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AN EVALUATION OF COVENTRY PATMORE'S  
POETICAL THEORY

by

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## AN EVALUATION OF COVENTRY PATMORE'S POETICAL THEORY.

## INTRODUCTION

As the title is meant to clearly indicate, the purpose of this thesis is to evaluate according to an objective norm the speculative critical theory of Mr. Coventry Patmore concerning the nature of poetry and the process of poetic creation. Mr. Patmore has presented his poetical theory in a series of essays written over a period of years. In its final form, his poetical theory was preserved for posterity in a volume of personally selected and rewritten essays entitled, Principle in Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, and in a volume of short aphoristic expressions entitled, The Rod, The Root, and The Flower. In these two volumes, then, are to be found the critical principles which constitute the poetical theory of Mr. Coventry Patmore.

He did not aim at producing a well-rounded critical system, but at pithily, suggestively and forcefully restating basic truths about literature and about the relationship between art, life and religion, and this he did admirably.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, the material object of this thesis is the "poetical theory" of Mr. Patmore. By "poetical

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.202.

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theory" is meant that body of principles used by Mr. Patmore in his practical criticism and apparently adhered to in the making of his own poetry. As presented in this thesis, that body of principles includes the role of "intellect" in poetry, the role of imagination in poetry, and the relationship between poetry and religion. This tripartite chapter division is intended to present the major principles - his fundamental analyses of the nature of poetry-- within the proper framework of Mr. Patmore's concept of the processes of poetic intuition and expression. Such an arrangement should allow for a more accurate analysis and evaluation both of the individual principles themselves and their interrelationships. Included within the area of the role of the "intellect" in poetry are the concepts that deal with the nature of the "intellect" as a creative faculty, the process of poetic intuition, and the nature of poetic intuition. Included within the area of the role of the imagination in poetry, are the concepts that deal with the nature of the imagination as a faculty of poetic expression, the process of poetic expression, and the nature of poetic imagery. Included within the last area of the relationships that exist between poetry and religion are the concepts that

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deal with the connections between poetry and religion as an influence upon the poet and as a subject matter of poetry. This last area of consideration is especially significant because it represents the logical working out of Mr. Patmore's critical principles in a practical application to a poetic problem such as the relationship of poetry to morality. Because of this fact, the last chapter offers a means of checking the accuracy of the previously made analyses and of seeing more clearly both the weaknesses and the strong points in Mr. Patmore's poetical theory as evaluated in the previous sections of the thesis.

In order to make this evaluation of Mr. Patmore's poetical theory, an "objective" norm has been assumed. By "objective" is meant that the norm represents a speculative or philosophical analysis of the nature of poetry from poetic intuition to poetic expression. The analysis of Mr. Jacques Maritain was chosen to fulfil the requirement of the norm needed for this thesis.

Mr. Maritain's analysis meets the requirement of being an "objective" norm and also it possesses the advantage of generally covering the entire process from poetic intuition to poetic expression. In keeping

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with this latter advantage, the norm like the material it is evaluating, possesses one dominant point of view and has an over-all unity resulting from the fact that it is taken from a single author. The norm is supplemented by material chosen on the basis of its "objective" clarity and its general conformity with the dominant viewpoint held by Mr. Maritain. By supplementary material is meant additional analyses to make more explicit those areas of Mr. Maritain's analysis that are only implicit or briefly explained and to fill in areas of Mr. Maritain's analysis that he has not carried through to completion. Finally, it should be noted that supplementary material is introduced in this thesis to make the norm more appropriate to the matter it attempts to evaluate; and it is presented for this purpose only - not in any way to disparage Mr. Maritain's excellent analysis.

To meet these requirements, two speculative literary critics have been used. The first is Mr. T. S. Eliot, and the second is Dr. Paul Marcotte. Again, it should be pointed out that it is not the purpose of the norm of this thesis to present the more popular or better known critic in his specific area of specialization.

