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ABSTRACT

Name: Richard William Eric Nelson
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Despite the changes that his work underwent over the course of his career, Schwartz's writings form a cohesive whole. His poems, stories and essays are unified by a series of themes and motifs that recur both within individual works and throughout his oeuvre. One of the most significant of these involves the moment when an individual catches sight of his reflection in a mirror, a moment of sudden self-knowledge, shocking yet liberating. Schwartz provides a reinterpretation of the Narcissus myth that serves as a justification for his self-conscious approach to art. Again and again he returns to an examination of the individual's place in society. The individual is seen as alienated both from his fellow man and from himself, but at the same time unable to escape the bonds that hold him to others. His nature is determined by that relationship. Nevertheless, he can achieve freedom through becoming truly conscious. Although Schwartz's interest in Freud and Marx is relevant, he does not accept any doctrine uncritically. His use of repetitions helps him to develop contrary positions and is part of an approach to art that favours paradoxes over certainties. He views himself as an isolated artist, yet carries out a sustained critique of the implications of that isolation. One effect of this reading of Schwartz's work is to provide a defence of the hitherto poorly received later stories and poems.

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DECLARATION:

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INTRODUCTION

I

Delmore Schwartz received considerable acclaim in the early years of his literary career. His first achievements, in collections such as In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and The World is a Wedding, marked him out as a distinctive writer of both poetry and short fiction. However, in later years that praise became a burden, and he began to fear that he would not be able to live up to the early reception. He was right to worry: the later work was not favourably received.

The years since his death have not done much to restore his critical reputation, in spite of a recent revival of interest in Schwartz in the United States. Previously unpublished or uncollected letters, journals, poems, stories, plays and essays have all been gathered in various posthumously published volumes. However, although Schwartz considered himself to be above all a poet, a Collected Poems is still sorely missed: both his long poem, Genesis: Book One, and the second of his three volumes to include verse, Vaudeville for a Princess, have been long out of print. In Great Britain only a selection of predominantly early poems and a volume of correspondence with his publisher, James Laughlin, are currently available. No volume of his fiction is in print in Britain. Moreover, few verse anthologies include

poems by him. It is rarer still to find his work in collections of short stories.

Schwartz's standing as a writer has not been helped by the way his personal life has come to overshadow his art. More readily available than his own writings, John Berryman's The Dream Songs and Saul Bellow's Humboldt's Gift have done much to fix the image of Schwartz as a tragic, doomed poet. The biography by James Atlas has also contributed to this myth-making process. Schwartz has become more important for what he represents than for what he wrote. Unfortunately, this image of him only involves a partial truth that is sometimes deeply misleading.

Extreme caution needs to be exercised in relating Schwartz's life to his writings, in spite of their heavily autobiographical leanings. One mistake is to assume that there is a simple correlation between Schwartz's deteriorating mental health and the way that he wrote in his later years. Another more serious error is to assume that Schwartz's artistic concerns were unhealthy and contributed to his personal problems. His work is self-conscious, but that is not necessarily a pejorative description. The only book-length study of Schwartz's writings, Richard McDougall's Delmore Schwartz, is marred by the author's disapproving attitude to his subject's self-consciousness.

It is indisputable that Schwartz's work changed considerably over the years. There are significant differences between the poetry in the 1938 volume, In Dreams Begin Responsibilities, and the new verse printed

in 1959 in Summer Knowledge, just as there are between the short stories in The World is a Wedding, which first came out in 1948, and those in Successful Love and Other Stories thirteen years later. The sometimes implicit and sometimes explicit basis for some critical judgements about Schwartz has been that he produced his most authentic work at the beginning of his career before his personal problems sidetracked him. However, it is dangerous to assume that In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and The World is a Wedding are typically Schwartzian in a way that the later volumes fail to be.

It will be part of the argument of this thesis that there is a good case for considering Schwartz's body of work as a cohesive whole. Whatever the differences, whatever the changes, his later writings are still recognizable as the work of the man who produced In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and The World is a Wedding. Furthermore, the apparent narcissism of his art, which McDougall finds so objectionable, is not only one of the factors that makes for that cohesion, but is also more fairly seen as a sustained examination of what it means to be both an individual and an artist in society in the twentieth century.

II

In "The Poetry of Allen Tate" Schwartz describes the way in which repeated images or motifs provide a key to understanding a writer's work:

> The whole vision of the poet can best be seen by grasping minute image, recurrent metaphor, symbol and idea, typical use of language, and single view of differing subjects in the unity from which they arise. Beginning with the minute image, we find that every element, from image to subject, tends to suggest itself as an example of some aspect of another part and of the writing as a whole. (1)

He can be found applying this critical approach in "Ezra Pound's Very Useful Labors":

> The Cantos have no plot, although as the poem continues, the repetition of key phrases, characters and situations, makes more and more clear the kind of unity which the Cantos do have, a wholeness based upon certain obsessions or preoccupations, deriving itself from the character of Pound's mind . . . (2)

The relevance of the approach becomes increasingly clear when one considers Schwartz's own work. As he himself admits in "The Literary Dictatorship of T. S. Eliot", "there is . . . a natural tendency upon the part of a poet who writes criticism to try to justify and praise in his criticism what he attempts to accomplish in his poetry" (3). A reading of Schwartz's work reveals instance after instance of "the repetition of key phrases, characters and situations". So extensive is Schwartz's use of repetition that it clearly amounts to more than a tendency to reuse successful or favourite expressions from old material. Rather, it is a technique that enables Schwartz to establish relationships and contrasts, to develop ideas, to complicate issues and to structure his work.

Richard McDougall's book examines some of Schwartz's repeated images, particularly in the section "Blue Sky,

White Snow: Images of Transcendence" (4). This study will draw attention to others. It will show how they create for the body of Schwartz's writings "a wholeness based upon certain obsessions or preoccupations". It will also demonstrate the way in which they are part of Schwartz's self-critical attitude to his art.

CHAPTER ONE

Narcissus and the Mirror: Facing the Self

I

Of all the examples of Schwartz's reliance on "recurrent metaphor, symbol and idea" one of the most significant is the use he makes of the moment when individuals catch sight of themselves in a mirror. An essay by Mark Goldman, "Reflections in a Mirror: On Two Stories by Delmore Schwartz", discusses two occasions when this happens in "America! America!" and "The Child Is the Meaning of This Life". He describes how "the mirror becomes a system of multiple perspectives" that also operates in "a world of richer and more complex mirror-images where the narrator stares at his reflection in the glass, at the self caught in a chain of hereditary circumstances beyond his control" (1).

However, these two stories are by no means the only works by Schwartz to depend on the mirror as an image. It features in the short stories "The Track Meet", "The Commencement Day Address" and "Tales from the Vienna Woods", as well as in the long poem Genesis: Book One and in one of the prose interludes of "Coriolanus and His Mother". Mirrors are also important in the following poems: "In the Naked Bed, in Plato's Cave"; "Father and Son"; "The Sin of Hamlet"; "By Circumstances Fed";

"All of the Fruits Had Fallen"; and "Apollo Musagete, Poetry, and the Leader of the Muses". Furthermore, the verse plays Choosing Company, Dr. Bergen's Belief and Venus in the Back Room use the mirror as an image: indeed, the first two open with characters looking at their reflections.

There is a clear connection between Schwartz's reliance on mirrors in his work and the autobiographical impulse of much of his writing. Richard McDougall makes these points:

> Schwartz belongs among those writers whose work, while undergoing the transforming and universalizing process of art, derives directly from their personal experience. Often his writing is a mirror in which he sees chiefly himself; in fact, the mirror recurs in his work as a symbol of self-scrutiny, and he frequently refers to Narcissus. There is a narcissistic side to his characters which he recognizes and explicitly develops. (2)

This narcissism was apparently recognized early in Schwartz's career. A photograph taken by Mrs. Forbes Johnson-Storey shows a young Schwartz staring intently at his reflection in a mirror. It can now be found on the dust jacket of his published journals, Portrait of Delmore.

Unfortunately, an inclination to "self-scrutiny" can incur the disapproval of others. McDougall, having described Schwartz as "a deeply disturbed, self-doubting, inwardly dwelling man of marked egoism and self-concern" (3), later complains that "consciousness becomes an end in itself for Schwartz's incredibly self-absorbed and retrospective heroes, a substitute for living and acting" (4). When discussing "Father and Son", McDougall again

maintains that "introspection or self-consciousness, as symbolized by the 'looking-glass', is supposed to lead to action, but more likely than not it becomes a substitute for action, just as it does so often elsewhere in Schwartz's work" (5). Narcissus is not considered a desirable role model for a poet.

Schwartz, however, uses the figure of Narcissus for his own ends. He presents an adaptation of the old myth that provides a justification for his approach to art. Mirrors serve a much more important function in his work than merely indicating either "multiple perspectives" or "self-scrutiny".

II

Summer Knowledge, Schwartz's last volume of verse, includes the three-part poem "Narcissus". The second part of this, "The Fear and Dread of the Mind of the Others", is a monologue by Narcissus in which he expresses his pain and dismay at how others misunderstood him:

> They thought I had fallen in love with my own face,
> And this belief became the night-like obstacle
> To understanding all my unbroken suffering,
> My studious self-regard, the pain of hope,
> The torment of possibility
> . . . (6)

Schwartz takes the figure of Narcissus, retains the notion of his "unbroken suffering", yet makes a crucial change in suggesting that people are fundamentally wrong in their perception of his "self-regard".

The remainder of the second part of the poem is

dominated by Narcissus's struggle for self-expression: he is aware that there is something "trembling and passionate / Within the labyrinth and caves of my mind", that unconscious part of himself where the mind is "partly or wholly hidden from itself", but he lacks the words, the "Comparisons and mere metaphors", to articulate it and make it conscious. The significance of this difficulty to a writer is clear, especially to one as concerned as Schwartz with the secrets of the mind. The struggle for self-expression is a theme that recurs throughout his work. It appears, for instance, in the sestet of "Sonnet: O City, City": "Whence, if ever, shall come the actuality / Of a voice speaking the mind's knowing" (7).

Last & Lost Poems, a posthumous collection, contains a long poem, "The Studies of Narcissus", which includes the three sections of "Narcissus", though in a different order. Robert Phillips's "Foreword" makes it clear that exigencies of space forced Schwartz to discard all but small portions of this poem before it could be published in Summer Knowledge; though Phillips also points out that the surviving typescript of "The Studies of Narcissus" is unfinished (8). Regrettably, the editorial decision that produced "Narcissus" obscures much of Schwartz's intention in using the myth. Not only is the connection between the three sections unclear, but also the importance of the river to Narcissus is left unexplained, as is the reason why people are mistaken in thinking that Narcissus "had fallen in love with [his] own face".

The restored "The Studies of Narcissus" begins with a prose "Prologue" that provides the much needed clarification. This reveals a version of the Narcissus myth that is significantly at variance with extant classical treatments of the same story. The nature of this difference says much about Schwartz's conception of the nature of his personal artistic endeavour. Indeed, his use of the myth functions as a clear distillation of what he believed to be the role and methods of the modern poet.

As the "Prologue" explains, those who "thought Narcissus was moved by self-love and looked in the river only to see his own beloved face" did so because "they forgot that his father was the river god":

> The truth was that he was entirely dissatisfied with the image of his own face, yet the river, continuously changing under the continuously changing light, and promising so much to Narcissus, nurtured an inexhaustible hope in him, and hopes: the hope that he would be satisfied, and beautiful enough, as an image, a face and a being, to be able to be loved by a truly beautiful being. But the river itself was the most beautiful of all the beings he had ever beheld. (9)

According to Louise Vinge, Ovid is "perhaps the earliest and definitely the most detailed of the classical authors who are concerned with Narcissus" (10). His account of the myth has few similarities to Schwartz's. The only major details that the two versions have in common concern the parentage of Narcissus and the unrequited love felt for him by the nymph, Echo. The differences, on the other hand, are numerous. Ovid's Narcissus is born after the rape of Liriope by the

river-god, Cephisus, but this factor plays no important role in Ovid's rendering of the myth. In Ovid Echo loses the power of normal speech as a punishment for her deception of Juno, not, as Schwartz maintains, because of "misconceiving the nature of love".

The most important difference, though, is that, while Ovid's Narcissus is essentially innocent of self-love, this is not because "he was entirely dissatisfied with the image of his own face". When he sees himself in a still pool, not a river, he is initially unaware that the reflection is his own. Instead, he believes it to be a real, beautiful person. His suffering is caused by the assumption that what he sees before him is separate from himself and apparently unreachable. However, his death results from the eventual realization that it is only his own reflection that he loves. He is aware that self-love cannot be satisfied. He knows the hopelessness of his position. In contrast, Schwartz's Narcissus is moved by "an inexhaustible hope". There is no suggestion that his behaviour will cause him mortal hurt. No intimation is given that he is suffering from any form of delusion. The deluded ones are "all the others, including the nymph, Echo".

The epigrams of Pentadius, which are included in the Anthologia Latina and discussed by Vinge, are the only early treatments of the Narcissus story that do seem to provide a basis for Schwartz's interpretation of the myth in his "Prologue". One passage Vinge translates as follows:

> The boy whose father was a river, worshipped springs and praised waves, he whose father was a river. The boy sees himself when he looks for his father in the river, and in the clear lake the boy sees himself. (11)

Here the notion that Narcissus has been fathered by the river is given prominence, as is the idea that the boy devotes his time to the worship of the waters. Yet there is no intimation that Narcissus's interest in the river is motivated by anything other than devotion and respect. The obsession of Schwartz's Narcissus is not disinterested; he seeks through his devotion the satisfaction of a powerful need.

It is therefore clear that, while Schwartz does draw on classical accounts, he both introduces important new details and reinterprets old ones. His Narcissus is no longer the epitome of the self-deluded man. Indeed, he is no longer narcissistic. He is not in love; he seeks love. He does not see himself as beautiful; he desires to be beautiful. He does not despair; he hopes. His dissatisfaction with his own appearance is placed within an optimistic context. The emphasis on hope, beauty and love draws the sting of what may otherwise have appeared to be debilitating self-loathing. Schwartz's rhetoric neutralizes it.

It is by drawing on a myth concerned with the nature of love, but in a way that subverts its received meaning, that Schwartz manages to contrive a powerful metaphoric expression of, and also apologia for, the nature of his approach to art. Narcissus, dissatisfied with himself "as an image, a face and a being", seeks self-worth and

affirmation through the rapt contemplation and examination of "the most beautiful of all the beings he had ever beheld". This being, the river, a deity, is ever-changing, ever-engrossing. The connection with the concerns of the artist becomes obvious. Moved by desire, the poet seeks through an art that concerns itself with the Beautiful to free himself and to give himself power (12). He reaches for the Beautiful by looking into and through his self, just as Narcissus looks through his reflection to the river in which it is reflected. Life is seen not in the mirror of art, but through the looking-glass.

Inevitable for such an artist is the accusation that he cares for nothing but self-contemplation, that his art is subjective and sterile. All the outsider sees is the artist regarding himself, unaware of those around him, of the love offered to him. Echo's error in mimicking the voice and words of Narcissus is a consequence of only seeing this surface. It is this essential mistake that makes an accusation out of the observation that a writer is self-conscious.

However, the final sentence of the "Prologue" ends Schwartz's account of the myth on an ambiguous note. Having presented a justification for the seemingly narcissistic artist, a risk is acknowledged. Narcissus devotes himself to the river in the hope that he may become, through his devotion, worthy of being loved by "a truly beautiful being". Yet, because "the river itself was the most beautiful of all the beings he had ever beheld", his task becomes self-perpetuating. After

communing with the Beautiful, there is no longer a need to return to the world of normal relations. Art is then only for art's sake. The accusation of sterility has been refuted only to reappear. It is a moment reminiscent of "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" when Schwartz describes Baudelaire as "either the first or the typical modern poet". As evidence for this claim he quotes from "L'Etranger" where the "enigmatic man", having disavowed his allegiance to family, friends and country, declares of Beauty, "I love her with my whole will; she is a goddess and immortal", saying also that he loves "the clouds . . . the clouds which pass . . . far away . . . far away . . . the marvelous clouds!" (13).

III

Schwartz tends to use the mirror image in different pieces in much the same way and for much the same purpose. Consider, for instance, these lines from "The Sin of Hamlet":

> . . . the furtive
> Fugitive, looking backward, sees his
> Ghost in the mirror, his shameful eyes, his
> mouth diseased. (14)

They are similar to ones in "By Circumstances Fed", another poem that appeared in the 1938 volume, _In Dreams Begin Responsibilities_:

> . . . .
> So, once in the drugstore,

> Amid all the poppy, salve and ointment,
> I suddenly saw, estranged there,
> Beyond all disappointment,
> My own face in the mirror. (15)

Much later in his career Schwartz is still recreating this moment, as he does in a poem first published in 1955, "All of the Fruits Had Fallen":

> . . . .
> --Until, in the dim window glass,
> The fog or cloud of my face
> Showed me my fear at last! (16)

Even a short story that was first published in 1959, "The Track Meet", replays the basic situation from those two early poems:

> I tried once more to stand up, and awoke, and found myself standing up, staring, in a sweat of confusion and dread, not at the sky but at the looking glass above the chest of drawers next to my dishevelled bed. The face I saw was livid and swollen with barbarous anger and unbearable shame. (17)

Each of these passages concludes the piece from which it is taken. The instant when the individual catches sight of himself in the mirror is in every case climactic.

In the "Overture" to "The Studies of Narcissus" Schwartz makes it clear that the river, which reveals "truth's variety" (18), gives a reflection of the face that does not deceive:

> I knew the parable of trying to see
> The truth behind the face, the mind behind
> The surface, the radiance within
> The radiance, within the shining radiance
> And thus I missed matchless magnificence
> So many times! Since, at times,
> Appearance is reality and not a mask
> . . . (19)

In 1942 Schwartz noted in his journal that "my face is an open secret" (20). A 1946 entry expands this notion:

> When one looks at one's face closely, as to prepare it for strangers, the unending unhappiness is pocked on it: it cannot be removed, it cannot be washed away. (21)

In Genesis one of the ghosts comments that "Deep-rooted truths emerge upon the face / Unknowingly" (22). The first four passages quoted above depend on understanding that, at times, "Appearance is reality". They overturn the perhaps more usual belief that "there's no art / To find the mind's construction in the face" (23), or that, as Schwartz himself expresses it elsewhere, "all men are masked" (24).

In accordance with the idea that Narcissus was "entirely dissatisfied with the image of his own face", the reality that the individual is confronted with in his reflection is unpleasant and provides incontestable evidence of inner turmoil and decay. The "mouth diseased" and the "livid and swollen" face are reflections of that inner state. Related emotions link the passages. The individuals have "shameful eyes" and show in their faces "fear" and "unbearable shame". There is "confusion and dread". An impression is given that man's essential condition is one of guilt and anxiety.

The climaxes are dramatic because they are the moment at which the individual becomes aware of this condition. The recognition of the image in the mirror shocks. A state of ignorance is replaced by knowledge, a painful knowledge of the self. Narcissus makes this claim in

"The Studies of Narcissus":

> . . . Were there lovers before me? How could
>   there be since I
> Discovered the self or--to insist again--
> Invented it, by staring in a glass
> And misconceiving the image of my face
> . . . (25)

Here Schwartz uses Ovid's notion that Narcissus assumes someone else's face is in the water in order to suggest that the self was "invented" only when man was able to see it as something distinct. Narcissus, in believing that the image that he studies is separate from himself, steps out of the confines of subjectivity and looks at himself as an object. He achieves the necessary detachment to see himself as he really is. The individuals in the four passages are at the point when they acquire such objectivity.

That Schwartz intended such an interpretation of "The Studies of Narcissus" is even clearer in the light of an entry in his journals that appears to represent early ideas for the poem:

> Narcissus says: He is the starting point
>   Each being exists as such the
>   First time when he says:
>   I am myself--I am Narcissus
>   Therefore I exist
>   Or when he recognizes
> Himself in the looking glass   (cats don't)
>
>   I am Narcissus: I am
>   conscious
>   I am Narcissus: I am
>   consciousness. (26)

The recognition of one's own face as something separate in the mirror is the dawn of consciousness and of self-consciousness.

The idea that man is able to see himself as an object, that he can be "estranged" from his "own face in the mirror", suggests the relevance of the Freudian model of the mind. Schwartz had a deep and abiding interest in Freud's work. James Atlas, Schwartz's biographer, testifies that Schwartz "began to read Freud in earnest . . . during the 1940's" (27). The story is told of how "once, after a session with his last psychiatrist . . . he announced that he had just emerged victorious from an hour-long debate on some point of interpretation about his childhood" (28). In writing about the work of Schwartz, Berryman, Lowell and Jarrell, Bruce Bawer lays great emphasis on the influence of Freud:

> One cannot understand the Middle Generation without recognizing the degree to which they relied on Freud, in the latter part of their lives, for their understanding of their world, their time, and themselves. This interest in Freud quite naturally coincides with the writing of their later poetry, which is predominantly subjective. One demonstration of Freud's influence is the prominence, particularly in their later poetry, of the dream motif. (29)

Of course, though, the volume of Schwartz's that Bawer cites as evidence, In Dreams Begin Responsibilities, was published in 1938 and contains the poet's early work. He also describes "The Two Audens" as the place where "the nature of Schwartz's interest in Freud was most clearly established" (30). That essay was published in 1939. Schwartz may have only started reading Freud "in earnest" in the 1940s, but his interest certainly began earlier, long before "the writing of [his] later poetry". Whatever period he was writing in, whether late or early, shows the imprint of Freud's ideas, often quite obviously.

In Dreams Begin Responsibilities contains several examples: "Coriolanus and His Mother" features Freud as a commentator on the action; "Prothalamion" asks that "Freud and Marx be wedding guests indeed" (31); "Dogs Are Shakespearean, Children Are Strangers" contains the request, "Tell us, Freud, can it be that lovely children / Have merely ugly dreams of natural functions?" (32); and one poem is titled "A Dog Named Ego, the Snowflakes as Kisses".

An interpretation of Schwartz's use of Narcissus and the mirror in the light of Freud's influence does clarify the meaning of the imagery. The disease, shame, fear and "barbarous anger" evident on the individuals' faces in the four quoted passages can be understood in terms of the ego, which is described by Freud as "the actual seat of anxiety" (33), reacting to the contents of the id as they momentarily escape the forces of repression and well up into consciousness. The individual is so shocked by this escape precisely because these contents, having been considered unacceptable, are normally repressed. As they come into consciousness, the observing ego is forced to recognized them as fellow elements of the self: the result is self-consciousness.

"The Sin of Hamlet" is driven by, if not uniquely Freudian imagery, certainly Freudian obsessions. Although it is never made explicit, the sin with which the poem appears to be concerned is Hamlet's failure to answer the demands of his father's ghost with decisive action (34). The first of the two stanzas establishes Hamlet's indecision in terms of the pull of childhood and the

past against the need for self-assertion and action. The past is associated with sleep, fog, vagueness, dimness and forgetfulness: the memories and emotions of childhood struggle through obscurity and repression to be heard by the adult. The call of the past is only a muffled, though insistent, "booming". Even the elliptical nature of the verse emphasises the lack of clarity. The influence of childhood militates against the decisiveness of "The voice answered, the choice announced". To choose is to make an act of will. It is the work of the ego, not the id. The "door opened", the "stair descended" and the "Trigger touched" are typical Freudian dream-symbols for mental and sexual assertion. The fog is dispersed by the "sharp declaration".

In the second stanza the psychoanalytic interest becomes even more pronounced. The individual takes the door of self-assertion, but "escape is small". He is "the furtive / Fugitive". On glancing back, he sees his own reflection in the mirror. In naming that reflection Hamlet's "Ghost", Schwartz not only recalls the lack of clarity earlier associated with the past, but also, and more importantly, makes the ghost of Shakespeare's play nothing more than a reflection of Hamlet's own self. The ghost that requires revenge from Hamlet is an expression of the prince's own desires. Hamlet's escape can only be "small" because he carries the demands of his past within him. The "Fugitive" from childhood is trying to escape from himself. He will always be haunted by his past; an indistinct, intangible past that can be no more grasped than can a phantom. The same grim

claim is made in Genesis:

> Like Oedipus,
> No one can go away from genesis,
> From parents, early crime, and character,
> Guilty or innocent! Though he cut out
> His eyeballs, though he kill himself, no man
> Escapes the Past . . . (35)

"By Circumstances Fed" deals with the effects of an omnivorous, unreflecting self. The self "towers" constantly, "Critical", "Dissatisfied", "Converting every feature / Into its own and unknown nature". It has no individuality, no humanity: it is just "The gaze which is a tower" (36). It finds neither happiness nor rest. The poem is one long sentence rushed on by a series of pairings: "blooms" and "blossoming"; "done or undone"; and "own and unknown". The only change and pause comes with the semi-colon on the eleventh line. Thereafter, in contrast to the object that is the "tower", a subject is now represented in the "I" and "My" of the final five lines. That subject seeks the relief of a balm or of an opiate, "Amid all the poppy, salve and ointment", but finds only the confirmation of its own self-estrangement. That alienation is formalized by the distinction between subject and object across the divide of the semi-colon.

"All of the Fruits Had Fallen" deals with a desire for an escape into impersonality, eschewing human problems in favour of "All the brutality and inner sense / A dog and a bird possess". Incapacitated by the loss of innocence, by "remorse", "used hopes" and the inadequacy of "Small knowledge" amid the "glittering senseless drift" of life, the speaker wishes to become pure appetite and

instinct, "A being all present as touch, / Free of the future and past". Consciousness becomes too problematic. Existence within time, determined by the past and obligated to the future, is too burdensome to be borne. The problem is the reverse of the concern with the danger of unconsciousness in "By Circumstances Fed". In that poem the implicit criticism is of the unreflecting self as a thing. In "All of the Fruits Had Fallen" there is a desire for a thing's unconsciousness, for "the innocence / Of my stars and my stones and my trees".

The differences between "By Circumstances Fed" and "All of the Fruits Had Fallen" may perhaps be explainable in terms of changes between Schwartz's early and late work, but what is most noticeable is that, though separated by many years, both poems come to essentially the same conclusion. Whether fleeing consciousness or troubled by its absence, the mind is still in the end confronted with itself. In the former the individual is made to recognize his own self-estrangement, in the latter the fear that makes him wish to escape. Both admit a desire for chemically induced oblivion. In one there is the drugstore, in the other "The jackals of remorse in a cage / Drugged beyond mirth and rage". Both still end with the self looking at itself in a mirror.

"The Track Meet" is concerned with the fear aroused by the recognition of one's essential, inescapable nature. The story deals with the events at an increasingly bizarre, and eventually surreal, athletics meeting. Early on, Frank, the protagonist, observes that "it all seemed quite strange to me; it was as if I were

dreaming" (37). Yet later he shakes hands with someone and notes his "slightly moist" hand, which "was real, not imagined" (38). He decides that "if I was not dreaming, certainly I was in a state of hallucination, for this was not the real world" (39). In this supposed hallucination Frank sees his mother, who looks at him "coldly and without recognition" (40), as well as his five brothers, who also ignore him. The brothers eventually begin to fight amongst themselves and are shot dead by five drum majorettes.

Amidst the anarchy at the meet, Frank is questioned by an Englishman, Reginald Law. Two crucial exchanges take place between them. The first comes when Frank retorts to an observation about his seeming good health by saying that "appearing is not reality":

> "How do you know what is happening to my head, or beneath my shirt, in my pounding heart?" (41)

The second occurs when Frank sees a female spectator who, having failed to seduce one of the runners into abandoning a race, succeeds by hitting him with a bottle. Frank complains that "there is no contest if you do not play fairly", "the winner does not feel pride but guilt". To this Law replies, "you are interested in platitudes . . . but I am interested in reality" (42). Frank's insistence that events must be ordered, logical and fair is dismissed as a conventional evasion of reality.

The conclusion of the story makes the implications of these exchanges explicit. Frank tries to flee the horrific events taking place around him. He insists again

that he has been merely dreaming, that comfort can be found in "the little things and small actions of early morning", a time connected in Schwartz's work with rebirth, renewal and the phoenix. Law rebukes him for this:

> "What difference does it make if it is a dream or it is not a dream? . . . It is worse for you--it is far worse for you if it **is** a dream. I should think that by this time you would know that." (43)

Law then explains the significance of the chaos witnessed by Frank:

> "You don't escape from nightmare by waking up, you know. And if what occurred on the field were merely imaginary and unreal and merely your own private hallucination, then the evil that has terrified you is rooted in your own mind and heart. Like the rest of us," Law said scornfully, "you not only know more than you think you know but more than you are willing to admit. Look at yourself! **Just look at yourself!**" (44)

This explanation, which is followed immediately by the paragraph quoted earlier where Frank wakes and sees himself in the mirror, is intended, so Schwartz notes in his journals, to "at first surprise & perplex the reader in the same way as I the writer in writing it was perplexed & astonished" (45). The surrealism of the story is suddenly shown to be misleading. The handshake may have been "slightly moist", but it was unreal, imagined. Frank's assertion that Law cannot know "what is happening to my head" is refuted. Law exists within Frank's head. All that happens is a working out of Frank's anxieties.

The shock of the ending comes from the reversal

of the conventional dismissal of nightmare and from the assertion of the importance of the "merely imaginary and unreal". External reality can be avoided. In reality Frank could have fled the meet. Yet the evil has been created by Frank's own mind. Escape from the self is impossible. Even waking from the nightmare brings only the sight of the "livid and swollen" face, a reminder of the ugly truth. The truth contained within the individual is there, and, whether there is a willingness to admit it or not, it can force itself into consciousness.

The nightmare works very clearly in terms of Freud's theories about dreams. The confusion and apparent unintelligibility of the manifest dream-content are a measure of the severity with which the latent content is ordinarily repressed:

> . . . there is a causal connection between the obscurity of the dream-content and the state of repression (inadmissibility to consciousness) of certain of the dream-thoughts, . . . the dream had to be obscure so as not to betray the proscribed dream-thoughts. (46)

The events within the dream "are disguised fulfilments of repressed wishes" (47). When his brothers are murdered, when they and his mother ignore him, Frank is merely creating an oblique expression of his own desires. As such, there is a psychological exactness to the "barbarous anger and unbearable shame" experienced by him when he is confronted with the true nature of his unconscious impulses and forced to admit them as an inescapable part of himself.

IV

In the four pieces just discussed the mirror image operates, as has been said, in much the same way. Two of Schwartz's other works, "Father and Son" and "Coriolanus and His Mother", show a significant variation in its use. In them the mirror image is put to a more overtly didactic end as Schwartz attempts to construct a resolution to the problem of free will's compatibility with determinism.

To an extent "Father and Son" is a simplification of Schwartz's method in "The Track Meet". Reginald Law's demand, "look at yourself", and the dialogue between Law and Frank which allows for an explanation of the story's meaning are echoed in the dialogue form of "Father and Son" and in the father's demand, "Be guilty of yourself in the full looking-glass" (48). In "The Track Meet" both dialogue and message are grounded in the events of the story. "Father and Son" does without such grounding.

The poem uses a quotation from Kafka as an epigraph:

> From a certain point onward there is no longer
> any turning back. That is the point that must
> be reached. (49)

"Be guilty of yourself in the full looking-glass" is the final line, placing the mirror image in its usual climactic position. Schwartz never states precisely what he sees as "the point that must be reached", but these concluding words emerge as its metaphorical represention. A state of guilty self-awareness is the

point after which "there is no longer any turning back".

Schwartz's use of the dialogue form gives "Father and Son" at least the appearance of being a reasoned debate. It allows philosophical ideas to be presented in a more direct manner than would be acceptable in lyric poetry. Actually, the argument is one-sided. Four-fifths of the lines are given to the father. His speeches average about ten lines in length. Of the eight times that the son speaks, four are only one line exclamations or questions, while two others are only two lines long. The son's primary role is to act as a foil to the father's exposition of his point of view. The son, by reacting and by questioning, enables that point of view to be drawn out in its entirety.

The opposition of father and son also provides Schwartz with the required contrast between maturity, when the ineluctability of time is confronted, and youth, when mortality is easily ignored. He echoes the farewell given to Laertes by Polonius, "to thine own self be true" (50), with the allusion made clear by the son's early complaint that his father seems set to behave like Polonius, expressing "the sentiment / Which gratifies the facile mouth, but springs / From no felt, had, and wholly known things" (51). This places the poem within a recognizable literary context. It suggests that any paternal counsel is liable to be received with Laertes's indifference. However, Schwartz upsets the expectation that the advice will be platitudinous and the son unconcerned. What the father has to say so frightens his child that he achieves a new maturity. He is "taught

. . . to be serious" (52).

The father warns the son to be aware of time and death. He claims that the son already fears "time and its slow drip" (53), but only subconsciously, not with his rational mind. He is dimly aware of it, as his father points out, "When you wake up from sleep, still drunk with sleep", on the borderline between consciousness and unconsciousness when dreams are still remembered. Yet such dream-knowledge is not fully articulated. It is not firmly grasped. It only arouses intangible feelings, a "nameless" guilt (54). The conscious mind can continue with its own mistaken assumptions. It still thinks that "Time is a dancing fire at twenty-one" (55). Yet the fear aroused by the promptings of the unconscious is sufficiently insistent to provoke the ego into a flight from inner demands into an excessive involvement with the external world:

> Integrated in the revery of a fine cigar,
> Fleeing to childhood at the symphony concert,
> Buying sleep at the drugstore, grandeur
> At the band concert, Hawaii
> On the screen, and everywhere a specious splendor
> . . . (56)

These are "the evasions which so many don" (57). They offer false comfort and a postponement of the true reckoning, all "Because one is afraid to be alone, / Each with his own death in the lonely room" (58).

The advice that the father gives to his son is a clear exposition of one of the purposes behind Schwartz's self-obsessed writings:

> Grasp firmly your fear, thus grasping your self,

> Your actual will. Stand in mastery,
> Keeping time in you, its terrifying mystery.
> Face yourself, constantly go back
> To what you were, your own history.
> You are always in debt. (59)

The fear of death can only be conquered by acknowledging that fear and by understanding how it has operated through the course of one's life. The son is the sum of his past. In order to understand himself he must therefore understand, or at least remember, this past.

As has already been noted, Richard McDougall complains that the father's advice "is supposed to lead to action, but more likely than not it becomes a substitute for action". On those grounds he claims that "there is a paradox in this advice which the poem does not exploit" (60). However, there is no such difficulty in "Father and Son". Schwartz shows elsewhere in his writings that he is fully aware of the dangers involved in too careful a scrutiny of one's self. The conclusion of his version of the Narcissus myth makes that clear. "Father and Son" deals with issues other than, in fact prior to, the problems of an inability to act. It is absurd to say that "more likely than not [introspection] becomes a substitute for action" as if the son had some predictable future life outside the work itself. Furthermore, the poem's contention is that most action undertaken actually has a negative value. It is indulged in as a form of anaesthetic, a way of "hiding your head in a warm and dark hole" (61). It lacks direction. It lacks individuality. Before the son can act purposefully, in a way that ought to attract McDougall's approbation, he must understand himself, and to do that

he must be self-conscious. He must also rid himself of a false estimation of external reality:

> See the wart on your face and on your friend's face,
> On your friend's face and indeed on your own face.
> The loveliest woman sweats, the animal stains
> The ideal which is with us like the sky . . .
> (62)

Schwartz's championing of the supreme importance of self-consciousness is directly connected with his attempt to resolve the problem of free will. The inescapability of the past is recognized:

> Always the same,
> Always the same self from the ashes of sleep
> Returns with its memories, always, always,
> The phoenix with eight hundred thousand memories!
> (63)

As the above extract indicates, with its repetition of "always" and its emphasis on the number of memories, that acknowledgement is an agonized, almost tragic one. (Elsewhere in the poem Schwartz refers to Hamlet: "only dying / Did he take up his manhood" (64).) The son's predicament is not easily solved. Yet it is not hopeless. "There is a stay" (65). While the contents of the unconscious are determined by the individual's past, and while they in turn determine his actions, either by directly driving him or by forcing him into flight, he does have the ability to control them. This control is exercised by an act of will.

The "I" is, according to Schwartz, identical neither with the will, nor unconscious impulses, nor even the self. Facing your self and admitting its mortality is the means by which the "I" gains control over the self

and the "actual will". Then when the individual acts, he does not do so purposelessly, nor blindly. He acts as an individual: "Your own self acts then, then you know" (66). He also attains a transcendent, numinous understanding:

> When the news is certain, surpassing fear,
> You touch the wound, the priceless, the most dear.
> There in death's shadow, you comprehend
> The irreducible wish, world without end.
> (67)

Guilt of oneself "in the full looking-glass" is not paralysing, "a substitute for action". It gives knowledge and freedom.

Such a resolution of the problem presented by the conflict between free will and determinism is developed more fully in "Coriolanus and His Mother". "The moment of vision and decision" which precedes Coriolanus giving himself up to Aufidius, so rejecting the claims of mother and motherland, takes place during the prose entr'acte, "Choose" (68). It comes when Coriolanus catches sight of his reflection in a lake. The mirror image occupies its usual pivotal position, marking the moment of self-discovery. Schwartz even goes so far as to describe Coriolanus as Narcissus.

Before happening upon the lake, Coriolanus is shown experiencing the first waverings in his previously unshakable sense of individuality and self-sufficiency. Initially, "he was gratified in his unceasing walk because he was alone with his towering shadow, which compared itself with nothing" (69). There is a clear echo of the omnivorous self, "The gaze which is a tower", in

"By Circumstances Fed". Coriolanus exists in complete ignorance of his internal nature. His individuality is not that of a subject among objects, but of a thing, a "sword" (70), supreme among other objects. He lives in "the lucid day of many objects and the vague night when nothing exists" (71). Dreams, which are products of the night and provide evidence of a subjective existence, are denied by him. Coriolanus has "no purpose, no desire, except the vindictive appetite". He is utterly depersonalized. In Genesis Coriolanus is described as "One of the ego's proper names" (72).

