauthentic. Thus, as she walks, it seems to her that "kisses, voices, tinkling spoons, laughter, the smell of crushed grass were somehow inside her".[50] At that stage she felt as if she "had no room for anything else". That this supposition is unduly pessimistic is shown by Laura's

capacity to realize the very different atmosphere of mortality. "What did garden-parties and baskets and lace frocks matter to him? He was far from all those things. He was wonderful, beautiful. While they were laughing and while the band was playing, this marvel had come to the lane."[51] Spatial relationships, details of action and objects are filtered through Laura's consciousness to show the possibility for either state to be apprehended within the scope of one human mind. In "The Escape", a wife torments a husband to the extent that, encountering by chance the atmosphere of a different manner of living, he reaches a limiting situation and sets himself free from her dominion.[52] The atmosphere of inauthenticity emanating from the wife is established initially through her view of the world, rendered by means of style indirect libre in the opening paragraph: "And then the station - unforgettable - with the sight of the jaunty little train shuffling away and those hideous children waving from the windows. 'Oh, why am I made to bear these things? Why am I exposed to them?...' The glare, the flies, while they waited ... and the woman who'd held up that baby with that awful, awful head."[53] Thus is the inhuman quality of the view of the beholder established. The atmosphere of her existence is further invoked through detail of the content of her handbag, and by means of the protagonist's awareness of its close association with his wife's essential mode of being: "He could see her powder-puff, her rouge stick, a bundle of letters, a phial of tiny black pills like seeds, a broken cigarette, a mirror, white ivory tablets with lists on them that had been heavily scored through. He thought: 'In Egypt she would be buried with those things.'"[54] Thus subtly is not only the flavour of her living established but also the fact of the protagonist's judgment of it.

The aura of a very different manner of living is impressionistically rendered. The protagonist sees a tree, and he is "conscious of its presence".[55] At once the atmosphere changes from the complaining, the tawdry and the mean to one which suggests the spirit of nature. That which he glimpses beyond the tree is mediated vaguely, through perceptions not yet clearly sorted out or conceptualized: "There was something beyond the tree - a whiteness, a softness, an opaque mass, half hidden - with delicate pillars."[56] The detail is not clearly defined, but the atmosphere has been delicately established as tender and pure, and the antithesis of that set up in the context of the protagonist's existence as his wife's whipping boy. The moment of insight is conveyed almost entirely through the atmospheric accompaniment of his experience. The protagonist becomes "part of" the silence, and hears a woman singing. The "warm untroubled voice" sets him free. As he listens he feels "himself enfolded". The open end of the story establishes the one fact of importance concerning his future. He has won through to a new style of living. His wife chatters unceasingly, but he is free, standing outside the compartment in the corridor of the train where, the reader is told, "so great was his heavenly happiness as he stood there he wished he might live for ever".[57] Thus through atmospheric flavour is the tenor of the protagonist's future suggested.

The atmosphere of the final New Zealand stories, which came into being, not as a "cry against corruption", but as a result of the author's feeling "in some perfectly blissful way at peace",[58] suggests a calm acceptance of the exigencies of being. It has been said that in these stories the narrator looks at the world through the eyes

of "an omniscient pre-school child".[59] It would perhaps be more accurate to say that the world is transmitted through the varied gaze of a number of viewers, for the stories show skilful use of the multiple omniscient point of view. The narrator does not entirely obliterate herself, however, and the view she transmits is that of an adult with marvellous memory, remembering in detail the view of a child. Thus, while the atmosphere is varied, altering according to the existential dilemma of the figural beholder, the overall atmosphere is set by the narrator's calm and loving backward glance. "All must be told with a sense of mystery, a radiance, an afterglow, because you, my little sun of it, are set."[60] This was the promise made by the author to her dead brother; she would re-create "the people we loved there" and "renew in writing" all the "remembered places".[61] Thus may the wondering gaze of the child be re-established, which accepts all manifestations of behaviour without criticism, and can view the decapitation of a duck with only incipient horror.[62] Such a gaze, purged of prejudice and censure, sees clearly the delicacy of the course pursued by each existing creature during the progress of the most ordinary day. The atmosphere established is that engendered by the view of an observant mind, charged with love, which watches and accepts the struggle towards authenticity, characterized as it is by the never-ending threat of the opposite state; existing within all human relationships and the world of everyday life. Thus the atmosphere of these late stories suggests that life is a hazardous adventure, in which man, although condemned by his nature to the threat of alienation, is ennobled by the struggle to find his better self. "Life is rich and mysterious and good, and I am rich and mysterious and good,

too."[63] The problem consists in discovering what constituted the good, and in piercing the mystery which shrouds it. Hence, in each detail and symbol of the everyday world, in the real, of ordinary habit, situation and action, and, above all, in the everyday consciousness of each man, woman and child, the atmosphere of these stories is contained.

Among Katherine Mansfield's achievements with regard to the handling of this function is her success in capturing the atmosphere which pertains to the precarious quality of personal choice as it occurs within the context of everyday living. Such decisions, seemingly trivial, may hold momentous import for the beleaguered human creature. The author shows skill in creating an atmosphere which points to the discrepancy between the apparent triviality of the incident presented and its significance in the life of the person to whom it relates.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VII

[1]Barbara Pannwitt, ed., The Art of Short Fiction (Boston: Ginn & Co , 1964), p. 474.

[2]Ruthrof, "Death Situations in the Short Story ", p. 390.

[3]Collected Stories, p. 701.

[4]Ibid., p. 702.

[5]Ibid., p. 697.

[6]Ibid., p. 701.

[7]Daiches, New Literary Values, p. 86.

[8]Collected Stories, p. 743.

[9]Ibid., p. 744.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid., pp. 744-5.

[12]Ibid., p. 746.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid., p. 718.

[15]Ibid., p. 561.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Ibid., p. 564.

[18]Ibid., p. 582.

[19]Ibid., p. 588.

[20]Ibid., p. 301.

[21]"Revelations ", Ibid., p. 190.

[22]Ibid., p. 192.

[23]Ibid., p. 191.

[24]"A Cup of Tea ", Ibid., p. 408.

[25]Berkman, Katherine Mansfield, p. 180.

[26]"Life of Ma Parker ", Collected Stories, p. 301.

[27]"Prelude" ; "At the Bay ", Ibid., pp. 11; 205.

[28]Ibid., p. 321.

[29]"Life of Ma Parker ", Ibid., p. 303.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid., p. 304.

[32]"Feuille d'Album ", Ibid., p. 160.

[33]Ibid., p. 309.

[34]Ibid., p. 313.

[35]Ibid., p. 312.

[36]Letters, I, 28. (K.M.'s emphasis.)

[37]Collected Stories, p. 320.

[38]Ibid., p. 60.

[39]"Prelude ", Collected Stories, p. 59.

[40]"Je ne Parle pas Francais ", Ibid., p. 65.

[41]Ibid., pp. 90-1.

[42]"An Ideal Family ", Ibid., p. 374.

[43]Ibid., pp. 374-5.

[44]"At the Bay", Ibid., p. 221.

[45]"Weak Heart", Ibid., p. 512.

[46]Ibid., p. 428.

[47]Letters, II, 195.

[48]Collected Stories, p. 422.

[49]Ibid., p. 428.

[50]Ibid., p. 259.

[51]Ibid., p. 261.

[52]Ibid., p. 196.

[53]Ibid., p. 197.

[54]Ibid., p. 198.

[55]Ibid., p. 201.

[56]Ibid.

[57]Ibid., p. 202.

[58]Letters, I, 119.

[59]Kleine, "An Eden for Insiders", p. 206.

[60]Journal, p. 94.

[61]Ibid.

[62]v "Prelude", Collected Stories, pp. 46-7.

[63]Ibid., p. 59.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FUNCTION OF TONE

A The Authorial Attitude towards the Characters

Reference has already been made to the letter written on February 3rd, 1918, in which Katherine Mansfield states that she had "two 'kick-offs' in the writing game". The first she describes as a "cry against corruption", adding that corruption is to be understood "in the widest sense of the word, of course". The second she describes as "joy - real joy.... Then something delicate and lovely seems to open before my eyes, like a flower without thought of a frost or a cold breath ... and that I try, ever so humbly, to express".[1]

Many of the early stories seem to derive their power from the first of these; at her final best, the cry against corruption seems to merge with that which is "delicate and lovely" so that the two springs may be said to converge, resulting in a form consistent with the author's stated view of aesthetics, in which she saw beauty and evil as necessarily co-existent.[2]

In this chapter, an attempt will be made to trace the changing tone as the writer's attitude to reader and fictional world matured from one of anger to one of a profound and impersonal acceptance which was able to bracket joy with anguish at the contemplated order of things. In the German Pension stories, Katherine Mansfield exploits a natural gift for satire - a talent which Katherine Anne Porter believed to be her true forte.[3] This gift the author later relinquished in her search for a deeper kind of truth.

These early stories, mediated through a tone of "snarling

ill-humour",[4] suggest that the entire fictional world is viewed as corrupt; and that the narrator, when existing within it, shares in this attribute of the presented world. The authorial narrative situation of "Frau Brechenmacher Attends a Wedding" is characterized by frequent withdrawal on the part of the narrator, enabling the characters to reveal themselves through dialogue.[5] The result is a view neither distanced nor impartial, for selection ensures that the male reveals himself as gross and selfish, inflicting hurt upon women who are delivered by a fateful combination of instinct and social hierarchy into his power. The tone of the author-narrator is compassionate, if somewhat perfunctory, towards mother and daughter. Through the lips of Frau Brechenmacher, a clear judgment upon the human condition is pronounced: "Always the same ... all over the world the same; but, God in heaven - but stupid."[6] The attitude implied towards fictional world and reader suggests an impatient arrogance which perceives the order of things as absurd and the male in particular as both gross and stupid. The anger implicit in the tone inclines the reader towards agreement with David Daiches in his description of these stories as mere "clever journalism". "There is little of that quietness of tone ", he adds, "which is so important in her best stories."[7]

Bearing some resemblance to the exuberant but lovable Stanley Burnell of the New Zealand stories, Andreas Binzer, protagonist of "A Birthday", is more sympathetically portrayed.[8] Although suffering self-consciously and considerably while his wife gives birth to a child, his concern is really centred upon his own discomfort. The omniscient narrator withdraws for long stretches of the story, allowing Andreas to reveal himself through outer and

inner action, the latter mediated through style indirect libre. Not entirely insensitive to the direction of the doctor's comments, the protagonist is shown as capable of greater sensitivity than most of the male characters depicted by the author at this period. He has a sense of his wife's delicacy and courage; none the less, when the tension is over, it is not of his wife that he thinks first. The tone is less devastating, but it still satirizes the egocentric male. The story closes with a highly revealing utterance, in which the protagonist exclaims: "Well, by God! Nobody can accuse me of not knowing what suffering is."[9]

Little allowance is made in the downright tones of these early stories for such intricacies of personality as are embodied in the idea of the loss of the self. The concentrated malice of the narrators' tones suggests, indeed, that a false self could well have taken over as the typical narrator of this period, projecting a distorted view of the inhabitants of the world. An interesting exception is "The-Child-Who-Was-Tired".[10] The hyphenated form of the title conveys the suggestion that it is not the whole self of the child which is presented, but a portion of the child, dominated and made separate by fatigue. Her mental state becomes distinctly abnormal as the need for sleep asserts its physical and mental claims. "As she sat at supper the Man and the Frau seemed to swell to an immense size ... and then become smaller than dolls, with little voices that seemed to come from outside the window."[11]

Singularly detached as she smothers the baby, the protagonist sees its struggles as reminiscent of "a duck with its head off, wriggling".[12] It is the self-that-is-tired which must eliminate the source of its fatigue. The author-narrator handles the scene

of the killing with a skilful blend of compassionate feeling for the protagonist and dispassionate report of that which occurs. The dream-like quality of the final sentence implies the loneliness of the "no man's-land" into which the protagonist's fatal action has led her.