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Thus the above named critics have been selected because of their basic conformity with the over-all viewpoint of Mr. Maritain. This thesis does not deny the value of an eclectic norm in itself - as a matter of fact Mr. Maritain's theory is itself eclectic - but it avoids introducing a variety of diverse critical points of view where no good purpose can thereby be served. This thesis is engaged entirely in making an evaluation of Mr. Patmore's poetical theory in its individual concepts and in its over-all concept of poetry. A unified norm, consistent in its viewpoint, can best accomplish the individual and general judgments required by this thesis. It is not the purpose of this thesis to trace the critical sources of Mr. Patmore's thought nor to note the similarities his thinking might have had with that of other critics - past or contemporary. The evaluations made in this thesis are intended to be "objective" judgments following an "objective" norm, that is, the analysis and comparison of concepts and simply noting their degree of conformity or non-conformity.

Having explained what the material object of this thesis will be and having explained the nature of the norm that will be used in making the evaluation of this material,

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it might further prepare one for an understanding of the thesis to briefly explain the special pertinence of such an approach to Mr. Patmore's poetical theory. It might appear at first glance that this thesis is unnecessarily dependent upon a speculative or philosophical norm with which to judge Mr. Patmore's observations concerning poetry. However, the "objective" norm is in fact the only way of honestly and adequately evaluating Mr. Patmore's observations. This is not to say that Mr. Patmore was a philosopher or that his observations are always the result of valid scientific investigation. Nevertheless, Mr. Patmore was explicit in describing himself a critic who was most concerned with demonstrating the necessity of viewing literature with definite "principles".

A few infallible and, when once uttered, self-evident principles would at once put a stop to this sort of representation among artists; and the public would soon learn to be repelled by what now most attracts them, being thence-forward guided by a critical conscience, which is the condition of "good" taste.<sup>1</sup>

For Mr. Patmore, "good" taste was a by-product of good judgment, and the latter required definite principles which cover the nature of poetry and poetic expression.

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle in Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.3.

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In other words, the predominant interest of Mr. Patmore as a critic is speculative - an interest which is readily apparent in his critical writings. The practical applications which Mr. Patmore did make are more of an illustration of one of his "principles" than criticisms for their own sake.

'MR. PATMORE DOES NOT AIM AT "APPRECIATION", but at the elucidation of principles', wrote Francis Thompson in a review of Patmore's Religio Poetae, thus succinctly stating the main difference between his own criticism and that of the older poet. Whereas Thompson is a fairly typical nineteenth-century 'appreciator', whose weakness as a critic lies in his lack of body of principles and a consistent critical standpoint, Patmore is always concerned with the search for generally valid critical criteria, and with the relationship between form and content. He is 'Classical' in his criticism, as Thompson is 'Romantic'.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, in so far as Mr. Patmore's poetical theory is "concerned with the search for generally valid critical criteria", then only an "objective" norm can be used to make an adequate judgment of Mr. Patmore's poetical theory.

This thesis has the distinction of being the first effort at evaluating the main body of Mr. Patmore's literary principles by means of a norm which is similarly

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.182.

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a body of literary principles. Therefore, this thesis is in a position to make a twofold contribution to the field of literary criticism: first, it will present the poetic theory of Mr. Patmore in its individuality and totality - thereby adding some new insights into it; and second, it will make an evaluation of Mr. Patmore's principles both individually and totally - a complete evaluation that has not been made as yet. As a result, the reader can gain from this thesis a knowledge of the "objective" worth of Mr. Patmore's critical theory and at the same time have a better knowledge of his principles and their inter-relationships.

The true significance of Patmore's literary criticism is not so much in his individual judgments (interesting and important as they are) as in the small but genuine body of principles on which those individual judgments were based.<sup>1</sup>

The scarcity of detailed criticism of Mr. Patmore's poetical theory is difficult to explain in the face of some high praise given Mr. Patmore's critical thoughts.