Yet, just as in "Father and Son" the son is haunted by dreams the urgings of which he tries to ignore, so too does Coriolanus find that the dreams he attempts to disown still shake his faith in himself. He dreams of surrender. Freud's notion of the dream as wish-fulfilment plays a part here, just as it does in "The Track Meet". The fear aroused by such apparent weakness provokes flight, Coriolanus "traveling a greater number of miles each day in order to deny the dream and convince himself that what occurred in the prone passivity of sleep had nothing to do with himself awake". Escape is, however, impossible. The dream recurs. Insomnia ensues. He despairs. It is in this state that Coriolanus sees himself in the lake. His unconscious nature has forced itself upon his awareness. He has been brought to the point where his unconscious mind has asserted itself as an undeniable part of his psyche. Self-knowledge is now attainable. The mirror image is invoked.

His reflection provides Coriolanus with the necesary understanding of the influence of his personal past:

> Staring upon that face which is his own, he sees his own life, and the lives rejected and the choices chosen, and the immediacy of anger and pleasure, and the abstracted stare of memory, and the strangeness, to himself, of his own face, the most peculiar of flowers. (73)

For once Schwartz goes further in his use of the image. The moment at which the reflection is seen does not end "Choose". He actually explains what Coriolanus understands on seeing his own face. There are elements shared with other works that have already been discussed. There is the "strangeness" of the face and "the immediacy of anger and pleasure". What is new is the mention of "the lives rejected and the choices chosen". Moreover, there is even further development. Schwartz introduces an Oedipal twist. Coriolanus sees his reflection dissolve into an image of his mother. She addresses him, insisting that all that Coriolanus now is comes from her. She claims that her influence is inescapable, that "your effort to depart from me is your pain, your evil".

Schwartz does not bind himself to a purely Freudian standpoint. The mother from whom Coriolanus is trying to escape, and yet towards whom he is drawn, is not merely Volumnia, but also the society that nurtured him. The reflection describes itself as "Volumnia or Rome". Schwartz brings to bear the two great interpretive systems of the early twentieth century, Freudianism and Marxism, both being essentially deterministic. By linking them within the one image, the mother-reflection in the water,

he gives them, at least in this particular instance, equal importance. It also enables him to use a single argument against them in order to assert the possibility of human freedom. The problems that Freud and Marx pose for the freedom of the will are basically the same. The use of the image of Volumnia makes this clear.

The assertion of human freedom is based on the fact that individuals possess the ability to make deliberate choices:

> You are free, self-choosing, a king. Your words are yours, although they are mine. Although you have taken yourself from me, nevertheless your speech is your choice, your life is your making, your being is your own.

This pronouncement is not a proof. It does not make its point logically, nor is it, at this particular moment, exemplified by experience. Yet it is not intended to be a proof, and it is not presented as a logically verifiable statement. It is established as a paradox: "your words are yours, although they are mine". The individual is both determined by external factors and able to operate as a separate unit. (Genesis relies on the same paradox when it claims that "necessity is there: / Yet by an accident it all begins!" and that "Freedom remains amid necessity" (74).) Man transcends the limitations placed upon him by society and parentage; or, at least, he has the potential to transcend them. The individual is individual, a new and unique creation, just as each moment is both new and unique.

Such individuality is not however an inherent attribute. It is not a passive quality, but must be

actively sought. It must be grasped, and grasped in particular by the act of choosing, the primary assertion of the will in which difference is acknowledged and preference shown. Choice can reject the bounds imposed by society and parentage, Volumnia and Rome. Thus the will "surpasses" determinism. The Mother, whether Volumnia or Rome, is a determining factor in the individual's actions, but so too is the individual himself. The two factors, or the three if one separates mother from state, are coexistant and fight for the dominant position. If allowed, the external will win; if fought, then the will may transcend the limitations placed upon it. In psychoanalytic terms, one may become stuck with childhood fixations or one may develop normally and subsume those early influences in a healthy psyche.

The final prose entr'acte of "Coriolanus and his Mother", "He is a Person", reaffirms the argument of "Choose". The speaker imagines "an abstract picture postcard" showing a human being (75). This being's identity is described as a combination of his mother, father, childhood, adolescence and maturity:

> None of this can be represented upon the postcard, and you, when you look at any man, remember that you do not truly see him. For he is his past and his past is unseen, although it is one of the greatest of powers. His past holds him and he must move forward in time, dragging every fear and every beauty of every year with him. (76)

Schwartz's concern is with what is missing from the postcard. McDougall's complaint that introspection is "a substitute for action" should be placed against the emphasis here on the necessity to "move forward in time".

Man cannot provide a "substitute for living and acting": "he moves, because he must". He can dwell on the past, but not live there:

> The future of time which is nothing cannot be grasped by the repetition of what has been. It is not enough. He must create what has never existed. The necessity of the future intrudes and he must choose, although as most often he merely chooses what has already existed. . . . He is the future. He is a person!

Again, it is by exercising choice that one can grasp the future. The paradox identified earlier whereby Schwartz affirmed human freedom is found again here in the notion that man is the past and yet also the future: "he is the mystery, irreducible".

It is significant that when Schwartz introduces the mirror image in "Choose", he very clearly, though not explicitly, identifies himself with the Roman outcast. The physical description of Coriolanus is very much suggestive of Schwartz. Coriolanus is said to have "thick lips, curly hair, flaring nostrils, broad forehead" and a "globe-like head" (77). It is not a description to be found in Shakespeare's play. The very peculiarity and unnecessary nature of these attributes makes one suspect a special purpose in introducing them; some private joke. The suspicion that they are meant to describe the author receives backing from the fact that Schwartz uses very much the same technique in "Hamlet, or There Is Something Wrong with Everyone". There Hamlet is described as having "a tendency to get fat in the face and thicken" (78), an apparently quite arbitrary detail unless one accepts it as self-referential. Later

in the same piece Schwartz associates himself with Hamlet more explicitly by ascribing to him the same manic-depressive illness from which Schwartz suffered. In much the same way Schwartz's lament over Coriolanus's fear of sleep, "desolate, desolate" (79), makes reference to his own well-documented insomnia.

Not only, therefore, is the figure who sees himself truly for the first time in his reflection Coriolanus, the arch-individual, as well as Narcissus, but he is also the author himself. The knowledge that he arrives at having seen himself, which includes the awareness of the influence of parents and environment and the perception of a potentially transcendent individual freedom, is an understanding sought by Schwartz throughout his work. His use of the mirror image dramatizes the moment at which it is attained.

CHAPTER TWO

The Artist in Society

I

Sidney Hook, who taught Schwartz contemporary philosophy at New York University in the early 1930s, complains in his autobiography about the inadequacies of some of his former pupil's political judgements, especially his hostility to America's entry into the Second World War:

> His opposition to the war, discreetly expressed, seemed to stem from a fear that reports of great battles and other events would distract the public's attention from his forthcoming books of poetry. His vanity, rather than any reasoned view of history and society, came into play in many of his observations. (1)

Notwithstanding Hook's bias, there is at least an element of truth in his basic characterization of Schwartz's political outlook. James Atlas maintains of Schwartz that, "always apolitical, he viewed the war as a farcical drama in which 'two raging giants', Germany and Russia, were certain to destroy each other and, eventually, the world", claiming that instead "Delmore worried about the more general threat to life and letters" (2). Schwartz was indeed concerned that the war would be damaging to the world of poetry. He did feel that great art was more important than "great battles". Though considered one of the New York Intellectuals, an intensely

political crowd, and though an editor of Partisan Review, in Karl Shapiro's words "the most ideologically sensitive and outspoken cultural organ in this country" (3), Schwartz was not primarily interested in politics.

Yet in his letters and critical writings Schwartz rails against the ill effects of "the increasing industrialization of society" (4), declares "that perhaps the greatest evil of capitalism is its oppression or perversion of all values and thus of all lives" (5) and suggests that "Marx seems to me to have discovered all the connections" (6). He also writes of the need for the intelligentsia to maintain a critical independence from the establishment (7) and cites "the depression of 1929-1937" as one of the most important influences on him (8).

More fairly judged, Schwartz's opposition to the war actually stemmed not from "vanity" but from what he terms in a short story, "a post-Munich sensibility" (9). There is evidence that he felt a deep cynicism about the reasons behind "the war to make the world safe for the lesser evil" (10), as well as distrusting the dishonesty that war encourages:

> Intellectuals even in wartime and especially in wartime ought to act on the necessary myth that they are a class with a vested interest in the truth and in the active telling of the truth, instead of being bandwagon chasers and whores. (11)

As already noted, his allegiance was "to poetry, / The true, the good, and the beautiful" (12).

It is evident, therefore, that, while Schwartz did not take any party line on political issues and denied

being a Marxist (13), to describe him as "always apolitical" is highly misleading. The element of truth in Hook's words is outweighed by error. Schwartz did take a "reasoned view of history and society". His work shows an intense and longstanding concern with the relationship between the individual and society. The artist in particular was seen by Schwartz in terms of his place in society. He believed that this relationship affected how the writer lived, how he wrote, what he wrote and how his work was received. Schwartz observes in "Rimbaud in Our Time" that "the age in which one exists is the air which one breathes" (14).

II

The most detailed expositions of Schwartz's ideas on society and the individual are to be found in his critical essays. A number of these essays can be regarded as a series in which ideas are elaborated and developed. Indeed the editors of Selected Essays of Delmore Schwartz, Donald A. Dike and David H. Zucker, have grouped them at the beginning of the volume in a section entitled "The Poet and Poetry". They include "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", "The Vocation of the Poet in the Modern World", "Views of a Second Violinist" and "The Present State of Poetry", and they cover in all a period of seventeen years between 1941 and 1958.

The first of these essays to be published, "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", is a statement of Schwartz's

basic thesis:

> The modern poet has been very much affected by the condition and the circumstance that he has been separated from the whole life of society. (15)

This is an idea that he returns to repeatedly in his writings. It appears, for instance, in <u>Shenandoah</u> when the lead character considers the fate of his literary heroes:

> . . . .
> All over Europe these exiles find in art
> What exile is: art becomes exile too,
> A secret and a code studied in secret,
> Declaring the agony of modern life
> . . . (16)

Like Narcissus, the poet stands apart from others.

Schwartz sees this separation as having its origins in "the gradual destruction of the world picture which, despite many changes, had for a long time been taken for granted by the poet" (17), an alteration brought about by the rise of Science and the decline of Religion. His reasoning is reminiscent of T. S. Eliot's famous observation in "The Metaphysical Poets" that "in the seventeenth century a dissociation of sensibility set in, from which we have never recovered" (18). According to Eliot, "the poets of the seventeenth century . . . possessed a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience" (19), men like Chapman and Donne being capable of "a direct sensuous apprehension of thought" (20). Schwartz elaborates a point already touched on in a 1938 review of Yvor Winters's <u>Primitivism and Decadence</u> in which he states that "the predicament of

the modern writer is exactly the fact that there is a gap, a distance, between the writer's perceptions and his beliefs or values" (21). In "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" he claims that a point was reached where the poet could no longer believe in the urgings of his sensibility:

> There is a break between intellect and sensibility; the intellect finds unreasonable what the sensibility and the imagination cannot help but accept because of centuries of imagining and feeling in terms of definite images of the world. (22)

The old images were confounded by "the evolving and blank and empty universe of nineteenth century science" (23). The ensuing conflict left the poet uncertain and marginalized.

However, the similarities between "The Metaphysical Poets" and "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" should not be pushed too far. In The Middle Generation Bruce Bawer maintains of Schwartz, Lowell, Jarrell and Berryman that "virtually every line of poetry that they wrote during their early years was brought into being by a poetic faculty that had been shaped by Eliot's doctrines" (24), and he also claims that "The Metaphysical Poets" was a seminal influence on them. He convincingly argues that Eliot's praise of "A Valediction: Of Weeping" inspired them to elaborate on Donne's ball conceit in poems like Schwartz's "The Ballad of the Children Of the Czar". His larger claims for Eliot's influence are not as convincing. Schwartz clearly had in mind "The Metaphysical Poets" when writing his essay, but he is nevertheless openly critical of Eliot. Moreover, his

approach and conclusions are different. Schwartz attempts to provide reasons for the break between the poet's intellect and his sensibility, while Eliot is content to describe the process and its consequences. When it comes to identifying causes, all that Eliot does say is that the process "was aggravated by the influence of . . . Milton and Dryden" (25). More importantly, Schwartz places the break much later than Eliot does, describing William Blake as the first poet to suffer from its effects. Rather than maintaining allegiance to Eliotic precepts, Schwartz seems to be using "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" as an ambitious assertion of his critical independence.

At the same time as the poet was struggling for new images, so Schwartz maintains, the increasing industrialization of society eroded his role in the community:

> The fundamental isolation of the modern poet began not with the poet and his way of life; but rather with the whole way of life of modern society. It was not so much the poet as it was poetry, culture, sensibility, imagination, that were isolated. On the one hand, there was no room in the increasing industrialization of society for such a monster as the cultivated man; a man's taste for literature had at best nothing to do with most of the activities which constituted daily life in an industrial society. On the other hand, culture, since it could not find a place in modern life, has fed upon itself increasingly and has created its own autonomous satisfactions, removing itself further all the time from any essential part in the organic life of society. (26)

In "Our Country and Our Culture", published eleven years later, Schwartz still maintains this to be the effect of living "in a mass society and in an industrial

economy":

> As things are and as they are likely to be in any near future, the highest values of art, thought and the spirit are not only not supported by the majority of human beings nor by the dominant ways of modern society, but they are attacked, denied or ignored by society as a mass. (27)

"The Isolation of Modern Poetry" identifies a self-perpetuating, two-fold process. Once the separation between society and the poet has begun, it inevitably becomes increasingly pronounced, the possibilities for reintegration growing more and more remote. Society views the poet and his work as largely irrelevant and even slightly peculiar, while he moves towards "the doctrine of Art for Art's Sake" (28) and is left with "no serious activity other than the cultivation of his own sensibility" (29). Like Schwartz's version of Narcissus, staring through his reflection for some transforming truth, the poet examines himself more and more closely. Since "it became increasingly impossible for the poet to write about the lives of other men", people "in whom culture and sensibility had no organic function", he becomes his own subject (30):

> Since the only life available to the poet as a man of culture has been the cultivation of his own sensibility, that is the only subject available to him, if we may assume that a poet can only write about subjects of which he has an absorbing experience in every sense. (31)

Again, Schwartz's argument reminds one of Eliot's words: "one must look into the cerebral cortex, the nervous system, and the digestive tracts" (32).

As the poet's sensibility, his self, is cultivated,

its complexities become more apparent and the need to come to terms with them is greater. Just as Freud found that he had to draw up whole new frames of reference as psychoanalysis delved deeper into the human mind, such concepts as the unconscious requiring ever greater subtlety to formulate, so too does the poet have to develop new methods. Schwartz argues the following:

> The poet is engaged in following the minutest movements, tones, and distinctions of his own being as a poetic man. Because this private life of his sensibility is the chief subject available to him, it becomes increasingly necessary to have recourse to new and special uses of language. The more the poet has cultivated his own sensibility, the more unique and special has his subject, and thus his method, become. (33)

This echoes the reason Edmund Wilson gives in Axel's Castle for the linguistic endeavours of the French Symbolists:

> . . . every feeling or sensation we have, every moment of consciousness, is different from every other; and it is, in consequence, impossible to render our sensations as we actually experience them through the conventional and universal language of ordinary literature. Each poet has his unique personality; each of his moments has its special tone, its special combination of elements. And it is the poet's task to find, to invent, the special language which will alone be capable of expressing his personality and feelings. (34)

Such reasoning helps to explain why "Song of Myself", Walt Whitman's idiosyncratic and peculiar attempt to give literary expression to the essence of an individual in nineteenth century America, should by the mid-twentieth century have as a counterpart The Dream Songs of Schwartz's contemporary, John Berryman. In the latter

the individual subject is seen only through the most fractured of lenses. The long poem has become even longer and has broken down internally into a collection of separate poems. The language and allusions are more private and obscure, and an ending is arguably no longer structurally necessary: the subject, Henry, dies quite early in the poem. Indeed, the poem need only end when the poet stops adding more sections.

Schwartz makes it clear that it is the poet's concentration on his own self that has produced the new attitude to language, not some attempt to comprehend the nature of the society around him. T. S. Eliot, again in "The Metaphysical Poets", argues that society is the determining factor:

> We can only say that it appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be **difficult.** Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning. (35)

In "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" Schwartz contends that Eliot's argument in this respect is both "utterly insufficient" and "superficial" since it makes the mistake of "identifying the surface of our civilization with the surface of our poetry" (36):

> . . . the complexity of modern life, the disorder of the traffic on a business street or the variety of reference in the daily newspaper is far from being the same thing as the difficulties of syntax, tone, diction, metaphor, and allusion which face the reader in the modern poem. (37)

He makes the same point in a slightly earlier essay, "Ezra Pound's Very Useful Labors". In that he remarks on the "un-ordered" nature of the modern world, but maintains that the necessary digestion of this by the poet cannot be achieved by "merely reflecting it in one's writing by an equivalent disorder upon the verbal level" (38).

According to Schwartz, one consequence of art and society gradually moving in different directions, and of the poet searching for a new approach to language to solve his problems, is that "the common language of daily life, its syntax, habitual sequences, and processes of association, are precisely the opposite of what he needs" (39):

> The trouble has been that the idiom of poetic style and the normal thought and speech of the community have been moving in opposite directions and have had little or no relationship to each other. (40)

The two idioms have become incompatible. The language of poetry has developed into a specialized tool to work on the highly refined sensibility of "the cultivated man", while the language of ordinary life has become too slack, debased and imprecise to cope with anything other than the most basic forms of communication.

Of course, the line of argument in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" gives rise to a number of possible objections. Richard McDougall observes that poets do seem to have been able to write about the uncultured and to use everyday words to their own ends, pointing

as evidence to the work of Edgar Lee Masters, Edward Arlington Robinson and William Carlos Williams (41). While Schwartz does admit that "human beings at any time in general do not speak or think in ways which are immediately poetic" (42), McDougall's objection is not seriously tackled. It is only in an essay to be discussed later that Schwartz corrects his mistake.

McDougall also complains that Schwartz's own short stories, since they are about uncultured people, disprove the contention that the poet cannot write about people "in whom culture and sensibility had no organic function". While it is tempting to remark that McDougall seems not to have noticed the difference between prose and poetry, it is only fair to note that Schwartz does the same thing in his essay. Having writen about how "the poet has taken [the] conflict between sensibility and modern life as his subject", he gives as an example "the early fiction of Thomas Mann" (43). The trouble is that, in devoting the essay to an examination of the isolation specifically of poetry, Schwartz leaves it unclear as to how he feels the same factors have affected prose writers. He does remark that "an analogous thing has, of necessity, happened in the history of the novel", commenting on the rise of the autobiographical novel, but he does not explain whether he thinks the novel is as isolated in America as is poetry (44). One suspects that he felt the poet to be uniquely scorned. One also suspects that, for reasons that should later become clear, he regarded art and poetry as almost synonymous.

Objections to Schwartz's essay are, however,

suggested by the evidence of his own creative writing. Take, for instance, his assertion that, "since one can only write about one's sensibility, one can only write lyric poetry", and the related claim that "dramatic and narrative poetry require a grasp of the lives of other men, and it is precisely these lives, to repeat, that are outside the orbit of poetic style and poetic sensibility" (45). While most of Schwartz's poetry takes the lyric form, he did not confine himself to that kind. For instance, all five plays collected in Shenandoah and Other Verse Plays contain verse passages, as does "Coriolanus and His Mother". Shenandoah was first published in 1941, the same year as "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", and has a cast of the same sort of lower middle class immigrants that populate many of Schwartz's early short stories.

However, these dramas are actually mixtures of verse and prose. "Coriolanus and His Mother" features prose entr'actes supposedly delivered on stage by the writer himself. The verse sections are a reworking in narrative form of Shakespeare's play with a commentary provided by the ghostly spectators in the audience, including Beethoven, Marx, Freud, Aristotle and their companion, the poet. The sensibility of the common, uncultured man is, therefore, only dealt with in as far as general theories about society and the individual are handled, compared and synthesized within that commentary. Moreover, Schwartz's decision to remodel an existing work of art is further evidence for his argument that, as an isolated poet, "writing about other poetry and

in general about works of art is the most direct way of grasping one's sensibility as a subject" (46).

In Shenandoah the verse is assigned only to the central character, the poet, while those around him, the uncultured, talk in prose. The verse passages again serve as a commentary on the action. They are the musings, the observations, of an individual reviewing his past. Action is dealt with only in prose. Schwartz therefore defines at a formal level the isolation of the individual sensibility. The verse speaker is quite unable to influence the events to which he is a witness.

It must also be noted that Schwartz's argument about the isolation of poetry was one that he was willing to revise over the years. The original essay is not presented as a definitive statement on the matter, and it also recognizes poetic movements, such as Southern Agrarianism, trying to break out of isolation. Thus many of the possible objections to the original essay are tackled by the author himself in later work. Two of the most significant revisions are concerned with the poet's attitude to everyday language and with his relation to everyday life.

In "The Vocation of the Poet in the Modern World", published ten years after "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", Schwartz restates, in forceful terms, the poet's need to avoid "the common language of daily life":

> . . . he must resist the innumerable ways in which words are spoiled, misused, commercialized, deformed, mispronounced, and in general degraded. (47)

He must do this because "words are the keys to what he

wants" (48). It is only by preserving an accurate sense of the precise meanings of words that the poet can communicate the perceptions with which he is dealing.

However, Schwartz also recognizes that degraded language can provide new meanings and nuances for words and so, possibly, create new perceptions. A knowledge of the various forms of linguistic degradation can only result in a greater sensitivity to potential meanings:

> Nevertheless, just as certain kinds of disease make for a greater sensitivity to experience or a more precise observation of reality . . . so, too, the disease which degrades language in the modern world may help to bring about the remarkable and often multilingual sensitivity of the modern poet to the language which is the matrix from which he draws his poems. (49)

This is a development of the belief mentioned in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" that "the enforced isolation of the poet has . . . increased the uses and powers of languages in the most amazing and the most valuable directions" (50). What is being advocated is not that the poet suffer from the disease himself. Rather he is supposed to observe the symptoms from outside and make use of a conscious understanding of their precise nature to enrich his work. He still stands apart from "the common language of daily life" as it is daily used.

"T. S. Eliot's Voice and His Voices", published at the end of 1954, is, however, a tacit admission of flaws in Schwartz's earlier arguments about the modern poet's relation to everyday language. Instead of continuing to maintain that "the idiom of poetic style and the normal thought and speech of the community have

been moving in opposite directions", he now notes that, on the contrary, the great modern poets are marked by "an effort to assimilate the everyday world, the modern world, and colloquial speech by the use of everyday or prosaic words" (51). He remarks in particular on Eliot's unusual diction, his use of words "commonly supposed to be too unpoetic to be used in poetry", describing it as a "transformation of prose into poetry".

The most significant adaptation that Schwartz makes to his original argument is the recognition that by 1958, when he published "The Present State of Poetry", the poet was no longer "separated from the whole life of society", but had instead become very much part of it. This extreme reversal of affairs is seen to be due to the increasing number of American poets, including Schwartz himself, who had taken up teaching posts in universities:

> . . . he is a useful and accepted member of society and not a peculiar and strange being, since the writing of poetry is clearly a natural pursuit for the teacher of literature. The fact that he is a poet is not something which in itself isolates him from most other human beings, an isolation which the poet and indeed the artist in every medium felt profoundly during every generation in the past. (52)

Elsewhere, in essays on Wallace Stevens published in 1954 and 1955, Schwartz writes of the isolation of the poet as something in the past (53).

However, "The Present State of Poetry" makes it quite clear that any new-found acceptance is not without its drawbacks. The disadvantages are clearly stated. Schwartz maintains that both poetry and teaching are,

or at least should be, vocations. A poet who teaches does so to live, not necessarily because of a love of education, and he cannot write poetry while he is teaching. Schwartz notes that his own reputation as a poet has done much to furnish him with distractions from his poetry:

> I was asked to do many things because I was a poet: the one thing I was not asked to do very often was to write poetry. (54)

The proliferation of prizes for creative writing (two of which, the Bollingen Prize and the Shelley Memorial Prize, Schwartz himself won), while making one's lot somewhat easier, are in the end held to do no more "than reduce the problem of economic necessity" from which the poet suffers (55).

As perhaps the most serious impediment of all, Schwartz indicates that the public's new interest in the poet does not usually extend to his poetry:

> . . . a poet can succeed in attracting national attention by being murdered or by being involved in some other activity of a spectacular, scandalous or extraordinary character: the intrinsic poetic value of his work is certainly not going to win him the same attention of the entire public at present or at any time in the foreseeable future. (56)

Ironically, Schwartz himself is now known, if he is known at all, chiefly for the "spectacular, scandalous" and "extraordinary" nature of his madness, paranoia and death; extraordinary that is except in comparison with the private lives of his fellow poets.

It is highly significant that Schwartz himself notes

such drawbacks to what he himself admits was, in the 1950s, a very healthy time for poetry. This is not so much because of the arguments that he proposes, but because of the unstated attitudes from which they clearly arise. For example, when he remarks that poetry prizes do little to alleviate the financial troubles of the poet, he ties that to the statement that "the problem of economic necessity" is "more difficult for the poet than for other human beings precisely because he is a poet". Wallace Stevens, a poet much admired by Schwartz, and admired partly for this reason, managed to be both a great poet and a highly successful executive in an insurance firm (57). When Schwartz makes such a claim about the inability of the poet to finance himself without extreme difficulty, he does so not because of an insensitivity to the harsh lot endured by so many, after all a large number of his short stories feature ordinary, non-artistic characters struggling against the constraints of "economic necessity", but rather because he regards poetry as a calling to which the poet should give his whole being. The only way that the poet could both be true to poetry and earn a living was by publishing, and selling, poetry.

In "The Vocation of the Poet in the Modern World" Schwartz provides the following description of the role of the poet:

> . . . the poet as creator, and metaphor-maker, and presiding bringer of unity is a kind of priest. He unites things, meanings, attitudes, feelings, through the power, prowess and benediction of words, and in this way he is a priest who performs a ceremony of marriage each time he composes

a poem. (58)

Although he undercuts this with the characteristically sardonic remark that "unfortunately, not all marriages are happy", it is clear how highly Schwartz regarded poetic endeavour. After all, he valued poetry before "great battles". Schwartz always regarded himself as a poet, even though he wrote little or no poetry during some of his most productive literary periods, and even though he also wrote short stories, essays and film reviews, as well as working as an editor and a teacher. As has already been noted, the term "poetry" is sometimes used by him in such a manner as to be all but interchangeable with the term "art" itself. If the poet exists as "a kind of priest", then it is inevitable that he should occupy a place elevated above the rest of society. Hence the occasional weakness of Schwartz's reasons for the isolation of the poet. He is trying to identify tangible causes for a state of affairs that he believed in as a matter of faith.

It is in the light of this understanding that some of Schwartz's fierce rhetorical pronouncements about poetry must be understood. "The Vocation of the Poet in the Modern World", for instance, ends thus:

> In the unpredictable and fearful future that awaits civilization, the poet must be prepared to be alienated and indestructible. He must dedicate himself to poetry, although no one else seems likely to read what he writes; and he must be indestructible as a poet until he is destroyed as a human being. In the modern world, poetry is alienated; it will remain indestructible as long as the faith and love of each poet in his vocation survives. (59)

Whatever the actual reasons for the alienation of poetry, it is a state desired by the poet. He wills it into being. The poet's isolation provides him with his power. The much-criticised ivory tower is both a fortress and a vantage point that enables the poet to see clearly both the society below him and whatever lies beyond. Above all, it is poetry that matters, not the poet. His survival is an issue of lesser significance than the survival of his art.

James Atlas describes the passage quoted above as "the disastrous culmination of an idea that could be said to have originated with [Schwartz's] early hero Rimbaud" (60). He may have in mind the following extract from one of Rimbaud's letters:

> I want to be a poet, and I am working to make myself a **seer:** you won't understand this at all, and I hardly know how to explain it to you. The point is, to arrive at the unknown by the disordering of **all the senses.** The sufferings are enormous, but one has to be strong, to be born a poet, and I have discovered I **am** a poet. (61)

Atlas maintains that "the power of this idea is manifest" in the suicides of Berryman and Jarrell, yet he complains that attributing these deaths to America's indifference is "a myth that has given Delmore's tragic life a spurious symbolic value for which he was himself in part responsible" (62). In attacking one myth, Atlas seems to accept another of equally dubious value. It is highly questionable that Berryman, Jarrell or Schwartz died because their faith in poetry led any of them to be "destroyed as a human being". Moreover, Schwartz's

pronouncement in all likelihood owes more to the influence of Nietzsche than Rimbaud. The Birth of Tragedy describes the state of Dionysiac release and oneness as "an ecstatic reality, which again pays no heed to the individual, but even seeks to destroy individuality and redeem it with a mystical sense of unity" (63). Nietzsche's influence can be detected elsewhere in Schwartz's work. One of the poems in Summer Knowledge, "Once and for All", describes the poet's development in terms of the influence of Apollo and Dionysus. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine", one of Schwartz's very best later poems, is concerned with "a mystical sense of unity", as well as with the moment that Nietzsche writes about when "man is no longer an artist, he has become a work of art" (64).

As a born poet Schwartz could not forsake poetry, even if for long periods he wrote none, and he could not forsake the demands that poetry made on him. If being a poet placed him outside normal society, then he had to take up the role of outsider. A faked sense of community would betray his calling, as would the use of easy, every-day language that failed to render adequately the truth of his perceptions:

> Every modern poet would like to be direct, lucid, and immediately intelligible, at least most of the time. In fact, one of the most fantastic misconceptions of modern literature and modern art in general is the widespread delusion that the modern artist does not want and would not like a vast popular audience, if this were possible without the sacrifice of some necessary quality in his work. But it is often not possible. And every modern poet would also like to be successful, popular, famous, rich, cheered on Broadway, sought by Hollywood, recited on the radio, and admired

> by Mr. J. Donald Adams. The renunciation of popularity does not arise from any poet's desire to punish himself and deprive himself of these glorious prizes and delectable rewards. The basic cause is a consciousness of the powers and possibilities of language, a consciousness which cannot be discarded with any more ease than one can regain one's innocence. (65)

A difficult life, difficult art and difficult knowledge are things from which the honest writer cannot escape. Schwartz extols the virtues of remaining faithful to the rigours of the poetic calling at the same time as he recognizes that the art produced as a result is only elitist by default, not by intention. Enormous popular success is still seen as desirable. Schwartz devoted tremendous energy to charting the progress of his own reputation. Furthermore, though he recognized a distinction between high and low art, it was without assuming that popular art was necessarily bad. He had a great passion for the cinema and for baseball, two of the most democratic expressions of American culture. When he reviewed films he saw no reason why he should not consider them in the context of Matisse, Breughel and _Finnegans Wake_.

III

Schwartz's early argument that the modern poet is isolated from his fellow man receives an interesting qualification in a 1957 journal entry. Although this dates from towards the end of his writing career and is roughly contemporary with the change of mind already

noted in "The Present State of Poetry", it indicates an attitude to experience that was already apparent in 1938 in Schwartz's first published volume of work:

> Each of us naturally thinks of himself & herself as an individual, as unique, and as separate & different from & apart from other human beings at least part of the time, when we are alone or in sleep's underworld. The reason that this sense of the self is universal to one or another degree is clear enough whenever we are in a public place, among strangers--in a great city, for example, in one of the hotels, or in railroad stations or in the coach of a train. The very nature of physical being is vivid evidence that each of us is an individual--separate from all the others of our kind. But this impression is profoundly deceptive and in the end essentially false. It is an illusion and it is a delusion. Each of us, at any moment whatever, exists as in the solitude of a railroad coach: there are other passengers seated behind us, next to us, or ahead of us, and in coaches ahead or behind the coach in which we think we sit in solitude: the others who travel with us at every moment are those we have known--not only our parents, brothers & sisters, but our friends, too, and, equally perhaps, those we have hated or who have hated us, injured us, excited sorrow or scorn in us. (66)

Schwartz begins by stressing not so much the isolation but the separateness of the individual as a deeply felt experience. Importantly, he argues that it is when one is with other people, when the individual is usually seen as subsumed within the crowd, that individuality is most strongly felt. Yet this experience of separateness is still held to be false. The awareness of individuality that one has in a crowd cannot be denied as an experienced emotion, but Schwartz maintains that it is untrue as an expression of psychological reality.

When the mother catches the father with his mistress in <u>Genesis</u>, a seminal moment for the son who witnesses

the scene, the commentary suggests that this "presents the biggest truth, / Man's Nature is this being-in-the-world", a truth that means "all are political!" (67). In a 1939 review of Rilke's Duino Elegies Schwartz writes that any treatment of the individual as purely an individual is an unwarranted abstraction:

> The abstraction consists of conceiving of the individual as an individual only, a man confronted with life all by himself. The very greatest poetry, by comparison, grasps the individual in a multitude of relationships, as a prince of Denmark, a citizen of Florence, a member of the house of Atreus, and a human being in a definite time and place. (68)

It is interesting that Schwartz maintains that this is an abstraction to which "lyric poets and especially the romantic tradition are always bound". It must be remembered that in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" he claims that lyric poetry is the characteristic modern poetic form. If such abstraction is an error towards which lyric poets "always" tend, then Schwartz appears to be suggesting that there is an inherent danger in the modern approach. His work can be seen as an attempt to minimize this danger.

Schwartz is concerned with two different types of relationship that militate against the isolation of the individual. One is the set of social ties linking the individual to "a definite time and place". This is the individual's more obvious connection with society. The other type is internal. Thus in Schwartz's railroad coach conceit the individual's fellow passengers, those behind him, in front of him and around him, are, in an

abrupt shift marked by the final colon of the last sentence of the passage, not actually outside the individual, surrounding him, but within. They are the emotional connections the individual has made during his life, not only to family and friends, but also to those who have aroused the negative emotions of hatred and scorn.

The internal and external types of relationship between the individual and the world are presented in Schwartz's work as existing in a state of tension with opposing, alienating forces. Neither link can be broken or ignored, yet they are still under great pressure. Schwartz's reliance on an urban setting is perfectly suited to the task of portraying the individual as alone even when surrounded by others. Two lines in his journal encapsulate the dual role that the city can play:

> O may I write a Walden of the city life!
> Living alone a year in the great city-- (69)

Schwartz expresses a desire to live in a place inhabited by millions of people, yet at the same time he wishes to emulate the artistic enterprise of a man who chose to live alone, "in the midst of nature", away from society for over two years (70).

At first the two impulses may seem contradictory. Thoreau writes about having "this vast range and circuit, some square miles of unfrequented forest, for my privacy" (71). Clearly, the city dweller cannot experience a similar seclusion. Yet Thoreau recognizes that it is not truly the proximity of others that determines one's experience of being alone:

> We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad among men than when we stay in our chambers. A man thinking or working is always alone, let him be where he will. Solitude is not measured by the miles of space that intervene between a man and his fellows. (72)

For him, as for Schwartz, solitude is not necessarily the outcome of a physical situation, but a spiritual condition. The literary advantage of an urban setting is that it highlights the problem of individual solitude. It emphasizes the absence of a causal link between the proximity of others and feelings of solitude.

G. M. Hyde begins his essay "The Poetry of the City" with the following observation:

> It could be argued that Modernist literature was born in the city and with Baudelaire--especially with his discovery that crowds mean loneliness and that the terms "multitude" and "solitude" are interchangeable for a poet with an active and fertile imagination. (73)

His reference is to a passage from "Les Foules" in _Le Spleen de Paris_ (74). As has already been noted, in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" Schwartz too describes Baudelaire as "either the first or the typical modern poet". In _Dionysus and the City_ Monroe K. Spears writes of "the literal and physical city", observing that "this city is the literal environment and scene, and hence a part of the subject, of most modern literature" (75). He claims that "Dante and Baudelaire are the poets whose infernal visions haunt the modern writer; or else images of snow, desert, and the sea--the opposite of the City" (76).

In "Views of a Second Violinist" Schwartz makes

the following claim:

> Any modern poet exists in an inescapable relationship to all the modern and modernist poetry which has been written since Baudelaire. He can choose to disregard or forget about this complicated relationship; but if he does, he is depriving himself of what is an important part of his inheritance as a poet, and a powerful presence in the minds of everyone who is capable of reading poetry. (77)

Schwartz's approach to urban poetry follows territory already charted by the likes of Baudelaire and Eliot. The literary heroes, the influential "great men", that he identifies in Shenandoah are Joyce, Eliot, Pound, Rilke, Yeats, Kafka, Perse and Mann (78).

In Dionysus and the City and John H. Johnston's The Poet and the City generalizations about the nature of modern urban poetry regularly fit the specific case of Schwartz's work. Spears makes the following observation:

> . . . the great early modern writers all tended to feel that they were witnessing the end of an era, that the values that had governed Western civilization for the past four centuries were doomed. But, though this sense of cataclysmic change, of collapsing and disintegrating civilization, is profoundly important in their work, it does not mean that they abandon the vision of man in society, the image of the City. (79)

"The Isolation of Modern Poetry", with its emphasis on the poet's dependence on an increasingly outmoded world-view, taps into just such a sense of decaying values. In a short autobiographical essay, "Memoirs of a Metropolitan Child, Memoirs of a Giant Fan", Schwartz writes from the perspective of 1958, a time when "it is difficult to believe that many human beings do not

know that they are living through the most apocalyptic and terrifying century since the fall of Rome" (80). He is concerned, however, with his childhood years during the 1920s when American life seemed all optimism and progress. He recounts how Oswald Spengler's The Decline of the West shattered his faith in the inevitability of this progress, making him doubt the possibility of any longer producing great poetry, and causing him to see the city as suddenly "unfriendly and distant", a "vast and mobile and ubiquitous evidence that Spengler was right" (81). He also recalls the indifference or hostility he encountered both at home and at school as a professed poet and book reader, attitudes that play such a part in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry".