The tone of the narrator toward the rest of the fictional world is distinctive as compared with that used in most of the author's stories of this period. Both man and wife are shown as brutal and corrupt, the man particularly so. Thus we are told that "the Man took the Frau's share of pudding as well as his own".[13] The state depicted is a sick one in which all seem to exist in a morass of circumstance outside human control. Even the children, as shown through the potagonist's eyes, are part of the human mess: "'Another baby! Hasn't she finished having them yet?' ... 'Two babies getting eye teeth ... two babies to carry about and wash their little piggy clothes!' She looked with horror at the one in her arms, who, seeming to understand the contemptuous loathing of her tired glance,... began violently screaming."[14] With the narrative situation showing some tendency to move from authorial to figural in such passages, the tone is mediated through the attitude of the child-protagonist.

An early example of a story in which division of the self is clearly present is "Millie", written in 1913.[15] Alone in her isolated dwelling while her husband rides out on a lynching party, Millie discovers the young man who is the object of their hunt. For Millie, moved to compassion by his youth and his terror, the realization that the boy is the "English johnny" [sic] for whom they are looking provides something approaching a limiting situation.

The sight of his "dreadful, frightened face" fans the humanity latent within her, so that she decides that "They won't ketch him. Not if I can 'elp it."[16]

The lynching party returns and Millie keeps faith with the young man. But when, during the night, he is flushed out, a strange reversal takes place. The pity which transformed her a short while before gives way to some primitive and atavistic lust for blood. The contrast is between two conflicting selves, one ennobled by an accession of human feeling, the other primitive and cruel: "And at the sight of Harrison ... and the three men hot after, a strange mad joy smothered everything else. She rushed into the road - she laughed and shrieked and danced in the dust,... 'A-ah! Arter 'im, Sid!... Go it!... Shoot 'im down. Shoot 'im!'"[17]

Each character presented is touched in some way by corruption. But the narrator's tone towards young Harrison is compassionate and concerned - no matter what he has done, he deserves pity now. The protagonist is shown as moving towards this insight, but retreating from illumination. While the narrator's tone suggests that her final frenzy is terrible indeed, there is a lurking note of compassion, which blends with that of the overall tone, for one who is isolated and untutored, who has moved towards self-knowledge and love for the unfortunate, only to deprive herself again.

"The Woman at the Store" (1911),[18] "Ole Underwood (1912)[19] and "The Little Girl (1912)[20] - each in its separate way suggests that sin, in its varying degrees and manifestations, is error and the sinner to be pitied rather than scorned. Thus the closing pages of "The Little Girl" show that the father who has hurt the child-protagonist through injustice is loving, none the less, and

himself deserving of pity. Terrible as he has become, Ole Underwood is still accepted as fully human. Censure is reserved for those in the world about him, who, by denying his humanity and viewing him as a "thing", have pushed him finally into a state of madness and sin. The peripheral first person narrator of "The Woman at the Store" is fortunate indeed to be able to round a bend in the road so that the "whole place disappeared".[21] The overall tone is one of stunned compassion for a mother and child who are caught in a net which has rendered them destructive, even as they are destroyed. The child, in particular, portrayed with some revulsion by the narrator, excites pity within the overall tone through the hopelessness of her implied situation; even her God-given talent has become, by the time she is six years old, an instrument of diseased projection. Set in New Zealand, these stories, with the exception of "The Little Girl", are concerned with people in humble circumstances. In the tone of acceptance of good and evil as co-existent within the framework of an individual existence, they are closer in tone to the final stories than to the intervening ones set in England.

The latter show, in general, a sharp dichotomy between those who are corrupt, and those who suffer as a result of their corruption. These " corrupt ones", less blatantly sensual and gross than were the inhabitants of the German pension, are often portrayed as superficially elegant and socially debonair. Often intellectuals (as, for example, the "literary gentleman" in "Life of Ma Parker")[22] or pseudo-intellectuals (as portrayed in "Bliss"[23] and "Marriage à la Mode"),[24] they are usually presented as affluent and as moving in slick social circles. The savage tone, which often renders ineffectual

the humour in the stories set in the German pension, has refined itself into a more restrained contempt. This allows a satirical effect more devastating, because more delicately handled. The pseudo-intellectuals of "Bliss" and "Marriage à la Mode" are accorded the coldest treatment. There is more feeling for the talented Raoul Duquette,[25] with his regretful and tender day dreams, and the "literary gentleman" of "Life of Ma Parker" who, despite his deliberate laying aside of his humanity, shows a spark of feeling in the single inroad allowed into his consciousness. ("Poor old bird! She did look dashed.")[26] This sympathetic glimpse into the mind of one of the betrayers is rare. For Mr Reginald Peacock there is no sympathy whatsoever.[27] His thoughts, mediated through his own consciousness, underline his self-absorption and the fact that he has become insensitive to those around him. They have become "objects", their only valid relationship being, for him, their power to feed his insatiable ego. He has become a _persona_, his manner towards his wife and young son harsh and grudging, his manner towards pupils and artistic associates ingratiating and unctuous. When he decides to make one last attempt to establish a better relationship with his wife, who, in his view, fails to give him sympathetic understanding, the false self he has become betrays him. It puts unintended words into his mouth, sweeping the story to a close in a sad, though richly comic, _dénouement_: "Down he sat on the side of the bed and seized one of her hands. But of all those splendid things he had to say, not one could he utter. For some fiendish reason, the only words he could get out were: 'Dear lady, I should be so charmed - so charmed!'"[28] Thus, through his own words, is the protagonist allowed to reveal the self he has become.

The attitude adopted towards wealthy and self-absorbed women, living out their lives in the pursuit of the frivolities of every-day life, is similarly astrigent. Figural presentation allows the protagonists of "Revelations"[29] and "A Cup of Tea"[30] each to reveal the quality of her own corruption. Style indirect libre, in each case achieving the quality of the protagonist's thought rhythms, allows each to reveal herself as shallow, destructive and false, with little hint of feeling in the overall tone for the predicament of the individual thus presented. The persona adopted by these individuals is that of the brittle, sophisticated London socialite. Each is shown as having suffered a loss of the self, but the protagonist is vouchsafed none of the insight or sorrow at this loss which renders poignant the plight of such characters as Raoul Duquette,[31] Beryl Fairfield[32] and Isabel in "Marriage à la Mode".[33] The protagonist of "Revelations" is vaguely aware that there is a false quality pertaining to her social persona, for she feels that only those paid to attend to her, such as the staff of her habitual hairdressing establishment, "under[stand] ... the real her".[34] When the young male hairdresser, confiding in her because she is an old customer, tells her that his little daughter has died that morning, Monica's sympathy is such as to impel her to rush straight out of the salon and into a waiting taxi. The discreet narrator effaces herself as far as possible, allowing the protagonist to reveal herself through thought, word and action. Her mental picture of the dead child, "a tiny wax doll with a feather of golden hair, lying meek, its tiny hands and feet crossed",[35] suggests her withdrawal from the I-Thou relationship and her entrenchment in inauthenticity. Something tender about the

image, lurking in such detail as the "feather of golden hair", allows a hint of mitigation. If the implication that the contemplation of a dead child might render the protagonist more human is intended, it is delicately conveyed. She retreats hastily and with ease, and as her thoughts toy with possible messages to be affixed to the token of sympathy eventually not sent, the tone grows devastating in its attitude towards her incapacity for love or genuine feeling. The protagonist is shown as unable to attain the state of illumination implied by the title; rather, she is portrayed as incapable of insight into the quality of herself or the sorrows of other people. Thus the title contributes to the contemptuous irony of the overall tone.

Rosemary Fell, revealing herself in the glib thought patterns of an undistinguished mind, is depicted through an overall tone of clear contempt.[36] Style indirect libre is used with effect as she is made to reveal the mediocrity of her mind by her equivocation of a coveted enamel box and her year-old son as "ducks". She, too, is shown as entrenched in the I-It relationship, her child so little a Thou to her that she fumbles for his name. The inauthentic quality of her existence thus early established informs the very spirit of the story, for she is prompted by a chance encounter to "take up" a fellow human being, later to abandon her in an unceremonious fashion which suggests that, for Rosemary, the stranger is a "thing". A shallow and brittle persona has withdrawn her energies from that which might have been the centre of a unique self, towards an obsession with acquisition, both of material objects and of a beauty which is not hers. The overall tone suggests scorn for the complacency of an egocentric

betrayer. Again, it is possible to read a hint of mitigation into the tone of the final sentence. As Rosemary whispers an entreaty for reassurance as to whether or not she is pretty, she is touched, for a moment, with pathos. Such subtle modulations suggest that the harsh authorial attitude is assumed rather than natural; it is as if the author has steeled herself to form stern judgments, despite a suppressed compassion which at times softens the anger.

The tone adopted towards the victims, on the other hand, is one of a pervasive sympathy. In a story such as "Life of Ma Parker", the tension between these divergent attitudes is delicately handled, so that, despite the intensity of the sympathy for the "victim", the story does not lapse into sentimentality.[37] At times this balance is precarious. In "Marriage à la Mode", the feeling for William occasionally becomes oppressive, and the group of young intellectuals is presented so disparagingly as to strain credibility.[38] Yet the story "comes off", for, with William absent from the final scene, the light is focused upon Isabel, and upon the struggle which takes place between the two selves within her. In the presentation of Isabel, the tone of the narrator blends with the overall tone in suggesting that the dichotomy between good and evil, authentic and inauthentic existence, is no longer seen as so fixed or unyielding in quality. (The story was written in 1921, by which date the author had composed a number of stories suggesting this more flexible view.) Isabel is depicted at a moment of temptation, in the process of being invited away from authenticity in a possible life with William and her children, towards a share in the inauthentic living of the young "intellectuals" who have "rescued" her. Although shown as rejecting the instinct of her truer self, she is tenderly

portrayed. The overall tone implies that she, as well as those she betrays, is sinned against. Thus she is shown as in a process of transition, between innocence and corruption. No hint of compassion suggests the human predicament of the intellectual friends.

The tone of the finest stories suggests a generous acceptance of the nature of mankind and the difficulties implied by the condition of being human. An early example of this compassionate acceptance is to be found in "Something Childish but very Natural",[39] where the theme is one of betrayal, but tone and title, as well as the emphasis laid upon Coleridge's poem, convey the suggestion that the fall from innocence results from the condition of being human, rather than from any fault on the part of the boy or girl portrayed. The protagonist of "The Man Without a Temperament"[40] is exiled both from the land and the life he loves by the invalid state of his wife. That he has been rendered sterile both as man and artist is indicated by the fact that even the casual acquaintances who are fellow guests in the pension are aware of his emasculation. This is evidenced by the fact that the two "Top-Knots" refer to him as "an ox". The tone adopted towards him by the creating mind is one of almost reverential gentleness and wonder. Very delicately, a sense of his frustration is conveyed, as when he is shown "turning the ring, turning the signet ring on his little finger".[41] The story is an outstanding example of that aspect of her art which has been suggested by H.E. Bates as among the writer's most original contributions to the art of the short story - the appeal to the imagination of the reader engendered through oblique presentation.[42]

It is the fate of man that he should be hindered from becoming his true self, that he should be distracted from realizing his potential for creative living, often through circumstances beyond his control. To find the opportunity to move towards adventurous living despite imposed restrictions implies the height of gallant acceptance. At the heart of the unstated tensions upon which the arc of the story is subtended is the idea that this state of living is harmful to the protagonist; that he knows it; that his wife is aware of it, and that each knows of the other's knowledge. In their restraint, and in the concern of each for the other, lies the key to the authenticity towards which, despite their imprisonment, they move. The tone of the narrator towards the wife - the source of the protagonist's spiritual malaise - is not one of anger; rather it is of a gentle and hopeless acceptance of her illness, which must hurt them both. His tact and kindly humour ("Très rum!", and the final whispered "Rot"),[43] her sympathy, obliquely conveyed through her twisting of the ring on his finger - all is presented with a deep concern. The quiet, unrebellious tone accepts her inability to set him free as failure, perhaps, but as part of the human predicament. In marked contrast to the malice of the earlier stories set in European pensions, the foreign inhabitants of this pension are, despite their vitality and impertinent interest, depicted without resentment.