If Patmore's verse has rarely been submitted to close scrutiny, his writings on aesthetics, literary principles, metrics, architecture, politics and theology have been almost completely ignored save for

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1. Paul Franklin Baum, "Coventry Patmore's Literary Criticism", University of California Chronicle, p.245.

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the purpose of illuminating an aspect of the poetry. Yet it is impossible to regard Patmore's prose as a substantial contribution to nineteenth century thought on a variety of topics.<sup>1</sup>

"Whenever a critic of faithful conscience," remarks Mr. Read, "recalls the poets of this period - Tennyson, Arnold, Clough, Patmore, Browning, Rossetti - it is on the name of Patmore that he lingers with a still lively sense of wonder. The rest have been fully estimated, and their influence, if not exhausted, is predictable. Patmore is still potential...."<sup>2</sup>

It was Patmore's achievement that he reconciled these two tendencies, mysticism and the scientific spirit. He did it, not like Tennyson, by accepting both into a grotesque and sterile union, but by rejecting both in their current acceptation, Romantic mysticism because it was confused and illusory, and the rational sycrretism because it was unreasonable. The basis on which he worked out this fusion is interesting and explains why the modern artist is turning to him.<sup>3</sup>

Similar statements could be added to those quoted above. However, the important point to be noted here is that each of the above statements require a thorough analysis and evaluation of Mr. Patmore's poetical theory before their own worth can be determined. Such has been the draw back of Patmorean criticism - sweeping general appraisals that

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1. J.C.Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, pp.8-9.

2. Calvert Alexander, S.J., The Catholic Literary Revival, p.70.

3. Ibid., p.56.

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appear to be based on each other rather than a detailed analysis and evaluation of it. Perhaps one of the reasons why there has been no detailed analysis and evaluation of Mr. Patmore's critical theory is because of the difficulty of setting up an "objective" norm adequate to cover the depth of poetic insight he tried to reach in his own critical essays.

Finally, some mention should be made of the difficulties that this thesis may cause its readers because of its subject matter and because of its critical nature. The first difficulty arises from the necessity of analyzing and evaluating the different notes of Mr. Patmore's main poetical concepts before the latter could be properly judged. The solution to this problem was to divide the sections into subsections. Each section has three subsections; the first, the analysis of Mr. Patmore's concept; the second, the presentation of the norm which will be used in its evaluation; and the third, the noting of the degree of conformity or non-conformity between these two. This tripartite division will be applied to each section in each chapter. The first subsection is introduced by the section's title; the

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second subsection is introduced by two stars (\* \*); and the third subsection is introduced by three stars (\* \* \*). Such a tripartite division of the sections into subsections was devised in order to enable the reader to follow the actual judgment process so that he could more closely check its component parts. However the reader is asked to remember that each section deals only with a particular part of one of Mr. Patmore's major poetical or critical concepts. In other words, in order to make an accurate judgment, each particular point of his poetical theory must first be treated as a separate unit; consequently, the reader must not expect anything like complete analysis or final evaluation until the end of the chapter is reached. Nevertheless, the difficulty which this step by step approach might at first present has been compensated for by such an arrangement of the sections that the individual parts of a major concept which they contain logically accumulate and form the major concept as the reader progresses through the chapter. In the first two chapters a separate section is devoted to the task of presenting a complete analysis and evaluation of all the material treated in the chapter, while in the third, a summary occurs in the section dealing with the last part

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of the major concept of that chapter.

The necessity of this cumulative and detailed analysis and evaluation may present another difficulty to the reader - the necessary repetition of various elements of the argument. In so far as the sections are intended to logically unfold a major concept or principle in Mr. Patmore's poetical theory, some repetition must take place in the different sections and subsections. The repetition arises from the need to bring in previously discussed terms and concepts both in the analysis of Mr. Patmore's critical theory and in the presentation of the norm. However, a distinction can be made between "simple" repetition and the repeating of ideas within a slightly different or more complete context. The repetition which occurs in this thesis is of the latter type - a type which is intended to give further insight into a previously discussed point and thereby give a more complete insight into Mr. Patmore's poetical theory and its evaluation.