Yet there is a subversive element to the treatment of his childhood obsessions. The extent to which the young Schwartz takes to heart the message of Spengler's book comes to seem increasingly absurd. He sees the decline of western civilization actualized in the failure of the New York Giants and in his own poor performance in school exams. His "obsession with history, civilization, the future, and pedestrianism" (82) is the "grandiose" behaviour of "a precocious egomaniac" (83). Robert Phillips observes that "Schwartz knew that the serious and the funny are one" and that he makes his use of humour "an escape--not from truth, but from despair" (84). Schwartz, in an essay on John Crowe Ransom, contends that "when the poet is regarded as a strange, rare and abnormal being, it is natural that he should mock at the same time as he enjoys the language of the

grand manner" (85). In the same essay he compares Ransom to Wallace Stevens, maintaining that "both poets make a like use of dandyism of surface, of irony, and of a mock-grand style" (86). McDougall rightly identifies these traits as elements in Schwartz's own work:

> For the most part, Schwartz's fictional style is that of a man who sees through and around everything; who, furthermore, is detached and ironic even in respect to himself. Often the very act of consciousness has an inflection of self-mockery. (87)

Interestingly, irony plays a much greater part in Schwartz's prose than in his poetry, though not just in his fictional work. Moreover, it is not merely a function of language. It is not all "surface" and "a mock-grand style". Rather, in an essay such as "Memoirs of a Metropolitan Child, Memoirs of a Giant Fan", the underlying approach to the subject is ironic. It is difficult to tell how much faith to place in the story of Schwartz's struggle with Spengler as a piece of autobiographical writing, but in it Schwartz mocks himself, his attitudes and the very idea of western civilization's decline, at the same time as he ostensibly takes all three very seriously. He appears to adopt a typically Modernist stance on the collapse of society and accepted values, as described by Spears, while his attitude is actually deeply ambivalent.

John H. Johnston maintains that both "Baudelaire and Eliot see the metropolis as a spiritual condition as well as a physical and social reality" (88), referring to "a dramatization of the poet's consciousness in terms of symbolic place" (89). Spears observes that "for the

great modern writers, the line between literal and symbolic City is . . . tenuous" (90). The city in Schwartz's poetry is just such a mixture of the physical and spiritual, as will be shown by a later examination of specific poems.

However, it is interesting to note that Schwartz's approach diverges from Eliot's in at least one respect. The links between the two poet's work are clear. Bruce Bawer traces many of these in The Middle Generation. He points, for instance, to Schwartz's "In the Naked Bed, In Plato's Cave", suggesting that this quotes from The Waste Land and recasts "Preludes" (91). Other examples can be found. "Sonnet: O City, City" borrows a phrase from The Waste Land for its title (92). Yet, while Eliot may refer to the "Unreal City", as Johnston observes, he "does not permit his symbolic desert landscape to diminish our sense of the real city; he describes London with a surprising degree of particularity" (93). Thus one feature of The Waste Land is the way in which a whole variety of particular places are named. Schwartz tends not to do this in his poetry. Consequently, more emphasis is placed on the city as something generalized, rather than as a specific, inhabited place. On the two most important occasions when Schwartz does rely on named city locations, in "Far Rockaway" and "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine", he is concerned with urban resorts. These are semi-natural havens contained within the bounds of the city where urban man can still find escape and relaxation. In "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" Schwartz

refers to such an area as "the real city" (94).

IV

The imagery that Schwartz uses in recreating the "disorder" of the urban environment originates primarily in a fairly limited number of stock settings:

> One who rides in a subway train knows very well how advertisements, lights, stations, the faces in another passing train, are all shuffled together. Or when one walks in crowds one is amid thousands unknown to each other. Or in reading the daily newspaper, one is faced with a fund of events which are together mainly because they occurred upon the same date. The subway, the crowds, and the newspaper are merely easy examples. The point is that the writer who has a sense of his own time and a sense of intellectual responsibility toward his own experience must of necessity attempt to digest into his poetry these types of disorder. (95)

Schwartz may write that "the subway, the crowds, and the newspaper are merely easy examples", but they nevertheless serve an important role in his work. They assume the status of paradigmatic representations of the city. They can be found appearing over and over again in Schwartz's work. Alongside another crucial setting, the city building, these stock sources of imagery can be found in at least eleven of Schwartz's poems. A detailed examination of three early poems, "Father and Son", "Tired and Unhappy, You Think of Houses" and "Sonnet: O City, City", will underline Schwartz's reliance on them.

McDougall writes about how Schwartz uses city images to "symbolize the inescapable reality that opposes the

imagination, idealism, and transcendence that compose the other half of the poet's world" (96). "Sonnet: O City, City" deals with just such an opposition. The octet expresses the horror of urban life:

> To live between terms, to live where death
> Has his loud picture in the subway ride,
> Being amid six million souls, their breath
> An empty song suppressed on every side,
> Where the sliding auto's catastrophe
> Is a gust past the curb, where numb and high
> The office building rises to its tyranny,
> Is our anguished diminution until we die. (97)

McDougall's suggestion that "his loud picture" is "perhaps a reference to garish advertisements as manifestations of spiritual emptiness" is not helpful (98); the subway itself is seen as a representation of death. Schwartz's use of this idea is not unusual. Eliot makes use of it in "Burnt Norton", which was first published in 1936 and so predates Schwartz's poem. The connection between the underground, hell and death is clear. However, death is not merely to be found in the subway. It is there by implication in the car's "catastrophe" and in the building's "tyranny" (99).

Schwartz has structured the octet around a manipulation of ideas about the nature of life and death. "To live between terms" is to be in a form of limbo, a death-in-life. He points up that manipulation in the first line where the line-break throws emphasis on the apparent paradox of "to live where death". More importantly, he presents the death-in-life limbo with cumulative force between the two poles of "To live" at the beginning of the stanza and "until we die" at its end. Achieving this effect requires a considerable

wrenching of the syntax. This unfortunately means that the octet's final line is difficult to read well, the weakness of the abstract "diminution" increasing the problem, so that the resolution is inadequate to the power of the preceding lines.

The sestet is concerned with a longing for self-expression, for "the actuality / Of a voice speaking the mind's knowing". It deals with the "transcendence" of which McDougall writes, yet presents it as a desired, perhaps even unachievable state. The sentiment is similar to that in "The Heavy Bear Who Goes With Me". There, the individual, a resident of "the hate-ridden city", agonizes over how the grossness of his own body is an inescapable barrier to love, "although a word / Would bare my heart and make me clear" (100). The notion in "Sonnet: O City, City" of expressing "the mind's knowing", of having "the self articulate, affectionate, and flowing", is readily understandable in terms of Freudian therapy.

As its title suggests, "Sonnet: O City, City" is, to some extent, a formal exercise in the treatment of a theme. The abrupt shift in subject matter from the octet to the sestet, each being contained within single sentences, and the reliance on abstraction together emphasize the formality of Schwartz's approach. Bruce Bawer maintains that Eliot's influence led the middle generation poets to produce work in the early years of their careers that does not attempt to "capture a state of emotion but to convey an intellectual experience" (101). "Sonnet: O City, City" is just such an

"intellectual experience", and its themes, the city as death and urban man's desire for self-expression, are fairly conventional. Its more singular properties will become clear with a discussion of "Tired and Unhappy, You Think of Houses".

In that poem the poet creates a picture of domestic comfort and security where youth is innocent, the old are content, and servants do the work. The atmosphere is one of relaxation as evening fades into night. However, suddenly, in mid-sentence, Schwartz shatters this mood:

> . . . .
> It is time to shake yourself! and break this
> Banal dream, and turn your head
> Where the underground is charged, where the weight
> Of the lean buildings is seen,
> Where close in the subway rush, anonymous
> In the audience, well-dressed or mean,
> So many surround you, ringing your fate,
> Caught in an anger exact as a machine! (102)

The city imagined here has much in common with "Sonnet: O City, City". Again, the subway is an important element. There is the same sense of claustrophobia, of lost humanity. Now, though, the poet urges an acceptance, almost an embracing, of the horror. The vision of peace at the beginning of the poem is dismissed with surprising contempt as a "Banal dream". Such domestic happiness is not real in the way that the underground, the buildings and the crowd are real. It is part of a self-indulgent fantasy entertained at a moment of weakness when "Tired and unhappy". The implication, a difficult message, is that modern man must be strong enough to face the reality of modern life, even though it may consume him.

The child singing "That song of Gluck where Orpheus pleads with Death" is part of the banality of the dream because her song offers the hope that hell can be escaped and death open to persuasion. However, this moment also prefigures the shift in the second half of the poem, because, of course, despite his artistry, and despite any beauty in Gluck's song, in the myth Orpheus fails in his mission. Death keeps Eurydice. In the same way, the individual in the poem has to turn back to the underground. Hope is false, or, as Schwartz puts it in "Fun with the Famous, Stunned by the Stars", "give me enough hope and I'll hang myself" (103).

In <u>Genesis</u> a ghost observes that Hershey Green "seems to encounter concrete abstractions" (104). Jay L. Halio's essay, "Delmore Schwartz's Felt Abstractions", describes how Schwartz creates "a poetry of ideas whose sheer weight can be felt" (105). When successful, he "moves easily back and forth between the abstract and the concrete, the physical concrete" (106). Halio explains how, for instance, "In the Naked Bed, in Plato's Cave" operates so that "the idea is **felt** before it is understood, or rather the idea is finally both felt and understood simultaneously" (107). Although he does not use them as examples, it is clear that Halio's argument also applies to "Tired and Unhappy, You Think of Houses" and to "Sonnet: O City, City". Both these poems end with ideas that have already been "felt". There is no attempt to specify who or what is angry in "Tired and Unhappy, You Think of Houses". However, what it means to be "Caught" in that "anger" is understood by the reader

because the explanation lies in the preceding five lines of the poem. The "charged" underground, the buildings' "weight" and the "close" subway crowd all contribute to the sense of entrapment. Likewise, in "Sonnet: O City, City" the idea of one's "diminution" is prefigured in the "suppressed" breathing and in the "numb and high" building.

Halio also comments on how, "in order to discover (or rediscover) the reality of actual experience, Schwartz turns from abstractions to something he can actually feel or touch, even when . . . the gesture boomerangs into another abstraction or analogy" (108). However, and this is surely much more unusual, the opposite is also true: Schwartz turns to abstractions to actualize experience. As part of his evidence that Schwartz moves easily between concrete images and abstractions, Halio notes how "inverted metaphors or similes" are sometimes used, quoting the description of pears as being "useless and soft / Like used hopes" (109). What he does not note is that the description is striking because, among other things, it is a comparison with an abstraction that makes the description of something physical more vivid, more real. A similar process takes place in "Sonnet: O City, City" with "the sliding auto's catastrophe". It is the abstraction that makes the image of the car vivid and solidly physical.

Halio believes that Schwartz's ability to switch from abstractions to physical images reflects "a conflict between an earthbound sensuality and a soaring spirituality, between the actuality of concrete, material

existence and its muddying effect upon man's conception of pure idealism" (110). However, Schwartz's abstractions cannot always be explained like this. The car's "catastrophe" and even those "used hopes" are not really aspects of a "soaring spirituality". They are the result of a certain quality of mind evident in Schwartz's work that treats ideas as though they were tangible. Things and ideas operate at the same level and can be used to reinforce each other. The same associative ability can be detected in Schwartz's approach to the senses. Halio writes about Schwartz's use of tactile imagery, but in "Tired and Unhappy, You Think of Houses" "the weight / Of the lean buildings is seen", it is not felt.

The success of this approach is partly dependent on the novelty of the associations created. Even though the "anger exact as a machine" of "Tired and Unhappy, You Think of Houses" has already been "felt" in preceding lines, it could not be deduced from them analytically. The name that Schwartz gives to the sense of urban claustrophobia created in the poem comes as a surprise. It is a surprise all the more striking because he uses a human emotion to characterize a dehumanizing, impersonal force and then likens it to the operation of a machine. By ascribing mechanical exactness to the "anger", he not only alludes to the industrial nature of modern urban life, but also suggests the implacability of an inescapable fate. Conversely, the "anguished diminution" of "Sonnet: O City, City" adds little to what has already been "felt" in the poem, another reason for its comparative failure as an ending.

One phrase in "Tired and Unhappy, You Think of Houses", "anonymous / In the audience", can also be found in "Father and Son":

> See the evasions which so many don,
> To flee the guilt of time they become one,
> That is, the one number among masses,
> The one anonymous in the audience,
> The one expressionless in the subway,
> In the subway evening among so many faces,
> The one who reads the daily newspaper,
> Separate from actor and act, a member
> Of public opinion, never involved. (111)

Although the poem has already been discussed, this particular passage merits further attention. It contains all those elements, "the subway, the crowds, and the newspaper", that are considered by Schwartz to be "merely easy examples" of modern urban disorder. As in "Tired and Unhappy, You Think of Houses" and "Sonnet: O City, City", man is seen in the subway crowd. The individual in this crowd is "anonymous", "expressionless". He is "one number among masses", a number indistinguishable among all the others. This is not the oneness of individuality, but of an absence of separate identity and of humanity: "they become one". The word "one" appears five times, driving home the sense of facelessness. The individual takes on the nature of the crowd. His feelings, his reactions are not his own. They are those of the mass. He is "a member / Of public opinion, never involved". He is passive, a recipient of others' reactions, a newspaper reader.

The description of the newspaper reader as "Separate from actor and act" identifies him with "The one anonymous in the audience". Both are seen to be in essentially

the same situation, witnessing actions in which they take no part. The way in which Schwartz has structured the two single-sentence passages quoted from "Father and Son" and "Tired and Unhappy, You Think of Houses" suggests the significance of "anonymous in the audience". The two passages list different aspects of experience that nevertheless have the same effect on the individual. However, the various clauses relate to each other only loosely. The result is that the apparent distinctions between the different items on the lists lose clarity. The various items may be separate, but they are also extensions and rephrasings of the same basic experience. This is a demonstration of Johnston's "dramatization of the poet's consciousness in terms of symbolic space". The blurring of distinctions is particularly apparent in "Tired and Unhappy, You Think of Houses". It is possible to interpret the lines as calling for the individual to turn to a number of different places where he will find, separately, the subway, the buildings and the audience. Yet neither here nor in "Father and Son" does Schwartz actually specify a theatre setting for the audience. As the sentence stands, the immediate assumption is that the audience is in the subway.

If the audience is indeed the subway passengers, then the impact of "anonymous in the audience" is far greater. The implication is that even when going about his ordinary business the individual is still in some way uninvolved in the action, "Separate from actor and act". Yet the action from which he is separated is in part the action of his own life. He is a spectator at

the play of his own existence. Not only, therefore, is there a split between actor and act, but there is also a further split between the actor and himself. Part of the individual acts and part merely watches this happen. The alienation of the individual from his surroundings is a reflection of a deeper-seated alienation within him.

The use of "anonymous in the audience" accords with Schwartz's treatment of the Narcissus myth. The individual in the poems is a Narcissus figure divided from himself. He is his own passive audience. The division within the self may be partly inherent, but it is also linked to the deracination of modern urban life. The individual, "Separate from actor and act", when he himself is that actor, is at home in a society which, in its claustrophobia and anonymity, encourages a separation from external life.

Schwartz's most famous short story, "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities", the title piece of his first volume, depicts the narrator watching the events surrounding the decision of his parents to marry "as if I were in a motion picture theatre" (112). As the narrator relaxes in the darkened theatre, he comments, "I am anonymous, and I have forgotten myself" (113). The connection between this comment and "anonymous in the audience" is unmistakable. The narrator may not be watching himself on the screen, but he is watching the moments that determined not only his conception but also, by implication, both his past and his future. The screen can be seen as part of a series of images, including

the mirror and the river, that relate to Schwartz's interpretation of the Narcissus myth. The narrator is looking at reflected images that provide him with a deeper understanding of his life. Realizing the importance of what he is seeing, he first tries to prevent his parents getting together and then, having failed at this, to heal their first portentous breach. However, since he is viewing all this as it is played out on a screen, he is doomed to fail in his attempts to influence events. As in the poem, he is "Separate from actor and act". He is ushered from the cinema for making a disturbance and told to stop worrying about matters beyond his control. He has to acknowledge the predetermined nature of his existence and yet take responsibility for his actions.

CHAPTER THREE

The Early Short Stories

I

Schwartz produced two volumes of short stories. The first, The World is a Wedding, was published in 1948. All but one of its stories had already appeared in full in a variety of magazines, some as early as 1937. The second, Successful Love and Other Stories, appeared in 1961, collecting work published between 1952 and 1959, as well as printing two new stories. There are marked differences in subject matter, style and tone between these two collections. The critical tendency has been to regard the former as containing Schwartz's best work as a short story writer. James Atlas notes that none of the original reviews of The World is a Wedding were hostile (1). He also quotes Robert Flint's evaluation of it as "the definitive portrait of the Jewish middle class in New York during the Depression" (2), describing himself how the book provides both "a brilliant self-portrait" and "a portrait of two generations: Delmore's parents and those second-generation Jews known as the New York intellectuals (many of whom could recognize themselves in these stories)" (3).

One of those "New York intellectuals", Irving Howe, when discussing "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities", admits that "those of us who read it at the time really did

experience a shock of recognition" (4):

> This sense that Schwartz had found both voice and metaphor for our own claustral but intense experience--this, more than any objective judgement of his technical skill--must have been the source of our strong response. We heard a voice that seemed our own, though it had never really existed until Schwartz invented it: a voice at home with the speech of people not quite at home with English speech. (5)

Part of the reason why Successful Love and Other Stories has suffered critical ill-favour is the general belief that in later years Schwartz lost his voice.

Howe notes Schwartz's "technical bravura" (6), the "distinctively urban" tone of the stories, and comments on how they "were put together in a form that Schwartz was making his own":

> . . . longer than the story but shorter than the novelette, with little visible plot but much entanglement of relationship among characters, stylized dialogue replacing action or drama, and a major dependence on passages of commentary, ironic tags, deflated epigrams, and skittish ventures into moral rhetoric. (7)

Indeed, part of the irony of the stories is the way in which they provide commentaries on their own form:

> Shenandoah was exhausted by his mother's story. He was sick of the mood in which he had listened, the irony and the contempt which had taken hold of each new event. He had listened from such a distance that what he saw was an outline, a caricature, and an abstraction. How different it might seem, if he had been able to see these lives from the inside, looking out.
>
> And now he felt for the first time how closely bound he was to these people. His separation was actual enough, but there existed also an unbreakable unity. As the air was full of the radio's unseen voices, so the life he breathed in was full of these lives and the

> age in which they had acted and suffered. (8)

The concern in this passage with the tension between "unbreakable unity" and "separation" has an echo in the 1957 journal entry in which the railroad coach conceit is used to convey the same idea.

In his early short stories Schwartz continues to examine the nature of the individual's relationship to society. He also continues to rely on an urban setting for this analysis. The elements of disguised autobiography in the stories, and the use of characters, such as Shenandoah, to represent the author, maintain the narcissistic interest of the work. The notion of writing only "an outline, a caricature, and an abstraction" can be understood as self-criticism, as can the reference to "the irony and the contempt" felt by Shenandoah. Developing themes of alienation and dependency, the stories depend on artistic distance, but they nevertheless consider how justified these criticisms may be.

A detailed study of three of the stories from _The World is a Wedding_, "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities", "America! America!" and the title story, will show how Schwartz portrays "the Jewish middle class in New York during the Depression". All are histories of particular groups, drawing frequently, though not explicitly, on incidents in the lives of Schwartz, his family and friends. All are informed by the themes outlined above.

II

"In Dreams Begin Responsibilities" was first published in 1937, though according to Atlas it was written in 1935 (9). It is therefore one of Schwartz's earliest pieces. In it the narrator sits in a cinema watching a film of the Sunday afternoon outing during which his parents agree to marry. That this draws on the experience of Schwartz's own parents is confirmed by a note his mother added to a typescript of the story: "if there is another word besides wonderful I dont know I dont remember telling you all these so accurate" (10).

The implication of the title that the events in the story are a dream is confirmed in the final sentence when the hero wakes. The past is being rehearsed within his own mind. The movie-theatre conceit therefore introduces a notion of division into the functioning of his psyche. The narrator is like those "Separate from actor and act" in "Father and Son". On one level he is seeing something outside himself, a production over which he has no influence. On another he is a spectator at the play of his own consciousness, though he still has no control.

Setting the story in such a context allows Schwartz to achieve certain special effects. One is that the separation between narrator and film means that the parents' behaviour can be treated from a distance. The film is at first described as an old silent movie of poor picture quality in which the actors wear "ridiculously old-fashioned clothes" (11). They are

seen at such a remove as to seem comic. Their desires and anxieties, the father's confident hopes for the future, are all undermined by the greater awareness of the narrator and reader. McDougall describes how the film is written about using "simple declarative sentences that follow one another with mechanical regularity", maintaining that this mimics the "quick pace of a silent movie" (12). Actually, the short sentences give the parents' story/film an impression of documentary exactness and, at the same time, by so neatly encapsulating what is happening, they undercut the pretensions of the father in particular to comic effect.

The narrator is able to escape from the film. He shuts his eyes, he leaves for a while, so missing moments. Yet it is still his film, his dream. As McDougall points out, though the film is ostensibly an old black-and-white silent picture, the narrator provides colour, sound and even the actors' thoughts: "projecting himself into the film . . . he makes inferences and states facts that a silent movie could not give" (13). To that extent the narration is a continual interpretation of the film. The opening paragraphs of the story, where the film is described as a silent picture, are a model of uncertainty. The phrase "as if" appears repeatedly. As the interpretation begins, there is a sudden switch to certainty: the original "I think it is the year 1909" becomes "it is Sunday afternoon, June 12th, 1909" (14).

The narrator's collusion in the film allows for the conflation of past and present to ironic effect, as when he refers to "my uncle, twelve years old" (15),

and, more shockingly, when he mentions an older uncle:

> He is studying in his bedrooom upstairs, studying for his final examination at the College of the City of New York, having been dead of rapid pneumonia for the last twenty-one years. (16)

McDougall contends that "this single sentence contains the essence of Schwartz's tragic awareness of time" (17). The sentence switches from past to present, as elsewhere Schwartz switches in mid-sentence from film to narrator, without acknowledging that two different time periods are involved. Out of context it is nonsense. It can however be seen to replicate Freudian dream processes by providing a form of condensation. The nature of the story allows Schwartz to get away with the trick. He is able to concentrate into one sentence ideas revolving round notions of fate, inevitability, the fragility of human existence and the precarious nature of human endeavour. Above all, he indicates the futility of the narrator's retrospective involvement in the events of his family's past. That Schwartz's awareness of this is "tragic", as McDougall suggests, is debatable. More clearly, the sentence seems to point to an awareness of absurdity; the absurdity of an individual studying for a future in which he will have no part; and the absurdity of an individual in the future being worried about someone who has been dead for twenty-one years. The abrupt shift within the sentence between past and present is, while shocking, nevertheless comic.

The narrator's involvement in the film is used to dramatize the impossibility of influencing the past.

He can only serve as an interpreter, but as the film progresses he begins to suffer from the illusion that he can participate in it actively. Since he is supposed to be watching a film, his two attempts to interfere in what is happening on the screen are doomed to failure.

First he tries to prevent the marriage:

> Don't do it. It's not too late to change your minds, both of you. Nothing good will come of it, only remorse, hatred, scandal, and two children whose characters are monstrous. (18)

This outburst brings to a climax the story's fourth section. Irving Howe observes that when he first read "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities", "naturally, this struck me as the high point of the story, the cry against the mistakes of the past" (19). It is indeed a shocking entreaty. Not only is it an attempt to forestall the misery of the parents' marriage, but also the very existence of the narrator himself. As such it is an extraordinary mixture of despair, revolt and self-disgust. That this cry should come from the audience and be directed at a movie screen emphasizes the bizarre, futile nature of the outburst. The annoyed reaction of the rest of the audience and of the usher is the rational response of the reader as well.

Schwartz heightens the effect by making the outburst the climax of the accelerating rhythm of the film/story. The paragraph which contains it begins slowly. It builds, though, to a sentence of extreme length that, while carefully controlled by Schwartz, twists and turns, mimicking the waltzing dancers who "swing madly" and who in their turn mimic the "awful daring" and vertigo

of the father as he proposes (20). This sentence shifts between the father's proposal, his nervousness over it, his uncertainty as to why he has done it, the mother's tearful reaction and the father's first moments of doubt and near regret. The very end of the increasingly wrought sentence breaks away from the action of the film and provides the narrator's outburst. In contrast to the usual "simple declarative sentences", the story's long sentences tend to mark moments of emotional intensity.

The second outburst represents a change of attitude on the part of the narrator. Whereas before he tried to prevent his parents' marriage, here he tries to prevent them parting, shocked by their first argument. Now it is imperative that the marriage does not descend into "remorse, hatred, scandal". As before, Schwartz structures the outburst so that it is the culmination of a long, controlled sentence that nevertheless gives the impression of swinging "madly" as it moves from the mother to the fortune-teller, to the narrator standing shouting, to the usher, to an old lady, to the outburst. Again, this provides a syntactical reflection of the "terrible fear" and vertigo experienced by the narrator (21).

Each attempt to influence the course of the film provokes an angry reaction from the rest of the audience. An old lady sitting next to the narrator keeps telling him to behave. At one point she asks him not to get upset since "all of this is only a movie" (22). McDougall interprets this as meaning that the narrator "is taking his dream of the past too seriously" and that "the past

may be wept over, but it is a fiction after all" (23). He also claims that the narrator's unhappiness with the film is contradictory: "after all, he has chosen to watch it, it is his own dream" (24). Part of the point of the story is that what is seen on screen is not just a movie. It is true, not a fiction, and it is of dreadful significance to the narrator, even if not to the others in the audience. Moreover, while the film is in the narrator's dream, he has not chosen to watch it. At most he feels a compulsion to watch, a "thirsty interest" (25). The film causes him fear and anxiety. The irony of the old lady's comments is that she is unaware of the film's significance for the narrator. Her comments are inappropriate because she behaves as if she were actually in a cinema that is showing an ordinary film. Schwartz layers the ironies though. The narrator's behaviour is inappropriate because he behaves as though he is not in a cinema.

It is clear that Schwartz's use of irony pushes the implications of the story in a number of directions. The narrator's two outbursts indicate a desire to change history. A writer such as Schwartz who is interested in searching for the past causes of present realities has to work on the basis that such knowledge, once acquired, can have some purpose. However, that benefit, learning from the past, runs the risk of being confused with an impulse to alter the outcome of past events. One implication of the story is that the autobiographical writer is in the absurd position of the narrator shouting advice at a cinema screen.

The narrator identifies with a photographer who tries to take a properly posed picture of the parents:

> . . . he is not satisfied with their appearance. He feels with certainty that somehow there is something wrong in their pose. . . . The photographer charms me. I approve of him with all my heart, for I know just how he feels, and as he criticizes each revised pose according to some unknown idea of rightness, I become quite hopeful. (26)

Both photographer and narrator have an artist's appreciation of "rightness". They sense that the mother and father do not suit each other. The photographer tries to arrange them in such a way as to overcome this problem, but he fails. The picture shows "my father's smile turned to a grimace and my mother's bright and false" (27). Art is incapable of solving or transcending the problems that will bedevil the parents' marriage. It merely serves a prophetic function, capturing the essence of those problems. The fortune-teller in the story's final section works in "a booth which is in a way like the photographer's" (28).

In "The Two Audens", a 1939 essay, Schwartz describes W. H. Auden's work in terms of its resemblance to characteristics of the ego and the id. A similar Freudian approach illuminates "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities". The narrator serves the function of the id, the unconscious desires of the dreamer. The remainder of the audience, the old lady and the usher operate in terms of the super-ego, the censoring agent. The film, as part of the dream, is a neurotic, compulsive repetition of a trauma, ostensibly concerned with the unhappy marriage of the parents, though fundamentally concerned

with the unhappiness of the narrator. The latent, as opposed to manifest, content of the dream involves the narrator's self-hatred and his desire that his life had developed differently. Hence the reference to "two children whose characters are monstrous".

Regarded in Freudian terms, further details of the story come into focus. The two outbursts are releases of normally repressed desires within the laxity and safety of the dreaming state. They are given the weight appropriate to such a welling up of previously contained and denied energy. That this energy is elemental, beyond conscious human control, is suggested in the third section of the story with "the terrifying sun and the terrifying ocean" (29). The individuals in the story are moved by forces of which they are only dimly aware. The father feels "uneasy", an "unknown uneasiness" (30). He proposes without knowing why. The mother feels "an uncontrollable desire" to listen to the fortune-teller (31).

"In Dreams Begin Responsibilities" conforms to Schwartz's use elsewhere of the theatre audience as an image of dissolved identity. However, the narrator's assertion that "I have forgotten myself" as he settles down to watch the film has further implications. It is certainly an idea that Schwartz returns to later in the story. After an interruption in the film the narrator notes that "I am awakened to myself". Thereafter, he finds it "difficult to get back into the picture once more and forget myself". When he succeeds, "the darkness drowns me" (32). The corollary of the dream releasing the unconscious desires and fears of the narrator, with

the film being a projection of those impulses, is that the conscious ego of the narrator must be in abeyance. The self must be "forgotten". Similarly, when the audience and usher rebuke the narrator, when the super-ego reprimands the *id* for its unruliness, the self must be recovered. It is therefore significant that the usher carries not a mere torch nor a flashlight but, twice, comes "hurrying down the aisle flashing his searchlight" (33).

While Howe admits to seeing the narrator's first outburst "as the high point of the story", he acknowledges that later he realized his mistake:

> [The story's] tragic force depends not so much on the impassioned protest of the young narrator as on the moment in the last paragraph when an usher hurries down the aisle of the theatre and says to him: "What are **you** doing?" . . . the usher's statement has to be given a central place in the story . . . (34)

Both outbursts are followed by a reaction on the part of the audience and cinema management, and on both occasions advice is given to the narrator, the first time merely to be quiet or risk wasting his entrance fee, the second time to reconsider his actions and accept the importance of everything he does. This final warning is the note on which the dream ends. The recognition of responsibility, a personal responsibility which is to be found in dreams, marks the narrator's awakening on the morning of his twenty-first birthday. The philosophical weight of the story rests on the advice.

"In Dreams Begin Responsibilities", then, concerns itself with two separate psychological impulses. One

is the urge to rail against existence, an irrational, highly emotional, though undeniably potent instinct. The other is the rational, responsible pressure to accept that life is something to be tackled, not taken lightly nor evaded. The first reaction is negative, the second positive. Yet both are contained as impulses within the individual at the same time.

Likewise, the story contains two separate conceptions of time. The film portrays a deterministic universe. Transferred to the present tense, the film unreels the unchangeable, unpreventable steps leading to the engagement of the parents. They act as they do without knowing why, moved by forces beyond their comprehension. The narrator, with the benefit of foreknowledge, though it is also hindsight, cannot influence the events before him. Yet outside this deterministic universe, in the seats of the cinema, the narrator is called upon to exercise free will, to take responsibility. On one hand he is presented as the product of his parents' unhappy marriage. He cannot change the marriage, and therefore he cannot change how it has affected him. On the other hand everything he does "matters too much" (35). His own individual actions are important. They are his own to make. Like Coriolanus in "Coriolanus and His Mother", he must decide. He must take responsibility for a life moved by forces beyond his control. Contrary notions are subsumed within the framework of the story.

III

According to James Atlas, "America! America!" is "based on [Schwartz's] mother's involved tales of the Salomon family, who had lived next door to the Schwartzes in Washington Heights" (36). The story's hero, Shenandoah Fish, represents the artist/poet and serves as a persona for Schwartz. He is a character that Schwartz uses elsewhere, also appearing in the verse play Shenandoah and in two other stories in The World is a Wedding, "New Year's Eve" and "A Bitter Farce". In "America! America!" Fish's mother tells him the history of the Baumann family in a series of monologues. Just as in "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities" with its narrative division between the film and the events in the audience, two different stories are involved. The story of Shenandoah and his mother imposes itself upon the Baumann story. The former provides the latter with both a prologue and an epilogue, as well as periodic interruptions. The action of the Fish story informs the Baumann story, Shenandoah's comments and observations interpret it, and the mother's narration imprints her sensibility on it. Mrs. Fish is described as "imposing from time to time her own kind of irony upon the irony which sang in Shenandoah's mind at every phase of her story" (37). These two layers of irony are then overlaid with the irony that is imposed by the author himself, as the Fishes too come under scrutiny. The reader is therefore presented with the Baumann narrative at a significant remove.

This distancing strategy supports the thematic

interest of "America! America!" both in the separation between parents and offspring and in the attitude towards this separation of the second generation. Shenandoah is a representative of the second generation of Jews whose parents arrived in America from Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. The parents' aspirations on arrival, the wonder expressed in the phrase "America! America!", their continuing attachment to the culture and language of the old country, are considerations that no longer move their children. The children's characters are different, or, if the same, they are no longer adequate to the changing times. Their ambitions are also different. In one long passage Schwartz outlines the nature of the change from Shenandoah's point of view:

> He reflected upon his separation from these people, and he felt that in every sense he was removed from them by thousands of miles, or by a generation, or by the Atlantic Ocean. . . . whatever he wrote as an author did not enter into the lives of these people, who should have been his genuine relatives and friends, for he had been surrounded by their lives since the day of his birth, and in an important sense, even before then. But since he was an author of a certain kind, he was a monster to them. They would be pleased to see his name in print and to hear that he was praised at times, but they would never be interested in what he wrote. . . . The lower middle-class of the generation of Shenandoah's parents had engendered perversions of its own nature, children full of contempt for every thing important to their parents. Shenandoah had thought of this gulf and perversion before, and he had shrugged away his unease by assuring himself that this separation had nothing to do with the important thing, which was the work itself. But now . . . he began to feel that he was wrong to suppose that the separation, the contempt, and the gulf had nothing to do with his work; perhaps, on the contrary, it was the centre; or perhaps it was the starting-point and

> compelled the innermost motion of the work to be flight, or criticism, or denial, or rejection. (38)

The notion of a generation having "engendered perversions of its own nature" is central to the Baumann story. The first generation of immigrants enjoyed, by middle-age, "a time of general prosperity" when "their first insecurity was passed and hardly borne in mind, except in the depths of consciousness" (39). The children initially prospered in this environment: "they seemed to gain vitality from the intensive social life of the household" (40). Even Martha, though resentful of the "true household" in which she lived (41), "depended upon it to nourish the depths of her being" (42). Yet this well-spring of vitality is paradoxically shown to be debilitating. The failures experienced by the sons, their inability to be more than socially adept, their inability to prosper, to advance in the world, are the result of the relative success of the father, both in business and in creating a haven from "the immense alienation of metropolitan life" (43). Only the child who rejects this community prospers:

> He was moved, and in a way shocked, as his mother was too, that Martha the family rebel, the one who had repudiated the family circle many times, should be the one who made out well in life. Shenandoah's mother amazed him by remarking that the two sons were unsuccessful because they were like their father, who had been successful, however, because of what he was. The sons had followed the father and yet for some unclear cause or causes, the way of life which had helped him to prosper prevented them from prospering. (44)

The treatment of the Baumann story rests on the

paradoxes that community is both nourishing and debilitating and that the dangers of estrangement may be more desirable than the safety of belonging. Because these are paradoxes, they are presented as mysterious: reasons are left "unclear". Yet Schwartz is able to exemplify the essence of the enigma in the structure of his writing. The contradictions in the last two sentences quoted, between being "unsuccessful" and "successful" and between prospering and not prospering, are set up in a state of unresolved, and unresolvable, difference. The fundamental nature of the mystery is emphasized by the reaction ascribed to Shenandoah and his mother. After having been described elsewhere as treating the Baumann story with irony, they are nevertheless still shocked by its implications. Shenandoah is "moved", "shocked" and "amazed" by Martha's success, considerable stress thus being placed on his reaction, yet it is he who is in a position most nearly comparable to hers . He feels himself to be standing outside the community, and he repeatedly muses on the gulf between himself and others, while, as Schwartz deftly indicates, still accepting the myth of the family's paramountcy. Schwartz embodies in the plot the "unbreakable unity" binding the individual to the beliefs of his cultural heritage.

The similarities between Shenandoah's views in the long passage quoted above and ideas proposed by Schwartz elsewhere are immediately apparent. Even the language has echoes. The use of the term "monster" to describe the general perception of the "author of a certain kind"

recalls not only the "two children whose characters are monstrous" of "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities", but also the claim in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" that "there was no room in the increasing industrialization of society for such a monster as the cultivated man". Those who "would be pleased to see [the writer's] name in print" but "would never be interested in what he wrote" provoked frequent complaints from Schwartz. In "The Present State of Poetry" he quotes a letter from his brother that praises his first collection of work with dispiriting honesty:

> I received your book and really liked it very much except that I don't like poetry as I don't understand it. I showed your book to a few people and they were very much impressed and except for the fact that they didn't have a spare $2.50 they would have bought a copy. (45)

The same anecdote is recalled in "An Author's Brother-in-law" (46).

The recognition that Shenandoah is so closely identifiable with Schwartz increases the sense of the artist deliberately distancing himself from his work. "America! America!" is a story by an author in the act of contemplating himself, his work and his motives for writing. He invests his own concerns in the attitudes of one of his own characters, but he does so in order to criticize them. According to the criteria one might normally expect to be applied to art, it is a serious, even damning, charge to claim that someone's writing is characterized by "flight, or criticism, or denial, or rejection". Yet that, by implication, is the

accusation that Schwartz lays against himself, using the very structure of his text as corroborating evidence.

Schwartz's method is not, however, a disingenuous apology for poor writing, nor is it a compulsive form of self-denigration. Instead, it is both a recognition of a problem that lies at the heart of his art and an attempt to grope towards possible solutions. How can the critical position of such essays as "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" be reconciled with the production of short stories that include family chronicles, as is the case with "America! America!" and "The Child is the Meaning of This Life", or that deal with the interactions of a group of friends, as does "The World is a Wedding"? How can an author who admits to having been cut off from the lives of others write such successful fiction? If indeed "it became increasingly impossible for the poet to write about the lives of other men" (47), the difficulty cannot be solved simply by writing prose instead. Schwartz's tendency to write about poetry as if it were almost synonymous with art in general has already been discussed. One option is McDougall's contention that the short stories contradict Schwartz's criticism, but the reality is more complicated (48).