A compassionate acceptance of a stern order in which a courageous woman can accept her role as an eternal spectator, and can love her fellow beings despite the lack of an opportunity to be loved, sets the tone of "Miss Brill".[44] The overall tone suggests tolerance towards the self-absorbed crowd in the park,

and even towards the thoughtless pair whose overheard conversation shatters the edifice of the protagonist's resistance. Robert L. Hull sees "Miss Brill" as a study in alienation, and suggests that the protagonist is estranged from "God, man and ... from herself".[45] The present writer sees Miss Brill as gallantly resisting alienation, and as achieving some measure of authenticity through this brave stand. Miss Brill's attempt to resist the alienation to which her isolated circumstances could so easily condemn her receives a severe, possibly a mortal, blow. It is the human condition rather than any individual person which is to blame.

Thus, to be the source of corruption is no longer the fate of certain persons only. It threatens all, and he who is innocent today is likely to become the betrayer of tomorrow. A clear cut dichotomy is no longer possible as authentic existence comes to be seen as precarious, a state to be moved towards, but never safely grasped. Inauthenticity is no longer shown as hopeless, a life-sentence for the spirit. At any moment the individual may, through a change in awareness, become free to make the necessary "leap"; the limiting situation through which he may be liberated is liable to occur during the course of the most unlikely day.

Thus the writer has learned to deal with her despair at the ugliness of life, not so much through a "cry against corruption", as through the contemplation and acceptance of the essence of things. Laura accepts,[46] Leila for the moment postpones,[47] an invitation to turn from superficial pleasures to the contemplation of an august beauty which makes living both tragic and splendid. Such a view implies awareness of a state of flux, a flow of endless

opportunity for a choice involving a move towards good or towards evil. In the later New Zealand stories, the characters are depicted as neither wholly good nor wholly evil. Each is engaged in a struggle, which may be described in such terms as the process of self-alienation, or the loss of the self through inauthentic living. The I-Thou relationship, so difficult for sinful man, is shown as continually threatened by the I-It. But Linda Burnell, who thinks that she cannot love her children, is portrayed through a tone of forgiveness, and is shown as encountering the genesis of a love of which she had not thought herself to be capable.[48] Beryl, despite her clear awareness of her falsity, and her longing to become her "true" self, treats Alice, her mother, Kezia and the little Kelveys as objects.[49] The overall tone implies no anger - no judgment of Beryl for her inconsistencies and weakness. The creating intelligence has reached an acceptance of the nature of things; as have such thinkers as Buber who sees the inevitability of the movement towards the I-It relationship as part of man's tragic fate. Evil lies, not in the tendency, but in the failure to struggle against it. Thus the tone of these final works is one of humble respect for each individual, engaged as he or she must be in the struggle implicit in the journey towards authenticity of existence.

B The Authorial Attitude towards the Narrators

It has been observed that the stories in which a first person narrator appears as protagonist or witness illustrate the writer's evolution towards objectivity.[50] Early experiments in presentation from the first person point of view suggest that initially the authorial attitude towards the narrator was one of considerable indulgence.

Closely identified with the author, the narrator typically adopts a superior and somewhat malicious attitude towards those who cross her path. Thus a school friend with whom she describes a reluctant encounter is a New Zealander, and addresses the narrator as "Katherine".[51] Those whom the narrators of this period describe are portrayed as stupid, greedy, egotistical and incapable of sensitive reaction. Minutely, but with malicious selectivity, the narrator records words and actions which reveal the basic unpleasantness of the people whom she meets. Simultaneously revealing her own malevolence, the narrator sets the tone through the assumption that such contemptible beings deserve repayment in similar, if more subtle, kind. If people are insensitive and stupid, one clearly superior in intellect may be forgiven for scoring off them, and for manipulating them without scruple at the bad faith thus involved. The interesting fact emerges that there are no exceptions. The narrator expects to be disillusioned by people, and is not disappointed. The world as presented through her eyes is an absurd world with inhabitants who constantly behave in such a manner as to underline the absurdity of their condition. An absurd view of the world implies that nothing matters;[52] except, in the case of the narrator, the opportunity for malicious amusement at the plight of such inconsiderable beings. This is a view with which the author would seem to concur, appearing to be oblivious of some facts of which the thoughtful reader becomes aware. The narrator is pleased to see nobody, likes nobody, and has an apparent lack of feeling for all whom she encounters. Thus the reader, unlike the author, may gain insight into the fact that it is the narrator rather than those upon whom she reports who is living in

the absurd; and that the author, with her uncritical acceptance of the basic assumption of rights conferred by superior powers of intellect (with the corollary that anything is permissible in dealing with such inferior beings), inhabits the same regions.

This becomes even more apparent in the German Pension sketches, where the narrator, a sharp-eyed peripheral observer, is in, but not of, a race of foreigners presented as boorish, insensitive and sententious. In "Germans at Meat",[53] "The Sister of the Baroness",[54] and "The Modern Soul"[55] respectively, the pitiless scrutiny of the narrator is directed upon the visceral, social, and spiritual debasement of the people observed. Even children, elsewhere so tenderly presented, are not exempt from the scorn of the harsh recording eye. "To my plebian eyes that afflicted child was singularly unattractive.... A dumb niece with unwashed ears struck me as a most depressing object."[56] The ultimate word is significant. To the narrator, people, even children, are objects. This narrator is certainly not capable of what Buber describes as the I-Thou relationship; neither is she critical of her own limitations. Clearly complacent, she exercises her gifts of humour and superior insight with reckless malice. The authorial tone, as already noted, is acquiescent. The need for objectivity has not yet been apprehended.

In "Bains Turcs",[57] written two years after the publication of In a German Pension, a slight but interesting shift in the narrator's attitude is discernible. Describing a visit to a Turkish bath with the inevitable encounter with stupid and disgusting flesh, the narrator discovers a sympathetic impulse towards "two fresh beauties" who are there. The women depicted are probably prostitutes,

but the narrator looks beyond this to record a certain gaiety and charm which distinguishes them. In the course of the narration the point of view is yielded for a time to "Mackintosh Cap", whose garrulous insistence on inflicting her views upon the reluctant narrator leads to a virulent denunciation of the "fresh beauties"; in the course of which she blatantly projects her own unconscious sexual and homosexual proclivities upon them. Repelled, the narrator leaves the reader in no doubt as to the direction of her sympathies. Her view of the victims of the attack becomes increasingly softened: "They were dressed in blue. One was pinning on a bunch of violets, the other buttoning a pair of ... gloves. In their charming feathered hats and furs they stood talking...."[58] "Mackintosh Cap" continues her ugly vituperations, but at the last moment the narrator seems to turn a not unsympathetic eye upon this lost and angry member of the human family, as she "stared after them, her sallow face all mouth and eyes, like the face of a hungry child before a forbidden table".[59]

Authorial and narrative tone still seem practically coincidental. Each of these, so flippantly and defiantly isolationist in earlier stories, has been superseded by one which cannot but recognize that which is gay and appealing, whatever weaknesses may co-exist. At least a movement towards a compassionate view is evidenced, both in narrator and overall tone, for one in the fictional world who reveals herself as singularly unlovely, both within and without.

A further advance is shown in "Violet" (1913) in which the narrator warns the protagonist, an old friend whom she has by chance encountered, not to trust her.[60] The tone is half-mocking, to be sure, with a sophisticated narrator fearful that the naïve

Violet's proffered confidences may prove a bore. At the same time there is true feeling in the narrator's warning, as if a more genuine self does not wish an opportunity to be given for betrayal. Violet persists, and the listening narrator is not quite able to maintain her cynical attitude. As Violet completes her story, revealing an innocence and depth of feeling at first unsuspected by the world-weary narrator, the latter moves towards the illumination implied in a new awareness of herself, and of the qualities still present in Violet. In the pause which follows upon Violet's story, the narrator regains receptivity to the voice of the background universe as she tells us that she "heard again the little fountain, half sly, half laughing - at me, I thought, not at Violet".[61] That the narrator can see her own fall in the child-like quality of her once-despised friend, and especially that she can hear in the music of the universe a laugh directed against herself, shows a remarkable advance. The author, still close to the narrator, now suggests the fallibility of the latter, and shows that the narrator herself is capable of apprehending that her intellectual superiority does not entitle her to sneer. An interesting perspective has been established through an overall tone suggesting the precarious quality of the humanity shared alike by author, narrator and characters encountered in the fictional world. The tone of both author and narrator emerges from the absurd, as both show recognition of this kinship within the human family.

"Spring Pictures", a fragment written in 1915, suggests a world inhabited by characters dressed in motley, but the narrator is similarly attired.[62] The violinist's nails are bitten, the flautist's cuffs are too long, the woman seen across the river is in the grip of some terrible and mysterious grief; meanwhile the

narrator longs for a letter, which is not delivered. Counterpointing her disappointment, egocentric as it may be, is an undertone of feeling for human suffering in general. The narrator is able to view her own predicament with a smile, "gaily swinging the milk bottle",[63] as she puts to the concierge the question to which she knows all too well what answer she will receive. A sense of proportion enables her to accept this disappointment, against the background of suffering musicians, and the woman across the river with her insupportable grief whom she watches as she "leans against a tree".[64] The narrator has acquired a sense of humour, and the overall tone allows sympathy for her disappointment, along with the recognition of the existence of deeper sorrows.

"An Indiscreet Journey"[65] is remarkable for the objectivity of its tone, as the author, effacing herself, allows the narrator-protagonist to progress towards illumination in a journey of the spirit, set against the background symbol of a journey by train. The narrator, presented with careful neutrality of overall tone, initially reveals herself as perceptive and sensitive to impressions of beauty ("Really very beautiful, I thought, smiling at St Anne")[66] but affected and silly ("I jumped out of my pyjamas and into a basin of cold water like any English lady in any French novel").[67] As the train journeys across Europe, the protagonist is carried towards the arena of the war -- a realm of suffering of which her understanding is as yet entirely academic. Because she is intelligent and observant, she accurately records sensations minutely perceived, but does so in a fragmentary manner which relates to the fact that for her their significance has no real meaning as yet. A glimpse of a young soldier reminds her, not of flesh-and-blood

suffering, but of a "little comic picture waiting for a joke to be written underneath".[68] Yet the tone of the author shows no impatience with this Punch-like apprehension of one quite probably proscribed; the narrator reveals herself soon afterwards as grappling with ideas, finding it difficult to reconcile impressions of "laughing voices"[69] and gay and colourful graves with the submerged reality of which she is but dimly aware.

It is through her receptiveness to beauty that the narrator moves towards an altered view, allowing her to progress towards an enlightened selfhood. Thus, as she contemplates the "faces lifted, listening",[70] she transcends the attitude of the smart and furtive girl, intent on deceiving the authorities in an attempt to keep an assignation in forbidden territory, by reaching the level of one who can look upon those who have suffered, and are perhaps about to die, with love approaching reverence. "They are like a family party having supper in the New Testament...."[71] The journey, culminating in this altered view, insofar as it has disrupted complacency and ease, has been indiscreet indeed. It has carried the protagonist towards authenticity, with its attendant anguish at the awareness of the implications of Being. The tone, as invested in title and in story, discloses a profound though modulated joy that such spiritual progress is possible. The title, flippant at first glance, acquires sombre and thought-provoking overtones when considered in this light.

The narrator in this story has moved towards a richer state of being; the narrators of "Je ne Parle pas Francais",[72] "A Married Man's Story",[73] and "Poison"[74] all reveal awareness of a lost and better self from which they have become estranged, the

contemplation of which evokes a haunting and impotent regret. Distance between author and narrator is now well established, the author allowing the narrator-protagonist in each case to relate the inception and growth of his own corruption.