The difficulties the reader may encounter in reading this thesis may be circumvented in the following manner: first, the reader must await a gradual unfolding of the major concepts of Mr. Patmore's poetical theory as the thesis progresses toward its goal through a

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division of sections and subsections; and second, the reader must not be misled by the repetition which occurs; rather, he is asked to be aware of the slightly different or more complete context within which the repetition takes place. These difficulties are the direct result of the formal object of this thesis - to present an evaluation of Mr. Patmore's poetical theory which is both detailed and complete. And finally, in this connection, the reader is again reminded that this thesis does not defend its norm but assumes it. The norm itself stands as "objective" in so far as it is an analysis of the nature of poetry and the process of poetic expression. The specific purpose of this thesis is to note the degree of conformity or non-conformity between Mr. Patmore's poetical theory and the norm that has been assumed.

## Chapter I

THE "INTELLECT" IN COVENTRY PATMORE'S  
POETICAL THEORY

From the point of view of speculative criticism, that is, considering the nature and process of poetic creation in itself, Coventry Patmore's poetical theory can be generally described as an attempt to emphasize the essential role of man's intellectual power in poetic activity.

Poetry, in common with, but above all the arts, is the mind of man, the rational soul, using the female or sensitive soul, as its accidental or complementary means of expression.<sup>1</sup>

In order to evaluate the above mentioned emphasis, this chapter will examine Mr. Patmore's concept of "intellect" and it will compare this concept with an objective philosophical analysis of the intellect's role in the process of poetic creation. This analysis and comparison will be performed in three parts: the first, the "intellect's" mode of operation ( how it knows ); the second, its proper object ( what it knows ); and the third, its nature ( what it is in itself ). When all of this has been done, a final section will indicate the poetic orientation of Mr. Patmore's emphasis upon the essential role of man's intellectual power in poetic activity.

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae and other essays, p.20.

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Section 1

The "Intellect's" Mode of Operation

Mr. Patmore introduces his concept of "intellect" by means of a threefold distinction of man's spiritual faculties.

The intellect, the understanding or the discursive reason, and the memory, it need scarcely be said, are three distinct faculties....Intellect, though it is constantly spoken of as synonymous with the understanding, is really an incomparably rarer quality....The intellect discerns truth as a living thing...without anything that can be called ratiocination.<sup>1</sup>

Though widely read in philosophy, Mr. Patmore was not primarily a philosopher; he was a poet trying to explain and justify his own approach to poetry.

Despite his endeavor to give a colouring of philosophic logic to his view of 'apprehension', in such essays as, 'Attention' and 'Real Apprehension', he is in fact, only describing, out of his experience, the 'poet's wise passiveness' before natural phenomena.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, Mr. Patmore's distinction between "intellect" and "understanding" as distinct faculties or qualities

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1. Ibid., p.289.

2. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.120.

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of man's rational soul should be considered from the point of view of the purpose which this distinction is designed to serve as well as from the point of view of the psychological accuracy of the distinction in itself. The purpose of this distinction is clear; namely, to point out that poetry involves the rational power of man in a particular kind of activity other than logical or discursive reasoning.

Mr. Patmore calls the "intellect" the faculty of the "seer" and the faculty of "direct vision", and he describes the implication of these terms in the following simile.

...like the photographic plate which finds stars that no telescope can discover by simply setting its passively expectant gaze in certain indicated directions so long and steadily that telescopically invisible bodies become apparent by accumulation of impression.<sup>1</sup>

It is evident from the above statement that Mr. Patmore is attributing to the "intellect" a kind of intuitive grasp of some truth in reality as it effects the poet.