A partial answer to these questions lies in the largely autobiographical background to the work in The World is a Wedding. "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities" and "America! America!" are not the only stories to draw on Schwartz's life. Atlas testifies that "in 'The Child Is the Meaning of This Life', Schwartz produced a vivid, if unsparing portrait of his own childhood" (49). Indeed,

Atlas goes so far as to claim that "the story of the Hart family's faded expectations . . . was entirely autobiographical" (50). "The World is a Wedding" is an account of the author Paul Goodman and a circle of his friends, "all of whom are readily identifiable" (51). Atlas sees the story as "in part, an act of revenge for their ill treatment of [Schwartz] on the few occasions when he attended the Saturday evenings at which Goodman's work was read aloud" (52). Likewise, "New Year's Eve" was "inspired by a party at William Phillips's New York apartment at the close of 1937" and deals with Schwartz's "intellectual friends, all of whom would be readily recognizable even without the key supplied in his notes" (53). Atlas identifies the characters that represent F. W. Dupee, Dwight Macdonald, Lionel Abel, William Barrett and Gertrude Buckman, Schwartz's first wife (54). The existence of a key, in which a person's initials appear in Schwartz's manuscripts alongside the name of his or her fictional alter ego, suggests in itself that Schwartz often intended his characters to be portraits or caricatures rather than merely figures suggested, or inspired by, actuality. Atlas maintains that Schwartz "found it difficult to escape from autobiography, but when he did address himself to others, he produced some of the best social history of his time", citing "New Year's Eve" as an example (55). It is clear, though, that the others he addressed were well known to him. He did not "escape from autobiography" all that far. Schwartz himself still appears in "New Year's Eve" as Shenandoah Fish.

There is conflicting evidence as to what Schwartz himself thought about the extent of his reliance on autobiography. In a 1942 journal entry he refers to his creation of a unique psychology for one of his works, noting that "in 'America! America!' it is clear I do not need my own life to use this psychology, only a saturation with facts and a form which makes [it] flow" (56). The nature of the distinction between Schwartz's "own life" and "a saturation with facts" is not entirely clear. Although written ten years later, a 1952 journal entry provides a possible clarification:

> Why does almost everything since 1937 not show itself as previous years did as themes: . . . it is still not lived out, nor far away; it is not subliminal, sufficiently (as childhood naturally is)--but? (57)

According to this, his past can become useful artistically only when it has been absorbed into his sensibility, when it is no longer conscious but instinctive. Such a belief still means that the life is important for the writing, it is needed for both the facts and the themes, but it has to be transformed first. However, Schwartz's answer is only tentative. That interrogative "but" is left dangling at the end of the sentence.

In a letter written in 1943 Schwartz refers to his difficulty in beginning a short novel:

> . . . the sadness is that I had this in me for at least five years, but was stopped by the imagined difficulty that I had to write about myself in order to write about the boys and the girls. (58)

At least at one point he imagined that he had to deal

with his own life in order to write about certain topics. In the letter he admits this to have been a mistake. It is perhaps significant, though, that the novel to which he refers, A History of the Boys and Girls, was eventually abandoned (59). However, a certain consistency with the two journal entries can be identified. Earlier in the letter Schwartz suggests "that the subject in me writes . . . and not my will, and which is always a good sign, for it is the knowledge we do not know we have which is most worth bringing into the light". Schwartz's general concern with the unconscious is relevant here, but so too are the notions of a "subliminal" past and "a saturation with facts".

Another factor complicates attempts to use Schwartz's reliance on autobiography to resolve the apparent contradiction in writing "social history" when "separated from the whole life of society". In Schwartz's terms he has no more real knowledge of his intimate family than he does of anyone else. He is separated from them just as much as from others. He is even a stranger to himself. "America! America!" ends on this note:

> No one truly exists in the real world because no one knows all that he is to other human beings, all that they say behind his back, and all the foolishness which the future will bring him. (60)

Similar statements can be found in Schwartz's journals: "no one can truly see himself because he is not another. No one can truly see another because he is himself" (61); "no one exists in the real world because no one knows what everyone else has said behind his back" (62); "each

being of mankind is secret, concealed from himself and from his fellows" (63). Both "New Year's Eve" and "The Child Is the Meaning of This Life" end on comparable notes of uncertainty; the former with the question "who are **you**?" directed at the Shenandoah character (64); the latter with a character, on being asked for a light, admitting "no, I have no light" (65).

Schwartz's use of autobiography is in part an attempt to understand his personality, to "truly see himself". "Why Do You Write an Endless History?", the final poem in Vaudeville for a Princess, addresses this issue:

> I think I wish to understand
> The causes of each great and small event
> . . . .
> For, as the light renews each incident,
> My friends are free of guilt or I am free
> Of self-accused responsibility. (66)

"America! America!" is "social history", but that history is presented in relation to the Schwartz figure, Shenandoah. Everything revolves around the self-regarding individual. At the end of the story he looks at himself in the mirror. He is Narcissus, looking through his image, and the images of those his mother has told him about, for the light of greater self-understanding. The story serves both as an expression of separation and as a dramatization of the search for identity and inclusion.

In the first paragraph Schwartz makes clear the dislocation experienced by Shenandoah and his generation. Shenandoah has returned from abroad. He has moved outside "his native city" and then come back to discover that "some great change" has occurred to those who stayed

behind. He himself is "unable to write with the great fluency and excitement of previous years". His identity as a writer has somehow come into doubt. The society he had left has broken up and people have moved out of the neighbourhood. His friendships "no longer existed" and lay in "the grave of the dead years" (67). The resulting emotions are shame, embarrassment and perplexity. It is made clear that Shenandoah has been shut off from his past, as have the others of his generation, by social changes, the Great Depression, the dispersion of the neighbourhood and a confusion of spirit which prevents any rational response to these alterations. The changes are not confronted. They are not understood.

Shenandoah's lost friendships, having been mentioned, do not reappear in the story. They are not recoverable. The implication is that this aspect of society is ephemeral. The story concentrates on the much smaller, more well-defined unit of the family. It is "the mystery of the family life" that is explored (68). The association of mortality with the passage of time itself, "the dead years", ostensibly suggests that time, like old friendships, is unrecoverable. Contained within the metaphor, however, is another option. The friendships might not "rise from the grave" but "the mystery of the family life" does. The story is a process of resurrection.

After this introduction Schwartz describes Shenandoah's routine as he listens to the history of the Baumann family. Important here is the state of idleness in which Shenandoah exists. His passivity follows

a time of "intense activity" (69). Initially this was felt to be a pleasurable respite: he "was not troubled by his idleness" (70); "it was simple and pleasant" (71). The setting too is important. It is a time of "morning sunlight", and the kitchen is marked by its "whiteness" (72). White, morning and sunlight are, like snow, symbols of hope and renewal for Schwartz. McDougall observes that "the whiteness of light is the whiteness of a pure potential that generates all of the colorful variety of the visual world, just as the sun, the source of light itself, generates all life" (73). While there is a potential ambiguity, Schwartz once noting that "I feel I am being born again--but being born is no great pleasure" (74), the connection is clear enough between the morning and ideas of renewal, rebirth, reawakening and newness. There is also a connection with another of Schwartz's favourite symbols, the phoenix. Schwartz's journals contain expressions of his desire to be "poet laureate" of "the early / Morning light" (75), or "student of the early-morning / light" (76). The narrator of "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities" wakes, having become aware of the duties of adulthood, with "the morning already begun" (77). The word "morning" appears four times in the first two sentences of the third paragraph of "America! America!". Shenandoah is set to experience a new beginning, a rebirth. Having lost friends and ceased working, having broken with the past, he is all potential.

Becalmed in this state, his sense of identity comes into question:

> After two months of idleness, Shenandoah began to feel uneasy about these breakfast pleasures. The emotion which often succeeded extended idleness returned again, the emotion of a loss or lapse of identity. (78)

As with the "unknown uneasiness" of the father in "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities", great stress is placed on the accompanying anxiety: "uneasiness of the whole being overtook Shenandoah"; he played "nervously" with a spoon. However, the question of identity "was only the projection of some other anxiety", and Shenandoah "knew that to work too was merely to deceive himself about this anxiety" (79).

In Freudian terms, projection is a defence process linked to paranoia:

> . . . a particular way is adopted of dealing with any internal excitations which produce too great an increase of unpleasure: there is a tendency to treat them as though they were acting, not from the inside, but from the outside, so that it may be possible to bring the shield against stimuli into operation as a means of defence against them. (80)

Jung contests that "projections change the world into the replica of one's own unknown face" (81), an image that Schwartz might well have appreciated. Even with his loose use of the term, however, Schwartz suggests the prior origin of the "other anxiety", as well as the difficulty in determining its true nature.

By the use of such language, by the repeated introduction of terms denoting forms of worry and nervousness, Schwartz indicates the psychological, emotional depths with which the story is interested and the level of unnameable anxiety and dread afflicting

his hero. The silent fifth ghost fulfills the same function in "Coriolanus and His Mother": "The small anonymous fifth whose face is hidden / By a white mask un-understood by all, / And who calls up in me an unknown fear" (82). Worries about identity are still real. That they are a projection does not make them any the less felt, but they are less pressing, of less danger to the individual, than the primary dread from which the self flies.

The Baumann story only begins once this background of anxiety, identity loss, separation and community break up has been established:

> On the morning when this uneasiness of the whole being overtook Shenandoah seriously, his mother's monologue began to interest him more and more, much more than ever before, although she spoke of human beings who, being of her own generation, did not really interest Shenandoah in themselves. (83)

A clear connection is made between Shenandoah's fear and his sudden interest in the Baumanns. His concern is not with them "in themselves", but, by implication, with how they relate to his problems. His interest is essentially narcissistic.

From this point on the Baumanns become the focus of attention. Mrs. Fish is only reintroduced now and then by the use of such phrases as "Mrs. Fish continued" (84), or with details of her actions in the kitchen (85). More importantly, her presence is occasionally felt in her use of certain words italicized in the text. Such touches capture the vocabulary and intonation of the immigrant generation's speech, adding to the accuracy

of Schwartz's portrait. They are also part of a strategy aimed at pointing up the distance between Shenandoah and the community and era with which his mother is dealing. Their words are no longer his. Period charm, local colour and linguistic exactitude are in this instance distancing devices:

> . . . he felt the curious omniscience gained in looking at old photographs where the posing faces and the old-fashioned clothes and the moment itself seem ridiculous, ignorant, and unaware of the period quality which is truly there, and the subsequent revelation of waste and failure. (86)

There is an echo here of "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities" where "the actors are dressed in ridiculously old-fashioned clothes" (87), the film depicts the tragi-comic ignorance of the parents and the narrator in the audience knows only too well the failure of the marriage to come.

As has already been discussed, the narrator of "In Dreams Begins Responsibilities" is so close to the action on the screen that his reactions can be cut into the story, sometimes in mid-sentence. The past is being rehearsed within his own mind rather than recounted to him by someone else. Shenandoah, by contrast, is not a felt presence while his mother is telling the Baumann story. Instead he serves as a means of interruption. The break between the introduction and the Baumann story takes the form of a dissolve, to use a cinematic metaphor. It is not abrupt. Shenandoah's reaction to his mother's use of the word "game" is noted in passing as the story gets under way (88). Soon afterwards, a parenthetical

note acknowledges Shenandoah's ironic reaction to the story. Thereafter, however, Shenandoah's appearances are not contained within the process of the story-telling, but instead are set apart. They are reserved for paragraphs of their own and are introduced by a variation on a formulaic phrase: "as Shenandoah listened" (89); "Shenandoah as he listened" (90); "Shenandoah listened" (91). He is even isolated in this way.

Shenandoah's interruptions offer not so much an opportunity to comment on the preceding section of the Baumann story as they do a way of detailing his attempts to come to terms with feelings of alienation: "his own thoughts, which had to do with his own life, and seemed to have nothing to do with these human beings, began to trouble him" (92); "Shenandoah as he listened tried to go back by imagination or imaginative sympathy to the lives of these people" (93); "he reflected upon his separation from these people" (94); "Shenandoah tried to imagine their arrival in the new world" although "he knew that his imagination failed him" (95).

Since these interruptions are exterior to the Baumann story, there is a distinct danger in the method. Schwartz recognizes the problem in one of Gide's plays:

> The weakness of the play, considered solely as a play, is that the characters tend to talk about moral principles and ideas instead of dramatizing them, a temptation to which most authors who are interested in ideas succumb. Both Broadway and Henry James warn of the danger, the former with the iron rule, "Don't tell 'em, show 'em," and the latter by speaking of "the platitude of mere statement." (96)

One might well be tempted to argue that in "America!

America!" Schwartz breaks Broadway's "iron rule" and lapses into "platitude". It is not readily apparent how Shenandoah's intrusions are supposed to relate to the Baumann story. His thoughts "seemed to have nothing to do with these human beings".

The obscurity of the link between Shenandoah and his mother's monologue has led to at least one critic seriously misunderstanding its nature. Richard McDougall maintains that the "unbreakable unity" binding Shenandoah to the Baumanns consists merely of the fact that "he has been as deceived and defeated in his own hopes as an artist as they have been in their dreams of material success", with the result being that "they are all . . . victims of the historical moment and of a fatality that runs counter to human aspirations and goals" (97). This is not what the story is about, and, even if it were, it hardly amounts to a case of "unbreakable unity". If the connection amounted to no more than this, then any family anywhere that had suffered material disillusionment would be adequate to Schwartz's purpose. Issues of community and family history would be irrelevant.

Shenandoah's own eventual recognition of the bond is preceded by a gradual break down in the story/interruption/story structure of "America! America!". He himself accepts the relevance of the Baumanns to his own existence at the same time as he becomes integrated into the telling of their story. The change that comes over Shenandoah is first hinted at with an acknowledgement of his growing interest (98). The most important step

comes next when that involvement overwhelms him and he starts to contribute his own memories of the Baumanns:

> Each incident cited by his mother suggested another one to Shenandoah, and he began to interrupt his mother's story and tell her what he himself remembered. She would seize whatever he mentioned and augment it with her own richness of knowledge and experience. (99)

The Baumann story therefore becomes as much Shenandoah's account as his mother's. Mrs. Baumann's last visit, for instance, is recalled by Shenandoah. He no longer stands outside engaged in thoughts of his own. As "America! America!" reaches its conclusion Shenandoah's reconnection with those with whom he has a shared past is wrought in the story's form and not just imposed through "the platitude of mere statement". Furthermore, when Shenandoah castigates himself because "he had listened from such a distance that what he saw was an outline, a caricature, and an abstraction", this is also a statement of a truth that has been made apparent in the story's form. The danger of the method has been turned to Schwartz's advantage in order to prove his point.

However, it would be wrong to argue that "America! America!" is directed solely towards the acceptance of Shenandoah's essential kinship with the figures of his past. Immediately after admitting the relationship, and after having been reintegrated into the story, the hero steps out on his own again. He contemplates himself in the mirror. He asserts the impossibility of ever truly knowing himself. The implication has to be that people can after all only be seen as "an outline, a caricature, and an abstraction".

The sentence in which the "unbreakable unity" is accepted is not simple: "his separation was actual enough, but there existed also an unbreakable unity" (100). Separation and unity coexist in tension, in balance. The final moments of the story restore the emphasis to the first part of that sentence. The balance tilts. While the preceding Baumann narrative has dealt with people as they interact, the final moments of "America! America!" focus on the solitary individual. When Mrs. Fish concludes by drawing the moral "that some human beings seemed to be ruined by their best qualities", Shenandoah turns it into "a generalization about the fate of all human beings and his own fate" (101). The mention of "his own fate" is redundant, yet highly suggestive of Shenandoah's turn of mind. For him, generalities are not important, the fate of his own self is. He asks three questions about his fate and draws three conclusions about himself. "I" is the significant repeated word.

"America! America!" ends with a retreat from affirmation as Shenandoah denies that anyone "truly exists in the real world". The story therefore pulls in a number of conflicting directions. It deals with the reintegration of the individual into society and the difficulty of maintaining a sense of identity when alone. However, it also chronicles the wasted lives and opportunities produced by an inability or unwillingness to escape the protection of the family, as well as indicating the impossibility of arriving at true self-knowledge while in society.

Although Shenandoah comes to recognize his fundamental connection to the Baumanns, his questions at the end of the story remain the same as at the beginning. Schwartz points up this continuity by retaining elements of phrasing. One of Shenandoah's early interruptions includes this question:

> What is it, he said to himself, that I do not see in myself, because it is of the present, as they did not see themselves? How can one look at oneself? No one sees himself. (102)

The same question at the end of the story receives essentially the same answer:

> What is it that I do not see now in myself?
> I do not see myself. I do not know myself.
> I cannot look at myself truly. (103)

The only change is that whereas originally Shenandoah is content to generalize, the second time he asks the question it has become intensely personal. "One" has been replaced by "I". The desire to "see myself", to know how to "look at oneself", is, of course, the impetus behind Schwartz's use of the mirror image. For once, though, a character looks at himself in the mirror and there is no sudden self-awareness. No matter how great the emphasis placed on the necessity for the individual to exist in a social context, that individual is still unable to step outside him or herself and break through to objective knowledge.

IV

"The World is a Wedding" presents certain obvious differences from both "America! America!" and "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities". The most significant of these is that for once Schwartz makes do without either a clear central character or a narrator. There is also no internal or secondary tale like the Baumann history and the film in the other two stories. The reader is therefore not presented with a narrative that is subject to the analysis of a character acting as a surrogate for the author. Indeed, there is no one figure standing in for the writer. Regardless of whether the reader recognizes the biographical background to the story that Atlas identifies, not even Jacob, "the conscience or judge of the circle" (104), is as clearly a representation of Schwartz as Shenandoah is in "America! America!" or as the narrator is in "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities". Indeed, while elements of Schwartz's dilemma as a writer are expressed through Jacob, they are also articulated by other characters, including Ferdinand and even Rudyard, the supposedly reviled Paul Goodman figure.

The story concerns itself with a "circle of human beings united by need and love" that is formed "just at the beginning of the great depression" (105). The socio-economic background to the story is clearly established. The members of the circle are all initially unemployed, having just finished, or being in the process of finishing, their formal education. The leader, Rudyard, initiates the circle as a form of salon when

he decides not to get a job but instead to devote himself to writing. As Schwartz writes, "in a way, this refusal to become a teacher and to earn a living was the beginning of the circle" (106). The other members are frustrated by the Depression in their attempts to find careers. Their hopes are left "worn thin like a cloth" (107). This frustration restricts the members' "true life" to the circle, as does "their lower middle class poverty" which prevents thoughts of romance and marriage (108).

Schwartz therefore makes it clear that the circle is founded upon a rejection of society and conventional responsibility, a "refusal . . . to earn a living", at the same time as its creation is provoked by society's inability to provide a normal economic place for those in the circle. Only with the end of the Depression does the circle lose this economic justification:

> The circle altered as the great depression was stabilized and modified. The idleness which had been beyond reproach because no one was successful, because most were frustrated, because the parents' generation had lost so much of its grip and pride, ended, for now there were jobs for everyone, although not the jobs each one wanted. (109)

The detail that the newly available jobs are "not the jobs each one wanted" indicates that even a comparative increase in economic prosperity is not necessarily sufficient for an increase in personal satisfaction. This is a point taken up by Jacob elsewhere in the story:

> The depression is as much an effect as a cause, and the amount of unhappiness was perhaps as great in 1928 as in 1934. (110)

Having placed such great emphasis on the economic

influence on the lives of the members of the circle, Schwartz uses comments such as this to suggest that other considerations may in fact be more important.

Jacob's observation emerges as a crucial aspect of the issues around which "The World is a Wedding" revolves. The statement in the second paragraph of the story that the circle is "united by need and love" is soon shown to be a misleading simplification, and perhaps even false. At the very least further elaboration is needed. The remainder of the story can be viewed as providing the required amplification and explication, culminating in Jacob's affirmation of the all-embracing nature of the wedding that is life.

Although the end of the Great Depression, or more precisely, to use Schwartz's terminology, the stabilizing of it, removes the economic justification for the circle, it does not bring it to an end. The circle, like the Depression, is "modified". Members find jobs. They can now afford a "modest round of luxuries" (111). Some eventually become involved with women. Though marriage is feared as disruptive, such an involvement does not necessarily alter a member's relationship to the circle:

> His marriage became by imperceptible degrees of which no one dared to speak, a recognized union, but this did not change in the least Ferdinand's participation in the circle or his mode of life. (112)

Even Rudyard's decision to leave and take a teaching post, depriving the group of its original leader, does not bring an end to the circle, though his role has admittedly by that point been largely taken over by

Ferdinand. Jacob certainly argues that the circle will continue to exist. The end of the story leaves its eventual fate unresolved, but the reader is given no real reason to believe that it will soon break up.

If, ultimately, the circle is held together neither by economic conditions nor by Rudyard, then nor is it truly united by love. At a basic level it is clear that not all members of the circle even like each other. Rudyard, for instance, has "open contempt for Marcus" (113). More fundamentally, though, Jacob maintains that the circle's behaviour is partly explained by its members' ignorance of love:

> Jacob, somewhat apart, saw that on this subject opinion was absolute and speculation infinite precisely because they were so far from the actuality of love. (114)

The same reasoning is used earlier by Jacob to explain his perception of the cruelty of Ferdinand's stories:

> "You have to love human beings," thought Jacob, "if you want to write stories about them. Or at least you have to want to love them. Or at least you have to imagine the possibility that you might be able to love them. Maybe that's not true. But it is true that Ferdinand detests everyone but his friends of the circle." (115)

This last quotation is a prime example of one of Schwartz's most distinctive literary tactics: he proposes a definite statement, an apparent answer and affirmation, then backs away from it, qualifies it and often resolves it down to uncertainty. This is frequently done to comic effect. Here the tactic is used to suggest not only the comic difficulty inherent in arriving at any easy

formulation concerning the prerequisites for good writing, but also the distance to be travelled before one can be said to "love human beings". The gradual weakening of Jacob's formulation, emphasized by the formal repetition of the phrase "or at least", the comic elaboration of the third sentence and the abrupt, though tentative, admission in the fourth sentence that the whole notion may be incorrect anyway, is strongly indicative of Jacob's uncertainty about the possibility of finally arriving at the point where one can love others.

The group's knowledge of love is presented as purely theoretical and without foundation in experience. That is not to say that they are sexually inactive or romantically uninvolved. Certain members do become attached, even marry. But this does not necessarily result in an improvement in their understanding. The homosexual Francis is sexually very active, yet the intimation is that in his case the motivation is not so much love as his belief, firstly, that homosexuality is "the real right thing" (the awkward, slangy nature of the phrase a criticism in itself) and, secondly, that his behaviour is justified by "the great authors and artists who had been as he was" (116). Moreover, his "sexual preoccupation" is considered by Jacob to be "a kind of sunlight" in which "he had come at last to see only the sunlight and nothing else" (117). For Francis, the notion of a Platonic Good has been reduced to mere sexual activity. His need for the others is correspondingly diminished. He slowly withdraws from

the circle.

If, then, the circle is indeed "united by need and love", the true emphasis in that conjunction is on the notion of need. The members stay together because they need each other. This truth is articulated by Jacob towards the end of the story:

> The fact is . . . we all have each other and we all need each other. . . . All of us consume each other, and life without such friends as we are to each other would be unbearable. (118)

Put like this, the need expressed is scarcely equivalent to conventional notions of love. It involves feeding off others in order to relieve one's own pain. However, this is not as fundamentally selfish as it may at first seem. Jacob continues by maintaining that "the best pleasure of all is to give pleasure to another being" (119).

That life should be so painful for the individual is not merely the consequence of economic conditions. A clue to the underlying malaise comes when Jacob contemplates the nature of urban life:

> They did not inhabit a true community and there was an estrangement between each human being and his family, or between his family and his friends, or between his family and his school. Worst of all was the estrangement in the fact that the city as such had no true need of any of them, a fact which became more and more clear during the great depression. (120)

New York is described as "the capital of departure", a place that "contains all of the means of departure as well as return" (121). The place where they live provides the members of the circle with no true roots.

The city is by its very nature rootless. Modern urban living is based on flux. Society is fragmented. Social units are tiny. There is no bond between family, school and friends. The situation depicted here is more extreme than in "America! America!". In that story the "unbreakable unity" binding the individual to his family mitigates his feelings of alienation from them. In "The World is a Wedding" the family has ceased to be a source of comfort. The only important family relationship in the story is between Rudyard and Laura, who are brother and sister, and he makes her miserable.

At one point Jacob does contemplate the effect of the family on the individual:

> "Is it something in the darkness of the family life from which we have all emerged which compels Edmund to assert himself like that? Is it his two brothers, his father's tyranny, or his mother's unequal affections? That's just one more thing we don't know."
> Jacob paused to have a modest lunch. (122)

The possibility of Freudian motivations is recognized, but only in such a way as to undermine that acknowledgement. The passage is another example of Schwartz's favoured literary tactic: the seriousness, the formality, the pomposity of Jacob's formulations gently mock both him and them. The admission of ignorance weakens them further. They finally collapse under the abrupt switch marked by the next paragraph. It is not that Schwartz necessarily doubts the reality pointed at by Freudian psychoanalysis. He is quite capable of sincerely believing in something yet holding up its contrary as possible. Rather, it is that, in the society

depicted in "The World is a Wedding", certainty over psychoanalytic issues is impossible. Doubt is the natural state of mind.

Amid such flux the individual has to find stability in some form of community. It is this that the circle provides: "they came together in order not to be alone, to escape from deviceless solitude" (123). As has been said, it is not love that is the attracting factor, but a need that must be assuaged. Two examples can be given:

> Jacob, thinking about his friends and walking many city blocks, was borne forward by the feeling that through them he might know his own fate, because of their likeness, difference, and variety. (124)

Rudyard's motivation is also selfish:

> The volley of the conversation, as at a tennis match, was all that he took with him. For what he wanted and what satisfied him was the activity of his own mind. This need and satisfaction kept him from becoming truly interested in other human beings, although he sought them out all the time. (125)

The description of Jacob's hope is immediately recognizable as a rendering of Schwartz's own artistic method and concern. The identification is helped by the use of Jacob as the primary commentator on the circle, its "conscience or judge". The criticism of the self-obsessed Rudyard is for a failing very similar to Jacob's. If Jacob is "interested in other human beings", this is only because he is really interested in himself and his "own fate". The individual's own sensibility, his own mind, feelings and cares have become his prime, if not his only, preoccupation.

This connection between the individual's concern with his sensibility and an alienation from normal social structures suggests a direct thematic link between "The World is a Wedding" and "The Isolation of Modern Poetry". The members of the circle correspond to those described in the essay who, having been "separated from the whole life of society" (126), are each left with "no serious activity other than the cultivation of his own sensibility" (127). The completeness of the separation is quite clear in "The World is a Wedding". Given the failure of the city, the family and other social units to provide a cohesive foundation for life, the circle comes into being as an entirely self-sufficient unit. This is clearly indicated by the visit of someone who is interested in producing Rudyard's plays:

> It seemed to him that the human beings of this circle existed in a private realm which did not permit the visiting stranger such as himself a true view of what they were and their life. He never saw them again. (128)

Life in the circle is marked by "the volley of the conversation". Each event is subjected to "passionate interpretation" as the members indulge to the full the expression of their sensibilities (129). Most of them are aspiring artists or view their lives in relation to art, whether it be Francis with his emulation of great homosexual writers or Rudyard with the long series of plays that he writes and reads to the others. Words are their natural concern. As McDougall observes, "the very structure of 'The World is a Wedding' is determined by this emphasis on words":

> It shows the farthest development of Schwartz's method of evoking character and mood by means of conversation and by modulations of the narrator's tone of voice. The young people of the story, all of them literate and given to analysis of themselves and one another, indulge in a continual play of language. (130)

Once the link between "The World is a Wedding" and "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" becomes clear, it also becomes apparent that the story functions as a sustained criticism of the essay. Of course, in the essay Schwartz is primarily attempting to describe the situation in which the modern artist finds himself and the historical process that gave rise to it. He is not presenting that state of affairs as wholly desirable, nor is he indicating that the artist has any real control over the factors that caused it. However, he does assume an artist engaged in the serious pursuit of his art. There is no doubt as to the esteem in which this activity is held. In "The Vocation of the Poet in the Modern World" he maintains that the poet's calling is something to which "one must respond with the whole of one's being" (131), and he describes the poet as "a priest who performs a ceremony of marriage each time he composes a poem" (132). In "The World is a Wedding" Schwartz shows how artistic endeavour can degenerate into self-delusion, self-indulgence and stagnation.

There are moments in the story when the ideal of the artist/priest is considered. Most notable of these is the occasion when Jacob comes to realize the primacy of his artistic aspirations over monetary considerations. He admits that the possession of "one million dollars"

would have little meaning to him since "it would not help me to make this short novel, which is worthless, a short novel which is good" (133). An earlier instance effectively dramatizes the contention in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" that the artist is "separated" from others "by the opposition between his values as an artist and their values as respectable members of modern society" (134):

> "You have just seen a genius," said Edmund to his mother.
> "How much money does he make?" asked Mrs. Kish. (135)

This quick exchange crystallizes with comic succinctness the nature of the conflict between both the artist and society and the younger and older generations. However, the comedy has an unexpected implication. It is not so much Mrs. Kish who is mocked for materialism, as it is Edmund whose pomposity is punctured by the rapidity and rationality of her riposte. That the principal mockery is not directed at Mrs. Kish is an impression reinforced by the consequent behaviour of the members of the circle. They recognize that her remark is "brilliant", but their attempts to use it as the basis of "a new genre for the epigram" (136), and their feeble, laboured variations, illustrate both their failure to grasp what makes the question "brilliant" and also the paucity of their imaginative powers.

In much the same way Schwartz manages to turn Jacob's rejection of the "one million dollars" against the group. They are "very much moved and impressed" by this renunciation (137), as indeed should be the reader.

Yet once again they are shown to have missed the point. The sincerity of the original emotion is lost in their later conception of the event. They talk of it as "the great rejection". Edmund maintains that it indicates a discovery of "the essential vanity and emptiness of our society". Again, they "invent variations, delicious to them, of the enigmatic sentences" (138). The comic treatment of their pomposity undermines their position. The final touch, the notion that their behaviour in this matter creates among strangers "the illusion that Jacob was a fabulous heir" (139), humorously suggests the extent to which their artistic pretensions result in a distortion of reality.

Schwartz does not only undercut the concept of the artist's superiority to materialist values. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" deals with the increased need of the artist to be "engaged in following the minutest movements, tones, and distinctions of his own being as a poetic man" (140). In "The World is a Wedding" the members of the circle are shown engaged in a rigorous examination of the motivation behind the marriage of an acquaintance. They propose a whole array of ingenious, intricate, psychological and social causes for such behaviour. Yet the multiplicity of reasons suggested, and their contradictory nature, eventually come to stand as an illustration of the difficulty of ever pronouncing accurately on the inner workings of an individual, let alone their "minutest movements". Just as Schwartz subverts Jacob's earlier consideration of the effect of "the darkness of the family life", the whole long

discussion is comically deflated at the end by Laura's observation that "maybe she just likes him and he just likes her" (141). The others dismiss Laura as "superficial", but the deflating humour of her comment makes the reader sympathize with such superficiality. Common sense, a simplistic approach to motivation, emerges triumphant over the uncertainties and intricacies of Freudian and Marxist interpretation.

Working away from ordinary society has an unhappy literary effect on the artist. Not only is the potential producer of Rudyard's plays repelled by the circle's impenetrable exclusivity, for its members too the plays are shown to be losing their significance:

> They had heard these ideas from Rudyard in conversation and were not much interested or impressed by the dramatic version. (142)

The artist's alienation from society has produced a situation where, even within the immediate community of fellow artists, the creation of art has been rendered obsolete. It is significant here that Schwartz makes his characters fresh from their education: "Jacob and his friends had prospered in school, and most of all at the university, in a way they never had since then" (143). Theory, ideas, discussion have triumphed over the work itself.

The two detailed descriptions of the sort of work that is produced by the circle deal with Rudyard's plays and Ferdinand's stories. Rudyard's drama is seen as weakened by its philosophical preoccupations:

> . . . Rudyard used character and incident

> merely as springboards for excursions which were lyrical and philosophical, so that the esssential impression was dream-like, abstract, and didactic. (144)

Ferdinand's fiction, which, like the plays, is unpublished, is criticized for the dislike of people manifest in it:

> His stories, however, belonged to a small province, the province of his own life with his mother and his mother's family. The essential motive of his stories was the disdain and superiority he felt about these human beings of the older generation, and his stories always concerned the contemptuous exchanges of the characters, the witty quarrels which revealed the cruelty and the ignorance of their relationship to each other. (145)

Both these descriptions echo Schwartz's account in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" of the types of art to be expected from the alienated artist. Ferdinand's work does not quite reach the extreme of the artist concentrating solely on himself, at a time when it is "increasingly impossible for the poet to write about the lives of other men" (146), but its restriction to "the province of his own life with his mother and his mother's family" can certainly be taken as indicative of the narrowing of the area of which the artist "has an absorbing experience in every sense" (147). Rudyard's plays, with their "lyrical" emphasis and abstraction, embody Schwartz's contentions in the essay that an absorption in one's sensibility means that the poet "can only write lyric poetry" (148) and that isolation from society causes the artist to abandon concrete, fixed allegiances.

It is also apparent that the descriptions quoted

above can be taken as representing not only modern art as detailed in the essay, but also more particularly the art produced by Schwartz himself. It is not clearly evident that this is intentionally the case with regard to Rudyard's plays, though charges of abstraction and undue philosophizing have been brought against Schwartz by critics: McDougall, for instance, though not with reference to "The World is a Wedding", has accused Schwartz of "graceless abstraction" (149). The characterization of Ferdinand's stories is, however, certainly intended to reflect facets of Schwartz's own short stories. It recalls "America! America!" and "the irony and the contempt which had taken hold of each new event" as Shenandoah listens to his mother's tales of older generations (150). "New Year's Eve" also concentrates on "the contemptuous exchanges" and "the witty quarrels" of its characters. More importantly, so does "The World is a Wedding" itself.

Schwartz has certainly been castigated for the faults seen in Ferdinand. Irving Howe recognizes such "disdain" in Schwartz's writing:

> The mockery Schwartz expended upon the New York intellectuals and would-be intellectuals can be caustic, even bitter and, to be honest, sometimes nasty . . . (151)

Howe does, however, also concede that Schwartz's mockery "is not dismissive, it does not exclude, it does not relegate anyone to the limbo of the non-human". Indeed, part of the point of Schwartz's mockery is its inclusiveness. He mocks what elsewhere he praises. He mocks what he holds most dear. He mocks his own writing.

He mocks the individuals of Paul Goodman's coterie, but he conflates his portrayals of them with elements of his own character, thus mocking himself as well.

This duality of approach provides a clue as to how the affirmation provided by Jacob about the nature of the wedding that is life operates within the context of the story as a whole. A casual reaction to the preceding pages, the story's first nine sections, might have it that such is the portrait of alienation, lovelessness and self-absorption in Schwartz's treatment of the circle that an attempt to end on a note of celebration must be at the very least unconvincing, if not false. Heinz Politzer observes, in "The Two Worlds of Delmore Schwartz", that in effect the true burden of the story's message lies on Laura's assertion that "the world is a funeral" (152):

> . . . judging from his writings, there is little doubt that Schwartz would like to feel and think as Jacob does, but actually feels and thinks like Laura. (153)

There is certainly evidence that Schwartz's initial reaction to the Talmudic phrase, "the world is a wedding", most nearly approximates to Laura's attitude. Mention is made of his first discovery of the phrase and his subsequent attempts to determine its meaning in a letter written to Mark Van Doren in April 1943:

> I have tried without success to figure what this means. At any rate, it suggests delightful variations, such as The world is a misalliance [sic], a marriage of convenience, a royal mating, a shot-gun affair, and all the other kinds of marriages. (154)

The similarity is obvious between Schwartz's position in the letter and the position he gives to Laura in the story:

> "The world is a marriage of convenience," said Laura drunkenly, "the world is a shot-gun marriage. The world is a sordid match for money. The world is a misalliance. Every birthday is a funeral and every funeral is a great relief." (155)

The only real difference is that in the letter Schwartz is acting in the role of humorist and man-of-the-world. In the story the variations on the original phrase, while still humorous, are more noticeably bitter, and the detail that they are uttered "drunkenly" suggests that by now the author is, to an extent, dissociating himself from them.

It is not until September 1943, in a letter to R. P. Blackmur, that there is evidence that Schwartz came to see the point of view that he would later ascribe to Jacob:

> I have figured out the meaning of "The World is a Wedding." It is that picture of Breughel's now on my wall, and it is motto [sic] for my tombstone, under "Metaphor Was His Exhilaration." (156)

Thus, when Jacob declares that "I read this sentence in an old book last week" and that "I had to think for two days before I had any conception of what this sentence . . . was supposed to mean", in the end concluding that "it was natural that I should think of Pieter Breughel's picture" (157), Schwartz is almost exactly reproducing his own reactions on encountering the phrase.

Politzer therefore misses the point in his interpretation of Schwartz's attitude to Laura and Jacob. He is right that Schwartz "feels and thinks like Laura", but he also, and at the same time, "feels and thinks" like Jacob. The two characters represent two conflicting aspects of Schwartz's personal reactions to a particular phrase. By dividing those negative and positive responses between two characters, Schwartz is better able to dramatize the conflict in terms of the story. While it is necessary to avoid the temptation of assuming that Jacob's role as commentator implies an identification between him and the author, one should also treat with caution Schwartz's occasional mockery of him and the use of other characters to contradict his views. When Laura rejects Jacob's opinions that does not prove that Schwartz is favouring one character over another. The manner in which he identifies a number of different characters with himself suggests that the reality must be more complicated. His tendency to deflate certainties encourages the use of characters who can reject or contradict positive statements. In part this approach provides as a way of testing those statements, and in part it underscores the difficulty of ever pronouncing on an issue with any finality. Schwartz's schizophrenic method in "The World is a Wedding" proceeds by opposing, comparing and synthesizing different attitudes.