Like Sylvia Berkman,[75] Saralyn Daly considers the abandonment of Mouse as the central concern of "Je ne Parle pas Francais". Daly suggests that, in Raoul Duquette, the author portrays a "narrator for whom she felt no sympathy but distinct distaste".[76] In the opinion of the present writer, this emphasis is misleading, and results in an under-estimation of the narrative's structure and meaning. The narrator-protagonist reveals himself as the betrayer of Mouse, to be sure, but just as certainly, of the self he was meant to be. The emphasis on the loss of the self is introduced early and recurs throughout the narrative structure; attention is focused upon it, not only through time montage - where the levels of time selected for presentation relate significantly to the inception and escalation of this process - but also through the marked oscillation of tone, atmosphere, diction and image, all of which point to the distance between the false and dominant self and the very different essence of that which haunts his imagination, as a major theme.

In presenting the depraved self that he has become the narrator's tone suggests complacency; but, at times, catching sight of himself in a mirror or moved by some chance image of pure association, he appears to see himself and his chosen milieu through death-stricken perceptions, and to recoil in horror from what he has become. With unerring insight he selects the incident in his youth which initiates the loss of the self. "Bury it under a

laundry basket"[77] is the phrase with which he dismisses the childhood self which might have been father to a very different man. In introducing the motif of Mouse, the narrator describes what might have amounted to a second chance; the opportunity to resurrect the better self through keeping faith with one as deserted as his buried self, and his rejection of this chance. His attitude towards himself becomes increasingly savage as he denotes his strong contempt for his character and actions. It is the tone of the narrator rather than the overall tone, then, that implies a "distinct distaste"[78] for the protagonist. The distance between the overall tone and that of narrator is considerable, the former conveying a sympathetic regret for what the protagonist-narrator has become, and especially for what he might have been, and for his sense of the difference. The character for whom the overall tone implies little sympathy is the foppish and mother-dominated Dick Harmon, in the case of whom the contempt of the overall tone overrides the amused indulgence of the narrator.

"A Married Man's Story",[79] written shortly afterwards, is remarkably similar in theme and structure. The narrator of this unfinished story is even more sympathetically conceived. The overall tone suggests pity and terror for his helplessness as, conditioned by childhood betrayals, he gives himself over to some dread, though not fully disclosed, destructive power.

Thus by 1918, the tone of the author suggests horror at corruption, but sympathy for those who are corrupt; and acknowledges the co-existence of good and evil, with the corollary that, within the most depraved, there lingers the possibility of beauty. The overall tone of "Poison"[80] delicately underlines this idea,

the title constituting a powerful symbol of its essence. As the narrator-protagonist moves towards illumination, with regard to both his betrayal and his own incipient corruption, his regret for a younger and more innocent self is deftly suggested, while the theme of contagion, obliquely rendered through the temporary shift of point of view from poisoned to poisoner, conveys frightening implications for the future. Again, the tone is less one of revulsion at the nature of corruption than of sorrow for the condition of man, which dooms him to spread the venom, even as he receives it.

The technique of presentation through a fallible narrator is fully exploited in "The Lady's Maid",[81] in which the narrator-protagonist eulogizes a beloved mistress, to whose exploitation of her own selfless devotion she is blind. Unwittingly, the narrator supplies both reader and implied listener with the insight which she lacks. The overall tone denotes acceptance in the fullest sense - not only of the narrator, for whose naïve and myopic view respect rather than contempt is implied, but even for those who have exploited her, the self-obsessed mistress, and the background figure of the grandfather who first conditioned her to submit. "Forgive them for they know not what they do" are words appropriate to the tone of the creating mind. Through the neutral and ironic mode of presentation, both betrayed and betrayers are shown as the victims of the limited vision accorded to mankind. The victim suffers, and this suffering, of which she herself is so touchingly oblivious, renders her life beautiful. The facts are presented and left to speak for themselves.

"The Canary", written in 1922, was probably the author's

last completed work.[82] This, too, is in the form of a monologue, but now no listener is implied in the fictional world, with the result that the narrator speaks clearly and directly to the reader. This narrator is not naïve. She anticipates criticism ("Does that sound foolish?")[83] and expects nothing from her "three young men" ("But I could not expect them to be interested.... Why should they be? I was nothing to them.")[84]

Anger and disappointment are absent from the tone of one who has strength and wisdom to accept life and to look for beauty where, within the context of her living, it may be found. "Perhaps it does not matter so very much what it is one loves in this world. But love something one must.... I loved the evening star...."[85]

It is, perhaps, the innocence which lies beyond experience that renders this narrator's tone so clear and so free of rancour. Something of the eager receptivity of a child's perception enables her to present her fresh apprehensions of beauty. She is too wise to accept the dissenting judgment of a "wiser" world. Thus the protagonist knows that it is "untrue. Dreadfully untrue", when the voice of worldly wisdom tells her that there is "no comfort, Miss, in a canary".[86]

This wise innocent knows that the death of her canary is, in a sense, an insignificant event, even within the context of her own restricted existence. "I shall get over it. Of course. I must."[87] Yet in this insignificance lies her reality, and the important aspect of her being.

Thus, by means of this inconsiderable microcosm of human loss through death, the narrator attempts to express the inexpressible

with regard to human existence. Despite her wisdom, she is no intellectual - the insight which allows her sure vision is intuitive rather than rational. Yet, through the homely imagery within her range, she expresses the essential quality of man's existence. "I must confess that there does seem to me something sad in life. It is hard to say what it is. I don't mean the sorrow we all know, like illness and poverty and death. No, it is something different. It is there, deep down, deep down, part of one, like one's breathing.... But isn't it extraordinary that under his sweet, joyful little singing it was just this - sadness? - Ah, what is it? - that I heard."[88]

The narrator knows, then, and accepts, the quality of man's existence. The death of the canary has been, in its minute way, a limiting experience. Aware of, and able to accept, the tragic essence of Being, the protagonist-narrator moves, for all her deprivations, towards authenticity. Such a concept as that of a true and false self becomes irrelevant as the narrator glimpses eternity in the song of a canary. Overall tone and the tone of the narrator have again become practically congruent, as author allows narrator to express the essence of the human condition through the lips of a wise and unsophisticated thinker.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

[1]*Letters*, I, 119.

[2]*Letters*, II, 195.

[3]Katherine Anne Porter, "The Art of Katherine Mansfield", Review of *The Short Stories of Katherine Mansfield*, in *The Nation* (New York), CXLX (October 23, 1937), 435-6.

[4]Gordon, *Katherine Mansfield*, p. 8.

[5]*Collected Stories*, p. 718.

[6]*Ibid.*, p. 725.

[7]Daiches, *New Literary Values*, p. 110.

[8]*Collected Stories*, p. 747.

[9]*Ibid.*, p. 757.

[10]*Ibid.*

[11]*Ibid.*, p. 764.

[12]*Ibid.*, p. 766.

[13]*Ibid.*, p. 764.

[14]*Ibid.*, p. 760.

[15]*Ibid.*, p. 582.

[16]*Ibid.*, p. 587.

[17]*Ibid.*, p. 588.

[18]*Ibid.*, p. 561.

[19]*Ibid.*, p. 573.

[20]*Ibid.*, p. 577.

[21]Ibid., p. 561.

[22]Ibid., p. 301.

[23]Ibid., p. 91.

[24]Ibid., p. 309.

[25]"Je ne Parle pas Francais ", Ibid., p. 60.

[26]"Life of Ma Parker ", Ibid., p. 302.

[27]"Mr Reginald Peacock's Day ", Ibid., p. 144.

[28]Ibid., p. 153.

[29]Ibid., p. 190.

[30]Ibid., p. 408.

[31]"Je ne Parle pas Francais ", Ibid., p. 60.

[32]"Prelude ", Ibid., p. 11.

[33]Ibid., p. 309.

[34]Ibid., p. 193.

[35]Ibid., p. 196.

[36]"A Cup of Tea ", Ibid., p. 408.

[37]Ibid., p. 301.

[38]Ibid., p. 309.

[39]Ibid., p. 607.

[40]Ibid., p. 129. (The original title of the story was "The Exile".)

[41]Ibid., p. 141.

[42]Bates, The Modern Short Story, p. 128.

[43]Collected Stories, pp. 136; 143.

[44]Ibid., p. 330.

[45]Robert L. Hull, "Alienation in Miss Brill", Studies in Short Fiction, V (Fall, 1967), 74-76.

[46]"The Garden Party", Collected Stories, p. 245.

[47]"Her First Ball", Ibid., p. 336.

[48]"At the Bay", Ibid., pp. 220-1.

[49]v "Prelude"; "The Doll's House", Ibid., pp. 11; 313.

[50]Daly, Katherine Mansfield, p. 63.

[51]"A Truthful Adventure", Collected Stories, p. 540.

[52]v Camus, The Myth of Sisyphus, p. 89.

[53]Collected Stories, p. 697.

[54]Ibid., p. 705.

[55]Ibid., p. 725.

[56]"The Sister of the Baroness", Ibid., p. 707.

[57]Ibid., p. 601.

[58]Ibid., p. 606.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Ibid., p. 594.

[61]Ibid., p. 601.

[62]Ibid., p. 644.

[63]Ibid., p. 647.

[64]Ibid.

[65]Ibid., p. 628.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Ibid., p. 630.

[68]Ibid.

[69]Ibid.

[70]Ibid., p. 643.

[71]Ibid.

[72]Ibid., p. 60.

[73]Ibid., p. 432.

[74]Ibid., p. 685.

[75]Berkman, Katherine Mansfield, p. 167.

[76]Daly, Katherine Mansfield, p. 66.

[77]"Je ne Parle pas Francais ", Collected Stories, p. 67.

[78]Daly, Katherine Mansfield, p. 66.

[79]Collected Stories, p. 432.

[80]Ibid., p. 685.

[81]Ibid., p. 375.

[82]Ibid., p. 428.

[83]Ibid., p. 429.

[84]Ibid., p. 430-1.

[85]Ibid., p. 429.

[86]Ibid., p. 431.

[87]Ibid., p. 432.

[88]Ibid.

CHAPTER IX

KATHERINE MANSFIELD'S METAPHYSIC

It has been remarked that since technique in fiction derives from a writer's metaphysic, the critic would do well to attempt to arrive at a definition of the metaphysic before undertaking an evaluation of the technique.[1] In this research the aim has been to explore rather than to evaluate; thus, through a consideration of the body of Katherine Mansfield's work along a number of structural perspectives, an attempt has been made to abstract the writer's metaphysic. The insights which have allowed the statement of the world view as set out in the chapter that follows have been achieved as a result of the structural examination which has constituted the subject matter of the preceding seven chapters. Inevitably, therefore, this chapter will contain some repetition of that which has gone before.

Emphasis has been laid, in the preceding pages, on the two separate origins of Katherine Mansfield's creative power, as she herself distinguished them. Thus, while her later stories arose from a sense of joy, the earlier were the expression of a "cry against corruption". The author adds that when she uses the word "cry" she means it quite literally. The stories constitute, not a protest, but a cry.[2]

The stress placed by Katherine Mansfield upon this distinction implies a high measure of acceptance, even in the stories motivated by the original impulse. Elsewhere she shows herself to be strongly averse to the idea that the artist should have a

problem. This, in the author's opinion, is an "invention of the nineteenth century". Thus, according to her view, Chaucer had no problem, and neither did Shakespeare. The artist's function, as she sees it, is rather "to take a long look at life. He says softly, 'So this is what life is, is it?' ... All the rest he leaves."[3]

This chapter will constitute an attempt to examine and assess the quality of the artist's "long look at life". Insights gleaned from the structural examination of the stories considered in the preceding chapters, and the body of the work as a whole, will be considered anew, with the following ends in view: To examine, in the first instance, the stories which seem to project the view that "everything is doomed to disaster", in a world which is ordered by some malignant power, so that all which is beautiful is condemned, "wilfully" and "stupidly", to an early and inevitable blight;[4] to discover whether, in the stories which resulted from a "different appearance of things"[5] she was able to transcend the quality of this view; and to trace the development of a world view which, while tragic in its essence, came to include a noble acceptance of the exigencies of the human condition, despite the cruel facts of sickness, betrayal and death which render man's brief passion both perilous and forlorn.