Thus the intellect is a faculty which discerns truth as that truth has effected, through experience, the whole person of the poet, body and soul. The moment of discernment or apprehension is the moment

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae and other essays, p.286.

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of impression that can not be denied....What the poet sees is not the essence of a particular truth but the experiential dimension of a particular truth...<sup>1</sup>

Thus the first major note of Mr. Patmore's operational concept of the "intellect" has both a negative and positive aspect. Negatively, the "intellect" operates in a non-conceptual, non-discursive manner "without anything that can properly be called ratiocination". Positively, the elimination of any type of reasoning activity from the "intellect's" operation renders it an intuitive faculty.

Consequently, the question that now arises is: In what manner does the "intellect" operate in its non-discursive or intuitive grasp of reality? Mr. Patmore calls this intuitive grasp of reality by the "intellect" an act of "real apprehension". Therefore, the answer to the above question can be found in those statements which deal with his concept of "real apprehension".

No one, probably, has ever found his life permanently affected by any truth whereof he has been unable to obtain a real apprehension, which as I have elsewhere shown, is quite a different thing from real comprehension....The poet is, par excellence, the perceiver,

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1. Rev. Thomas Peyton, Coventry Patmore's Poetical Theory, pp.10-11.

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nothing having any interest for him, unless he can, as it were, see and touch it with the spiritual senses, with which he is pre-eminently endowed.<sup>1</sup>

It is his pontifical privilege to feel the truth; and his function is to bridge the gulf between severe verity and its natural enemy, feminine sentiment...<sup>2</sup>

Because Mr. Patmore recognizes a difference between "real apprehension" which is an intuitive act and "real comprehension" which is a discursive act, then his emphasis is the two above statements upon the poet seeing and touching and feeling the truth is significant. It's significance lies in the fact that Mr. Patmore, in his descriptions, is indicating that the poetic intuition involves some kind of direct affective origin as opposed to an abstractive origin. He reveals further evidence of this direct affective rather than abstractive origin in his description of his own poetic apprehensions: "...my work being mainly that of a Poet, bent only on discovering how the "loving hint" of doctrine has "met the longing guess" of souls...."<sup>3</sup> Mr. Patmore's use of the words "loving" and "longing" certainly indicate that the

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, pp.219-220.

2. Ibid., p.339.

3. Coventry Patmore, The Rod, The Root and The Flower, p.v.

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intuitive mode of real apprehension is distinguished from the discursive mode of real comprehension via a kind of direct affective origin resulting from the poet's particular contact with reality.

In short, the above descriptions given by Mr. Patmore show that the affective experience of the poet is very much a part of the intuitive act of real apprehension - and that part appears to be in the way by which the "intellect" grasps directly and immediately the total significance of his particular experience. For Mr. Patmore, the poet sees the truth and feels the truth, but he does not think the truth.

...and the greatest of all the functions of the poet is to aid in his readers the fulfilment of the cry, which is that of nature as well as religion, "Let not my heart forget the things mine eyes have seen." The greatest perversion of the poet's function is to falsify the memory of that transfiguration of the senses and to make light of its sacramental character.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, as a second major note of Mr. Patmore's understanding of the operational mode of the "intellect", it can be concluded that in his descriptions of real apprehension he distinguishes the latter from real

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae and other essays, p.339.

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comprehension by means of an affective origin which helps to convey to the poet the total significance of a particular experience.

'Be the theme of the poet magnificent or humble, be it his purpose to justify the ways of God to man, or to publish praise of the "small celandine," it is certain that, in order to sing, he must first feel. Poetry is truth or fact of properly human import and general intelligibility verbally expressed so as to affect the feelings.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Patmore's statement requires some additional comment. Certainly, the first part of the statement supports the above mentioned second major note of affective origin. However, Mr. Patmore's subsequent description of poetry seems to relegate feelings to a complementary instead of a determining factor. Though the role of emotions in poetic expression will be discussed at length in the following chapter; at this point it must be determined whether Mr. Patmore is contradicting his previous descriptions of real apprehension.