Indeed, the final section of the story functions as a synthesis of a number of points of view. Schwartz's treatment of the title phrase is not a simple endorsement of community. Not only does he set up a direct contrast

and tension between notions of the world as a "wedding" and as a "funeral", but he also introduces a third element in the speech given by Francis. His contribution almost rivals Jacob's in length, while far exceeding Laura's, and it is given weight by the detail of being delivered "with an intensity which made everyone listen" (158).

Francis himself leaves the matter of where he stands vague. He asks whether the others think that he agrees with Jacob or not. Yet the story he tells concerns a marriage founded on "twin beds", shadowed by "the home for the aged" and celebrated by an occasion when "no one had very much to say to anyone else". The long account ends with the ominous statement that "the wedding was all over" (159). The marriage is given no more significance than everyday life. That Francis should suggest that this picture of alienation might accord with what Jacob says indicates that the latter's position provides more than a simple contrast with Laura's.

Jacob's understanding of "the world is a wedding" is, indeed, far from simple. He accepts elements of Laura's point of view. He admits that her version of the Kafka story, in which she is a cow eaten alive by her brother and friends, is "a very good story" (160). He admits that, in life, "each of us . . . has been disappointed and most of us will continue to be disappointed" (161). Yet in accepting Laura's story, he transforms it into an example of how "the best pleasure of all is to give pleasure to another being". His vision transcends the superficial violence and unpleasantness of the plot. This would seem wilfully optimistic were

it not for the homeliness and simplicity of the example given of such pleasure: the avoidance of "unbearable solitude" gained through the dependence of a cat.

The actual description of the Breughel painting is, in Jacob's handling, a far from purely joyful affair. One man is said to be looking "as if he were thinking of his faded hopes". The bride smiles "a faint smile". "An old man looks ahead at nothing". A priest and a nun are there, but "neither of them will ever have a husband or a wife". The parents' "time is passed and they have had their day". The rejected suitor "looks from a distance like death at happiness". One of the few notes of pleasure is in the bridegroom who "drinks as if he were in the midst of a long kiss" (162), but even here it could be felt that his satisfaction is merely sensual and found not in his bride but in alcohol. The details build to create a impression of collective disillusionment, uncertainty and exclusion. They also echo the observation at the beginning of the story that "the hopes of most of the boys of the circle had faded slowly like a color or were worn thin like a cloth" (163). The characters in "The World is a Wedding", like some of those in the picture, stand unhappily on the outskirts of life.

Yet somehow the description of the painting does, as it develops, acquire the tone of an affirmation. It is there in the richness of the detail, the accumulating abundance of characters and the sensuality of the climax:

> . . . in the foreground a handsome young man pours from a jug which has the comely form of a woman's body the wine which will bring

> all of them exaltation like light. His bending body is curved in a grace like harps or violins. (164)

The beauty of the work of art is felt despite the sadness to be seen in some of its features. In its all-embracing scope such artistry surpasses sorrow. As Schwartz does in "The World is a Wedding", the painting is able to include the excluded.

Jacob's treatment of the title phrase therefore serves as an illustration of his earlier comment that "everything is mixed in everything else" (165). The ending works because Jacob's conception accepts much of the unhappiness and alienation exhibited in the story, while at the same time transcending them. Jacob's question to Laura, in "a kind voice", "can't you think of anything good to say about any of us" (166), can be seen as a rebuke by Schwartz for that element in his writing that Howe characterizes as "nasty". A Jacob/Schwartz compound reprimands a Laura/Schwartz compound. Schwartz finally shows that he can see good both in things and in people, although this good exists in the context of a life marked by the positive and the negative, by "joy, fear, hope, and ignorance" (167). Everyone, even the disappointed, has a necessary part to play.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Late Short Stories

I

Over the years there has been a critical tendency to complain that there is a fall from earlier standards in _Successful Love and Other Stories_, Schwartz's second collection of short fiction. Richard McDougall does not even think the book worthy of discussion in his study of the writer's work, finding fault with Schwartz's move away from the subject matter of _The World is a Wedding_:

> The later stories, for the most part, try to depict a wider social milieu that did not concern him so deeply as a writer; and the result is hardly above the level of entertainment. Like a ventriloquist, he tries on a number of voices . . . and abandons the ironic voice of his fictional persona, the grown man looking back upon the obsessive past. (1)

James Atlas maintains that the late stories are "so strikingly different from _The World is a Wedding_ that a reader familiar with the earlier stories would hardly believe them to be by the same author". He identifies Schwartz's use of "a whimsical, optimistic mode . . . that had little in common with the self-conscious, ironic voice so distinctive in his fine autobiographical stories", claiming that he introduces "themes so alien to his own experience that one wonders how he managed to write about them as well as he did" (2).

According to Atlas, Schwartz did not write about those themes that well. He argues that in the mid-1940s Schwartz's "prose grew impossibly diffuse" (3). Of the late stories he considers only "The Track Meet" to be of any significance.

Some differences in subject matter are immediately apparent. There is no longer the emphasis found in the first book on the conflict between the first generations of New York Jewish immigrants and their intellectual, alienated offspring. Robert Flint notes that "none of these stories is concerned with Jewish life as such and thereby reflects the change that has weakened the emotional and intellectual ties of the community" (4). While there are late stories set in the city ("Successful Love" deals with a young woman's decision to move to New York and "The Gift" is about a child's cross-city trip by subway and taxi to Brooklyn), the importance of the urban milieu is not as great as in The World is a Wedding. There is no longer the intense concern with the city's power to influence people's lives. Instead, much of the interest has switched from New York to the university campus. "The Fabulous Twenty-Dollar Bill", "A Colossal Fortune" and "The Hartford Innocents" are all set within educational establishments. While in The World is a Wedding the city is presented as the truly modern environment, in "The Hartford Innocents" one character declares that "an institution of education is an epitome of America itself . . . a small volcano in which the major and half-hidden conflicts which run through American life come to the surface and erupt" (5).

The interest in campus life points to a more important change in the late stories. McDougall notes that the late stories have moved away from Schwartz's "youth, the events and circumstances that shaped his life--a field of strong emotion" (6). Instead, Schwartz is drawing for material on his experience as a lecturer. Before the publication of Successful Love and Other Stories he had worked at Harvard, Princeton, Kenyon College, Indiana University and the University of Chicago. However, more is at issue than Schwartz's reaction to new events as he grew older. The years lecturing at Harvard preceded the publication of The World is a Wedding, yet universities make no discernible impact on the subject matter of that book.

A 1952 journal entry already discussed in the previous chapter suggests Schwartz's reluctance to use his adult life in his art:

> Why does almost everything since 1937 not show itself as previous years did as themes: some of it does, more than I usually think: the professor of literature is in the way, my relations with the people; it is still not lived out, nor far away; it is not subliminal, sufficiently (as childhood naturally is)--but? (7)

Admittedly, this is but one entry in a journal notable for recording many fits of depression and losses of confidence. Moreover, its meaning is not entirely clear. The references to "my relations with the people" and to the professorship being "in the way" may be acknowledgements of a problem that is addressed in "The Fabulous Twenty-Dollar Bill". One suggestion there is that "the only reason why anyone writes fiction--short

stories or novels--is that they are afraid to gossip about other people's lives and can do so with some safety in the medium or in the disguise of fiction" (8). However, if Schwartz is expressing doubts about whether the medium is really as safe, and the disguise as good, as might be necessary to protect his "relations with the people", then he is showing an uncharacteristic reticence. Such worries did not deter him from giving only a very thin disguise to the gossip in "The World is a Wedding" and "New Year's Eve".

However, Successful Love and Other Stories does indeed appear to have moved away from the gossipy stories of the earlier volume. Only "The Fabulous Twenty-Dollar Bill" and "The Gift" give the impression that certain of the events and characters in them may have been drawn directly from specific life-models. For instance, in the former the central character, Professor Robbins, is, like Shenandoah, a Schwartz figure. He is told by Professor Anderson that Leonard Pierce has been asking questions about him. Robbins's wife ponders "the question of why Anderson had told her husband what Pierce said" (9). Later, while sleeping, "when the heart is pitiless and the mind an inquisitor", the same question occurs to Robbins himself (10). An entry in Schwartz's journal suggests that this is based on an real incident involving Allen Tate and Richard Eberhart: "notes for $20. Why Tate reported Eberhart's questioning" (11).

Schwartz's move away from a reliance on the overtly autobiographical marks one of the most significant changes of approach between the two short story collections.

A 1958 letter to the editor at The New Yorker, William Maxwell, suggests an interesting reason for this change:

> I'd like to try the genre of the memoir again fairly soon: I think that if I deal with later experience, I'm more likely to get beyond the overly personal and subjective, and I've already blocked out several pages about being a critic, editor, and particularly a teacher of English composition for seven years. (12)

It is this wish "to get beyond the overly personal and subjective" that McDougall perceives in Successful Love and Other Stories. Yet it is significant, and even typical of Schwartz, that his suggestion for doing this should involve "the genre of the memoir". He takes the apparently contradictory position that he can avoid subjectivity by concentrating his attention on the later events of his own past.

However, the letter is actually consistent with the attitude expressed in Schwartz's journal six years previously. Those later events are not so personal because they are "still not lived out". They are not yet "subliminal". As should be expected of a writer so strongly concerned with "harms & the child" (13), his older years are not the subject of such intense feelings on his part as is his youth. Character, on the Freudian model, is formed in infancy. It is there that the clues to identity, "the causes of each great and small event" (14), must be sought. Humorously, Schwartz notes as much in his journal: "the child is father to the man. William Sigmund Wordsworth Freud" (15).

II

Succesful Love and Other Stories is given a thematic unity by its treatment of innocence. Only two of its stories, "Tales from the Vienna Woods" and "The Track Meet", are about experience. They are concerned with knowledge gained in the looking glass and, partly as a result of this, are the late stories that most clearly resemble the work in *The World is a Wedding* (16). The other six stories in the volume all involve an examination of the concept of innocence as a significant character trait determining people's behaviour. Adult innocents populate "Successful Love", "The Fabulous Twenty-Dollar Bill", "An American Fairy Tale", "A Colossal Fortune" and "The Hartford Innocents". "The Gift" is about a young child becoming aware of the complexities of life as, with appropriate symbolism, he makes his first journey across the city, struggling with problems of obligation, destiny and divine will.

These stories explore an ambiguous kind of innocence. Atlas misses the point when he complains that Schwartz's late fiction "radiated the benevolence and bland tolerance of the Eisenhower era . . . as if he hoped to restore a lost innocence to his life by dwelling on suburban families and teenage girls" (17). The stories are about blandness and benevolence, and their tone is sometimes coy or childlike, but this does not mean that they too are bland and benevolent. Just as Jacob's strong argument for the inclusiveness of life is questioned by Laura in "The World is a Wedding", innocence in *Succesful Love*

and Other Stories is not supported uncritically by the author. The views of characters, narrators, even Schwartz figures, are not necessarily upheld by the stories in which they appear.

An important precedent for the collection is "Daisy Miller", in which Daisy behaves scandalously yet remains "the most innocent" young lady (18). The writer of "A Confidential Report", the section that ends "The Hartford Innocents", makes explicit the connection between the heroines of the two stories:

> . . . the entire episode draws one irresistibly to a long excursion--which I will suppress--on the American character, on the innocence of America, and of American womanhood, such as Henry James dramatized so well in another young American girl, Daisy Miller: Candy resembles Daisy very much, and the differences such as they are are without meaning, for the behavior of Candy . . . is rooted in the dominant patterns of American life. (19)

In effect the "excursion" is not suppressed. It is made in Schwartz's late stories. Furthermore, the report writer, DeWitt Howe, is wrong to claim that any difference between Candy and Daisy is meaningless. Schwartz highlights significant differences between the America of "Daisy Miller" and that of "The Hartford Innocents". Daisy's ignorance of, or unconcern with, the strict conventions of American expatriate society is not the same as Candy's idealistically motivated challenge to the combination of political and social forces embodied in the McCarthyite figure of Senator Cobb.

In "The Hartford Innocents" something of the difference between the two periods is suggested by the

bohemian figure of Mrs. Sorel, supposed victim of "prudery, bigotry and . . . self-righteous puritanism" (20):

> Mrs. Sorel was deceived about the injustice she had herself suffered . . . but even more deceived, as the years passed, for the little basis in truth which her sense of injustice had had when she was a student was entirely a matter of the past during and after the second World War, when so many rules and regulations had to be suspended: . . . Mrs. Sorel mistook whatever happened in the present as being identical with her own experience many years before . . . (21)

In "The Present State of Poetry" Schwartz makes a similar point about how people fail to notice the disappearance of previously insurmountable obstacles when he criticizes the Beat Poets, or as he describes them, "the Howlers of San Fransisco" (22): "the new rebel is fighting for what he has already won and fighting against a threat which does not exist" (23). The most telling indication of the difference in nature between Daisy Miller's unconventionality and Candy Manning's is that as a result of ignoring social strictures Daisy ends by destroying herself. Candy's destructiveness is directed outwards. She causes, or, more precisely, is a catalyst for, a national scandal, while she herself survives intact.

Schwartz's essay "The Grapes of Crisis", published at the beginning of the 50s, contains a section entitled "Daisy Miller Has Become Cynical". He starts it by asserting that "the beautiful innocence and goodness of the American girl which fascinated Henry James so much . . . has always been an important part of the American credo" (24). Then, albeit humorously, he attests

to the gulf separating the old and the modern heroine:

> . . . the truly glamorous modern heroine begins with cynicism and self-doubt . . . Daisy Miller was a misunderstood virgin, and her modern granddaughter is a self-confessed nymphomaniac who insists that promiscuity is a civil liberty . . . (25)

In a 1951 journal entry Schwartz notes that "the conventions which 'Daisy Miller' violates do seem old-fashioned now" and that therefore "the lack of shock spoils the effect" (26).

Successful Love and Other Stories examines the difference between the innocence of Henry James's time and that of the Eisenhower era. It is concerned with innocence as something quintessentially American that says much about society and its changing values. "Successful Love" begins the volume, and, at least before the paperback reissue added "The Statues", it ends with "The Hartford Innocents". In effect these two stories frame the portrait of society that the collection paints. A detailed discussion of them, with some reference to other stories, will show how the notion of innocence and its consequences is developed and re-examined over the course of the book. In the first story innocence is treated almost exclusively as a comic issue. By the last story it has come in for direct attack. The two also illustrate the extent of the divide between the early and late fiction. Both are prime examples of the new determination to avoid "the overly personal", yet both are recognizably Schwartz's work.

III

"Successful Love" makes clear early on the complexity of Schwartz's view of innocence. The end of the third paragraph and the start of the fourth juxtapose the mother's image of her daughter and her daughter's image of herself:

> . . . she clearly was an innocent old-fashioned girl.
>
> Susan did not think she was quite as innocent as Mummy thought she was, she did not think she was at all old-fashioned, quite the contrary . . . (27)

The terms introduced here are taken up, repeated and played with throughout the story. The mother uses them again in a crucial later passage:

> . . . her dear darling daughter was simple and naive, innocent and old-fashioned, eminently respectable, profoundly conventional. Her respectability was her weakness, the worst part of her innocence. Her innocence was partly impatience: she was impetuous too as only the innocent are. If anything would protect Susan from her own impetuous innocence, it was the freedom and the anonymity of New York: would protect her by giving her, to be blunt about it, sexual satisfaction on a regular basis! (28)

Conversely, the father uses the same terms to argue against the likelihood of his daughter even having an affair, let alone "sexual satisfaction on a regular basis":

> If Susan were a special and complicated creature, perhaps. But she was an old-fashioned girl, simple and natural, conventional and respectable, and a little self-conscious too. (29)

This reiteration of "innocent", "old-fashioned", "respectable" and "conventional" is a variation of Schwartz's tendency to subvert definite statements, as he does, for instance, in "The World is a Wedding". It is the use of this sort of literary tactic that helps to identify "Successful Love" as Schwartz's work. The repetitions not only draw attention to the different attitudes of the characters, but also undermine one's original sense of the words' meanings.

In the first of the three quoted passages the initial repetition of "innocent" and "old-fashioned" establishes a simple contrast between the attitudes of the mother and the daughter. The mother's opinion appears to be right. Susan's claim to be neither innocent nor old-fashioned is belied by her reference to "Mummy". Earlier she has twice referred to "Daddums" (30). The childishness of her diction and tone militates against any notion of her as a sophisticate.

However, the second quoted passage overturns the assumptions of the first, with the sting coming at the end of the long fourth sentence. Schwartz comically and dramatically illustrates the difference between traditional notions of innocence and the mother's more modern notion of what is desirable for a "conventional" girl. The shock is that it is the mother who believes that nymphomania is the best thing for Daisy Miller's "modern granddaughter". This surprising reversal upsets the expectation that the story will be concerned with a simple generational opposition in values. The mother

and the daughter disagree in their definition of innocence, but both have what one might call liberated attitudes to sex. The passage also introduces the ideas that innocence is something from which the innocent need protection and that "respectability" is a "weakness". While they are not developed further in "Successful Love", they become the crux of "The Hartford Innocents".

The third passage adds a further twist as the father uses his own conception of respectability to arrive at the opposite conclusion to his wife. She thinks her daughter is on the brink of an affair. He thinks she would not consider such action. Both base their opinions on Susan's supposed innocence. The reiteration of terms lends an amusingly satirical edge to the contrast between their points of view.

The claim that the daughter is "a little self-conscious too" increases the humour and further undermines the father's position. It is, after all, clear that one reason why Susan can be seen as genuinely innocent is her complete lack of self-consciousness. She may delight in necking and want to have an affair, but she feels no social awkwardness and has no real self-awareness. A previous scene deals with the courting rituals performed by Susan and her beaux. That these are knowingly carried out within earshot of the father in itself suggests that the girl is too innocent to understand that her actions might be considered improper. These rituals, "a mock clash of egos" (31), also involve conversations of quite remarkable banality, yet such is the participants' lack of self-consciousness that

they view them as examples of "brilliance of wit and repartee" (32).

At this point Schwartz's satire is little more than a sarcastic assault. However, the inclusion of these exchanges does indicate clearly how far he has moved away from the grandiloquence of the intellectuals portrayed in the early fiction. The change is all the more obvious because of the similarity between his criticism of the lovers' conversations and his mockery of the epigrams attempted by Rudyard's circle in "The World is a Wedding". The second collection shows a new interest in a class of people notable for their inarticulacy and anti-intellectualism: Susan's New York lover observes that "all that brainwork is a big waste of time" and that "guys who analyze the reasons for everything can't do anything else" (33); which is in itself a neat summation of McDougall's criticism that the self-consciousness of Schwartz's characters, and, by extension, of his work, is essentially negative, "a substitute for living and acting" (34).

The shift of interest from the 1930s to the 1950s between the two volumes of short stories also means a reversal of the generational conflict in _The World is a Wedding_. In that collection the second generation struggles against the parents' indifference to culture. The intellectual child is isolated by the low value placed on art by others. In "Successful Love" it is the father who is worried:

> When a second beau during the same week told his daughter that she had quite a milk fund, he argued with himself that it was merely a

> question of speech. Among the young men of his own generation, purity of speech had been directly connected with morbidity of feeling. (35)

Here is an echo of Schwartz's early view that society's attitude to literature allowed no place to "such a monster as the cultivated man" (36). In "Wallace Stevens: An Appreciation", published in 1955 four years before "Successful Love" first appeared, Schwartz admits that things have changed since Stevens's youth when "the adult male who read a great deal was regarded as, at best, anti-social and probably literally addicted to secret vices" (37). The father is a product of that earlier time.

Schwartz's new concern with lowbrows rather than highbrows can be seen as an effort to tackle the problem set out by him as early as 1941 in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry":

> . . . it became increasingly impossible for the poet to write about the lives of other men; for not only was he removed from their lives, but, above all, the culture and the sensibility which made him a poet could not be employed when the proposed subject was the lives of human beings in whom culture and sensibility had no organic function. (38)

"Successful Love" is an attempt by a highly self-conscious artist to write about people in whom "sensibility had no organic function", their inarticulacy and innocence barring them from too great a degree of self-awareness. That Schwartz can be seen here as confronting problems that he originally articulated before the publication of his first collection of short stories is further evidence of a connection between the late fiction and

the body of Schwartz's work as a whole. The World is a Wedding also provides a critique of "The Isolation of Modern Poetry". The concern with the slang used by Susan and her boyfriends is the same as the interest in the mother's diction in "America! America!".

"Successful Love" ends with an admission of intellectual bewilderment in the face of innocence:

> It might be true that most human beings are much simpler than one commonly supposes them to be; one is oneself far simpler than one often supposes. But it was also true that the simple were extremely complicated. He felt entirely lost in the terror and jungle of innocence. (39)

Such a conclusion allows room for a complicated interpretive system, such as Freudianism, to explain motivation, at the same time as it suggests that perhaps no complex system of forces determines human behaviour.

The claim that maybe "human beings are much simpler than one commonly supposes them to be" echoes Schwartz's treatment of the intellectuals in The World is a Wedding. In the title story of that volume there is that moment when Laura deflates a highly involved discussion about the factors that brought two people together by suggesting that "maybe she just likes him and he just likes her" (40). The recognition that "one is oneself far simpler than one often supposes" is itself a deflation of Schwartz's artistic exploration of consciousness and motivation. However, it is not a repudiation, since "it was also true that the simple were extremely complicated". The tension expressed by this apparent paradox mirrors the tension in the writer's work between

a distrust of theories and the need for abstractions. The paradox is itself an abstraction of Schwartz's treatment of the terms "innocent", "old-fashioned", "respectable" and "conventional": the connection between complexity and simplicity is illustrated by his manipulation of these words and by the way in which he applies them to Candy.

IV

The father "lost in the terror and jungle of innocence" anticipates thematic developments later in Successful Love and Other Stories. In "An American Fairy Tale", "A Colossal Fortune" and "The Hartford Innocents" innocence is indeed terrifying.

The first of these stories begins and ends with the claim that it is "full of purity, innocence, and happiness" (41), yet it is actually a jaundiced revision of the American Dream. Robert Flint is therefore wrong to be so uncertain when he writes that "I **think** this may be a bitter irony, but am unwilling to wager that it is" (42). Schwartz returns to the period covered in his early stories, "the worst part of the great depression" (43), but reduces to a joke the assertion in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" that "there was no room in the increasing industrialization of society for such a monster as the cultivated man" (44):

> He was arrested for drunkenness and he argued with the policeman and the judge that they had no right to judge him because they had

> studied neither Plato's Republic, nor the works of D. H. Lawrence, where the necessity of spontaneity and wholeness of being was shown to be an imperative of nature, an imperative blocked and frustrated by our industrial civilization, thus forcing all who were intelligent and sensitive to take up hard liquor and sprees. (45)

The sting in the tale lies not in its account of a popular artist's attempts to produce what he considers to be serious work, but in the ease with which his father becomes a respected artist, even though he is an avowed capitalist and, therefore, in the terms of Schwartz's essays, an opponent of culture: "in a comparatively short period of time, he was a primitive abstractionist" (46). In this case innocence is merely the ability to switch or adapt value-systems without any awareness of hypocrisy. The hope that the story is held to express, the evidence that it is supposed to give for America's capacity for self-renewal, is founded on events that are actually indications of the elusiveness of self-fulfilment. Admittedly, the story is partly fuelled by a disrespect for the artistic merits of "primitive or abstract art" (47), akin, one suspects, to Schwartz's denigration of Beat poetry, but what is more important is the usurpation of the notion of artistic integrity by a capitalist. Integrity here is really fickleness and superficiality.

While the treatment of innocence in "An American Fairy Tale" is bitter and sarcastic, "A Colossal Fortune" is more explicit in its criticism. The two innocents of the story, Kitty and Monroe, are innocent in a way which indicates a fundamental flaw in their personalities.

Monroe's blindness to matters of everyday practicality is described as perhaps stemming from "the absence of some quality of being" (48), as well as from him being "disconnected, or unconnected, with the real world" (49). This lack of connection preserves him from an appreciation of both the norms of social behaviour and the effect of his actions on others. He is an example of "the cruelty of unawareness"; his innocence is "appalling" (50).

Monroe is another of Schwartz's intellectuals:

> Concerned with objects of the intellect, he soared above the average concerns of the flesh: he was a student of philosophy, and he had written his doctor's thesis on a metaphysical subject. (51)

The inclusion of this detail by Schwartz, himself a philosophy graduate, with "soared" underlining the irony, recalls the criticism of intellectuals in The World is a Wedding, just as Monroe's disconnectedness recalls "The Isolation of Modern Poetry". Monroe is an extreme example of the isolated intellectual, "disconnected" from life around him. However, it is not an uncultured, industrialized society antagonistic to artistic endeavour from which he is removed, but, crucially, "the real world". This phrase is attributed to Monroe's father, "a specialist in ear, eye, nose and throat diseases", who "did not know the world except in these special ways" (52). It is his view that is justified by the story. In the contrast between a physician and a metaphysician, abstraction loses out.

Schwartz's attitude to intellectuals has therefore

shifted from simple criticism or satire to a more important repudiation. Monroe's inadequacy as a human being is not explained, even partly, in terms of the alienating effects of an industrialized society, nor is it anything to do with the Great Depression. It is simply a part of his "innocence" and indifference to "the average concerns of the flesh". Intellectualism is an evasion of reality and of the pressing problem of living in the world. It is a "self-consolation and self-escape" (53):

> Sidney returned to his own place and sought by reading a work expounding the nature of relativity physics to forget about the chaos of perception and response into which he had been plunged by Monroe's behavior. (54)

This "chaos of perception and response" is like the father's experience of "the terror and jungle of innocence" in "Successful Love". A feeling of disorientation is presented as a truer response to life than attempts to discover scientific certainties and metaphysical truths. Schwartz's reliance on the techniques of paradox, irony and subversion, as well as on the manipulation and repetition of phrases, is indicative of a desire to embed this disorientation in the text itself.

The story's ultimate irony is that Monroe's "disconnected" personality is the cause of his peace of mind:

> He had no need of anyone or anything; he had no need of a drugstore, a soda fountain, a wife or a colossal fortune: he was his own colossal fortune. (55)

He has no need of the evasions already listed in "Father and Son":

> Integrated in the revery of a fine cigar,
> Fleeing to childhood at the symphony concert,
> Buying sleep at the drugstore, grandeur
> At the band concert, Hawaii
> On the screen, and everywhere a specious splendor:
> One, when he is sad, has something to eat,
> An ice cream soda, a toasted sandwich,
> Or has his teeth fixed, but can always retreat
> From the actual pain, and dream of the rich. (56)

Monroe is spared "the actual pain" because he lacks self-consciousness. He is free of what is termed elsewhere "the unending agony of conscious being" (57). Schwartz figures like Shenandoah, constantly seeking the truth in their own reflections, have to accept pain as the natural concom itant of their search. Sidney's realization "that he himself had no desire, really, to be very lucky or to have a colossal fortune" indicates that, just as the son finally does in "Father and Son", he too accepts that, since Monroe is the alternative, the high price of self-awareness is worth paying (58).

V

In "The Hartford Innocents" there is a detailed argument against innocence:

> . . . we must face the fact of the ultimate innocence of most forms of aspiration, an innocence unaware, deliberately or not, of the nature of reality and the nature of the reality of a human community, to such an extent that the only possible conclusion is the recognition of the infamy of innocence, an

> infamy all the more destructive because its basis is precisely this: the ignorance of innocence, the deliberately cultivated disregard of all consequences and of all possible injury to actual human beings in the name of one or another exalted principle . . . (59)

As a result, "nothing is as terrifying as innocence and that boundless idealism which is innocence's chief aspiration" (60).

This critique of innocence is based on the premise that society is in crisis:

> The attitudes and principles meant as theoretical limits of the structure of a democratic society had become not the boundary lines they were meant to be but the center of attention, consciousness and action. (61)

Society is seen to be dependent on the existence of accepted structures, a series of rules that make life both possible and meaningful. If those rules should be questioned, or worse still overturned, then chaos would ensue. The only degree of flux acceptable is within a specifically defined context: "mobility is desirable only where there is an underlying stability" (62). Hartford, however, is a modern liberal academic institution with the main emphasis on "literature, the arts, the drama and ballet". A recent effort to bring about a new "scientific orientation", with an increased budget for atomic physics and similar subjects, has been much resented (63). As such, Hartford encourages an approach to life that involves a disrespect for structures, rules and conventions. Moreover, it attracts students who are already involved in an important renunciation:

> They come to Hartford . . . because they are already much involved in a repudiation of their family, the career of the debutante, and the customary studies of undergraduates. . . . The girls of Hartford have committed themselves to a profound rejection of the entire way of life of the upper middle class in our society. (64)

This "repudiation" manifests itself in à disrespect for authority, whether in the shape of Goodknight, the Hartford President, or Senator Cobb, and in a relaxed attitude to sexual relationships, with "divorce as a cancellation and purgation, without aftermath, of an unfortunate error" (65).

"The Hartford Innocents" has much in common with Schwartz's other work. The reasons given for "the infamy of innocence" are consistent with the portrait of Susan in "Successful Love". Her blindness to the possible impropriety of her sexual behaviour is similar to the Hartford girls' attitude to necking: it is claimed that Candy's "chastity is a purely physical and quite trivial matter when set in contrast with the ardor and inclusiveness with which she and her friends engage in . . . necking" (66). Candy's "strong sense of propriety" is one appropriate to her generation. The reactions of Susan's father and of Sidney in "A Colossal Fortune" to "the chaos of perception and response" into which they feel that they have been thrown has already provided evidence of the way in which innocence is a socially dangerous force. The Hartford girls' "profound rejection" of their social class is reminiscent of the alienated intellectuals of The World is a Wedding who are also in conflict with the culture and expectations

of their parents. The concern for the stability of modern American society is similar to statements made by Schwartz in 1958 in "The Present State of Poetry":

> Clearly when the future of civilization is no longer assured, a criticism of American life in terms of a contrast between avowed ideals and present actuality cannot be a primary preoccupation and source of inspiration. . . . civilization's very existence depends upon America, upon the actuality of American life, and not the ideals of the American Dream. (67)

This rejection of idealism and the American Dream matches directly the notion that "the attitudes and principles meant as theoretical limits of the structure of a democratic society" should not become "the center of attention, consciousness and action". Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the contention that "guilt" is preferable to "innocence", and experience to inexperience, recalls not only Sidney's reaction at the end of "A Colossal Fortune", but also the message, implicit or otherwise, of much of the rest of Schwartz's writings.

In "The Hartford Innocents" guilt is presented as the normal human emotion. Senator Cobb is a parodic advocate of this belief:

> . . . in Cobb's mind, as ever, everyone was guilty until proven to be of an innocence incompatible with anything but sleeping sickness or a catatonic attack . . . (68)

Cobb's mistake however, and his failure as an inquisitor, is that he regards all guilt as ultimately traceable to the worst sin of all: communism. The reality is that the feeling of guilt is unspecific and all-pervasive:

> . . . most adult human beings existed in a state of guilt about one or another relationship, past or present, and although what they felt guilty about was hardly ever what Cobb attempted to establish, nevertheless they looked guilty, when they encountered the accusation of guilt, however inaccurate. (69)

This is the "endless guilt" in "Starlight Like Intuition Pierced the Twelve" (70), and it is the guilt which the father orders his son to acknowledge in "Father and Son" (71).

For Schwartz, guilt is the result of existing in a world that requires one to be in some form of relationship to others. Moreover, its source can be traced to before the birth of the culpable individual. To that extent his understanding of guilt approaches a religious conception of sin. Schwartz's characters suffer from Original Guilt in the same way that a Christian suffers from Original Sin. It is a responsibility that cannot be consciously avoided. The individual does not necessarily have to do anything to incur it. He carries it with him into the world. Yet Schwartz's Original Guilt can be explained in psychological, Freudian, rather than religious terms: he makes use of Biblical characters in the poems "Abraham", "Sarah", "Jacob" and "Starlight Like Intuition Pierced the Twelve" more for their psychological, human value than out of a desire to establish an overt religious framework for his ideas. The guilt that the individual brings with him into the world is a residue of the lives of his parents, family, ancestors and community: "Child labor! The child must carry / His fathers on his

back" (72). In this version of the Aeneas myth in "The Ballad of the Children of the Czar" the significance of the plural "fathers" should not be missed. The image suggests the full weight of the burden that his past places on an individual.

Innocence is also important in "The Ballad of the Children of the Czar":

> The innocent are overtaken,
> They are not innocent.
>
> They are their father's fathers,
> The past is inevitable. (73)

Here too the meaning of innocence is called into doubt. With the past determining the present, the child is not only his father, but also his father's father. The innocent are "overtaken" by the guilt of what has gone before and will therefore come after. History is merciless and all-devouring.

The Hartford students are judged to ignore the extent to which the individual is burdened with a whole complex of consequences and responsibilities. Life there is "a masquerade in which they suffer from the hallucination that it is possible to be a purely free being" (74). Since in Schwartz's world it is impossible to be "a purely free being", to regard oneself as such is a cardinal error. It is a dangerous form of unconsciousness, involving a limited, limiting awareness of the internal and external world. Because the Hartford girls, and Monroe in "A Colossal Fortune", are guilty of such unconsciousness, they are inevitably viewed critically.

However, even though much of the disapproval of

Candy, and of the Hartford girls in general, is perfectly consistent with the critique of innocence developed during the course of Successful Love and Other Stories, and even though the conception of guilt and responsibility involved in the story is echoed elsewhere in Schwartz's work, the reader is still left with significant doubts about the status of the criticism. Robert Flint identifies part of the trouble:

> . . . [the criticism of the Hartford students] comes at the end of a long demonstration of exactly what innocence can still achieve when joined to strong natural gifts. The very substance of the story, indeed, is little more than the charm and power of innocence. (75)

Flint's doubts about whether or not Schwartz is being ironic in "An American Fairy Tale" are much more pertinent when one considers "The Hartford Innocents".

The root of the problem is Schwartz's decision to use the epistolary form to deliver the criticism, especially after having begun the story using a conventional third-person narrative. All the attacks on innocence and on the dangerous liberalism of Hartford so far quoted are made by the letter writer, DeWitt Howe. Since the events in the story seem to contradict his reactionary attitude to them, one suspects that Schwartz has distanced himself from him for deliberate ironic purposes. There is good reason to believe that as a witness Howe is not to be altogether trusted. Yet it is also true that his arguments are given great weight. The reader is never entirely sure just how ironic is Schwartz's position.

It seems that the abrupt shift in the story's form a third of the way through was not part of Schwartz's original plan. In submitting "The Hartford Innocents" to The New Yorker, where it was not in the end published, he made the following observations:

> I began it several years ago, thinking of it as a long story, and it could certainly be reworked in several ways for periodical publication: it could be shortened, for example, and I think that the entire third chapter might be better as third-person narrative instead of a letter in the first person. (76)

The letters that Schwartz wrote to William Maxwell at The New Yorker in 1958 and 1959 make repeated reference to a willingness to accept editorial scrutiny and alter work as appropriate, if doing so meant securing publication. They provide clear testimony to Schwartz's uncertainty about his stories. He dismisses some unspecified early published fiction as "poor or no good at all" (77). He admits that the stories he is now submitting come from a stock-pile of abandoned first drafts: one is identified as eight years old (78). He implies that he considers none of the stories to be in their final form, and he explains his submission of heavily revised and untidy typescripts by referring to his "inclination to revise continually and indefinitely" (79). The letters also provide evidence of Schwartz's rush to get as much fiction published as soon as possible; hence the trawl through the old story drafts despite his observation in the 1949 essay, "Views of a Second Violinist", that "one ought to write as much as possible and publish as little as possible" (80). Schwartz seems

still to be aware of the truth of that view, though he admits that money is now his greater concern:

> . . . sending you so much work, in such a state of untidiness and haste, is economic. During the past six months I have had more prose and verse accepted for publication than at any other time and more than I would in the past have thought either possible or desirable; but the amount I was paid by The New Yorker for two poems and a story exceeds all the others combined. (81)

The oddness of "The Hartford Innocents" may therefore be partly explained by the fact that Schwartz's immediate need for publications overrode a concern to resolve properly formal problems in old material.

It is also probable that the difficulty in narrative point-of-view posed by the use of DeWitt Howe results from an attempt to solve an earlier problem. An examination of the treatment of another story illustrates what is likely to have happened. In one letter to William Maxwell Schwartz discusses his doubts about "The Track Meet", a work which The New Yorker did eventually publish. His principal concern is whether or not to introduce "a direct and explicit formulation of the theme of the story at one or another point" (82). He then gives one such possible, and lengthy, formulation, though he admits that "this is surely too didactic, except as a summary" (83). However, if one compares this "too didactic" thematic statement with the relevant passage in the published story, then their similarity is immediately apparent. Schwartz has taken the core of his summary, removing those elements that merely serve as amplification, and worked it into the body of the text.

Consider, for instance, the following extract from the letter:

> . . . what he means would be explicit in an argumentative and expository sense, if he added, "It makes no difference whether or not the incidents which have shocked you so much are part of a dream or have occurred in actuality . . . For if what occurred in your dream were merely your own private hallucination, then the evil which has terrified you would be rooted solely in your own mind and heart . . . " (84)

The relevant sections in the story run as follows:

> "What difference does it make if it is a dream or it is not a dream?" he said coldly . . . And if what occurred on the field were merely imaginary and unreal and merely your own private hallucination, then the evil that has terrified you is rooted in your own mind and heart. (85)

Schwartz also adapted these sentences for "The Fulfillment":

> . . . .
> Dream, is it a dream? What difference
> Does it make or mean? If it is only a dream
> It is the dream which we are. (86)

The "formulation of the theme" in "The Track Meet" is introduced by the simple expedient of having one character declare, "I detest explanation . . . Do you insist on one?", while the other replies, "I often feel that I know little or nothing" (87). Since Schwartz keeps the following explanation short and direct, avoiding the lengthy elaborations suggested in the letter, he does not appear "too didactic". He also makes sure that the story does not end on this expository note, which would have been too obviously schematic, and relies

instead on the moment of self-revelation before the mirror.