The argument of the chapter will contend, and try to show, that the author eventually came to accept the universe and man as one; and that with this acceptance came a sense of the beauty with which mortality touches mankind.

David Daiches and other critics have laid stress upon the fact that Katherine Mansfield's stories are unified insofar as they

constitute a quest for what she herself described as the "deepest truth" to be found in an idea.[6] An examination of the function of action has shown that the plots of Katherine Mansfield's stories are informed by a movement of the spirit towards new and enriched awareness. The action moves towards an altered view for the characters, the reader, or for both. Attention to the function of character has suggested that the protagonists, while presented as individuals, belong to the genus "Everyman" as well. The mythic aspect of Katherine Mansfield's characterization ensures that the journey of each character towards augmented truth has contained relevance for the generality of mankind. Beneath the slight, everyday quality of the action and situation presented is a search for an answer to the fundamental question as to the nature of, or reason for, man's sojourn here on earth.

So perceptive a reader as T.S. Eliot observed the presence of a quest in Katherine Mansfield's work, and remarked pejoratively upon it. In a conversation with T.O. Beachcroft, Eliot suggested that this quality in her work did not altogether please him, as it precluded the development of a "pure aesthetic". Beachcroft, however, suggests that the quest, at least as far as the author's finest work is concerned, is "absorbed into her art".[7] To explain, or underline a moral, was certainly not consistent with Katherine Mansfield's idea of artistic integrity. In her finest work, she presents the facts of a situation, and leaves moral inferences to the reader and characters, insofar as they have power to see them.

In the final pages of the chapter, an attempt will be made to indicate the manner in which the writer came to postulate an ethos combining ethical and aesthetic values. Middleton Murry has

likened the thinking of Katherine Mansfield to that of Keats, with regard to what he describes as her "extraordinarily profound" doctrine that despair should never be directly expressed; instead, it should be transformed into beauty through artistic creation.[8] Murry mentions the "Ode to Melancholy" as a poem in which Keats puts forward a similar view. It would seem that the thinking of the author also bore a similarity to the poet's with regard to the equivalence of truth and beauty. That the truth, however painful, holds beauty within it, is the ethos which emerges from the final stories. An extract from a letter written by Katherine Mansfield in 1922 sheds interesting light upon the process whereby the author came to feel that beauty vanquishes the ugliness in life: "Do you really feel that all beauty is marred by ugliness and the lovely woman has bad teeth? ... It seems to me if Beauty were Absolute it would no longer be the kind of Beauty it is. Beauty triumphs over ugliness in Life.... And that marvellous triumph is what I long to express."[9] Katherine Mansfield's final view seems to include the idea that the truth in its entirety is beyond human understanding. The vision must prove elusive, for it can be sensed in glimpses and signs, at best. A passage from a letter helps to elucidate this view: "My secret belief - the innermost 'credo' by which I live is - that <u>although</u> life is loathsomely ugly and people are terribly often vile and cruel and base, nevertheless there is something at the back of it all - which if I were only great enough to understand, would make <u>everything</u> ... indescribably beautiful. One just has glimpses, divine warnings - signs -."[10] To record situations in which characters are vouchsafed such divine warnings and signs seems to have become the

author's close endeavour. In the accomplishment of this she sought, with increasing humility, to efface herself, her own personality and her own view; so that a portion of the august scheme might be shown without impertinent comment from one able to apprehend but a portion of the entire design.

The search for evidence of the loss of the self, and of man's resistance to estrangement, initiated in the preceding chapters, has been continued; and an attempt has been made to relate such evidence as has been revealed in the course of the research to the author's evolving metaphysic.

The inward direction assumed by the author's quest for the truth about mankind has led to an interest in the essential quality of the self; so that the theme of self-alienation has been found to be germane to many of the stories. The exploration of such functions as those of narrative situation, time, space, atmosphere and tone has yielded a result suggesting that, where the idea is not explicitly stated, it is none the less woven into the fabric of the story, to an extent not suspected by the present writer at the outset of this research.

The attempt to describe the evolving metaphysic will be presented in three sections. The first two, entitled "The Lost Self" and "The True Self", pertain to degrees of estrangement and of authenticity of existence. The final section attempts to show the eventual confluence of the author's aesthetic and moral purpose.

The Lost Self

Katherine Mansfield seems to have been concerned from the outset with the terrible consequences of the power exercised by one human being over another. Deprivation and loss are recurrent themes

of the stories. At no time are the results more devastating than when the loss involved is that of the self, which should be part of each man's rightful heritage. To a considerable extent, the cry against corruption which was the motivating power of a number of the stories is directed against those who assist their fellow men and women towards the most fatal of deprivations.

The difference between man's promise, and that which he becomes, seems to have become an almost obsessive concern of Katherine Mansfield's. It is present in themes of stories and in letters. "Why do people hide and withdraw and suspect - as they do? I don't think it is just shyness.... I used to. I think it is lack of heart : a sort of blight on them which will not allow them ever to come to full flower."[11] In the fictional worlds of the stories, the blossoming self is frequently shown as stricken or blighted, and this contagion of the spirit seems to follow upon the influence of men and women upon one another. Various factors -- the necessity to live "in boxes",[12] to make money, to impress other people, or to succeed in one of the many competitive spheres created by modern living -- prevent people from developing relationships which are spontaneous, gay or free. Such stories as "The Fly"[13] and "An Ideal Family"[14] demonstrate the manner in which middle class values betray people into giving over their lives to the making of money. Others, such as "Prelude",[15] "New Dresses"[16] and "The Little Girl",[17] lend evidence of the restrictive influence of one person over another within the basic societal unit of the family circle. Ties of love, marriage, parent-child relationships, even ties of friendship, place the human being in a position of power which is apt to become destructive, both to himself and to others.

One who is well-loved is in a position of special privilege, and liable to do great harm. Abuse of such power, or even an understandable failure of faith, might hold very serious repercussions for the other person. The suggestion to be inferred from a story such as "Something Childish but very Natural" is that the state of being human renders the keeping of faith almost an impossibility.[18] The prominence given to Coleridge's poem, both as title and as part of the story, suggests that simple and direct behaviour, natural and uncomplicated for such a creature as a bird, is too difficult for the human creature. The complexities of man's estate are such as to render it impossible that he can avoid hurting, or being hurt by, those he loves most deeply. More frightening still, a chance encounter between strangers, a remark overheard, may result in a hurt to the vulnerable human spirit far out of proportion to the intent of the agent. "Miss Brill",[19] "A Cup of Tea",[20] "The Canary"[21] and "Psychology"[22] are among the stories which carry such ideas as an important aspect of their themes.

In the early stories, innocence seems to have been seen as the prerogative of certain people. The ultimate in corruption, presented as an insidious rather than a spectacular process, seems to have been regarded as residing in those who destroy innocence, either wantonly or through insensitivity. The author's projected view of human relationships at this time leads one to compare her thought, as suggested by the stories, with that of Sartre as contained in the dictum: "Hell, that is other people".[23] People live essentially alone, and if some attempt is made to bridge the void, it is likely to be made for some selfish end, without regard to the effect upon the person approached. In "The Tiredness of Rosabel",

the protagonist, inviolate in her world of secret and surprising thought, is shown as cut off from the couple who are her clients.[24] The only attempt to bridge the gap, rendered poignant by her secret longing to escape to a life more like that she imagines as led by the glamorous couple, is, significantly, an insolently oriented remark from the young man, which implies a sexual interest, but is devoid of concern for Rosabel as a person or human being. "The Little Governess" is concerned with an approach which turns out to be a coldly calculated attempt at a betrayal of human trust.[25] In the case of "The-Child-Who-Was-Tired", the approach is made for purposes of exploitation, and the protagonist is almost inevitably propelled towards the act which is fatal to herself and the child in her care.[26] The protagonist of "Ole Underwood" is portrayed as on the edge of a precipice which will project him into the final loneliness resulting from madness and violence.[27] He is helped over the edge by those he encounters casually in a pub. In each of these stories, he whom chance or circumstance has decreed will be in a position to influence or betray the protagonist is guilty of that which, in Buber's system of thought, amounts to the ultimate evil: the giving up of oneself to the I-It relationship. No attempt is made to maintain that difficult but precious state of being implied by the I-Thou in which man ventures out towards his fellow man with love and respect.[28] The protagonist in each case is helped towards his doom through contact with those who are estranged from their fellow men and from themselves.

If existence precedes essence, as Sartre argues, man is flung into a world which can only acquire whatever meaning he creates in it for himself.[29] Given such a view, the ultimate in

corruption must lie in a person or system which prevents a fellow being from filling the entity which is the self with some creative meaning, without which his existence is rendered absurd. The early stories show again and again a protagonist who is prevented by the people or the system into whose web he has been thrown from finding his essence. The protagonist of "Millie" moves to the very brink of a richer selfhood, and of finding authenticity of existence through feelings of warmth and compassion for a stricken fellow mortal; but she is flung back from this state by the impact of prevailing attitudes and stereotypes, and the blood-lust of the vengeful group of which she is a member.[30] The self which so nearly came into being is lost, as an atavistic alter ego takes over, alienating her from the essence she so nearly attained. In "The Woman at the Store", various factors (clearly implied as beyond her control) have combined to render the existence of the protagonist sterile; her doom has already infected her six-year-old child, for all her diseased but brilliant talent. In the nightmare which her living has become, the protagonist asks "Wot for?"[31] Frau Brechenmacher, less unfortunate and more resigned, sees little point in her existence. It is, as she sees it, both pointless and inescapable: "All over the world the same; but, God in heaven - but stupid."[32] Ole Underwood, with the terrible innocence of the insane, is unable to comprehend that the world for him has no meaning; but the "mad wind" accompanies him as he goes, and, as he rocks the little kitten "to and fro" in his arms prior to swinging it into the sewer opening, the reader becomes aware that this is so.[33]

These stories are set in the absurd, where, according to the judgments which Camus lists as absurd, "all is well; everything is

permitted and nothing is hateful".[34] That which might have been hateful to the characters mentioned above becomes permissible once the frightening lesson of "all is well" has been absorbed. No action remains as abhorrent. Camus suggests that in order to guard against the dangers inherent in such judgments, it is necessary to "restore morality by the Thou".[35] Only a sense of the self in relation to the Thou of other people can guard mankind against the loss of the self implied. Despite their comic mode, those stories of the German Pension series which are related by a first person narrator share this setting in the absurd. The narrator's contemptuous view of the people she observes, with their apparent lack of sensitivity, brings her to the idea that, with regard to them, anything might be permitted; nothing (for they are crass and imperceptive) would be hateful. In her inability to perceive in them any quality rendering them worthy of the Thou, she herself hovers on the brink of the absurd.