Mr. Patmore does emphasize the complimentary or accidental role of the sensitive soul which represents man's affective capability. However, in this case, affective determination and a complementary or accidental

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.188.

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role are not necessarily contradictory. The reason for this is that the feelings expressed in poetry can have their type in the feelings by which the poet first realized his poetic intuition. Mr. Patmore's statement would seem to indicate such a connection. The poet must first feel in order to sing, but, when he sings, his language must affect his readers the same way that the real apprehension first affected the poet. In other words, the poet is expressing poetic thought and feeling as they are part of his real apprehension and not as they are artificially joined for the mere purpose of affective poetic expression. Mr. Patmore supports this view of real apprehension in some of his observations which he makes concerning the poet William Barnes.

He seems, in fact, never to have written except under the sense of a subject that makes its own form, and of feelings which form their own words...<sup>1</sup>

Thus when Mr. Patmore speaks of the affective appeal of poetry, this need not be taken in an artificial or decorative sense, but may be recognized as an indication that feelings are a definite part of the real apprehension itself.

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae and other essays, p.112.

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...when the writer pretends to deal with those facts and phenomena of humanity which, directly or indirectly, are the main region of every poet's song, he has to overcome our sense that he is an habitual trifler before he can gain credit for sincerity, even when he is giving utterance to what may really be a passing strain of true poetic thought and feeling.<sup>1</sup>

Then, Mr. Patmore's theory and explanation of the "intellect's" mode of operation may be concisely recapitulated in two statements: first, "intellect" intuitively operates in a non-conceptual, non-discursive manner "without anything that can properly be called ratiocination"; and second, the "intellect" in making its intuitive grasp or "real apprehension" of some aspect of reality is aided by feelings or an affective origin.

\* \*2

Mr. Maritain in his philosophic analysis of the creative process in art is also concerned with the relationship of the intellect to poetic creation. It is in considering the operational mode of the intellect in this process - in which category he places poetry - that Mr. Maritain stresses the intuitive nature of the intellect's creative activity.

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1. Ibid., p.37.

2. The reader is reminded that two stars ( \* \* ) introduces the subsection which presents the norm that will be used for the evaluation of this section. This arrangement is used throughout the entire thesis.

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For reason indeed does not only articulate, connect, and infer, it also sees; and reason's intuitive grasping, intuitus rationis, is the primary act and function of that one single power which is called intellect or reason. In other words, there is not only logical reason, but also, and prior to it, intuitive reason...But when it comes to poetry the part of intuitive reason becomes absolutely predominant.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, in considering Mr. Maritain's philosophic analysis of the intellect's mode of operation in poetry, the first major note is that the intellect operates in an intuitive manner as opposed to any conceptual, discursive or logical activity.

Having made his distinction between the intuitive reason and conceptual reason, Mr. Maritain goes on to analyze more closely how the intuitive reason operates with regard to poetry.

But when it comes to poetry, the part of intuitive reason becomes absolutely predominant. Then, as our further analysis will show, we are confronted with an intuition of emotive origin, and we enter the nocturnal empire of a primeval activity of the intellect which, far beyond concepts and logic, exercises itself in vital connection with imagination and emotion.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, p.55.

2. Ibid., p.55.

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Mr. Maritain clearly indicates that poetic intuition is an "intuition of emotive origin". He further explains what he means by the process of emotive origin by stating that "Poetic intuition is directed toward concrete existence as connatural to the soul pierced by a given emotion".<sup>1</sup> Mr. Maritain then sheds light on his expression "pierced by a given emotion" by saying that the thing grasped by the intuitive reason in poetic intuition is "grasped only through its affective resonance in and union with the subjectivity".<sup>2</sup>

Taken together, Mr. Maritain's statements clearly indicate that the process of poetic intuition depends upon something entirely different from the ordinary cognitive process of conceptual abstraction. That difference lies in the fact that poetic intuition is born of a particular experience which effects not just the external and internal senses but which directly effects the very depth of, or subjectivity of, the soul of the poet. In other words, a particular experience significantly effects the whole person of the poet, and

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1. Ibid., p.91.