Schwartz's use of the first-person letter in "The Hartford Innocents" seems to be a similar attempt to provide a statement of the story's theme. If this is so, then DeWitt Howe is a thinly disguised cover for the direct expression of Schwartz's views. This explains the resemblances detailed earlier between the statements made by Howe and ideas contained elsewhere in Schwartz's work. The dangers for an author taking such an approach are considerable. If Schwartz feared being overly didactic in "The Track Meet", then it is difficult to see how he could defend the third chapter of "The Hartford Innocents" against the same charge. Furthermore, if one accepts that the letter writer is to be identified with Schwartz, then the final part of the story ceases to operate solely as a piece of fiction and instead moves closer in nature to some of Schwartz's essays. The story begins as a family chronicle with a gently satirical tone, but it suddenly abandons this approach, as well as all the characters introduced so far except for Candy, in favour of a largely abstract discussion of the necessity for social responsiblity. McDougall's complaint about Schwartz's tendency to lapse into abstraction apparently receives here its most unequivocal justification. Even in Schwartz's own terms this sudden change in the story would seem to contradict the spirit of his assertion that "the subject of poetry is experience, not truth, even when the poet is writing about ideas" (88).

However, the letter writer cannot simply be identified with Schwartz. Howe's implied endorsement of Mrs. Manning's attitude to the "entirely undesirable marriages" entered into by the daughters of her best friend, "one to a Czech refugee, one to a Jew, and one to a young man who was of an Italian immigrant family" (89), are unlikely sentiments for Schwartz who, as both a Jew and the child of a immigrant family, elsewhere showed himself painfully aware of the ramifications of Mrs. Manning's brand of social élitism. The attack on the modern tendency towards divorce is also hard to accept as the view of a twice divorced man who wrote a short comic piece, "The Difficulty of Divorce", in which he suggests that "a divorce, of course, ought not to be made so difficult" (90).

However, the most significant evidence against a direct identification of Schwartz with Howe is the letter writer's weakness for digression and hyperbole. At the beginning of "A Confidential Report" he refers to "the repugnant actuality" and "hideous pandemonium" of the Hartford affair (91). At the end of the letter this tendency to exaggerate reaches a peak. While describing the students as "kamikaze", he adds the parenthetical comment, "I do not exaggerate at all" (92). He worries about appearing "melodramatic or grandiose" (93). He admits that his final views are "grotesque and extreme" (94). By placing such comments among Howe's increasingly aggressive attacks on the dangers of innocence and of women like Candy, Schwartz increases the impression of the letter's growing hysteria. Drawing attention to this

hysteria by the interpolation of the above phrases indicates deliberation on Schwartz's part and establishes an ironic distance between him and the contents of the letter.

Furthermore, Schwartz makes an effort to develop Howe as a distinct character in the story. The letter contains a number of snide asides at the expense of the trustees. He suggests that he will be dealing with "sophisticated and complicated matters which are beyond most of the trustees' minds or consciousness", though they are "sincere and honest in their evasion of the truth" (95). These details are in keeping with the story's comic nature, and they also create an impression of tension within the Hartford administration of which Howe is assistant director (96). This tension is not necessary to the story, but it does add background colour. More important is Howe's admission that at one time he "had to make unfavorable comments about a close friend to the F.B.I. and another government agency" (97). This is the story's only reference to this act of betrayal. The nature of the admission immediately places the letter writer within the realm of guilt and compromise. He is no innocent. He is a man who has given a supposed duty to the state priority over the demands of a personal relationship, a decision with which he is evidently uncomfortable. He has elevated abstractions over humanity:

> The realm is one in which intellectual analysis and logic are foremost, and exclude any entertainment of sympathy, compassion, pity or charity, any influence--so far as that is possible--of forgiveness, forebearance, and

> acceptance of another human being upon which all personal relationships, all intimate friendships and above all, the family itself, depend. (98)

It is this guilt that explains Howe's emotional opposition to the McCarthyite Senator Cobb and his intellectual opposition to the socially disruptive Candy. His reasoning in the letter has a crucial bias.

"A Confidential Report" therefore combines two impulses. One is the result of Schwartz's desire to provide a statement of the story's meaning. The other involves his use of a distinct character with clearly flawed views to examine the moral and intellectual confusion besetting an institution faced with the consequences of its own liberalism. The most telling precedent for Schwartz's use of Howe is "The World is a Wedding". In that story Jacob operates in part as a Schwartz figure and propounds views that carry the force of authorial approval. More importantly, he provides the "formulation of the theme of the story" when he explains that life is like Breughel's The Peasant Wedding. Yet Schwartz still maintains an ironic distance from Jacob. He still criticizes or contradicts him.

The reason that the distancing effect is more successful in "The World is a Wedding" than it is in "The Hartford Innocents" is largely to do with the former's more fully realized formal qualities. James Atlas testifies that "The World is a Wedding" was originally intended to be only part of a "Bildungsroman" (99), but the final story has survived the scaling down of Schwartz's intentions. "The Hartford Innocents" on

the other hand appears to have fallen victim to its alterations. Schwartz's uncertainty about retaining the letter section is suggestive of his failure to resolve confused intentions. The story as published is an amalgamation of fragments of writing, all broadly dealing with more or less the same story and characters, yet differing widely in form and purpose. The first two chapters, "Red Bananas" and "The Flight of the Innocents", represent the beginnings of a story about the Manning family, in the manner of "The Child Is the Meaning of This Life" and "America! America!", which is then abandoned in favour of Howe's letter. When Candy goes to sleep reading The New Yorker at the end of "The Flight of the Innocents", the opening narrative strand comes to an end (100). The following chapter itself yokes together different approaches, including the remnants of an original third-person version of the Hartford events, parts of which survive in the journals.

One section of the final chapter is indicative of its fragmentary nature. Towards the end of "A Confidential Report" a new character is unexpectedly introduced. Ralph Williams, a teacher at Hartford, is given an Anglo-Indian background, thus making him the product of both "England's class society and . . . a caste system made all the more other than America by Albion's aloofness, shyness, or disdain of the Brahmin and the Maharajah" (101). Yet unlike Julia Sorel, Senator Cobb, Candy Manning and Goodknight, he serves absolutely no function in the story whatsoever. His background suggests that he will be used to provide an outsider's perspective

on the events at Hartford and to point up the contrast between England's social system, India's caste system and America's racial segregation. However, Williams confines himself to speculation on the promiscuity of the Hartford girls. His outsider status is irrelevant for these observations. They could just as easily have been made by Howe.

The section begun with Williams's introduction is only three pages long, after which he disappears. The inescapable conclusion is that his brief appearance is merely the surviving trace of an abandoned plan to give him a more substantial role in the story. The awkwardness of such an undeveloped character draws attention to itself. There is a distinct impression that the fragment has only been lightly rewritten in order to fit it into the epistolary form.

"The Hartford Innocents" is, therefore, a striking example of the dangers to which Schwartz's writing sometimes exposes itself. The best of his fiction is marked by the success with which he manages to find the form and style capable of conveying his intentions. Because of that success his irony, paradoxes, temporal shifts and abstractions are held under control and remain effective. However, when the appropriate form is not found, or when the conception of the story is not sufficiently well defined, as is the case with "The Hartford Innocents", then tension is dissipated, abstractions lose their justification, paradoxes become merely contradictions, and the reader is left confused.

CHAPTER FIVE

Form, Content and Consciousness

I

In 1942 Schwartz noted in his journals that "form is an endless effort, and not only that, but perhaps the secret of life" (1). His essays, letters and journals all provide evidence of his intense interest in form and its relationship to content. For a period in 1942 the journals record a concentrated attempt to arrive at a clear description of how the two operate together. Schwartz's statements show how he saw art as something capable of giving shape to the artist's unconscious. His concern with writing as a type of psychotherapy was part of the reason why he believed that form was "perhaps the secret of life". For Schwartz, even formal theories reflected on issues of self-consciousness.

Schwartz took an essentially New Critical view of the connection between form and content, as he makes clear in a 1938 essay, "The Critical Method of R. P. Blackmur":

> That form and content are inseparable is a dogma which all modern critics accept, contradict in practice, and never elucidate. . . . I repeat the dogma: form and content are inseparable . . . (2)

Yet his acceptance of this "dogma" does not give a complete account of his position. He was certainly not

wholehearted in his support for the New Critics. Statements he made elsewhere indicate that he did not see himself as a New Critic and that he harboured definite doubts about the New Criticism's ultimate worth. In his essay, "Our Literary Critics: An Appreciation", he contends that "it is easier to criticize the New Criticism than to shoot fish in a barrel; and it ought to be criticized" (3).

That essay makes the case both for and against the New Criticism. On the one hand Schwartz maintains that it has led to a welcome "rapprochement between scholarship and criticism" (4) and that "at worst it has helped to create and to keep alive a consciousness of literature at a higher and more serious level than at any time since the Civil War" (5). On the other he feels that "much of the criticism . . . is given over almost entirely to an analysis and interpretation of the meanings of the literary object, which is certainly a one-sided and limited kind of criticism at best" (6).

It is for one-sidedness that Schwartz criticizes Allen Tate in a letter to him. He begins by noting that one cannot judge a poem's beliefs separately:

> But this does not seem to me to mean that both poetry and literary criticism must restrict themselves to an analysis of craft and technique. I think that both you and Eliot have allowed yourself to be driven to this extreme. (7)

In the essay he maintains that, as a result of such a tendency, "it is now often necessary . . . to insist that Moby Dick is about a white whale and whaling, whatever its more elevated and profound meanings may

be" (8). He stresses the need for "a historical sense of literature" (9), and, even though Eliot was one of his literary heroes, he indicates a preference for "the social and moral values of Van Wyck Brooks and Edmund Wilson, instead of those of T. S. Eliot" (10).

Schwartz's own attempts to explain the "dogma" of the inseparability of form and content clarify the extent to which he agreed with the New Criticism:

> . . . form is the way in which a poet sees anything: if he looks at a thing in a different way, with a different form (from a different point of view, for example), he sees something proportionately different. . . . This inseparability means that we ought never, in specific analysis of given poems, to permit either technique or substance to preoccupy our attention apart from one another. (11)

That form and content must be considered together "in specific analysis of given poems" is a restatement of the basic tenet of the New Criticism, a practical rule which means that the critic avoids what Cleanth Brooks termed the "heresy of paraphrase". However, the quoted passage links judgements about two distinct processes, not only the criticism but also the creation of the work of art. While Schwartz's conclusion about poetic analysis is a New Critical commonplace, his description of the act of artistic perception indicates a more individual approach.

Of course, it would be misleading to treat the New Critical movement as if it were a unified school held together by a common, codified doctrine that was clearly understood by those both outside and inside the movement. In his study of American criticism René Wellek argues

strongly that "the view that the New Criticism represents a coterie or even a school is mistaken" (12). He contends that a detailed comparison of the writings of those commonly considered to be New Critics makes the error obvious:

> I could collect and quote a large number of their pronouncements violently disagreeing with their supposed allies and show that they hold often quite divergent and even contradictory theories. (13)

Nevertheless, when any of the New Critics talk of the inseparability of form and content they do not seem to do so for the reasons given by Schwartz. For instance, Mark Schorer, in his 1948 essay, "Technique as Discovery", maintains that form is "technique" and that "the difference between content, or experience, and achieved content, or art, is technique":

> For technique is the means by which the writer's experience, which is his subject matter, compels him to attend to it; technique is the only means he has of discovering, exploring, developing his subject, of conveying its meaning, and, finally, of evaluating it. (14)

There are lines of convergence between this view and Schwartz's. These will become clear later. However, the points of divergence are much more significant. Schorer's distinction between content and "achieved content" is not one for which Schwartz allows. It is his contention that form and content are inseparable not only in the work of art as a finished product, but also in, and even prior to, the act of creation itself. While Schorer's technique is merely a "means" to enable him to get at, and to deal with, his experience, which

must therefore be separable from form, Schwartz's technique is essential in determining what he actually has as an experience. It is the way he sees, and as he comments in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", "the poet must see" (15).

If one follows Schwartz's approach it may be possible to distinguish between "achieved content" and intended content, although according to the New Criticism this would be an improper line of inquiry, one guilty of the "intentional fallacy" as it was called by W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley. However, it would not be meaningful to separate "achieved content" from content. The content, or subject matter, of the work of art is its "achieved content". To regard it as anything else would be, according to the argument that Schwartz himself employs in "Poetry and Belief in Thomas Hardy", an "abstraction" fraught with difficulties (16).

In a letter written in 1940 Schwartz explains how he understood experience to be related to form:

> . . . let's say that experience is always form-content in some way . . . but with respect to the forms of any art, the subjects an artist chooses are relatively un-formed. By submitting them to the particular forms of his medium, he makes a new experience of them, a new form-subject relationship; and this is what makes it something available only in his work itself in place of the old one; nowhere else. (17)

Experience is already in some way formed, articulated or "achieved". It is itself a "form-subject relationship". Since the work of art involves a different "form-subject relationship", a refinement of the prior one, it therefore represents "a new experience". To adapt Schorer's

formula, "achieved content" is an experience transformed by technique into a new experience. As the artist's work contains a unique experience, involving a unique "form-subject relationship", "something available only in his work itself", the two elements of form and subject cannot then be considered separately and in the abstract. That would destroy the experience. Experience is a compound of its two elements. If one or the other element is extracted, then the experience no longer remains, nor can its qualities be determined by an analysis of the two now separate elements.

Schorer begins "Technique as Discovery" with the assertion that "in art beauty and truth are indivisible and one". He claims that this notion can be more readily understood "if for beauty we substitute form, and for truth, content". He then maintains that a further reduction can be made if, instead of form and content, we "speak of technique and subject matter" (18). This questionable procedure goes some way towards illustrating the slipperiness of critical terminology. Technique is not altogether the same as form, nor is content necessarily the same as subject matter. Such slipperiness makes it difficult to determine whether, when talking about form, a critic means a general ordering of material or the more specific literary techniques that influence that ordering.

The difference between Schorer's approach to terminology and the position taken by Schwartz is underlined by the fact that Schwartz identifies truth not with content, but with form:

> . . . when the subject demands the form, the greatest form which is truth (truth is form, not a thing). (19)

Schorer does develop his argument to try to prove that "technique objectifies" (20), that "technique, at last, is measure" (21), and that "technique alone evaluates" (22). Yet this is not quite the same as the point made by Schwartz. For Schorer, content is still truth. Technique is just the means to test that truth.

Schwartz's attitude to form, including his belief that "truth is form", partly arose from his attempt to resolve the problem of how to respond to belief in art, an issue that he addressed most comprehensively in "Poetry and Belief in Thomas Hardy", though it is also dealt with in the introduction to Genesis. Confronting the question of how to react to an author whose views differ from one's own, he reasserts the inseparability of form and content:

> Now there are two ways in which we tend to handle alien beliefs. One of them is to reject those poems which contain beliefs we regard as false. This is an example of judging poetry in terms of its subject, considered in abstraction, and the difficulties are obviously numerous. . . . Certainly we would have to do without Homer, and without Dante or Shakespeare.
>
> The other alternative, which is in any case preferable to the first, is to judge poetry wholly in terms of its formal character. But this is an act of unjustifiable abstraction also. For it is evident that we enjoy more in a poem, or at least the poem presents more to us, than a refined use of language. (23)

In order to avoid these two alternatives, Schwartz concludes that truth should not be looked for in the writer's beliefs. He should not be read for his messages,

since "the subject of poetry is experience, not truth, even when the poet is writing about ideas" (24). This is a direct contradiction of Schorer's equation of truth with content.

Schwartz's reasoning is that someone's experience is valid in itself. It does not need to be checked against some external measure of truth because it is genuine as an experience for that individual. In the introduction to Genesis he notes that "the author's beliefs and values may be wrong in the abstract or in the living world, but 'right' in relationship to his own experience" (25). In the essay on Blackmur he writes about experiences being "facts":

> I say **fact** in an effort to curve about the problem of poetry and belief, and say of that difficult question only this: that beliefs in most poetry are only a means, a framework to help the poet represent the ragged, unwieldy facts of experience. (26)

In a footnote he explains further:

> . . . each moment of our lives verifies many facts, and any point of view is a window upon certain facts. Given the point of view, we can verify what is seen from it, and a point of view is itself a fact. (27)

The measure of an experience's validity in art is the extent to which it is adequately rendered. In "Poetry and Belief in Thomas Hardy" Schwartz suggests a test for a poem which relies only on its internal relationships:

> When the poet can get the whole experience of his sensibility into his poem, then there will be an adequate relationship between the details of his poem and the beliefs he asserts,

> whether they are true or not. For then he is getting the actuality of his experience into his poem, and it does not matter whether that actuality is illusory or not; just as the earth may be seen as flat. The functioning of his sensibility guarantees his asserted beliefs; it guarantees them as aspects of experience, though not as statements of truth. (28)

Schwartz maintains that even for the poet concerned with ideas "there is the same question of the relationship between his asserted ideas and the language, tone, attitude, and figures which constitute the rest of the poem" (29).

Although this is an internal test for poetry, Schwartz is not advocating that the poem be considered as if it were an isolated object. He is not being as New Critical as it may at first seem. Since he takes experience to be "the subject of poetry", and since experience is understood to be a form-content relationship, the content element of that relationship justifies a critical concern with certain matters outside the poem. He finds fault with Hardy's poem, "The Masked Face", because "the asserted belief, instead of generalizing the particulars of the poem, merely interferes with them and fails to give them the significance they are intended to have" (30). "The intentional fallacy" is, for Schwartz, no fallacy. The purpose of poetry is not to create a fully realized artifact, but to convey the "fact" of an experience:

> Ultimately we judge a poem genuine because by means of words it discovers the truth of a fact for us, and we reject a poem as bogus because it is foisting some falsity upon us or it is not making the truth adequately available in its words. (31)

This should not be understood as a contradiction of Schwartz's contention that "the subject of poetry is experience, not truth". The notions of truth and falsity introduced here are measures of experience, "the truth of a fact".

II

Schwartz's position in relation to the New Critical insistence on the autonomy of the work of art provides an answer to complaints that his work is too personal. In "The Intentional Fallacy" Wimsatt and Beardsley advance the following theory:

> The poem is not the critic's own and not the author's (it is detached from the author at birth and goes about the world beyond his power to intend about it or control it). (32)

John Crowe Ransom makes essentially the same point in "Criticism, Inc.". He writes about "the autonomy of the work itself as existing for its own sake" (33). In a 1942 journal entry Schwartz makes this observation:

> To express anything is to free it not only from not being known but from personal experience, personal distortion, the limited point of view of anyone at any moment. (34)

While the notion of the work "existing for its own sake" is contradicted by Schwartz's belief that poetry is concerned with the "facts of experience", here he supports the concepts of "the autonomy of the work itself" and

of the work "detached from the author at birth". However, Schwartz goes further than either Ransom or Wimsatt and Beardsley. The journal entry implies not only that in art experience is self-validating, but also that writing acts as a form of psychotherapy.

The belief that a writer can solve his personal problems through his work is not unique to Schwartz. Two of his friends thought along the same lines. John Berryman's biographer, John Haffenden, notes his subject's attitude:

> Although he spoke of his work in terms of therapy, he did not strictly expect others to appreciate what amounted to a private literary version of an enema. (35)

Berryman maintained that poetry "aims . . . at the reformation of the poet, as prayer does" (36). Ian Hamilton has observed that Robert Lowell hoped that a proposed autobiography would provide "a sort of immense bandage for my hurt nerves" (37).

In 1949 Schwartz commented in his journals that "writing is the way in which one solves one's problems":

> Writing is a way of working off anxiety. Writing is a way of drinking less, smoking less, making love less, and getting rid of one's feelings of guilt. Raw with guilt, said the good doctor, I absolve thee. (38)

A few days later he returned to this theme:

> The way to solve one's emotional problems is to sit at the typewriter and solve them. Here they are controllable. (39)

One caveat, though, is that Schwartz also believed that writing, or more precisely, being a writer, could make

matters worse. In an essay critical of Edmund Wilson's The Wound and the Bow he suggests the possibility that "the unhappiness and disorder of creative lives is the **effect** and not the cause of creative effort" since such creativity tends "to make a human being more sensitive, more easily disturbed, and, last but not least, less able to make a living and be a devoted husband and friend" (40).

The significance of the comments made by Berryman and Lowell is that, like Schwartz, they used their own personalities, as well as specific incidents from their lives, as important sources for their art. When the term "confessional" is applied to these writers, it is done with considerable aptness. It is true that Berryman himself did not aprove of the description. Haffenden records that Berryman believed that "the word doesn't mean anything" and responded to it with "rage and contempt" (41). Yet his reference to the similarity between poetry and prayer, and the link made by Schwartz between writing and absolution, indicate the extent to which the authors themselves did think along such religious lines.

However, when Schwartz introduces the notions of confession and absolution, it is significant that they are to be provided by "the good doctor", not a priest. This reference to Freud is further evidence of Schwartz's tendency to invoke a conception of guilt that approaches a religious understanding of sin, yet which operates on a purely psychological level. This inclination of his has already been discussed in the earlier examination

of "The Hartford Innocents".

The first of Schwartz's two journal entries quoted above contains a mixture of the comic and the serious. On one level writing is presented as valuable simply because, if one is engaged in it, for that period at least there is no time for harmful behaviour. In a typical Schwartzian joke, "making love" is considered alongside smoking and drinking as a source of anxiety. Of course, it is this sort of attitude that Richard McDougall saw as proof of Schwartz's supposed inability to face up to the problems of life, a failure connected to his creation of characters in "self-enforced isolation from life" where consciousness is "a substitute for living and acting" (42). Yet, as has already been argued, part of the impetus for Schwartz's work is the belief that life is inevitably a source of pain and guilt, so that if one can find a way to reduce the number of certain actions, by, for instance, "drinking less, smoking less, making love less", particularly "making love less", then at the very least one will also have reduced the amount of pain and guilt. However, as is usual with Schwartz, the more serious claim is left to the end. The truly important way in which the act of writing can alleviate anxiety is a result of what it actively does. By identifying the work of "the good doctor" with the notion of writing "getting rid of one's feelings of guilt", Schwartz clearly indicates what he saw as the therapeutic effects of writing.

It is true that Schwartz did not see a simple parallel between Freudian analysis and the process

involved when he wrote about his own life. His journals show that he was aware of the fundamental problem:

> Freud: Self-analysis is impossible. (He was unable to free himself from a compulsion neurosis.) (43)

Although Freud attempted self-analysis, believing that this would enable him to analyse others more successfully, he soon became aware of difficulties. He explains the problem in a letter to Wilhelm Fliess:

> My self-analysis remains interrupted. I have realized why. I can analyse myself only with the help of knowledge obtained objectively (like an outsider). True self-analysis is impossible; otherwise there would be no [neurotic] illness. (44)

It is possible that Schwartz's note that "self-analysis is impossible" is a quotation from this passage. Freud amplifies his point in a later remark in "The Subtleties of a Faulty Action":

> . . . in self-analysis the danger of incompleteness is particularly great. One is too soon satisfied with a part explanation, behind which resistance may easily be keeping back something that is more important perhaps. (45)

Therefore, if Schwartz were taking a strictly Freudian view of his writing as therapy, his efforts would be blocked by the impossibility of maintaining the necessary separation between himself as patient and himself as analyst. He cannot have "the help of knowledge obtained objectively (like an outsider)". Furthermore, his art is not a process of free association, the primary Freudian analytical method for investigating the nature of

neuroses.

Yet it is still possible to see how Schwartz's art operates along broadly Freudian lines. Highly significant is Schwartz's assertion that expressing something frees it from "personal experience, personal distortion, the limited point of view of anyone at any moment". Here he is claiming for art the sort of objectivity that Freud felt good analysis required. Moreover, the Freudian analyst's interest with making conscious what has been unconscious can also be found in Schwartz's attitude to writing. In The Question of Lay Analysis Freud describes the therapeutic aim of the analyst as an attempt to "restore the ego, to free it from its restrictions, and to give it back the command over the id which it has lost owing to its early repressions" (46). This involves a process of seeking out repressions so that the patient can confront them, rather than seeking refuge in flight:

> Our path to these situations of conflict, which have for the most part been forgotten and which we try to revive in the patient's memory, is pointed out to us by his symptoms, dreams and free associations. . . . By encouraging the patient to disregard his resistances to telling us these things, we are educating his ego to overcome its inclination towards attempts at flight and to tolerate an approach to what is repressed. In the end, if the situation of the repression can be successfully reproduced in his memory, his compliance will be brilliantly rewarded. (47)

In "The Paths to the Formation of Symptons", one of the Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, Freud writes that "neurotics are anchored somewhere in their past" (48). It can be seen from the above passage that the

metaphor can be extended to indicate that the purpose of the analysis is to search back through the past in order to raise the anchor from the unconscious into the conscious, so setting the patient free.

There is a basic similarity between this understanding of the analytical process and ideas that Schwartz introduces in his work. There is the significance of the title "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities". In "Father and Son" the father tells the son to "constantly go back / To what you were" (49). He must face the fact of his inevitable death, rather than be guilty of "the evasions which so many don" (50), because "Your own self acts then" (51). Schwartz is effectively echoing Freud's words about "educating [his patient's] ego to overcome its inclination towards attempts at flight". Similarly, a 1944 journal entry is an expression of Schwartz's acceptance of the Freudian approach:

> The past which rises in me as a war.
> Always it is the Past, revived in us, seeking to renew itself & to commit the self-same crimes--which we must strive to make conscious and seek to alter to bring true newness to the future. (52)

This is, in essence, a restatement of Freud's proposition that the patient will be "brilliantly rewarded" if "the situation of the repression can be successfully reproduced in his memory". By using the moment when characters catch sight of themselves in a mirror, Schwartz dramatizes a sudden self-consciousness that gives the ego back "command over the id". Consciousness is knowledge, and it gives freedom.

III

Schwartz's belief that there are elements in each of us that "we must strive to make conscious" is germane to a 1957 entry in his journal:

> . . . the o.a. is an experience which has already been controlled, mastered: it has been made available to consciousness: it has been made consciousness. (53)

This reference to "the object of art" is part of a longer description of the objective nature of the work of art. Schwartz maintains that "the work of art is bounded" and "can be repeatedly experienced", that on coming into contact with it "our sensations are sensations which have already been scrutinized and organized by another human being", that in it "nothing is isolated, unrelated, or unconnected", and that it "is rooted in conditions of its own which free it from the conditions of ordinary experience". He also writes about "art as the conversion of experience into consciousness per se" (54).

Such an account of the work of art as an eternal, fully integrated object removed from the mundane is, to an extent, fairly conventional. These ideas lie behind "Ode on a Grecian Urn" and "Sailing to Byzantium". The contention that art is experience "made consciousness" is, however, more idiosyncratically Schwartzian, not least because Schwartz takes consciousness as the explicit subject of so much of what he wrote. To take only a most obvious instance, in a single collection of poetry, Vaudeville for a Princess, consciousness features as an element in "My Mind to Me a Kingdom Is", "I Did Not

Know the Spoils of Joy", "The Past's Great Power Overpowers Every Hour", "There'll Be Others But Non So For Me", "Being Unused to Joyous Consciousness", "After the Passion Which Made Me a Fool", "The Rumor and the Whir of Unborn Wings", "Boy Wonders and Precocities are Wrong", "Running Like Every Other Jill and Jack" and "Starlight Like Intuition Pierced the Twelve".

It is difficult to understand the claim that art is experience "made consciousness" without reference both to Freud and to Schwartz's ideas about the form/content nature of experience. It is easy to follow the argument that if the work of art is an object, then it is "bounded" and separate from the flux of life. It is not so easy to appreciate why Schwartz links making an experience conscious with its being mastered. It should first be noted that Schwartz differs from Wimsatt and Beardsley on the issue of control. Their contention is that the poem "is detached from the author at birth and goes about the world beyond his power to intend about it or control it". The implication behind Schwartz's theory is that, once the poet has produced his work, there is no further need "to intend about it or control it". It is already held together by his intention and control. The work of art cannot escape this bond as it is part of its being. The writer does not have to worry about the reader misinterpreting his work, about it meaning different things to different people, because the reader's "sensations are sensations which have already been scrutinized and organized" by the author. In that sense the work of art can never be free of its author,

even though it is a separate object. An apt comparison in this context would perhaps be to the individual who, though separate from his parents, nevertheless cannot escape the extent to which his being has been determined by them, any more than he can escape from himself. It is this possible extension of the metaphor that Wimsatt and Beardsley fail to take into account when they write about the "birth" of the poem.

However, even if one does accept the comparison, it is still difficult to see why the reader should have his responses fixed by the poet. Why should the consciousness represented by the poem become the consciousness of the reader? Though the child's nature may be governed by the nature of its parents, the same would not be true of the reaction of anyone meeting that child. Furthermore, if art is experience "made consciousness", it is not clear what, if any, distinction is being made between the transition of the individual's experience from the unconscious to consciousness and the transition from consciousness to the poem on the page.

Some of the difficulties are resolved if one accepts the premises of Schwartz's theory. According to these, there is no real difference between the two types of transition. When the artist creates, he is making something conscious. He is not making something conscious and then creating. As far as the work of art itself is directly concerned, all that is significant is the unique experience expressed in its compound of form and content. Other experiences are transitory and elusive, whereas

the poem is eternal, static and capable of being "repeatedly experienced". Consciousness is linked to the mastering of experience in the work of art because consciousness **is** mastery. Making something conscious involves giving form to the previously formless and uncontrolled. The inchoate is given shape. It may disappear again from consciousness, in which case it will escape that period of control, or it may be fixed permanently in a work of art. Hence Schwartz's comment that "the way to solve one's emotional problems is to sit at the typewriter and solve them" since "here they are controllable".

CHAPTER SIX

Summer Knowledge: Different Forms for a Different Consciousness

I

In one of the elegies to Schwartz in The Dream Songs John Berryman writes that "I'd bleed to say his lovely work improved / but it is not so" (1). In a letter written five days after Schwartz's death Robert Lowell observes that "I think the later poems have more flow and joy than suited his genius" (2). Reviewing his literary fortunes in his journals in 1953, Schwartz himself suggests "one version: very promising in his first book--lost his lyrical quality after that" (3).

These three verdicts encapsulate what has become the standard view of Schwartz's decline as a poet. Berryman's opinion is frequently quoted because of its forcefulness and apparent authority. It is mentioned, for instance, in Robert Phillips's introduction to Last & Lost Poems (4), Douglas Dunn's introduction to What Is To Be Given (5), the biography by James Atlas (6), Richard Gray's American Poetry of the Twentieth Century (7) and An Introduction to Fifty American Poets by Peter Jones (8). Yet there is a considerable discrepancy between the original reception of Schwartz's final volume of poetry and its eventual low critical stature. Summer Knowledge: New and Selected Poems: 1938-1958 won him

the Bollingen Prize in Poetry in 1959, making him the youngest recipient in the history of the award. Phillips notes that in the same year Lowell had been "a likely contender" with Life Studies (9).

Part of the reason for the praise initially accorded to Summer Knowledge is undoubtedly its inclusion of all the poems from In Dreams Begin Responsibilities. It is on them that Schwartz's reputation as a poet is most firmly based. They are part of the "lovely work" preferred by Berryman. The reversal of opinion about Summer Knowledge is primarily due to the perception of the new poems. Echoing his criticism that in the 1940s Schwartz's "prose grew impossibly diffuse" (10), Atlas maintains that, when selecting new poetry for the collection, Schwartz "chose to devote over a hundred pages to haphazard, euphonious, virtually incomprehensible effusions" (11). (There are in fact only seventy-seven pages of new poetry in Summer Knowledge, constituting forty-three poems either collected or published for the first time, as well as three extracts from a long poem later published posthumously in Last & Lost Poems as "The Studies of Narcissus".) Atlas goes on to complain that "too many of them are empty symphonies of sound; while not without a peculiar beauty, they verge on being devoid of any sense whatever" (12). He also refers to "the prolix, repetitive lyricism of some of the later work" (13). His assurance that Schwartz "possessed a natural genius for poetry, a fluency that redeemed even his worst poems from bathos", sounds somewhat less than wholehearted when considered alongside such

criticism (14).

Douglas Dunn maintains that "the later work is not all as bad as Berryman took it to be" (15). Even so, the selection of poetry that he introduces includes only five of the new poems from Summer Knowledge, reserving the majority of its forty-six poems for another reprint of all the poems from In Dreams Begin Responsibilities. He holds up "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" as "the primary exception" to Berryman's criticism (16). He maintains that this one work is "a summation of virtually everything Schwartz had been endeavouring to express from the very beginning" (17), creating "an image of grace, radiance, and a consecration of the ordinary" (18). Yet at the same time he states that "there is nothing in the poem for the connoisseur of verse" (19):

> . . . it is a pity that a poem of such remarkable substance should be riddled with clumsinesses its author would never have allowed only a few years before. In his infatuation with what he seems to have recognised all of a sudden, and too late for his artistry to have expressed with the formal perfection of which he had once been capable, he was left with a reliance upon dementia that in turn provided him with rapidity and confidence, an overwhelming concern with theme, and only a residual craftsmanship. (20)

Such criticism undermines Dunn's desire to assert the worth of the poem.

His reasoning does, however, suggest a partial explanation as to why the later poetry is held in low regard. The myth that has grown up around the figure of Schwartz is a sometimes impenetrable barrier to an objective assessment of his work. Robert Phillips correctly remarks that the basis of Berryman's criticism

is wrong:

> His poetry did not, in fact, "improve." It became different. Few readers have been willing to examine these differences, to find merit in the later work. (21)

He blames this unwillingness on "the popular portrait" that Schwartz "was bright, then burned out like a candle", as "perpetrated" by both Saul Bellow's Humboldt's Gift and the biography by James Atlas (22). It is surprising how many reference books and histories of American literature, if they mention him at all, seem to believe that one of the most notable things about Schwartz is that his body lay unclaimed in the morgue for two days after he had died in a hotel.

Humboldt's Gift is a roman à clef in which Humboldt, the Schwartz figure, is presented as an American type:

> . . . Humboldt did what poets in crass America are supposed to do. He chased ruin and death even harder than he had chased women. He blew his talent and his health and reached home, the grave, in a dusty slide. . . . So did Edgar Allan Poe, picked out of the Baltimore gutter. And Hart Crane over the side of a ship. And Jarrell falling in front of a car. And poor John Berryman jumping from a bridge. . . . The country is proud of its dead poets. (23)

This concern with "dead poets" was shared by Schwartz's other literary friends. Berryman begins "Dream Song 153" with these lines:

> I'm cross with god who has wrecked this generation.
> First he seized Ted, then Richard, Randall, and
> now Delmore.
> In between he gorged on Sylvia Plath. (24)

Robert Lowell addresses the same issue in a letter to

Theodore Roethke, who was dead himself less than a month later:

> There's a strange fact about the poets of roughly our age, and one that doesn't exactly seem to have always been true. It's this, that to write we seem to have to go at it with such single-minded intensity that we are always on the point of drowning. . . . I feel it's something almost unavoidable, some flaw in the motor. There must be a kind of glory to it all that people coming later will wonder at. (25)

Ian Hamilton comments that at the time of Schwartz's death "the notion of there being a sort of generic curse on the poets of his generation was recurring time and again in Lowell's letters" (26). In one of these Lowell refers to a claim by Berryman that there is "something evil stalking us poets", adding the observation that "that's a bad way to talk, but there's truth in it" (27). Hamilton contends that "Lowell . . . had for some time been nervous of the **idea** of Delmore Schwartz, of his decline from early promise, of the ways in which he had wasted his real talent" (28). Schwartz has notes for his own "List of Dead" in his journals. Those mentioned include F. O. Matthiessen, "death by suicide", Dylan Thomas, "brain insulted", and John Wheelwright, hit by a car while "drunken after midnight" (29).

Poets in Their Youth, Eileen Simpson's memoir of Berryman, Blackmur, Jarrell, Lowell, Schwartz and Stafford, uses for its title an adaptation of lines from Wordsworth's "Resolution and Independence":

> . . . .
> We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;
> But thereof come in the end despondency
> and madness. (30)

Schwartz also believed in the aptness of Wordsworth's poem. He uses its line about "mighty Poets in their misery dead" in two of his essays, "The Literary Dictatorship of T. S. Eliot" and "He Too Has Lived in Arcadia . . ." (31). In the latter he writes that "the literary life from the time of Irving until the time of Brooks seems full of . . . mighty poets in their misery dead" (32). Furthermore, a significant alteration of the poem is attributed to him by Lowell in "To Delmore Schwartz":

> You said:
> **"We poets in our youth begin in sadness;**
> **thereof in the end comes despondency and madness;**
> . . ." (33)

This treatment of "Resolution and Independence" by Simpson, Schwartz and Lowell reinforces the myth about doomed poets.

However, in a letter to Lowell Schwartz maintains that "To Delmore Schwartz" misquotes him and that he had actually proposed a different alteration:

> We poets in our youth begin in sadness
> But thereof come, for some, exaltation,
> ascendency and gladness. (34)

Lowell's amendment of Schwartz's amendment shows how reality can be altered in favour of the myth. The variation that Schwartz claims as his own serves as a better characterization of the change undergone by his poetry than Lowell's. However, its greater optimism does not fit "the popular portrait".

Unfortunately though, even Schwartz's optimism is

open to question. The myth surrounding his life is peculiarly resilient. It is possible to argue that "exaltation, ascendency and gladness" are merely the flip-side of "despondency" in the manic-depressive illness from which he suffered: in his journals Schwartz describes himself as "overcome . . . by madness of exaltation & madness of despondency" (35). Dunn draws attention to the following passage in Humboldt's Gift:

> . . . if Energy is Delight and if Exuberance is Beauty, the Manic Depressive knows more about Delight and Beauty than anyone else. Who else has so much Energy and Exuberance? (36)

Dunn argues that in "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" "the Delight and Exuberance Humboldt spoke of . . . are given their heads" (37).

Dunn agrees with William Barrett, "who condemns the legend of Schwartz as New York's **poète maudit**, as the poet killed by society, ruined by humiliated ambition" (38). Yet he also maintains that "Humboldt's Gift probably gives a better presentation of Schwartz (Humboldt) than any other text" (39). The dangers latent in such a position become apparent when he refers to "the poems of Schwartz's late, manic period" (40), as well as when he declares of "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" that "its flaws, its hapless concentration on radiances and luminosities, are part of its own tragedy and the tragedy of Delmore Schwartz" (41).