Man is shown as estranging himself from the unique self he might be in a variety of ways. In "Pictures", Miss Ada Moss is obliged to relinquish the self which cares about the fate of little children, and is concerned as to whether sparrows get fed, by the demands of an unfeeling world and economic duress.[36] The parents depicted in "Sun and Moon"[37] and "A Suburban Fairy Tale"[38] are shown as having yielded their selves in favour of social roles and suburban good living. In "An Ideal Family", Mr Neave awakens too late to the realization that he has wasted his life in "spinning" the requirements of a socially ambitious family, to whom he is of no more importance than the redundant male spider.[39] "Bliss" shows that perilous moment of happiness, derived from a flight into the

comfortable world of everyday living, which augurs suffering to come; the state of joy experienced by the protagonist is one of hubris, in the midst of which she is brought face to face with the strictures of a system which has robbed her of the right to order a spontaneous relationship with her own husband or her child.[40] She is about to be betrayed, by the people whom she loves, and who are part of the system. "A Cup of Tea" shows a flight back into inauthenticity as a result of the threat of personal and sexual competition.[41] The challenge to compassion is refused, the human being who elicited it becoming a threatening It, to be abandoned as rapidly and as inexpensively as possible. The overall tone contains a hint of concern for the protagonist, spoilt and brittle as she is, insofar as society's stresses, the human condition, or both, have combined to promote this failure of the spirit. "Sixpence" suggests the loss of the I-Thou relationship; the parents have allowed the ready-made systems of thought inflicted upon them by others within their social group to affect their relationship with their little boy, with the result that they wound him cruelly, and initiate within their child a movement towards the donning of the protective armour which could result in a loss of the self.[42] A similar process is to be seen in the parental punishment of the love-induced "naughtiness" of the protagonist of "The Little Girl",[43] as well as in the guilt-inspired stealthiness of Kezia in the final incident presented in "Prelude". In this instance she is shown as moving towards the formation of a false self as, fearful of adult censure, she "tiptoe[s] away, far too quickly and airily".[44] All three of these stories show some measure of sympathy with the adult transgressors, a theme to be movingly explored in "The Doll's

House" where Kezia, defying the voices of adult "education", moves towards authenticity by defying her Aunt Beryl, who is shown in a state of alienation from the self.[45] "Life of Ma Parker", in which the themes of deprivation through death and the exploitation of one human being by another are examined, suggests in its ethos that the one exploited is, in the long run, a richer human being than the one who, having suffered a loss of the self, exploits her.[46] The protagonist's existence has a far greater potential for authenticity than does that of the mask-like "literary gentleman". This theme is presented again in "The Lady's Maid", where the narrator innocently reveals the extent of her exploitation at the hands of a beloved employer; in so doing, she unwittingly reveals the quality of her own existence as far nearer to authenticity than that of her self-centred mistress.[47] Interesting progress has been made towards a view of corruption as a force which must, of necessity, hurt the perpetrator more grievously than it does the victim.

The development of a more compassionate attitude towards the authors of corruption is suggested in "Marriage à la Mode", where the group of young artists and writers is handled with asperity; but there is pity for the protagonist, who is shown at the very moment of choice between a true and false self.[48] The compassion of the overall tone for one in a state of transition emphasizes the delicacy of the choice, which might easily have moved in the opposite direction. Katherine Mansfield's quest is moving towards a deeper kind of truth - a breakdown of the dichotomy between, on the one hand, the innocent or the exploited, and, on the other, the corrupt or exploiting. Even such an arch-exploiter of the innocent as Raoul

Duquette is shown as having a curious inner innocence, of which the false self, which controls his manner of existence, is insistently and regretfully aware.[49] As in "A Married Man's Story", the innocence of the child has been irretrievably defiled before he is at an age to order things otherwise. The man into whom this sullied child has grown seems powerless to prevent himself from destroying others as he has been destroyed. Divested of the strength to become other than that which he is, he has the tragic power to visualize the self he might have been, and to mourn its irrevocable loss. The narrative situation of these stories allows the protagonist to project his self-contempt, but the overall tone implies compassion for the quality of the narrator's regret. A comparable narrative situation allows regret for a lost self and horror at the idea of the spiritual contagion inherent in corruption to emerge as the metaphysic informing "Poison".[50] The protagonists of these stories, in the grip of false selves, are cut off from authenticity. They live in the grip of forces they do not understand and therefore cannot control. In Jungian terms, the archetypes of the collective have asserted their sway; the loss of the self has resulted in the ascendance of persona, shadow or anima.

It is interesting to note that at no time in one of Katherine Mansfield's stories is a human being shown as seeking aid, either human or divine, for spiritual distress or the loss of the self. No Mansfield character exclaims "God help me!" And at no time is any attempt made to confide in doctor, priest or friend. The human being is shown as having, in all but the superficial levels of life, to live his life alone and to make his own decisions. It is an essential feature of the metaphysic that corruption and loss of

faith arise so insidiously as to elude verbal definition. This fact, together with the subtle stresses imposed on him by societal living, accounts for the terrible helplessness of the human creature.

The ethos of the stories still suggests that people are very much at one another's mercy; the exploiters are now shown as driven by forces beyond their control. There is pity for them, but little hope. They have insight into their sickness of the soul, but little knowledge of how to cure it. Thought is still intensely private, and it is well that this is so. People, with their power to hurt and destroy, are able, at times, to control this power through the attribute of privacy. Human relationships, difficult as they are, would be even more destructive if the power had not been granted to choose one's words with care, and to keep the greater part of one's thinking hidden. The careful control of dialogue in "The Man Without a Temperament" suggests the heroic restraint of the two people concerned, and the care which each takes not to utter the words which would deal mortal hurt to the other.[51] Some measure of authenticity of existence is implied by the selflessness of their restraint. The control which each is able to establish through self-knowledge augurs the ascendance of a true self in each case. In "Psychology", the protagonist is shown as drawing back just in time. If she had given voice to her true feelings, she would have demolished the happiness of a trusting and tender fellow being.[52] Again, there is a victory of authenticity; a creative becoming, of the one that one is capable of being, through the selflessness of the choice. It is as if the author were extolling the high virtue of control. In both "The Canary"[53] and "Miss Brill",[54] the responsibility of one human being to another is suggested by means of

the lasting impression made upon the protagonist of each story, as a result of a remark overheard by chance.

In "Prelude" and "At the Bay", the gulf between thought and utterance is fully explored. Thus Linda Burnell contemplates the various feelings she has for her husband, each so separate and distinct that she could have "done [them] up in little packets, and given them to [him]".[55] She imagines his surprise if she were to hand him the final packet, "this hatred, just as real as the rest".[56] But she does not, and Stanley continues to believe in Linda according to his habit of direct and straightforward trust in human goodness. "If he believed in people - as he believed in her, for instance - it was with his whole heart.... And how terribly he suffered if he thought anyone - she - was not being dead straight ... with him."[57]

Linda has thoughts which link her to the characters of the earlier stories who question in such agony of spirit whether life has any meaning at all. "Why, then, flower at all?" she wonders, as she looks at the exquisite, but perishable, flower in her hand.[58] It is the love which Linda cannot but feel (for Stanley, whose innocence she understands and must preserve through loving silence; for her little boy, whom, to her astonishment, she finds that she does love, after all) which enables her to become a richer self, and to move towards authenticity.

Thus she is presented as having the "high courage"[59] to resist the absurd view, and to band together with others in the fight against destructive forces. There is a similarity between her stand and the defence against the absurd as suggested by Camus in The Rebel and in The Plague.[60] In the ethos of Katherine Mansfield it

represents, perhaps, the height of human gallantry. This is the kind of courage which allows Miss Brill to feel excitement at her very small role in the human drama, and which enables the protagonist of "The Canary" to find that life is worth something if illumined by any kind of love at all; even if it is only that felt for the evening star, or for a bird. It is this, perhaps, which furnishes an answer to the question posed at the end of the short sketch, "Bank Holiday": "And up, up the hill came the people,... up they thrust into the light and heat, shouting, laughing, squealing, as though they were being pushed by something, far below, and by the sun far ahead of them - drawn up into the full, bright, dazzling radiance to ... what?"[61]

There are, however, no easy answers. As characters move towards authenticity, it is seen to recede before them. The world view of the later stories suggests that authentic existence is, as Jaspers has postulated, not a state but a becoming.[62] Man's efforts to reach it are doomed to failure - but it is a gallant failure, in itself rendering the apparent futility meaningful. The protagonist of "Psychology" may fail on many occasions to be her true self, but a fortunate warm impulse decrees that she does not fail -- at least on the one occasion presented in the story. Miss Meadows, in "The Singing Lesson", almost hurts the trusting young as a result of her private sorrows; a fortunate telegram sends her back to them in a state in which she is able to lead them into the music, her voice "full, deep, glowing with expression".[63] Mrs Parker is robbed of the joy she has found in existence through the cruel fact of deprivation through death,[64] as is the protagonist of "The Canary".[65] Miss Brill's gallantly maintained joy in the

human pageant which passes her by is shattered as she retreats from what she has visualized as a stage to her "cupboard".[66] Beryl Fairfield moves towards authenticity of existence as she perceives the false quality of her daily living. She sees clearly the gulf between the one that she is and the one she is capable of becoming. To become the latter is difficult indeed: "She saw the real Beryl - a shadow ... a shadow. Faint and unsubstantial she shone.... Shall I ever be that Beryl for ever? ... And was there ever a time when I did not have a false self?..."[67]

Through Beryl's thoughts, a view of living is suggested which represents something very much like the state of adventure which the existentialists see as authenticity of existence. "Life is rich and mysterious and good." That such a state of existence is elusive is clearly formulated: "Was there ever a time when I did not have a false self?" The implication seems to be that,if the desired state is to be reached, it will only be in snatches. In "The Doll's House", we are shown Beryl, driven by inner tensions, as chiding Kezia for her little attempt to effect the "leap" into authenticity. Driven by the closed system of socially decreed class distinctions on the one hand, and instinctual forces which threaten her on the other, Beryl's existence is far from authentic at that moment. She has, indeed, become the source of corruption - the one who destroys innocence. But the glimpse which is allowed into the processes of her mind reveals the pressures to which she is subjected, and the overall tone suggests that she, too, is to be pitied. The world view implies that it is in the nature of the human condition that innocence should move towards corruption, and that, in so doing, others should be touched

with the blight. Still, there is hope. Some measure of that which has been lost may reassert itself - in "gleams", at least.

The True Self

The crises which interested Katherine Mansfield are very minor ones. The kind of truth she sought lay not in the effects upon people of fire or flood, but rather of the almost unnoticed exigencies of everyday living. Although the revelatory experiences towards which the author's characters move are, on the surface, trifling, the consequences are profound. The temptations and betrayals which concerned her are fundamental to the texture of the human spirit. Thus, through a confrontation with events which are at once insignificant and momentous, the characters are brought face to face with guilt, suffering, conflict and the reality of death. It is in such experiences, Jaspers contends, that the limiting situations to be encountered by mankind are found.[68]

As the world view of the author moves towards the more positive aspects of the self, it becomes apparent that she shares, to some extent at least, the view propounded by Conrad, that work lends some measure of safety.[69] The workers depicted in the fictional worlds, with the exception of those characters whose lives are given over to the making of money, seem never to be far from authenticity. Examples of characters for whom the work in itself seems important are Mrs Parker,[70] the protagonist of "The Lady's Maid",[71] the young male hairdresser in "Revelations"[72] and William in "Marriage à la Mode".[73] Such characters are, as has been observed, more fortunate in the long run than are those who take advantage of their devotion. The idea recurs in a number of stories.

The artist who is the protagonist of the unfinished "Daphne", very differently conceived from the savagely delineated pseudo-intellectuals of the London stories, has integrity of the self as a result of his passion for his work. "Painting is far and away the most important thing in life - as I see it. But - my work's my own affair. It's the separate compartment which is me."[74] Edie Bengel's devotion to her piano places her, too, in a world apart, into which not even her mother may trespass. Thus, as she plays it seems to her mother "that there is a stranger with Edie in the drawing-room, but a fantastic person, out of a book, a - a - villain".[75]

In "Prelude" and "At the Bay", the grandmother, Mrs Fairfield, works tirelessly to order existence for herself and those about her. Having made of her life a pattern of ordered living, she is among the most whole in personality, and among those nearest to authenticity of existence, of the characters presented in the body of the work as a whole. Ian French, whose quiet devotion to his work and observance of his own particular standards sets him apart from the superficial women who wish to befriend him, has a manner of living so different from theirs that they describe him as "impossible".[76] He, too, orders his living in such a way that everything within his studio is "arranged to form a pattern, a little 'still life' as it were".[77] The grandmother in "The Voyage" shows a similar quality.[78] Undismayed by recent bereavement, she orders the universe for her grandchild in such a way as to form a firm antidote to bewilderment and grief. This she accomplishes through a brisk reassuring manner, and attention to the details of living. The reader, as well as Fenella, knows that she

will find safety in such care.