It is undeniable that unhappiness dogged the lives of Schwartz and many of his fellow writers. The history of letters does indeed abound with cases of "mighty Poets

in their misery dead". However, although the question of the relationship between their fates and their vocations defies easy answers, the important point when it comes to examining Schwartz's work itself is that too great an emphasis on his state of mind encourages errors of critical judgement. Two examples are revealing. Atlas begins the final paragraph of the biography with these words:

> "Into the Destructive Element . . . that is the way," Delmore scrawled on a bank-deposit envelope found in his last hotel room. It was his conviction that the self-immolating powers of the imagination would lead him to some purer realm; and it is a measure of the lethal character of that myth that he died alone in a midtown Manhattan hotel. (42)

Elizabeth Pollet ends Portrait of Delmore by quoting these lines "from a final notebook found in the hotel room where Delmore died":

> The poisonous world flows into my mouth
> Like water into a drowning man's. (43)

Both endings imply that the words they quote are original to Schwartz and mark the last, poignant, yet still eloquent efforts of the poet. Their poignancy is undeniable, but, in fact, Schwartz is himself only quoting others. The lines come from, respectively, Lord Jim and the diaries of Franz Kafka (44).

Just as it is unwise to blame Schwartz's death on "the self-immolating powers of the imagination", so too is it dangerous to relate the obvious formal changes and perceived drop in quality in Schwartz's later poetry to his loss of mental control. There are better

explanations for works like "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" than "a reliance upon dementia". When Dunn contends that that poem suffers because Schwartz was no longer able to bring to bear "the formal perfection of which he had once been capable", he does not take enough account of the truth of Phillips's observation that Schwartz's poetry "became different". It is misleading to look for the old "formal perfection" in work where the forms are no longer the same. New criteria need to be applied.

Some of the factors that make Schwartz's late verse different are described by Phillips:

> . . . it often accurately re-creates a sensuous experience and does so in language that is musical, free-associative, and highly communicative . . . (45)

He refers to Schwartz's "later style of spontaneous effusion" (46). A possible poetic influence is suggested:

> With their accumulations of details and syntactical repetitions, Schwartz's late poems seem to be modeled after Whitman rather than his early master, Yeats. . . . Schwartz's poems from the fifties and early sixties are written in longer lines, with more relaxed syntax and more apparent good humor. They mark an enormous stylistic change of direction . . . (47)

McDougall also recognizes that "some of the poems are reminiscent of Walt Whitman", and he gives "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" as an example of a poem that "suggests Whitman's use of accumulated pictorial detail and his syntactical repetitions" (48).

Other characteristics of the later work are identified by McDougall:

> Most of the new poems also try to impart a vision of a kind of knowledge . . . which is intuitive rather than analytical and which is, above all, exemplified by the works of artists, poets, and musicians, whom Schwartz now celebrates not as "culture heroes" enduring the martyrdom of isolation, but rather as celebrants and seers endowed with a transcendent and life-transforming vision. These poems represent a heroic, if only partly successful, effort to break away from the poet's past preoccupations--from an obsession with exile and the ironies of introspective and retrospective knowledge. (49)

He also notes the important shift of scene as "the poet leaves the city and turns to the natural world for his images" (50). Schwartz loses the emphasis on an urban environment in his late poems just as he does in his late stories.

A discussion of the new poetry in Summer Knowledge will illustrate the truth in much of what Phillips and McDougall write, as well as showing what other factors are important. "May's Truth and May's Falsehood", "The First Morning of the Second World" and the title poem are all of interest. However, "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" deserves detailed attention since of the later poems it is the one most frequently cited as a success, even by Schwartz's detractors, and since it clearly exemplifies the Whitmanesque loosening of form remarked on by Phillips and McDougall. Moreover, it is also a good example of how, despite the enormous changes in the later poetry, Schwartz continues to reflect back on earlier work. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" has roots that can be traced back to such early poems as "Far Rockaway", Parlez-Vous Français?" and "Calmly We Walk through This April's Day", as well as

to "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities" and "The World is a Wedding". It is also the most highly developed instance of Schwartz's use of repetition as a structural device.

II

"Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" takes its primary inspiration from Georges Seurat's Neo-Impressionist masterpiece Un Dimanche d'été à L'Ile de la Grande Jatte. It is a meditation on the painting and mixes description, interpretation and celebration. Nevertheless, it also involves a restatement and development of ideas from Schwartz's earlier work, particularly themes central to "The World is a Wedding" and "Far Rockaway".

There are a number of clear similarities between the Seurat poem and the story. "The World is a Wedding" also finds inspiration in a painting which depicts a society at leisure, Pieter Breughel's The Peasant Wedding. In both story and poem the careful study of these paintings provides a deeper understanding of life. In "The World is a Wedding" Jacob declares that "if you look at it long enough, you will see all the parts that anyone and everyone can have" (51). The Seurat poem elevates the act of looking into an almost numinous experience:

> If you look long enough at anything
> It will become extremely interesting;
> If you look very long at anything

> It will become rich, manifold, fascinating:
>
> If you can look at any thing for long enough,
> You will rejoice in the miracle of love
> . . . (52)

Again, one remembers Schwartz's remark in "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" that "the poet must see" (53). One also remembers these lines in Genesis:

> . . . If one can look at anything for long,
> If one can look at any thing for long,
> Not pause, nor blink nor let attention drift
> And shift,
> what wonders, sleepless boy! (54)

Both "The World is a Wedding" and "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" list descriptions of individual figures in the paintings. The list in the story is strikingly lyrical. In the following passage, which it should be remembered is presented as speech, the inversions in syntax and the sensuous language mark a distinct shift from the sparse prose that is characteristic of most of the story:

> . . . a handsome young man pours from a jug which has the comely form of a woman's body the wine which will bring all of them exaltation like light. His bending body is curved in a grace like harps or violins. (55)

One line in the poem provides a clear echo of this passage: "A young man blows his flute, curved by pleasure's musical activity" (56).

In "The World is a Wedding" Jacob uses The Peasant Wedding to argue the case for the all-embracing nature of life:

> It is a wedding, the most important kind of party, full of joy, fear, hope, and ignorance.

> And at this party there are enough places and parts for everyone, and if no one can play every part, yet everyone can come to the party . . . (57)

Likewise, "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" stresses the inclusive nature of the social group portrayed in La Grand Jatte:

> The Sunday summer sun shines equally and voluptuously
> Upon the rich and the free, the comfortable, the
> **rentier**, the poor, and those who are paralyzed
> by poverty. (58)

However, just as the story ends with Laura's contention that "the world is a funeral" (59), repudiating the optimism expressed in the preceding description of the painting, the poem celebrates "the marvellous blinding radiance of love" (60), yet retreats into "despair's sickness" (61). The poem is an affirmation of inclusiveness which ends by expressing the sense of exclusion experienced by Kafka, Flaubert and even, perhaps, the poet himself.

"Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" returns to a situation already captured in "Far Rockaway": society at leisure at the weekend when "The rigor of the weekday is cast aside with shoes, / With business suits and the traffic's motion" (62). New York's Rockaway, like Paris's L'Ile de la Grande Jatte, is an area within a city which nevertheless offers the possibility of a temporary escape from urban life. Moreover, there is the same democratic, inclusive impulse in "Far Rockaway" that there is in "The World is a Wedding" and the Seurat poem: "A socialist health takes hold of the adult, / He is stripped of his class in the

bathing-suit" (63).

Moreover, just as the later poem ends by imagining the isolated Kafka crying "They all stretch out their hands to me: but they are too far away!" (64), so "Far Rockaway" concludes by switching attention from the integrated society on the beach to "The novelist tangential on the boardwalk overhead" (65). He is not able to take pleasure in what he sees, nor to participate in the summer relaxation. All he can do is question:

> "Here," he says, "With whom?" he asks, "This?"
> he questions,
> "What tedium, what blaze?"

His questions are useless, and they certainly go unanswered. The syntactical breakdown of the above lines and the vague, abrupt and inarticulate nature of the questions are all criticisms of the novelist's position. This is especially clear because they follow the rapturous alliterative rush of lines expressing the joy that others can experience: "The radiant soda of the seashore fashions / Fun, foam, and freedom"; and "O glittering and rocking and bursting and blue". There is even an element of humorous (self-)mockery mixed in with the criticism of the troubled novelist. He is the "nervous conscience amid the concessions".

Yet the novelist is also shown to have a point. His nervousness is not inappropriate. The mockery is undercut by the pain expressed at the end of the poem when the "conscience" becomes "a haunting, haunted moon". The idea of death has already been introduced in the fourth line of the poem with "the self-destroying waves".

It is reintroduced immediately before the novelist appears:

> . . . .
> Time unheard moves and the heart of man is eaten
> Consummately at leisure.

The implications of these two lines are complicated. We have already been told that no "shadow" is cast on pleasure. Time is "unheard". Man is "at leisure" while he is dying. Aided by the enjambment and by the difference in the length of line in the stanza form used, the effect of the second line is partly to underline the positive aspect of this scenario. "Consummately", itself stressed by its position at the beginning of the second enjambed line, suggests a leisurely relishing of the completeness and perfection involved. Yet it also makes clear how utterly man is at the mercy of time. Just as "Consummately" is emphasized, "eaten" is stressed by being followed by the line-break. Man is "at leisure", but so too is "Time" as it destroys him. Even as man relaxes, even while he is unaware of it, he is dying. Time has no need to be heard and is not in a hurry.

This reading of "Far Rockaway" is supported by Schwartz's treatment of the same ideas elsewhere in his early work. A similar "tangential" figure, "the writer merely", appears in "Parlez-Vous Français?" (66). There he tries to warn ordinary people as they relax that promises of "the sun / Brilliant and strong on everyone" presage only "la fin d'été", though he fails because he speaks in a language that they do not understand. In the third section of "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities"

the father and mother spend their Sunday at Coney Island. Like the novelist in "Far Rockaway", they look down on the beach from the boardwalk. However, they do so "absently", "absentmindedly" (67). "The ocean seems merry" to the mother (68). It is the narrator who reacts like the novelist. He is aware that "the sun's lightning strikes and strikes" (69). He feels the "harshness" of the ocean. In the poem the waves are merely "self-destroying". In the story they are both destructive and appalling. The narrator stares "at the terrible sun which breaks up sight, and the fatal, merciless, passionate ocean". Finally, overwhelmed by "the terrifying sun and the terrifying ocean", he bursts into tears and rushes from his seat (70). This suggests an explanation of the novelist's question in "Far Rockaway": "what blaze?". It also adds resonance to these lines in the poem: "The lolling man lies with the passionate sun, / Or is drunken in the ocean". While the sense of danger suggested by the pairing of sun and ocean is less obvious than in the story, it is nevertheless present as an undercurrent.

Another early work, "Calmly We Walk through This April's Day", also uses the word "blaze": "What is the self amid this blaze?"; and "Avid its rush, that reeling blaze!" (71). The implications of the word are clarified by the refrain that runs through, and then concludes, the poem: "Time is the school in which we learn, / Time is the fire in which we burn" (72). The sun is associated with time and the inexorable onward movement of nature: "The great globe reels in the solar fire, / Spinning

the trivial and unique away" (73). The same association between time, fire and destruction can be discerned in "the passionate sun" and "Time unheard" of "Far Rockaway", as well as in "the terrible sun which breaks up sight" of "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities". In "Calmly We Walk through This April's Day" there is also the same contrast between the calm of apparent relaxation and the simultaneous operation of destructive forces. The scene is pointedly similar to that found later in "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine": "In the park sit pauper and **rentier**" (74), just as "the **rentier**, the poor" are at L'Ile de la Grande Jatte (75).

The Seurat poem does not just revisit the themes and situations of early poems and stories. The same phraseology and imagery reappear. Reference is made to "time's fire" and to "the uncontrollable blaze of time and of history" (76). The sun is vitally important. Yet now a new vision transforms what had before held such terror for the poet. Seurat works with light. The "blaze" of the sun is harnessed to the "blaze" of the painter:

> . . . he wants to hold the warm leisure and
> pleasure of the holiday
> Within the fiery blaze and passionate patience
> of his gaze and mind
> Now and forever: O happy, happy throng,
> It is forever Sunday, summer, free . . .
> (77)

Indeed, there is a sense in which Seurat is the same as light. He is "Dedicated radiance" (78). That is why he is "himself unseen" (79). Only the results of what he does can be seen, these being himself reflected in

what he creates, light captured in the painting, "vividness and permanence" (80). He is at one both with the form and with the content of his work. The artist is no longer a purely marginal figure. He can arrest time. He can transfigure the ordinary.

III

The principal technique that Seurat uses in La Grande Jatte is divisionism; though admittedly, according to John Russell in his study of the artist, the painting is "decidedly incomplete in its adherence" to this method, "divisionist passages alternating with passages of pure Impressionist brushwork" (81). Divisionism developed as a result of scientific theories of perception. In Seurat and the Science of Painting William Innes Homer explains how La Grande Jatte "embodied Seurat's latest discoveries in the realm of scientifically controlled light and color" (82). He states that the painter "attempted to treat the entire canvas according to a consistent set of laws of optics and physics proposed by such scientists as Rood, Maxwell, Helmholtz, and Dove" (83).

The aim of both divisionism, also described by the Neo-Impressionists as "the methodical separation of the elements" (84), and the more specific pointillist technique of applying pigments in small dots is to replicate the effect of light in nature. Félix Fénéon, an art critic and Seurat's friend, explains the basic

process:

> If the painter juxtaposes on his support . . . tiny eye-like spots of color, the succession of which corresponds either to local color, or to sunlight, or to reflections, these multicolored spots will not be perceived individually: from a distance, the rays of light which emanate from it will recombine on the retina in an **optical mixture.** The painter's artifice will have rigorously restored the process of reality. (85)

He amplifies this explanation:

> These colors, isolated on the canvas, recombine on the retina. One has, therefore, not a mixture of colored pigments but a mixture of colored light. . . . It is also known that the luminosity of optical mixture is always much greater than that of pigmentary mixture . . . (86)

He writes of "optical mixture" that "such a process will permit the painter to objectify his sensations in their complexity, to translate his fundamental originality with permissible assertiveness" (87). It is not that the divisionist approach subjugates art to science, though Seurat was attacked on those grounds by contemporary critics (88). Rather, as Fénéon insists, divisionist painters "only make use of scientific facts to direct and perfect the education of their eye and to control the exactness of their vision" (89). As he goes on to write, "Mr. X can read optical treatises forever and he will never paint La Grande Jatte" (90).

The Phaidon Encyclopedia of Impressionism observes that La Grande Jatte, "with its perfect composition and balance . . . brilliantly reveals the harmony of Seurat's art":

> The perfect balance between heat and cold, light and shade, horizontal and vertical, express [sic] the "calm" of a beautiful sunny day with people walking about and resting in a landscape where nature herself is subject to the laws of harmony and serenity. (91)

Seurat explains his aesthetic approach in a letter to a friend quoted in the encyclopedia:

> Art is Harmony. Harmony is the analogy of opposites, the analogy of similarities, of tone, colour, and line . . . (92)

Russell remarks on "Seurat's determination to compose in terms of perfect spatial harmony" (93).

The scientific basis of divisionism and the importance of harmony in La Grande Jatte are of immediate concern to "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine". The description of Seurat in Schwartz's poem as "at once painter, poet, architect, and alchemist" embraces the implications of the divisionist approach (94). Seurat's alchemy lies in mixing science with the transforming power of art. Russell describes the painting as one of "the great poems-in-paint with which the French nineteenth century has dowered us" (95). The architecture lies in the process of slowly building up dots of colour to create an harmonious whole, each dot needing the others in order to fulfil its purpose. The poem returns again and again to the notion of "Making a mosaic of the little dots into a mural of the splendor of order" (96): the painter is "fanatically threading / The beads, needles and eyes . . . of vividness and permanence" (97); "He builds" using "his little seeds, his small black grains" (98), "His marvellous little marbles, beads,

or molecules" (99);

> . . . .
> Each little picture links the large and small,
> grouping the big
> Objects, connecting them with each little dot,
> seed or black grain
> Which are as patterns, a marvellous network
> and tapestry . . . (100)

The longest single section of the poem deals with "the perfect balance" of the painting. Attention is drawn to the fact that in it "many are holding something or someone": "some hold several kinds of parasols"; "Each one who holds an umbrella holds it differently"; "A little girl holds to her mother's arm"; "An adolescent girl holds a bouquet of flowers"; "the bourgeois wife . . . holds her husband's arm"; "He holds a good cigar, and a dainty cane"; and "He is held by his wife" (101). Even nature is part of this general act of connection:

> No hold is as strong as the strength with
> which the trees,
> Grip the ground, curve up to the light, abide
> in the warm kind air:
> Rooted and rising with a perfected tenacity
> Beyond the distracted erratic case of mankind
> there. (102)

This preoccupation with the harmony and science of the painting, along with the numerous references to Seurat's use of light, to the painter as "Dedicated radiance", demonstrate Schwartz's intense interest in the inextricable link between the technical aspects of La Grande Jatte and its content.

Schwartz appears to assert nature's superiority. While the "little girl holds to her mother's arm" only "As if it were a permanent genuine certainty", there

is no such doubt about the trees: they have "a perfected tenacity". Yet the reality is ultimately more complicated. Schwartz writes that "Assured as the trees is the strolling dignity / Of the bourgeois wife". He describes "a lady who has turned to stone, or become a boulder" (103). As Russell remarks, this figure, seen only from the back in the painting, takes its form from a haystack in an earlier painting by Seurat, La Meule de Foin (104). He also notes that the painter is "too busy with an emblematic conception of bearing and dress to bother with the particularities of human feature" (105). Within the painting, and now within the poem, the inanimate, the natural and the human are given similar properties:

> Every umbrella curves and becomes a tree,
> And the trees curving, arise to become and be
> Like the umbrella . . . (106)

Harmony takes precedence over individual differences.

The repeated use of "as if" makes the disparate motives Schwartz ascribes to the figures in the painting part of a common whole. The phrase does not necessarily imply that the characters are wrong to feel as they do. The girl holding "to her mother's arm / As if it were a permanent genuine certainty" is, at one level, mistaken, if that is indeed what she believes. The man and wife, "suave and grave / As if they were unaware or free of time, and the grave", are wrong, at one level, if they do believe that they enjoy such freedom (107). Yet not only does Schwartz hold back from definitely attributing these mistakes to them, but, at another level, the nature of La Grande Jatte ensures that they are actually right.

The poem draws attention to the "permanence" and "stillness" of those in the painting, as well as to their freedom from "teething anxiety" (108):

> The sunlight, the soaring trees and the Seine
> Are as a great net in which Seurat seeks to
> seize and hold
> All living being in a parade and promenade of
> mild, calm happiness . . . (109)

The answer, "hope itself" (110), lies in the form of Seurat's work.

The concentration on the painting's divisionism suggests a parallel with the form of Schwartz's poem. His concern with Seurat's methodology is not merely thematic. When the painter is first mentioned it is not by name but only as "The one who beholds them" (111). As the beginning of the poem gives the impression that the poet is contemplating and intrepreting the painting, when "The one who beholds them" is introduced, although Schwartz is referring to Seurat, the result of not naming him is to obscure the distinction between the two. The later description of Seurat as "painter, poet" actually identifies their roles, Schwartz's with Seurat's. It seems reasonable to deduce that Schwartz was attracted to aspects of Seurat's approach to art that suggested a kinship with his own methods and aims, particularly the notion that a subjective perception of the world can be grounded in a form that "will permit the painter to objectify his sensations in their complexity", and that this helped to determine his choice of subject for the poem.

It also seems reasonable to deduce that, once having

made such a connection, Schwartz took inspiration from Seurat's approach for the methods that would allow him to "objectify his sensations". This amounts to something more than is admitted by McDougall's arguments that "the painter's concern with theory appealed to Schwartz's intellect" and that "the poet found in the painting an objective form whose images helped to fix his own ideas and emotions" (112), even though they are undoubtedly correct in as far as they go. Having abandoned regular forms of organization in favour of free verse and a rhapsodic tone, Schwartz still needed some way of controlling his poem. In significant ways this new framework is divisionist.

Of course, it would be impossible to translate the divisionist technique from painting to poetry fully, but there are definite parallels. The heavy reliance on repeated words and phrases, on assonance and alliteration, meshes the poem into an interrelated whole. Each repetition recalls an earlier appearance or appearances, while often anticipating later ones, at the same time as it emphasizes, or develops, themes. The repetitions are not intended to be "perceived individually". They function like Seurat's dots of colour, combining in the mind of the reader to form a unity, "a mural of the splendor of order", which is more, of greater "luminosity", than its individual parts.

There is also an attempt to recreate "the perfect balance" of La Grande Jatte. This is part of the purpose behind the variety provided by the changes in line length, the typographical overspills, the isolated lines, the

extremely long sections and the more evenly matched sections in the middle of the poem. No one element is allowed to dominate. Schwartz's repetitions and frequent shifts in focus establish harmony through what Seurat terms "the analogy of opposites, the analogy of similarities". This is what happens with the use of "as if". While a considerable amount of the power of Schwartz's earlier work derives from the tension generated by his ability to develop paradoxical positions, he now tries to defuse differences. He relies on stability, not "dementia".

The only time that the equilibrium of the poem is seriously upset is in the final section when, as noted before, there is a retreat into "despair's sickness". Earlier there are two eruption's of the "ache and torment" of "weekday" life, threatening a break with the serenity that the poet finds in La Grande Jatte, yet ultimately these are contained by the form of the poem and Schwartz reasserts the painting's values (113). The ending, however, is not neutralized in this way. While the majority of the poem has worked to establish a communion between poet and painting, when "Selfhood will possess and be possessed" (114), the ending is a regression to the notion of the artist separated from life. It is as if Schwartz has tried to set up a new, inclusive vision and form only to pull back at the last moment.

While the poem retains many similarities with the themes, diction and imagery of Schwartz's previous work, it is only the final section that truly strikes one as reverting to the attitudes of the early writing. Schwartz

may now be using Seurat and Whitman as his models, but it is Kafka who is invoked by name at the very end. He is one of "the great men" in Shenandoah for whom "art becomes exile too, / A secret and a code studied in secret, / Declaring the agony of modern life" (115). "Song of Myself" is about a spectator "Both in and out of the game and watching and wondering at it" (116). Those he sees are not "too far away", as Kafka is heard to cry, but rather an ess ential part of him: "of these one and all I weave the song of myself" (117). Despite the democratic concerns of the poem, Schwartz is ultimately unable to make that identification.

IV

Schwartz considers the subject of free verse in an essay first published in two parts in 1954 and 1955, "T. S. Eliot's Voice and His Voices". In it he discusses the new organizational approaches exemplified in a poem such as The Waste Land, and he relates them to developments in versification since the time of Blake:

> If instead of using the term, free verse, one speaks of open and closed versification, then one can relate the new method of organization to the revolution in versification in this way: as the new method of total organization includes any and all other kinds of organization within it, without requiring any particular one at any particular point, so open versification includes all the closed forms of versification and the older open forms exemplified in the Bible, Whitman, Marianne Moore, and William Carlos Williams, without being committed to any particular one at any time. (118)

A divisionist methodology enables Schwartz to draw on both "the closed" and "the older open forms". It is a system of "total organization" as defined in the essay: different forms can be used where appropriate as elements in the harmonious "mosaic" of "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine".

Single rhyming couplets are introduced at certain points. Some lines are metrically regular. Alliterative verse, in which the alliteration serves a definite structural purpose, is reflected in Schwartz's own use of alliteration. His repeated quotation of the phrase, "under the sun", is an allusion to one of the "forms exemplified in the Bible" (119). Though in this case he chooses a primarily prose source, Ecclesiastes, the frequent occurrence of the phrase in the original both heightens that prose and structures it (120). By repeating the phrase himself, if not so often, Schwartz suggests a precedent for his structural use of repetition.

At the same time as fitting in neatly with the poem's interest in "The Sunday summer sun" (121), the allusion to Ecclesiastes also allows Schwartz to subvert some of the cynicism and resignation of that book:

> . . . Time passes: nothing changes,
> everything stays the same. Nothing is new
> Under the sun. It is also true
> That time passes and everything changes .
> . . (122)

In Ecclesiastes the contention that "there is nothing new under the sun" is used to further the argument about the vanity, transience and evil of life (123). In

"Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" it has been elevated into something positive. It is now evidence of the relief from care that can be attained through such permanence. "The Sunday people" are "looking at hope itself, under the sun" (124).

Of "the older open forms", by far the most important are to be found in Walt Whitman's work. Robert Phillips and Richard McDougall are surely right to identify him as an inspiration for the form of Schwartz's later poems. Among the obvious similarities, both "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" and, for instance, "Song of Myself" feature what Phillips describes as "accumulations of details and syntactical repetitions". Whitman's cataloguing tendency is well known. At three points in his poem Schwartz concentrates on listing descriptions of individual figures in the painting, the second occasion providing by far the longest section of the work. The "longer lines, with more relaxed syntax" that Phillips identifies in the Seurat poem are a further similarity.

Whitman's approach to art, the avowed intention in "Song of Myself" "to speak at every hazard, / Nature without check with original energy" (125), has important consequences for his poetry. In <u>The New Walt Whitman Handbook</u> Gay Wilson Allen discusses how, as a result of Whitman's artistic theories, "fluency, logical structure, finish, were looked upon as artificial and useless ornamentation" (126). The abandonment of regular metre is an obvious corollary to such an attitude. Allen also notes that, because of Whitman's democratic ideas, because "nowhere in the universe does he recognize caste

or subordination", "he needed a grammatical and rhetorical structure which would be cumulative in effect rather than logical or progressive" (127). The same is true of the structure of "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine". It is not linear in its development. The poem does not progress; it accumulates. That is the point of the "mosaic" of the divisionist approach.

Consider one of the longest lines in Schwartz's poem:

> Selfhood will possess and be possessed, as in the consecration of marriage, the mastery of vocation, the mystery of gift's mastery, the deathless relation of parenthood and progeny. (128)

The contention that "Selfhood will possess and be possessed" is an important thematic point. The analogies are also pertinent to Schwartz's general concerns: "the mastery of vocation" and "the mystery of gift's mastery" provide the theme for "Jacob" later on in <u>Summer Knowledge</u>; "the deathless relation of parenthood and progeny" is exemplified throughout Schwartz's writings; "the consecration of marriage" is the subject of the admittedly complex affirmation of "The World is a Wedding". However, they are not directly pertinent to this particular poem. A case can be made for the relevance of each analogy, but, as they stand, they do not make such a case for themselves. They appear arbitrary, and the structure of the poem, particularly the loose structure of that extremely long line, provides no formal argument to justify why they should need to be included. Indeed, the length of the line suggests that the list

has been put together merely through an association of ideas and not from a concern for unity and coherence. Yet this is the point of Whitman's approach. There need not be unity and coherence at a logical level. The analogies do not have to be directly pertinent. The poem is not a closed system in a New Critical sense. It can draw on those ideas and phrases that it has in common with Schwartz's other poems and stories. It can develop by association of ideas. It is enough that the analogies work as analogies, provide a cumulative effect and relate to the poet's general concerns.

Allen identifies the specific techniques on which Whitman relies. He describes how the "basic structure" of the poetry depends on "parallelism" in a way that is reminiscent of "the primitive rhythms of the King James Bible", though he believes it unlikely that that was where Whitman found his inspiration (129). "Parallelism" is loosely defined as "a rhythm of thought, repeating and balancing ideas and sentences (or independent clauses) instead of syllables or accents" (130). The consequence of this system is that "the single line must by necessity be the stylistic unit" (131). It is immediately obvious that Whitman's lines are usually endstopped.

Allen details the effect of "parallelism" on "Song of Myself":

> First of all it provides the basic structure for the lines. Each line makes an independent statement, either a complete or an elliptical sentence. In the second place, this repetition of thought (with variations) produces a loose rhythmical chanting or rhapsodic style. And, finally, the parallelism binds the lines

> together, forming a unit something like a stanza in conventional versification. (132)

He comments that "Whitman's parallelism . . . is so often accompanied and reinforced by parallel wording and sounds that the two techniques are often almost identical" (133). Words or groups of words clearly tend to be repeated most at the beginning of lines, though Allen does acknowledge that "words and phrases are frequently repeated in other positions", sometimes, though not often, at the end of the line, and sometimes "repeated and interwoven throughout succeeding lines" (134). He also recognizes that Whitman uses more "conventional" techniques dependent on repetition, "such as alliteration, both vowel and consonantal, and assonance", though these are dismissed as "rather embellishments . . . than fundamental techniques" (135).

Correspondences can readily be seen between Allen's description and Schwartz's poem. There is a distinctly Whitmanesque aspect to these lines quoted earlier from "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine":

> If you look long enough at anything
> It will become extremely interesting;
> If you look very long at anything
> It will become rich, manifold, fascinating:
>
> If you can look at any thing for long enough,
> You will rejoice in the miracle of love
> . . .

They are an example of "synonymous" and "synthetic parallelism" according to the terminology that Allen borrows from Bishop Lowth: "synthetic" because the second line of each pair "supplements or completes the first"; "synonymous" because the second and third pairs of lines

are variations on the first (136). There is the repetition of words and, with only slight variation, of lines. The first four lines are even rhymed.

Allen also makes the following observations about Whitman's use of parallelisms:

> Notice that the parallelism asserts without qualifications. The poet is chanting convictions about which there is to be no argument, no discussion. . . . The form is rhapsodic, the tone that of inspired utterance. (137)

Those lines of Schwartz's quoted above are "convictions" "without qualifications". It is important that they are insistent in this way. As statements about the value of contemplation they may well represent the writer's manifesto for the poem. Yet at the same time they are somehow at odds with this role. The claims that they make are so bald that they run the risk of reducing any credo to triteness, the danger that Schwartz elsewhere characterizes by quoting Henry James's warning against "the platitude of mere statement" (138). Moreover, the preponderance of monosyllables militates against the notion of "inspired utterance", an effect emphasized by the split between "any" and "thing" in the fifth line.

It is not until the sentence started in the first line finally approaches its end that a truly rhapsodic tone appears:

> . . . .
> You will possess and be blessed by the
>   marvellous blinding radiance of love,
>   you will be radiance. (139)

In some ways this line is a continuation of the

parallelisms. It forms a "synonymous" parallelism with the preceding line. It repeats "You will", itself a development from "It will". However, by precedent the sixth line should have formed the end of a pair. The seventh is therefore an anomaly. It works as a climax by breaking away from the starkness and brevity of what has gone before. Its disruption of the simple structure established by the first six lines makes it, and, retrospectively, them, effective.

However, such use of parallelisms is unusual in "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine". For the great majority of the poem the line is not "the stylistic unit". Words or phrases, when repeated, tend not to appear at the same point in a line. There are only a few duplications of the beginnings of lines. Those that do occur are almost all restricted to simple two line parallelisms such as "This is the celebration of contemplation, / This is the conversion of experience to pure attention" (140). There is a much greater reliance on enjambement than in Whitman's work.

Some of the other poems among Schwartz's later verse show Whitman's influence more extensively. In "Summer Knowledge" there is a close resemblance to his use of parallelism as a comprehensive structural device. Almost all the lines in that poem involve some parallelism, as well as being endstopped and dependent on initial repetitions. They are also extremely long, most being too long to be confined to one line typographically. One line consists of 51 words. This is only beaten by the 58 words in one line in "May's Truth and May's

Falsehood". It is no coincidence that "Summer Knowledge" is one long assertion, "chanting convictions". It is also no coincidence that it is less successful than "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine". McDougall complains that "the poem is a detailed catalogue of instances as to what 'summer knowledge' is and what it is not, but the result is less than a poem" (141).

Schwartz makes these points in a letter to John Crowe Ransom:

> It seems to me now, as it did not when I typed the first copy, that the way in which these kinds of lines are set is not important and that the context suffices to set the pace, phrasing, and overflow . . . (142)

This is written with direct reference to "The First Morning of the Second World" as a response to Ransom's recommendations about "making indentations and margins consistent". This poem is formally very similar to "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine", especially in its incorporation of lines of extreme and variable length. The implication is that in these poems Schwartz has relinquished the controlling force of not only metre but lineation as well, merely replacing them with what he rather loosely terms "context".

Such an abandonment would be, if actually the case, a dangerous reduction of a poet's available resources. In disproving Amy Lowell's contention that "whether a thing is written as prose or as verse is immaterial", Charles O. Hartman clearly demonstrates in his book, Free Verse, that "lineation can be well or poorly used, but it can never be 'immaterial'" (143). Schwartz's

use of punctuation, of variations in the length of syntactical units, of alliteration, assonance, consonance and other forms of repetition, indeed all those factors involved in creating the divisionist "mosaic" or "tapestry", indicates how the context works "to set the pace, phrasing, and overflow". However, it is also clear that lineation is not irrelevant in his work.

There are potential weaknesses in the new verse forms in Summer Knowledge. The adoption of the loose long line does endanger the effectiveness of lineation. Too long a line can seem merely clumsy, and, more importantly, it can unbalance the poem as a whole. However, the verse provides evidence that Schwartz was aware of the pitfalls. Moreover, it appears to be the case that Whitman was aware of them too. Roger Asselineau notes that, while the 1855 edition of Leaves of Grass contains lines of exceptional length, subsequent editions saw them pared down, with excessively long lines either jettisoned, broken up or shortened (144). Lines the length of the two already mentioned in "Summer Knowledge" and "May's Truth and May's Falsehood" are only comparable to those in Whitman's early verse.

Asselineau maintains that the long lines in the first Leaves of Grass were controlled by "rhythmic stops" in the line that were indicated, not with "imperceptible commas, but by series of widely spaced points of suspension" (145). However, his reasons for this unusual punctuation are surely flawed. He suggests that it is used merely "for the pleasure and convenience of the eye":

> If Whitman's poetry had been meant for the ear, such an artifice would have been unnecessary. For, when one reads a poem aloud, the breaks appear by themselves, whether they were or were not marked by the author. (146)

The same mistake is apparent when Asselineau concludes that Whitman reduced the length of his lines because he "gradually passed from poetry designed to be read to poetry designed to be recited" (147). Even if it were true that Whitman's intentions altered in this way, it is not a sufficient reason for the changes that he made. The breaks do not just "appear by themselves" when one recites a poem. If they did, then lineation surely would be unnecessary.

Asselineau weakens his own case by quoting lines that have the "widely spaced points of suspension" alongside their replacements in which Whitman uses commas. Whether read or recited, the two versions **sound** different. The impact of the breaks created by the two types of punctuation is not the same. The spaced periods serve to lighten extremely long lines by marking a more definite pause than a comma would provide. The reduction in the length of lines, and the break up of single lines into different ones, removed the need for this tactic. If Whitman cut down the length of some of his lines because they read badly, then that would have been true of them regardless of whether they were read to oneself or to others.

There are lines of great length in "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine", but they are in the minority. Most can be contained on one line of the page. At the

same time there are very short lines, the briefest only two words. Neither extreme is allowed to predominate. Undoubtedly some are too long to avoid clumsiness, but at these moments one can sense Schwartz moving to reassert control. This is the case at the following point in the poem:

> He is a saint of Sunday in the open air, a fanatic disciplined
> By passion, courage, passion, skill, compassion, love: the love of life and the love of light as one, under the sun, with the love of life. (148)

The second of these lines is the ecstatic climax of a section. Its excessive length is a deliberate part of this effect. Some internal control is maintained by the use of repetitions, parallelisms and punctuation. More importantly however, the next line is not so long, and it is typographically isolated. The stillness with which the line is concerned is suddenly recreated in the poem: "Everywhere radiance glows like a garden in stillness blossoming" (149).

Schwartz uses the same anchoring technique again later. The line quoted earlier beginning "Selfhood will possess and be possessed" is the culmination of a euphoric break from a series of short, straightforwardly structured lines. As though Schwartz was aware that the poem is threatening to get out of hand, the next line, "All things are fixed in one direction", serves likewise to fix the poem (150). As a result of its simplicity and brevity, and its return to the direct scrutiny of the painting, it slows down the movement of the verse and rapidly reins in the excess of the previous line. The restored calm

also reaffirms the harmony of the poem.

Whitman can be seen using the same tactics in "Song of Myself". Like Schwartz, he controls his verse with variations in section and line length. A good example is provided by these two lines: "The little one sleeps in its cradle, / I lift the gauze and look a long time, and silently brush away flies with my hand" (151). Just as spaced periods mark a more emphatic pause in the middle of a line than a comma, the typographical isolation of these lines creates longer rests than would be provided by normal line-breaks, so underlining the tranquillity of the image. The shortness of the first line also helps to establish the appropriate mood. The second line may be long, but its almost prosaic flatness is more effective than an alternative in which the line is broken at the comma.

By adopting techniques relied on by Whitman, Schwartz is able to have the latitude he wants while still retaining some means of maintaining discipline. He does not adhere strictly to Whitman's literary and philosophical principles, nor does he engage in a complete recreation of his formal devices. What he does do is take only those elements that are helpful and either use them directly or adapt them to his immediate purposes. Thus some of the extremes of Whitman's approach are tempered to meet the demands of dealing with the fixed form of the painting. Schwartz draws on Whitman's work "without being committed" to it.

V

While it may be overstating the case to describe "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" as "a summation of virtually everything Schwartz had been endeavouring to express from the very beginning", as Douglas Dunn does, it is clear that the poem represents the importance for Schwartz of self-reflection and repetition. It is a work of art that takes as its subject another work of art; it is concerned with what it means to be an artist; it is interested in the process of artistic creation; it touches on issues of consciousness and the self; it deals with the relationship between the artist and society; and it recognizes both the bonds and the distance between the two.

Repetitions help to structure the poem. There are deliberate allusions to other work by Schwartz. These allusions are also largely dependent on the use of repetition, and they highlight the consistency of interest that characterizes his writings over the course of his career. While much had changed in Schwartz's life by the time he wrote "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine", and although his work had undergone considerable change, the arguments of a seminal essay such as "The Isolation of Modern Poetry" are still relevant, even though it was written years earlier.

The figure of Narcissus is rehabilitated in Schwartz's version of the myth. The diversity of interests and the self-critical complexity which his own narcissistic art could sustain justifies that

reappraisal.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Delmore Schwartz, "The Poetry of Allen Tate", Selected Essays of Delmore Schwartz, p. 164.

2. Schwartz, "Ezra Pound's Very Useful Labors", Ibid., p. 109.

3. Schwartz, "The Literary Dictatorship of T. S. Eliot", Ibid., p. 315.

4. Richard McDougall, Delmore Schwartz, pp. 38-41.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Mark Goldman, "Reflections in a Mirror: On Two Stories by Delmore Schwartz", Studies in American Jewish Literature, 2 (1982), pp. 89 & 86.

2. Richard McDougall, Delmore Schwartz, p. 36.

3. Ibid., p. 15.

4. Ibid., p. 37.

5. Ibid., p. 53.

6. Schwartz, "Narcissus", Summer Knowledge: New and Selected Poems: 1938-1958, p. 227.

7. Schwartz, "Sonnet: O City, City", Ibid., p. 52.

8. Robert Phillips, "Foreword", Last & Lost Poems, by Delmore Schwartz, p. xviii. The body of the text is titled "Overture" and contains manuscript breaks and missing words and lines (pp. 60-82).

9. Schwartz, "The Studies of Narcissus", Ibid., p. 59.

10. Louise Vinge, The Narcissus Theme in Western European Literature up to the Early 19th Century, p. 3.

11. Ibid., p. 25.

12. Vaudeville for a Princess contains a series of poems in a section titled "The True, The Good, and The Beautiful" in which the poet considers the worth of his dedication to these forms at a time of war (pp. 53-63).

13. Schwartz, "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", Selected Essays of Delmore Schwartz, p. 9. The strength of Schwartz's argument about Baudelaire is somewhat undermined by his use of a mistranslation of the French. The original, "je l'aimerais volontiers", is in the conditional tense, not the present. To have the stranger

declare his love for Beauty renders redundant the continued questioning that leads to the final answer of "les nuages" (Charles Baudelaire, "L'Etranger", The Poems in Prose with La Fanfarlo, vol. 2 of Baudelaire, p. 28).

14. Schwartz, "The Sin of Hamlet", Summer Knowledge, p. 35. In Genesis: Book One Schwartz writes of "the secret sin which made one go / A furtive fugitive to a foreign country" (p. 159).

15. Schwartz, "By Circumstances Fed", Summer Knowledge, p. 42.

16. Schwartz, "All of the Fruits Had Fallen", Ibid., p. 205.

17. Schwartz, "The Track Meet", Successful Love and Other Stories, p. 98.

18. "The Studies of Narcissus", p. 79.

19. Ibid., p. 69.

20. Schwartz, Portrait of Delmore: Journals and Notes of Delmore Schwartz: 1939-1959, p. 96.

21. Ibid., p. 283.

22. Genesis, p. 50.

23. William Shakespeare, Macbeth, act I, scene iv, lines 11-2.

24. Schwartz, "All Clowns Are Masked and All **Personae**", Summer Knowledge, p. 65.

25. "The Studies of Narcissus", p. 78.

26. Portrait of Delmore, p. 550.

27. James Atlas, Delmore Schwartz: The Life of an American Poet, p. 213.

28. Ibid., p. 255.

29. Bruce Bawer, The Middle Generation: The Lives and Poetry of Delmore Schwartz, Randall Jarrell, John Berryman, and Robert Lowell, p. 48.

30. Ibid., p. 42.

31. Schwartz, "Prothalamion", Summer Knowledge, p. 46.

32. Schwartz, "Dogs Are Shakespearean, Children Are Strangers", Ibid., p. 68.

33. Sigmund Freud, The Ego and the Id, The Essentials of Psycho-Analysis. p. 477.

34. Schwartz returns to the same subject in the short prose piece, "Hamlet, or There Is Something Wrong with Everyone" (Schwartz, The Ego Is Always at the Wheel: Bagatelles, pp. 73-9).

35. Genesis, p. 120.

36. Genesis twice refers to "the ego's tower" (pp. 100 & 106).

37. "The Track Meet", p. 85.

38. Ibid., p. 87.

39. Ibid., p. 87.

40. Ibid., p. 89.

41. Ibid., p. 88. Note the difference from the contention in "The Studies of Narcissus" that "Appearance is reality" (p. 69). It is Frank's version that is shown to be wrong.

42. "The Track Meet", p. 95.

43. Ibid., p. 97. Note the similarity to the opening lines of "The Fulfillment":

> "Is it a dream?" I asked. To which my fellow
> Answered with a hoarse voice and dulled insistence:
> "Dream, is it a dream? What difference
> Does it make or mean?" (Summer Knowledge, p. 150.)

44. "The Track Meet", p. 98. In Genesis it is noted that "I cannot go / Away! The mind is my own place, my world" (p. 94).

45. Portrait of Delmore, p. 600.

46. Freud, On Dreams, The Essentials, p. 114. For the definitions of manifest and latent dream-content see On Dreams, p. 88.

47. Ibid., p. 115.

48. Schwartz, "Father and Son", Summer Knowledge, p. 33.

49. Ibid., p. 29.

50. Shakespeare, Hamlet, act I, scene iii, line 78.

51. "Father and Son", p. 29.

52. Ibid., p. 33.

53. Ibid., p. 29.

54. Ibid., p. 29.

55. Ibid., p. 30.

56. "Father and Son", p. 31.

57. Ibid., p. 30.

58. Ibid., p. 31. The poem, "All of Us Always Turning Away for Solace", takes as its subject people's attempts to escape "From the lonely room where the self must be honest" (Summer Knowledge, p. 63).

59. "Father and Son", p. 31.

60. McDougall, p. 53.

61. "Father and Son", p. 30.

62. Ibid., p. 31.

63. Ibid., p. 32. The short story, "The Commencement Day Address", refers to "the mystery of waking with the same self, always, always, from the ashes of sleep the phoenix with eight hundred thousand memories!" (Schwartz, In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and Other Stories, p. 118). This strange piece also converts into prose much of "In the Naked Bed, in Plato's Cave", passing it off as part of the speech given by Dr. Isaac Duspenser.

64. "Father and Son", p. 33.

65. Ibid., p. 31.

66. Ibid., p. 33.

67. Ibid., p. 32.

68. Schwartz, "Coriolanus and His Mother: A Dream of Knowledge", Summer Knowledge, p. 124.

69. Ibid., p. 123.

70. Ibid., p. 81.

71. Ibid., p. 123.

72. Genesis, p. 153.

73. "Coriolanus and His Mother", p. 124.

74. Genesis, pp. 42 & 54.

75. "Coriolanus and His Mother", p. 131.

76. Ibid., p. 132.

77. Ibid., p. 124.

78. "Hamlet, or There Is Something Wrong With Everyone", p. 73.

79. "Coriolanus and His Mother", p. 123.

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1. Sidney Hook, Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the 20th Century, p. 520.

2. James Atlas, Delmore Schwartz: The Life of an American Poet, p. 148.

3. Karl Shapiro, "Foreword", Letters of Delmore Schwartz, by Delmore Schwartz, p. xi.

4. Delmore Schwartz, "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", Selected Essays of Delmore Schwartz, p. 7.

5. Schwartz, "Rimbaud in Our Time", Ibid., p. 57.

6. Schwartz, "To Julian Symons", 26 Jan. 1938 [1939], Letters, p. 65.

7. Schwartz, "Our Country and Our Culture", Essays, p. 401; Schwartz, "To Dwight Macdonald", 5 Oct. 1942, Letters, p. 132; Schwartz, "To R. P. Blackmur", [Oct. 1942?], Ibid., p. 136.

8. Schwartz, "Views of a Second Violinist: Some Answers to Questions about Writing Poetry", Essays, p. 32.

9. Schwartz, "New Year's Eve", In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and Other Stories, p. 113.

10. Schwartz, "To W. H. Auden", 16 Nov. 1943, Letters, p. 198.

11. "To R. P. Blackmur", [Oct. 1942?], p. 136.

12. Schwartz, "He Heard the Newsboys Shouting 'Europe! Europe!'", Vaudeville for a Princess, p. 53.

13. "To Julian Symons", 26 Jan. 1938 [1939], p. 65.

14. "Rimbaud in Our Time", p. 53.

15. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", pp. 4-5.

16. Schwartz, Shenandoah, Shenandoah and Other Verse Plays, p. 21.

17. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 5.

18. T. S. Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets", Selected Essays, p. 288.

19. Ibid., p. 287.

20. Ibid., p. 286.

21. Schwartz, "Primitivism and Decadence by Yvor Winters", Essays, p. 344.

22. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 5.

23. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 6.

24. Bruce Bawer, The Middle Generation: The Lives and Poetry of Delmore Schwartz, Randall Jarrell, John Berryman, and Robert Lowell, p. 60.

25. "The Metaphysical Poets", p. 288.

26. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 7.

27. "Our Country and Our Culture", p. 402.

28. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 9.

29. Ibid., p. 10.

30. Ibid., p. 10.

31. Ibid., pp. 10-1.

32. "The Metaphysical Poets", p. 290.

33. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 11.

34. Edmund Wilson, Axel's Castle: A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870-1930, p. 24. In "The Writing of Edmund Wilson" Schwartz describes Axel's Castle as "not the kind of criticism which helps to germinate new writing" (Essays, p. 362). A scene in "New Year's Eve" centres on one of the characters reading from Wilson's book (p. 109).

35. "The Metaphysical Poets", p. 289.

36. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", pp. 3-4.

37. Ibid., p. 4.

38. Schwartz, "Ezra Pound's Very Useful Labors", Essays, p. 108.

39. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 11.

40. Ibid., p. 10.

41. Richard McDougall, Delmore Schwartz, p. 27.

42. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 10.

43. Ibid., p. 11.

44. Ibid., p. 11.

45. Ibid., p. 11.

46. Ibid., p. 11. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine" provides yet more evidence in support of Schwartz's argument (Schwartz, Summer Knowledge: New and Selected Poems: 1938-1958, pp. 190-6).

47. Schwartz, "The Vocation of the Poet in the Modern World", Essays, p. 16.

48. Ibid., p. 16.

49. Ibid., p. 17.

50. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry, p. 12.

51. Schwartz, "T. S. Eliot's Voice and His Voices", Essays, pp. 130-1.

52. Schwartz, "The Present State of Poetry", Ibid., p. 37.

53. Schwartz, "In the Orchards of the Imagination", Ibid., p. 188; Schwartz, "Wallace Stevens: An Appreciation", Ibid., p. 194.

54. "The Present State of Poetry", p. 38.

55. Ibid., p. 39.

56. Ibid., p. 42.

57. Schwartz refers jokingly to Stevens as "certainly the best poet who has ever been the vice-president of an insurance company" ("In the Orchards of the Imagination", p. 187). More seriously, in the same essay Stevens's career is held up as "a parable of what is possible" (p. 188).

58. "The Vocation of the Poet", p. 16.

59. Ibid., p. 23.

60. The Life of an American Poet, p. 302.

61. Arthur Rimbaud, "To Georges Izambard", [13] May 1871, Collected Poems, p. 6.

62. The Life of an American Poet, p. 302.

63. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music, p. 18.

64. Ibid., p. 18.

65. "Views of a Second Violinist", p. 28.

66. Schwartz, Portrait of Delmore: Journals and Notes of Delmore Schwartz: 1939-1959, p. 591.

67. Schwartz, Genesis: Book One, pp. 206-7.

68. Schwartz, "A Great Poem, in English", Partisan Review, 6 (Summer 1939), p. 120.

69. Portrait of Delmore, p. 57.

70. Henry David Thoreau, *Walden, or Life in the Woods, Walden, or Life in the Woods and On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*, p. 92.

71. Ibid., p. 91.

72. Ibid., p. 95.

73. G. M. Hyde, "The Poetry of the City", *Modernism: 1890-1930*, ed. by Malcolm Bradbury & James McFarlane, p. 337.

74. Charles Baudelaire, "Les Foules", *The Poems in Prose with La Fanfarlo*, vol. 2 of *Baudelaire*, p. 58.

75. Monroe K. Spears, *Dionysus and the City: Modernism in Twentieth-Century Poetry*, pp. 70-1.

76. Ibid., p. 71. Snow appears frequently as an image in Schwartz's work. In his journals he notes that snow represents "newness, renewal, freedom" (*Portrait of Delmore*, p. 112).

77. "Views of a Second Violinist", p. 27.

78. *Shenandoah*, pp. 20-1.

79. *Dionysus and the City*, p. 72.

80. Schwartz, "Memoirs of a Metropolitan Child, Memoirs of a Giant Fan", *The Ego is Always at the Wheel: Bagatelles*, p. 115.

81. Ibid., p. 123. In *Shenandoah* the persecution of the Jews is described as an act carried out by "the dying West" (p. 31).

82. "Memoirs of a Metropolitan Child", p. 123.

83. Ibid., p. 125.

84. Robert Phillips, "Foreword", *The Ego is Always at the Wheel*, p. ix. In *Genesis* the commentary notes that "Irony is release, caricature / Yields momently a freedom from strict pain" (p. 175).

85. Schwartz, "Instructed of Much Mortality: A Note on the Poetry of John Crowe Ransom", *Essays*, p. 176.

86. Ibid., p. 174.

87. McDougall, p. 30.

88. John H. Johnston, *The Poet and the City: A Study in Urban Perspectives*, p. 167.

89. Ibid., p. 150.

90. *Dionysus and the City*, p. 74.

91. The Middle Generation, pp. 71-2.

92. T. S. Eliot, The Waste Land, The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot, p. 69. Schwartz also uses the phrase in Genesis (p. 155).

93. The Poet and the City, p. 170.

94. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 196.

95. "Ezra Pound's Very Useful Labors", p. 108.

96. McDougall, p. 43.

97. Schwartz, "Sonnet: O City, City", Summer Knowledge, p. 52.

98. McDougall, p. 45.

99. Elsewhere, the city is also associated with death or sickness. In "Demons and Angels Sing Ever in the West" "The city, sad and used, lies like a corpse" (Vaudeville for a Princess, p. 95). Cambridge is described as "Sick and used" in "The Morning Light for One With Too Much Luck" (Ibid., p. 91). Genesis refers to the "sick city" five times (pp. 125, 142, 165, 179 & 188).

100. Schwartz, "The Heavy Bear Who Goes With Me", Summer Knowledge, pp. 74-5.

101. The Middle Generation, p. 60.

102. Schwartz, "Tired and Unhappy, You Think of Houses", Summer Knowledge, p. 38.

103. Schwartz, "Fun with the Famous, Stunned by the Stars", The Ego is Always at the Wheel, p. 143.

104. Genesis, p. 197.

105. Jay L. Halio, "Delmore Schwartz's Felt Abstractions", Southern Review, 1 (Autumn 1965), p. 818.

106. Ibid., p. 807.

107. Ibid., p. 809.

108. Ibid., p. 810.

109. Ibid., p. 807. The description referred to is in "All of the Fruits Had Fallen" (Summer Knowledge, p. 205).

110. "Felt Abstractions", p. 805.

111. Schwartz, "Father and Son", Summer Knowledge, pp. 30-1.

112. Schwartz, "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities", In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and Other Stories, p. 1.

113. "In Dreams", p. 1.

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1. James Atlas, Delmore Schwartz: The Life of an American Poet, p. 276.

2. Ibid., p. 274; Robert W. Flint, "The Stories of Delmore Schwartz", Commentary, 33 (April 1962), p. 336.

3. The Life of an American Poet, p. 275.

4. Irving Howe, "Foreword", In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and Other Stories, by Delmore Schwartz, p. vii.

5. Ibid., p. ix.

6. Ibid., p. viii.

7. Ibid., pp. ix-x.

8. Delmore Schwartz, "America! America!", In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and Other Stories, p. 32.

9. The Life of an American Poet, p. 70.

10. Ibid., p. 72.

11. Schwartz, "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities", In Dreams, p. 1.

12. Richard McDougall, Delmore Schwartz, p. 67.

13. Ibid., p. 66.

14. "In Dreams", p. 1.

15. Ibid., p. 2.

16. Ibid., p. 3.

17. McDougall, p. 68.

18. "In Dreams", p. 6.

19. Howe, p. viii.

20. "In Dreams", p. 6. Here Schwartz echoes "The awful daring of a moment's surrender / Which an age of prudence can never retract" from The Waste Land (The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot, lines 403-4). The father's proposal is an illustration of Eliot's lines.

21. "In Dreams", p. 8. The image of the imperilled tight-rope walker reappears in the poem, "The Heavy Bear Who Goes With Me", where it is again used to suggest an unnamed, intense fear (Summer Knowledge: New and Selected Poems: 1938-1958, p. 74).

22. "In Dreams", p. 5.

23. McDougall, p. 69.

24. Ibid., p. 69.

25. "In Dreams", p. 7.

26. Ibid., p. 7.

27. Ibid., p. 7.

28. Ibid., p. 8.

29. Ibid., p. 5. The sun and sea serve the same purpose in the poem, "Far Rockaway" (Summer Knowledge, p. 34).

30. "In Dreams", p. 3.

31. Ibid., p. 8.

32. Ibid., p. 3.

33. Ibid., pp. 6 & 8.

34. Howe, p. viii.

35. "In Dreams", p. 9.

36. The Life of an American Poet, p. 273.

37. "America! America!", p. 12.

38. Ibid., pp. 19-20.

39. Ibid., p. 13.

40. Ibid., p. 16.

41. Ibid., p. 16.

42. Ibid., p. 17.

43. Ibid., p. 16.

44. Ibid., p. 26.

45. Schwartz, "The Present State of Poetry", Selected Essays of Delmore Schwartz, p. 42.

46. Schwartz, "An Author's Brother-in-law", The Ego is Always at the Wheel: Bagatelles, p. 54.

47. Schwartz, "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", Essays, p. 10.

48. McDougall, pp. 27-8.

49. James Atlas, "Introduction", *In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and Other Stories*, by Delmore Schwartz, p. xx.

50. Ibid., p. xx.

51. *The Life of an American Poet*, p. 60.

52. Ibid., p. 60.

53. Ibid., p. 102.

54. "Introduction", pp. xvii-xviii.

55. *The Life of an American Poet*, p. 102.

56. Schwartz, *Portrait of Delmore: Journals and Notes of Delmore Schwartz: 1939-1959*, p. 66.

57. Ibid., p. 414.

58. Schwartz, "To Gertrude Buckman", 3 June 1943, *Letters of Delmore Schwartz*, p. 172.

59. "Introduction", p. xxi. Atlas gives the title as *A History of the Boys and the Girls*.

60. "America! America!", p. 33.

61. *Portrait of Delmore*, p. 134.

62. Ibid., p. 282.

63. Ibid., p. 575.

64. Schwartz, "New Year's Eve", *In Dreams*, p. 114.

65. Schwartz, "The Child Is the Meaning of This Life", Ibid., p. 186.

66. Schwartz, "Why Do You Write an Endless History?", *Vaudeville for a Princess*, p. 106.

67. "America! America!", p. 10.

68. Ibid., p. 11.

69. Ibid., p. 10.

70. Ibid., p. 10.

71. Ibid., p. 11.

72. Ibid., p. 11.

73. McDougall, p. 40.

74. *Portrait of Delmore*, p. 308.

75. Ibid., p. 221.

76. Portrait of Delmore, p. 228.

77. "In Dreams", p. 9.

78. "America! America!", p. 11.

79. Ibid., p. 11.

80. Sigmund Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, The Essentials of Psycho-Analysis, pp. 237-8.

81. C. G. Jung, Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self, Jung: Selected Writings, p. 92.

82. Schwartz, "Coriolanus and His Mother: A Dream of Knowledge", Summer Knowledge, p. 99.

83. "America! America!", p. 11.

84. Ibid., p. 14.

85. Ibid., p. 15.

86. Ibid., p. 32.

87. "In Dreams", p. 1. Genesis: Book One also refers to the "period quality" of the past and to the clothes which "seem ridiculous" (p. 82).

88. "America! America!", pp. 11-2.

89. Ibid., p. 16.

90. Ibid., p. 17.

91. Ibid., p. 19.

92. Ibid., p. 16.

93. Ibid., p. 17.

94. Ibid., p. 19.

95. Ibid., p. 27.

96. Schwartz, "The Fabulous Example of André Gide", Essays, pp. 247-8.

97. McDougall, p. 93.

98. "America! America!", p. 19.

99. Ibid., p. 24.

100. Ibid., p. 32.

101. Ibid., p. 32.

102. Ibid., p. 16.

103. "America! America!", p. 33.

104. Schwartz, "The World is a Wedding", In Dreams, p. 35.

105. Ibid., p. 34.

106. Ibid., p. 34.

107. Ibid., p. 36.

108. Ibid., p. 36.

109. Ibid., p. 84.

110. Ibid., p. 83.

111. Ibid., p. 84.

112. Ibid., p. 84.

113. Ibid., p. 40.

114. Ibid., p. 63.

115. Ibid., p. 48.

116. Ibid., p. 44.

117. Ibid., p. 45.

118. Ibid., p. 89.

119. Ibid., p. 89.

120. Ibid., p. 50.

121. Ibid., p. 51.

122. Ibid., p. 47.

123. Ibid., p. 42.

124. Ibid., p. 43.

125. Ibid., p. 58.

126. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", pp. 4-5.

127. Ibid., p. 10.

128. "The World is a Wedding", p. 68.

129. Ibid., p. 54.

130. McDougall, p. 100.

131. Schwartz, "The Vocation of the Poet in the Modern World", Essays, p. 14.

132. Ibid., p. 16.

133. "The World is a Wedding", p. 81.

134. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 9.

135. "The World is a Wedding", p. 38.

136. Ibid., p. 39.

137. Ibid., p. 81.

138. Ibid., p. 82.

139. Ibid., p. 82.

140. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 11.

141. "The World is a Wedding", p. 55.

142. Ibid., p. 61.

143. Ibid., p. 43.

144. Ibid., p. 35.

145. Ibid., p. 48.

146. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 10.

147. Ibid., p. 11.

148. Ibid., p. 11.

149. McDougall, p. 90. He refers to "the graceless abstraction that disfigures Genesis".

150. "America! America!", p. 32.

151. "Foreword", p. xi.

152. "The World is a Wedding", p. 93.

153. Heinz Politzer, "The Two Worlds of Delmore Schwartz: Lucifer in Brooklyn", Commentary, 10 (Dec. 1950), p. 565.

154. Schwartz, "To Mark Van Doren", 8 April 1943, Letters, p. 158.

155. "The World is a Wedding", p. 91.

156. Schwartz, "To R. P. Blackmur", 15 Sept. 1943, Letters, p. 193.

157. "The World is a Wedding", p. 90.

158. Ibid., p. 91.

159. Ibid., p. 91.

160. Ibid., p. 89.

161. "The World is a Wedding", p. 89.

162. Ibid., p. 92.

163. Ibid., p. 36.

164. Ibid., p. 92.

165. Ibid., p. 42.

166. Ibid., p. 88.

167. Ibid., p. 92.

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1. Richard McDougall, Delmore Schwartz, p. 22.

2. James Atlas, Delmore Schwartz: The Life of an American Poet, p. 348.

3. Atlas, "Introduction", In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and Other Stories, by Delmore Schwartz, p. xxi.

4. Robert W. Flint, "The Stories of Delmore Schwartz", Commentary, 33 (April 1962), p. 337.

5. Delmore Schwartz, "The Hartford Innocents", Successful Love and Other Stories, p. 238.

6. McDougall, p. 22.

7. Schwartz, Portrait of Delmore: Journals and Notes of Delmore Schwartz: 1939-1959, p. 414.

8. Schwartz, "The Fabulous Twenty-Dollar Bill", Successful Love, p. 68.

9. Ibid., p. 56.

10. Ibid., p. 58.

11. Portrait of Delmore, p. 395.

12. Schwartz, "To William Maxwell", 11 Oct. 1958, Letters of Delmore Schwartz, p. 344.

13. Portrait of Delmore, p. 269. This phrase is also quoted by John Berryman in one of his elegies for Schwartz: "he sang me a song / 'I am the Brooklyn poet Delmore Schwartz / Harms & the child I sing, two parents' torts'" ("Dream Song 149", The Dream Songs, p. 168).

14. Schwartz, "Why Do You Write an Endless History?", Vaudeville for a Princess, p. 106.

15. Portrait of Delmore, p. 17.

16. Schwartz, "Tales from the Vienna Woods", Successful Love, p. 51; Schwartz, "The Track Meet", Ibid., p. 91.

17. The Life of an American Poet, p. 348.

18. Henry James, "Daisy Miller", Selected Short Stories, p. 191.

19. "The Hartford Innocents", pp. 211-2.

20. Ibid., p. 218.

21. Ibid., p. 218.

22. Schwartz, "The Present State of Poetry", Selected Essays of Delmore Schwartz, p. 44.

23. Ibid., p. 45.

24. Schwartz, "The Grapes of Crisis", Essays, p. 380.

25. Ibid., pp. 380-1.

26. Portrait of Delmore, p. 382.

27. Schwartz, "Successful Love", Successful Love, p. 4.

28. Ibid., p. 8.

29. Ibid., p. 27.

30. Ibid., p. 3.

31. Ibid., p. 11.

32. Ibid., p. 11.

33. Ibid., p. 16.

34. McDougall, p. 37.

35. "Successful Love", p. 10.

36. Schwartz, "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", Essays, p. 7.

37. Schwartz, "Wallace Stevens: An Appreciation", Ibid., p. 194.

38. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 10.

39. "Successful Love", p. 36.

40. Schwartz, "The World is a Wedding", In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and Other Stories, p. 55.

41. Schwartz, "An American Fairy Tale", Successful Love, pp. 99 & 108.

42. Flint, p. 338.

43. "An American Fairy Tale", p. 101.

44. "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", p. 7.

45. "An American Fairy Tale", p. 101.

46. Ibid., p. 107.

47. Ibid., p. 107.

48. Schwartz, "A Colossal Fortune", _Successful Love_, p. 120.

49. Ibid., p. 121.

50. Ibid., p. 168.

51. Ibid., p. 121-2.

52. Ibid., p. 121.

53. Ibid., p. 146.

54. Ibid., p. 146.

55. Ibid., p. 181.

56. Schwartz, "Father and Son", _Summer Knowledge: New and Selected Poems: 1938-1958_, p. 31.

57. Schwartz, "Coriolanus and His Mother: A Dream of Knowledge", Ibid., p. 132.

58. "A Colossal Fortune", p. 181.

59. "The Hartford Innocents", pp. 233-4.

60. Ibid., p. 236.

61. Ibid., p. 236.

62. Ibid., p. 237.

63. Ibid., p. 210.

64. Ibid., p. 212.

65. Ibid., p. 237.

66. Ibid., p. 231.

67. "The Present State of Poetry", p. 46.

68. "The Hartford Innocents", p. 220.

69. Ibid., p. 227.

70. Schwartz, "Starlight Like Intuition Pierced the Twelve", _Summer Knowledge_, p. 240.

71. "Father and Son", p. 33.

72. Schwartz, "The Ballad of the Children of the Czar", Summer Knowledge, p. 22.

73. Ibid., p. 23.

74. "The Hartford Innocents", p. 240.

75. Flint, p. 338.

76. "To William Maxwell", 11 Oct. 1958, p. 344.

77. Ibid., p. 345.

78. Ibid., p. 344.

79. Schwartz, "To William Maxwell", 27 Sept. 1958, Letters, p. 341.

80. Schwartz, "Views of a Second Violinist: Some Answers to Questions about Writing Poetry", Essays, p. 25.

81. "To William Maxwell", 11 Oct. 1958, p. 345.

82. Schwartz, "To William Maxwell", 31 May 1958, Letters, p. 336.

83. Ibid., p. 337.

84. Ibid., p. 337.

85. "The Track Meet", pp. 97-8.

86. Schwartz, "The Fulfillment", Summer Knowledge, p. 150.

87. "The Track Meet", p. 97.

88. Schwartz, "Poetry and Belief in Thomas Hardy", Essays, p. 71.

89. "The Hartford Innocents", p. 205.

90. Schwartz, "The Difficulty of Divorce", The Ego Is Always at the Wheel: Bagatelles, p. 66.

91. "The Hartford Innocents", p. 202.

92. Ibid., p. 238.

93. Ibid., p. 241.

94. Ibid., p. 242.

95. Ibid., p. 202.

96. Ibid., p. 240.

97. Ibid., p. 233.

98. "The Hartford Innocents", p. 233.

99. "Introduction", p. xvi.

100. "The Hartford Innocents", p. 201.

101. Ibid., p. 227.

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2. Schwartz, "The Critical Method of R. P. Blackmur", Selected Essays of Delmore Schwartz, p. 354.

3. Schwartz, "Our Literary Critics: An Appreciation", Essays, p. 310.

4. Ibid., p. 308.

5. Ibid., p. 309.

6. Ibid., p. 309.

7. Schwartz, "To Allen Tate", 8 March 1938, Letters of Delmore Schwartz, pp. 43-4.

8. "Our Literary Critics", p. 310.

9. Ibid., p. 309.

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11. "The Critical Method of R. P. Blackmur", p. 354.

12. René Wellek, American Criticism, 1900-1950, vol. 6 of A History of Modern Criticism: 1750-1950, p. 146.

13. Ibid., p. 146.

14. Mark Schorer, "Technique as Discovery", The Hudson Review, 1 (Spring 1948), p. 67.

15. Schwartz, "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", Essays, p. 6.

16. Schwartz, "Poetry and Belief in Thomas Hardy", Ibid., p. 69.

17. Schwartz, "To Robert Hivnor", 3 Oct. 1940, Letters, p. 101.

18. Schorer, p. 67.

19. Portrait of Delmore, pp. 10-1.

20. Schorer, p. 71.

21. Schorer, p. 86.

22. Ibid., p. 73.

23. "Poetry and Belief in Thomas Hardy", p. 69.

24. Ibid., p. 71.

25. Schwartz, Genesis: Book One, p. viii.

26. "The Critical Method of R. P. Blackmur", p. 357.

27. Ibid., p. 357.

28. "Poetry and Belief in Thomas Hardy", p. 71.

29. Ibid., p. 71.

30. Ibid., p. 70.

31. "The Critical Method of R. P. Blackmur", p. 357.

32. W. K. Wimsatt, Jr., and Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy", The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry, by W. K. Wimsatt, Jr., p. 5.

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34. Portrait of Delmore, p. 46.

35. John Haffenden, The Life of John Berryman, p. 84.

36. John Berryman, "From the Middle and Senior Generations", The Freedom of the Poet, p. 312.

37. Ian Hamilton, Robert Lowell: A Biography, p. 226.

38. Portrait of Delmore, p. 304.

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40. Schwartz, "The Writing of Edmund Wilson", Essays, p. 371.

41. Haffenden, p. 2.

42. Richard McDougall, Delmore Schwartz, p. 37.

43. Portrait of Delmore, p. 212.

44. Sigmund Freud, The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess: 1887-1904, p. 281.

45. Freud, "The Subtleties of a Faulty Action", New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis and Other Works: 1932-36, vol. 22 of The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, p. 234.

46. Freud, *The Question of Lay Analysis: Conversations with an Impartial Person*, *The Essentials of Psycho-Analysis*, p. 25.

47. Ibid., p. 25-6.

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49. Schwartz, "Father and Son", *Summer Knowledge: New and Selected Poems: 1938-1958*, p. 31.

50. Ibid., p. 30.

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2. Ian Hamilton, *Robert Lowell: A Biography*, p. 349.

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8. Peter Jones, *An Introduction to Fifty American Poets*, p. 272.

9. Phillips, p. xxiii.

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11. *The Life of an American Poet*, p. 326.

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14. The Life of an American Poet, p. 326.

15. Dunn, p. xvii.

16. Ibid., p. xvii.

17. Ibid., p. xviii.

18. Ibid., p. xvii.

19. Ibid., p. xvii.

20. Ibid., pp. xviii-xix.

21. Phillips, p. xiii.

22. Ibid., p. xiii.

23. Saul Bellow, Humboldt's Gift, p. 117.

24. Berryman, "Dream Song 153", The Dream Songs, p. 172. The first two individuals referred to are Theodore Roethke and R. P. Blackmur.

25. Hamilton, p. 337.

26. Ibid., p. 350. Lowell returned to the same theme after Berryman's death:

> Yet really we had the same life,
> the generic one
> our generation offered
> (**Les Maudits**--the compliment
> each American generation
> pays itself in passing)
> . . .
> ("For John Berryman", Day by Day, p. 27.)

27. Hamilton, p. 351. In "Dream Song 121", an elegy for Randall Jarrell, Berryman writes that "He saw in the forest something coming, grim, / but did not change his purpose" (The Dream Songs, p. 138).

28. Hamilton, p. 349.

29. Portrait of Delmore, pp. 510-1.

30. William Wordsworth, "Resolution and Independence", Poetical Works, lines 48-9.

31. "Resolution and Independence", line 116; Schwartz, "The Literary Dictatorship of T. S. Eliot", Selected Essays of Delmore Schwartz, p. 330.

32. Schwartz, "He Too Has Lived in Arcadia . . .", Partisan Review, 12 (Winter 1945), p. 130.

33. Robert Lowell, "To Delmore Schwartz", Life Studies, p. 68.

34. Schwartz, "To Robert Lowell", 12 April 1959, Letters of Delmore Schwartz, p. 354.

35. Portrait of Delmore, p. 194.

36. Dunn, p. xi; Humboldt's Gift, p. 10.

37. Dunn, p. xvii.

38. Ibid., p. xii.

39. Ibid., p. x.

40. Ibid., p. xvi.

41. Ibid., p. xix.

42. The Life of an American Poet, pp. 378-9.

43. Portrait of Delmore, p. 648.

44. "In the destructive element immerse. . . . That was the way" (Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim, p. 216); Franz Kafka, The Diaries of Franz Kafka: 1910-23, p. 23.

45. Phillips, p. xiv.

46. Ibid., p. xiv.

47. Ibid., p. xv.

48. Richard McDougall, Delmore Schwartz, p. 115.

49. Ibid., p. 115.

50. Ibid., p. 115.

51. Schwartz, "The World is a Wedding", In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and Other Stories, pp. 90-1.

52. Schwartz, "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon along the Seine", Summer Knowledge: New and Selected Poems: 1938-1958, p. 191.

53. Schwartz, "The Isolation of Modern Poetry", Essays, p. 6.

54. Schwartz, Genesis: Book One, p. 64.

55. "The World is a Wedding", p. 92.

56. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 193.

57. "The World is a Wedding", pp. 92-3.

58. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 192.

59. "The World is a Wedding", p. 93.

60. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 192.

61. Ibid., p. 196.

62. Schwartz, "Far Rockaway", Summer Knowledge, p. 34.

63. Ibid., p. 34.

64. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 196.

65. "Far Rockaway", p. 34.

66. Schwartz, "Parlez-Vous Français?", Summer Knowledge, p. 41.

67. Schwartz, "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities", In Dreams, p. 5.

68. Ibid., p. 4.

69. Ibid., p. 4.

70. Ibid., p. 5.

71. Schwartz, "Calmly We Walk through This April's Day", Summer Knowledge, p. 66.

72. Ibid., p. 67.

73. Ibid., p. 67.

74. Ibid., p. 66.

75. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 192.

76. Ibid., p. 194.

77. Ibid., p. 192.

78. Ibid., p. 190.

79. Ibid., p. 190.

80. Ibid., p. 190.

81. John Russell, Seurat, p. 141.

82. William Innes Homer, Seurat and the Science of Painting, p. 132.

83. Ibid., p. 114.

84. Ibid., p. 119.

85. Ibid., p. 139.

86. Ibid., p. 139.

87. Ibid., p. 158.

88. Homer, p. 235.

89. Ibid., p. 237.

90. Ibid., p. 237.

91. Maurice Sérullaz, *Phaidon Encyclopedia of Impressionism*, p. 180.

92. Ibid., p. 177.

93. Russell, p. 156.

94. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 192.

95. Russell, p. 141.

96. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 195.

97. Ibid., p. 190.

98. Ibid., p. 192.

99. Ibid., p. 193.

100. Ibid., p. 194.

101. Ibid., pp. 190-1.

102. Ibid., p. 191.

103. Ibid., p. 191.

104. Russell, p. 147.

105. Ibid., p. 150.

106. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 191.

107. Ibid., p. 191.

108. Ibid., p. 190.

109. Ibid., p. 193.

110. Ibid., p. 190.

111. Ibid., p. 190.

112. McDougall, p. 122.

113. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", pp. 190 & 192.

114. Ibid., p. 192.

115. Schwartz, *Shenandoah*, *Shenandoah and Other Verse Plays*, pp. 20-1.

116. Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself", *The Complete Poems*, line 79.

117. "Song of Myself", line 329.

118. Schwartz, "T. S. Eliot's Voice and His Voices", Essays, p. 142.

119. The phrase appears three times in "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon" (pp. 190 & 196). It also appears in Genesis: "O what a practical joke on everyone, / Something is always new under the sun!" (p. 70).

120. The phrase appears 27 times in Ecclesiastes.

121. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 192.

122. Ibid. p. 196.

123. Ecclesiastes, chapter 1, verse 9.

124. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 190.

125. "Song of Myself", lines 12-3.

126. Gay Wilson Allen, The New Walt Whitman Handbook, p. 210.

127. Ibid., p. 215.

128. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 192.

129. Allen, p. 215.

130. Ibid., p. 215.

131. Ibid., p. 218.

132. Ibid., p. 221.

133. Ibid., p. 224.

134. Ibid., p. 226.

135. Ibid., p. 242.

136. Ibid., pp. 216-7.

137. Ibid., p. 220.

138. Schwartz, "The Fabulous Example of André Gide", Essays, pp. 247-8.

139. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 192.

140. Ibid., p. 195.

141. McDougall, p. 120.

142. Schwartz, "To John Crowe Ransom", 11 June 1955, Letters, p. 303.

143. Charles O. Hartman, Free Verse: An Essay on Prosody, p. 60.

144. Roger Asselineau, The Evolution of Walt Whitman: The Creation of a Book, pp. 241-2.

145. Ibid., p. 240.

146. Ibid., pp. 240-1.

147. Ibid., p. 242.

148. "Seurat's Sunday Afternoon", p. 190.

149. Ibid., p. 190.

150. Ibid., p. 192.

151. "Song of Myself", lines 148-9.

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