In the world as envisaged by Sartre, which silently stares at man, objects, natural and otherwise, are "impermeable and dense, silent and dead".[79] This is the state of en ensoi, which can gain meaning only through man's consciousness and through his acceptance of the anguish which accompanies awareness.[80] Inauthenticity implies a state in which man, shrinking from this responsibility, does his best to become an en ensoi himself, relinquishing consciousness. The frightening quality of objects for those faced by contingency is reflected in the fictional worlds of the stories. As the protagonist of "The Stranger" is brought to a realization of his essential "aloneness", even with his beloved Janey at his side, the room takes on a different appearance. It becomes "huge, immense, glittering" as it fills his entire world.[81] The young protagonist of "Weak Heart" runs from the graveside of fourteen-year-old Edie to her home, and stares across the room at her now-silent piano, which seems to represent the emptiness of the entire world: "But cold, solemn, as if frozen, heavily the piano stared back at Roddie. Then it answered, but on its own behalf, on behalf of the house and the violet patch ... and all that was delightful: 'There is nobody here of that name, young man!'"[82]

The universe, neutral in itself, gains meaning in accordance with the existential state of the one who experiences it. A study of point of view renders this clearly apparent in the very different perceptions of the aloe revealed by Mrs Fairfield, Linda Burnell and Kezia in "Prelude".[83] Gulls, waves and "rainy air" spell desolation to the mother in "Six Years After" who is still acutely

mindful of her dead son; to the more forgetful father, the sea air is of interest for its "tonic" qualities.[84] The wind, when it blows for Matilda on her own, is frightening; for Matilda in the company of a well-beloved brother, its force constitutes an exhilarating experience.[85]

The opening description of the natural surroundings presented in "At the Bay" projects a calm and accurate picture, touched with "a sense of mystery, a radiance, an afterglow".[86] This is the universe as perceived, perhaps, by a self so secure in its being that it can, for a while at least, withdraw; so that the natural world is divorced, as far as is humanly possible, from the distorting eye of the beholder. The observer, moving towards true selfhood, almost becomes a part of the natural world. His perceptions, like his being, move towards authenticity.

Contained in the delicate description of this natural beauty is the implication that it is neither static nor solid; it will pass. The movement of time, of delicately poised being, is contained in the details selected. "A heavy dew had fallen. The grass was blue. Big drops hung on the bushes and just did not fall.... Drenched were the cold fuschias ...".[87] Authenticity, in Heidegger's view, presupposes an acceptance of nothingness as a part of the natural order. The knowledge is here contained in the description of the delicate, perishable flowers, bowed down by cold and dew. Man must learn to create meaning in the face of the knowledge that he will come to dust. The acknowledgement of death as an integral aspect of one's own being must always be present in the moment.[88]

Mrs Fairfield, grandmother of the Burnell children, has the

serenity of one who lives with this knowledge.[89] Moving towards death, she finds it worth while to smell sweet, to keep her hands and hair exquisite, to wear fine linen next to her skin, to arrange her kitchen in ordered patterns, and to be unfailingly gracious to the children; maintaining, through her courtesy and interest, the I-Thou relationship, and thus helping those of oncoming generations towards a calm acceptance of life and of mortality, resembling her own. The grandmother in "The Voyage", the same calm acceptance implicit in her attitude towards Fenella and her recent bereavement, helps the child to assimilate the knowledge as a portion of her being.[90] No direct conversation between them bears on the subject; it is implied by the grandmother's actions, and by her ordering of the microcosm represented by the cabin for Fenella and herself. Laura, induced by a certain fineness of the spirit to face death despite the distractions offered by everyday living, transcends inauthenticity by assuming responsibility. She accepts the leap to which she is challenged by the proximity of death at an inconvenient moment. By so doing, she is lifted towards true selfhood, as, contemplating death, her living becomes transfigured by a sense of the mystery and wonder of life.[91] (Emphasis mine.)

It is interesting to reflect that the developing metaphysic of the author affirms, from first to last, the importance of the individual human being. With closed systems as such, whether they be political, religious or social, Katherine Mansfield shows little concern. Obliquely, insofar as their influence robs mankind of the unique beauty which should be part of the human heritage, they are of interest. In the peace and goodness which cling to the

settings of such stories as "Prelude" and "At the Bay", in the pastoral settings in which are imagined the activities of the lost self in such stories as "Je ne Parle pas Francais" is contained an indictment of society and its alienating influence. Those set apart from society's competitive stresses, such as the grandmothers or the very young, are, like the fools mentioned by William Empson, endowed with "better sense than [their] betters and [they] can say ... [and learn] things more fundamentally true".[92] The struggling lost selves, like the children and the elderly, have a more secure wisdom than characters such as Stanley Burnell or Beryl Fairfield, whose positions as aspirant members of a competitive society impel them towards the development of false selves. The children are shown as beset by estranging influences as the ready-made systems of thought imposed by societal influences begin to close about them. Thus it is insofar as they impinge upon the spiritual development of the individual man, woman or child that institutions are invoked.

That these impinge heavily, at times disastrously, is an important aspect of the world view. Such systems are seldom described or discussed. They are presented impressionistically, so that the flavour of the institution is allowed to permeate the reader's consciousness. Thus the movements of two doves in a cage is used to suggest the threatening quality of the institution of marriage to a particular human relationship;[93] or the implications of the casino world, and of a mother's inauthentic manner of living, are suggested through the detail of a daughter's vigil upon a flight of steps, leading to a swing door.[94] The solid spatial details presented of steps and door hint at the heaviness of the

business commitments which weigh upon the soul of Mr Neave.[95] In "How Pearl Button Was Kidnapped",[96] the prison constituted by suburban life, with its soulless pattern of conformity, is contained in the image of the "little boxes" to which Pearl Button must return, after having escaped to a world of sea and sun and warm affection.

The story last mentioned, written in 1910, contains an interesting suggestion that the author may have regarded the difficulties in communication, so integral an aspect of the metaphysic, as being the result of societal factors operating in highly civilized groups rather than as an inescapable facet of the human condition. Pearl Button communicates with her captors with the greatest of ease. In their presence she casts aside fear, and discovers the beauty of sea, sun, sand and communication, free from constraint. Some quality in the kidnappers (who are probably Maories or gypsies) liberates her, so that she is able to show them spontaneous joy and affection. The manner in which the child has been impressed by her own background is revealed by the gist of the questions with which she plies her captors. "Haven't you got any Houses of Boxes? ... Don't you all live in a row? Don't the men go to offices? Aren't there any nasty things?"[97]

The Unity of Aesthetic and Moral Purpose

Concern with the natural beauty of the human spirit, and indignation that so many forces should seem intent upon undermining this beauty, seems to have determined the quality of anger which is inherent in the earlier ethos. This anger came to be expressed as a "cry" against the corrupting forces, in whatever subtle form they might occur. Eventually, a loftier perspective seems to have

established a tragic view, allowing a magnanimity which transcends indignation.[98] Man is born innocent. Such beauty cannot last. Systems, institutions, other men will tarnish it. So much is this state of affairs intrinsic to the human condition that there is little point in anger. As man struggles to become a truer self, he will be subject to lapses, during which he will become destructive to himself and other people. This seems to have been accepted in the final ethos as inevitable, and as part of some universal plan, too august to be apprehended other than in perplexing fragments of the whole. These glimpses suggest that, in some paradoxical way, facts of sickness, ugliness, mortality and corruption hold beauty within them.

Here it is that the moral purpose of the writer seems to draw near to the aesthetic. Man, however unfortunate he may be, is somehow sublime in his capacity to suffer. He is neither to be blamed nor to be despised. Corruption may ravage the flesh and tarnish the spirit. As man struggles against the ills which beset him, he will suffer, and in this suffering there is beauty. "The poor man lives and tears glitter in his beard and that is so beautiful one could bow down. Why? Nobody can say."[99]

"The Daughters of the Late Colonel" illustrates this well.[100] The two sisters, free at last of obligation, lift their faces to the future and find that it is empty. The story closes with Josephine staring at a "big cloud where the sun had been".[101] The story is presented from a perspective which allows humour; no anger is expended upon the father who has absorbed the youth of his daughters, or the system of things which has allowed it. The sisters, depicted as vague, hesitant and ineffectual, are

beautiful in their impotence. A study of the function of time as effected in this story directs the reader's attention to the fact that their particular circumstances have insulated them from progress. For them it is too late. They are shown as struggling, hoping for a moment, then accepting. In this acceptance lies their dignity and their movement towards authenticity. In their quiet and conscious renunciation of the selves they might have become lies their strength. They are free to become the ones they now might be. On one level, this may be seen as a crippled state of being; in the very cruelty of its limitations lies the beauty.

The protagonist of "The Fly", for all the destructive quality of his inauthentic existence, gains a certain beauty as "a grinding feeling of wretchedness" takes hold of him.[102] His act of deliberate annihilation of a part of living creation (though it be but a fly) brings him to a limiting situation. Moving to the brink, he is overcome by anguish as he glimpses the destructive quality of his living. He has given himself over to the demands of a money- and power-oriented system, and has lost his capacity for warm and generous love. Brought to the very verge, he fails to make the existential leap which would enable him to learn, and so to alter his manner of living. The revelation is for the reader rather than for the protagonist. But there is hope in the very failure. Here is the human creature, at the mercy of forces he does not fully understand, moving towards awareness despite his blindness, and able to feel anguish at that which he can hardly allow himself to see. A glimpse, and the vision is gone. In the feeling of misery which denotes that his oblivion is not absolute, lies the beauty.

Through the narrator-protagonist of "The Canary", this paradox is articulated clearly.[103] The song of the canary has come to represent beauty for the protagonist; with this is associated the power of her love. "Perhaps it does not matter so very much what one loves in this world. But love something one must."[104] In the final ethos, authenticity, the becoming of a true self, seems to be linked with the outward direction of love. Middleton Murry, a close student of Katherine Mansfield's writing, believed that "any attempt to explain Katherine Mansfield's development" without a consideration of the value attached to love in her ethos would be "doomed to failure".[105] Love, in the wide sense in which it appears as a force which transforms the life of man, is linked with beauty; and, with this, suffering is inevitably implied, for beauty in its highest manifestation is mortal. Even before the death of the canary, its owner hears some quality in its singing which implies knowledge of the nothingness which exists within all living forms of beauty. The sadness which she hears within the song is difficult to explain; it is no ordinary sadness, like that associated with "illness and poverty and death". But it is a part of life itself; it is "there, deep down, ... part of one, like one's breathing".[106] This quality exists in the beauty of the flower which Linda Burnell knows has been formed only to scatter its petals and die,[107] and in the music which Edie Bengel wrings from her piano.[108] "We see death in life as we see death in a flower that is fresh unfolded. Our hymn is to the flower's beauty: we would make that beauty immortal because we <u>know</u>."[109] These words shed light upon the author's attitude to mortality, to beauty and to her art.

The moral purpose of Katherine Mansfield's work is, then, finally expressed as a hymn to the perfection of the universe, in which man's manifold frailties - his weakness, his mortality, his failure to become the self he should be - are seen, in a mysterious way, as contributory to the potential for beauty which lies within his being. Consciousness, distinguishing him from all other forms of creation, renders him capable of suffering, and in this potentiality lies his unique moral grandeur. That he should shrink from this agonizing gift is natural enough; in his attempts to evade it, he may become a false self, live inauthentically, destroy himself and others. All this is relatively unimportant. In his floundering he will suffer; in his suffering lies his worth.

The high dignity accorded to the individual human being, and the view which places him as an integral part of the natural order, suggests that in her world view Katherine Mansfield shows herself to be a descendant of the Romantics.[110] In her intensive interest in the peculiar quality of sensations, and in the representation of consciousness, she shows her affinity to the French symbolists. This would, perhaps, explain to some extent why her work was initially more readily understood and appreciated in France than in England.

At the same time, a sensitive and prophetic attunement to the Zeitgeist of the century turned her interest towards the alienation of man; so that her stories show a concern with the estrangement of the individual from the society in which he lives, from the natural world and from the self.

As Saralyn Daly points out, Katherine Mansfield had probably never heard of existentialism.[111] Yet in the "long" and, eventually,

accepting "look at life",[112] which was the only response to a problem she allowed, she moved from a sense of the absurd, in which man seems to be lost in a world with little meaning, to a sense of the beauty to be found in the journey, filled with suffering as it may be, towards the becoming of a more genuine self.

Katherine Mansfield's method of arriving at moral truth, not through direct question or attempt to force an answer but through a transmutation of such questionings into art, finds an interesting parallel in the lines quoted below from the Hui Ming Ching. Jung describes these lines as "a sort of alchemical instruction as to the method ... of producing the 'diamond body'"[113] (i.e., a mandala symbol, relating to the archetype of the self):

> If thou wouldst complete the diamond body with no outflowing,
> Diligently heat the roots of consciousness and life.
> Kindle light in the blessed country ever close at hand,
> And there hidden, let thy true self always dwell. [114]

By turning the light of her intelligence to the "roots of consciousness and life", and by allowing this light to dwell upon the "blessed country ever close at hand",[115] the author was enabled, at times, to effect the act of creation whereby aesthetic and moral purpose, welded together, became a satisfying whole.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER IX

[1]Sartre, "Time in the Works of Faulkner", p. 87.

[2]Letters, I, 119.

[3]Letters, II, 152.

[4]Letters, I, 119.

[5]Journal, p. 93.

[6]Daiches, New Literary Values, p. 85.

[7]T.O. Beachcroft, The Modest Art (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 174.

[8]Murry, Katherine Mansfield and other Literary Portraits, p. 16.

[9]Letters, II, 195.

[10]Letters, I, 204-5.

[11]Letters, I, 218.

[12]"How Pearl Button was Kidnapped", Collected Stories, p. 530.

[13]Collected Stories, Ibid., p. 422.

[14]Ibid., p. 368.

[15]Ibid., p. 11.

[16]Ibid., p. 548.

[17]Ibid., p. 577.

[18]Ibid., p. 607.

[19]Ibid., p. 330.

[20]Ibid., p. 408.

[21]*Ibid.*, p. 428.

[22]*Ibid.*, p. 111.

[23]v Breisach, *Modern Existentialism*, p. 104.

[24]*Collected Stories*, p. 524.

[25]*Ibid.*, p. 174.

[26]*Ibid.*, p. 757.

[27]*Ibid.*, p. 573.

[28]Herberg, *The Writings of Martin Buber*, p. 57.

[29]Jean-Paul Sartre, "Existentialism is a Humanism", cited by Breisach, *Modern Existentialism*, p. 98.

[30]*Collected Stories*, p. 582.

[31]*Ibid.*, p. 569.

[32]*Ibid.*, p. 725.

[33]*Ibid.*, p. 576.

[34]Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, p. 89.

[35]Camus, *Carnets: 1942-1951*, trans. by Philip Thody (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1966), p. 48.

[36]*Collected Stories*, p. 119.

[37]*Ibid.*, p. 153.

[38]*Ibid.*, p. 660.

[39]*Ibid.*, p. 368.

[40]*Ibid.*, p. 91.

[41]*Ibid.*, p. 408.

[42]*Ibid.*, p. 678.

[43]Ibid., p. 577.

[44]v Ibid., p. 60.

[45]Ibid., p. 393.

[46]Ibid., p. 301.

[47]Ibid., p. 375.

[48]Ibid., p. 309.

[49]"Je ne Parle pas Francais ", Ibid., p. 60.

[50]Ibid., p. 432.

[51]Collected Stories, p. 129.

[52]Ibid., p. 111.

[53]Ibid., p. 428.

[54]Ibid., p. 330.

[55]"Prelude ", Ibid., p. 54.

[56]Ibid.

[57]"At the Bay.", Ibid., p. 222.

[58]Ibid., p. 221.

[59]v Letters, I, 211.

[60]v Camus, Carnets, p. 15.

[61]Ibid., p. 367.

[62]v Breisach, Modern Existentialism, p. 197.

[63]Collected Stories, p. 350.

[64]Ibid., p. 301.

[65]Ibid., p. 428.

[66]*Ibid.*, p. 330.

[67]"Prelude", *Ibid.*, p. 59.

[68]v Breisach, *Modern Existentialism*, p. 122.

[69]v Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1962; rpt. 1969), Chap. II, pp. 101-5.

[70]"Life of Ma Parker", *Collected Stories*, p. 301.

[71]*Ibid.*, p. 375.

[72]*Ibid.*, p. 190.

[73]*Ibid.*, p. 309.

[74]*Ibid.*, p. 472.

[75]"Weak Heart", *Ibid.*, p. 513.

[76]"Feuille d'Album", *Ibid.*, p. 160.

[77]*Ibid.*, p. 163.

[78]*Ibid.*, p. 321.

[79]v Breisach, *Modern Existentialism*, p. 97.

[80]*Ibid.*

[81]*Collected Stories*, p. 363.

[82]*Ibid.*, p. 515.

[83]*Ibid.*, pp. 34; 52-3.

[84]*Ibid.*, pp. 465-70.

[85]"The Wind Blows", *Ibid.*, p. 106.

[86]*Journal*, p. 94.

[87]*Collected Stories*, p. 205.

[88] v Breisach, Modern Existentialism, p. 89.

[89] v "Prelude ", Collected Stories, pp. 11-60.
"At the Bay ", Ibid., pp. 205-245.

[90] Ibid., p. 321.

[91] "The Garden-Party ", Ibid., p. 245.

[92] William Empson, Some Versions of Pastoral (London: Chatto and Windus, 1935; rpt. 1950), p. 14.

[93] "Mr and Mrs Dove ", Collected Stories, p. 285.

[94] "The Young Girl ", Ibid., p. 294.

[95] "An Ideal Family ", Ibid., p. 368.

[96] Ibid., p. 530.

[97] Ibid., p. 533.

[98] v Ward, Aspects of the Modern Short Story, p. 296.
In Ward's opinion, "if she had lived, she would have taken a high place among the most tragic writers of our time".

[99] Letters, II, 195.

[100] Collected Stories, p. 262.

[101] Ibid., p. 285.

[102] Ibid., p. 422.

[103] Ibid., p. 428.

[104] Ibid., p. 429.

[105] Murry, Katherine Mansfield and other Literary Portraits, p. 11.

[106] Collected Stories, p. 432.

[107] "At the Bay ", Ibid., p. 221.

[108] "Weak Heart ", Ibid., p. 511.

[109]John Middleton Murry, ed., Katherine Mansfield's Letters to John Middleton Murry, 1913-1922 (London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1951), p. 393. (K.M.'s emphasis.)

[110]*v* Berkman, Katherine Mansfield, pp. 124-5.

[111]Daly, Katherine Mansfield, p. 112.

[112]*v* Letters, II, 152.

[113]*v* Jung, Alchemical Studies, pp. 21-4.

[114]Ibid., p. 21.

[115]i.e., the New Zealand of her youth.

APPENDIX

TABLE OF STORIES AS REFERRED TO WITHIN CHAPTERS

In general, the stories are referred to in the order of their appearance within each chapter. Where a story has been mentioned more than once, the entry below refers to the more detailed discussion.

CHAPTER I : THE INTERPRETATION OF THE STORIES

The Fly; The Daughters of the Late Colonel; Prelude; An Ideal Family.

CHAPTER II : NARRATIVE SITUATION

The Tiredness of Rosabel; Ole Underwood; Life of Ma Parker; Millie; The Fly; At the Bay; The Doll's House; The Daughters of the Late Colonel; BLISS; PRELUDE; JE NE PARLE PAS FRANCAIS; A Married Man's Story.

CHAPTER III : THE FUNCTION OF SPACE

Prelude; The Woman at the Store; At Lehmann's; Frau Brechenmacher Attends a Wedding; The-Child-Who-Was-Tired; The Wrong House; Millie; The Fly; The Garden-Party; An Indiscreet Journey; The Voyage; The Doll's House; Six Years After; The Wind Blows; Je ne Parle pas Francais; At the Bay; AN IDEAL FAMILY; LIFE OF MA PARKER; A SUBURBAN FAIRY TALE.

CHAPTER IV : THE FUNCTION OF TIME

The Tiredness of Rosabel; A Dill Pickle; Je ne Parle pas Francais; Poison; A Married Man's Story; Life of Ma Parker; Her First Ball; The Garden-Party; The Fly; The Stranger; THE DAUGHTERS OF THE LATE COLONEL; AT THE BAY; SUN AND MOON.

CHAPTER V : THE FUNCTION OF ACTION

Psychology; At the Bay; Her First Ball; Sun and Moon; Mr Reginald Peacock's Day; The Daughters of the Late Colonel; The Voyage; Prelude; The Doll's House; Taking the Veil;

A Cup of Tea; The Little Governess; Bliss; A Dill Pickle; Life of Ma Parker; Miss Brill; The Lady's Maid; The Canary; THE WOMAN AT THE STORE; THE WIND BLOWS; THE GARDEN-PARTY; THE FLY; Je ne Parle pas Francais.

CHAPTER VI : CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION

This Flower; The Dove's Nest; Weak Heart; A Cup of Tea; The Voyage; Prelude; Honeymoon; The Woman at the Store; Millie; Ole Underwood; The Fly; An Ideal Family; The Daughters of the Late Colonel; The Voyage; Life of Ma Parker; The Lady's Maid; Je ne Parle pas Francais; Marriage à la Mode; The Fly; Mr Reginald Peacock's Day; Sun and Moon; A Suburban Fairy Tale; THE LITTLE GIRL; POISON; THE DOLL'S HOUSE.

CHAPTER VII : THE FUNCTION OF ATMOSPHERE

The Baron; Germans at Meat; The Luft Bad; Frau Brechenmacher Attends a Wedding; The Woman at the Store; Millie; Life of Ma Parker; Revelations; A Cup of Tea; The Voyage; Feuille d'Album; Marriage à la Mode; Je ne Parle pas Francais; Prelude; An Ideal Family; Weak Heart; The Canary; The Fly; The Garden-Party; The Escape.

CHAPTER VIII : THE FUNCTION OF TONE

Frau Brechenmacher Attends a Wedding; A Birthday; The-Child-Who-Was-Tired; Millie; The Woman at the Store; Ole Underwood; The Little Girl; Life of Ma Parker; Bliss; Marriage à la Mode; Je ne Parle pas Francais; Mr Reginald Peacock's Day; Revelations; A Cup of Tea; Something Childish but very Natural; The Man Without a Temperament; Miss Brill; Prelude; A Truthful Adventure; Germans at Meat; The Sister of the Baroness; The Modern Soul; Bains Turcs; Violet; Spring Pictures; An Indiscreet Journey; A Married Man's Story; Poison; The Lady's Maid; The Canary.

CHAPTER IX : KATHERINE MANSFIELD'S METAPHYSIC

An Ideal Family; Prelude; New Dresses; The Little Girl; Something Childish but very Natural; A Cup of Tea; Psychology; The Tiredness of Rosabel; The-Child-Who-Was-Tired; Millie;

Frau Brechenmacher Attends a Wedding; Pictures; Sun and Moon; A Suburban Fairy Tale; The Lady's Maid; Marriage à la Mode; Je ne Parle pas Francais; A Married Man's Story; Poison; Miss Brill; Prelude; Bank Holiday; The Singing Lesson; The Doll's House; Revelations; Daphne; Weak Heart; The Voyage; The Stranger; Six Years After; The Wind Blows; At the Bay; Mr and Mrs Dove; The Young Girl; How Pearl Button was Kidnapped; The Daughters of the Late Colonel; The Fly; The Canary.

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