2. Ibid., p.93.

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the significance of that clash with reality is carried to the intellect by virtue of feeling and not by virtue of an abstracted species. Therefore, the second major note of Mr. Maritain's philosophical analysis of the intellect's activity in making a poetic intuition is the concept of emotive origin - that is, a particular emotion which directly impresses the soul of the poet with the total significance of a particular experience in reality.

Like Mr. Patmore's, the findings of Mr. Maritain's philosophic analysis of the intellect's mode of operation in poetic activity may be concisely recapitulated in two statements: first, the intellect's mode of operation in poetic activity is intuitive as opposed to any type of conceptual, discursive reasoning; and second, poetic intuition is born of emotive origin by which process feeling carries directly to the poet's intellect the total significance of his reaction to concrete experience.

\* \* \*<sup>1</sup>

In order to evaluate Mr. Patmore's analysis of the

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1. The reader is reminded that three stars ( \* \* \* ) introduces the subsection which makes the evaluation of the section. This arrangement is used throughout the thesis.

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"intellect's" contribution to the making of poetry of how the "intellect" knows, the two major notes of his analysis shall be compared with the two major notes of Mr. Maritain's analysis. Apropos of the first, Mr. Patmore and Mr. Maritain are explicitly and essentially in agreement. Both hold that the intellect exercises a type of poetic intuition that is distinguished from any kind of conceptual or discursive reasoning. Apropos of the second, Mr. Patmore's descriptive awareness of an affective origin in real apprehension is implicitly in agreement with Mr. Maritain's analysis of emotive origin. The word implicitly is used to indicate that Mr. Patmore's descriptions of how the real apprehensions are made tend toward the explicit analysis of the process of poetic intuition made by Mr. Maritain. Mr. Patmore's descriptions definitely indicate that feeling is a definite part of real apprehension and to this extent he tends toward the concept of emotive origin. That is to say that implicitly one can deduce similarities between "affective origin" and "emotive origin". However, explicitly, Mr. Patmore does not indicate that feeling is that by which the total significance of the poet's clash with reality is carried to the intellect thus resulting in a poetic intuition. And finally, as a corollary, it

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should be pointed out that Mr. Patmore's failure to explicitly arrive at a concept of emotive origin, through which concept the emotions are integrated into the process of poetic creation, is a defect in his poetical theory - a defect which corresponds to a defect in his poetry noted by his friend and critic Fr. Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J.

'The faults I see in him are bad rhymes: continued obscurity; and the most serious, a certain frigidity when, as often, the feeling does not flush and fuse the language.<sup>1</sup>

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.301.

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Section 2

The "Intellect's" Proper Object

Mr. Patmore is explicit in stating what the "intellect" knows or, more properly speaking, what the "intellect" intuitively grasps when it comes into contact with reality through the experience of the poet.

The intellect...discerns truth as a living thing... It discerns with a more or less far-reaching glance the relationships of principles to each other, and of facts, circumstances, and the realities of nature to principles without anything that can be properly called ratiocination.<sup>1</sup>

This statement clearly indicates that the "intellect" grasps a kind of intuitive insight into the order of things while not grasping their essences. Mr. Patmore further reveals this peculiar insight of the "intellect" into reality in another statement.

The artistic confines itself...to phenomena and to the First Cause, and takes note of no relationships between the former and the latter, but such as are immediate and direct.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religo Poetae, and other essays, p.289.

2. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.44.

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This latter statement by Mr. Patmore, indicates that the "intellect" deals with concrete or experiential reality - "phenomena" - and that the "intellect" immediately and directly grasps the causal relationships surrounding that concrete or experiential reality. Therefore, as the first major note of Mr. Patmore's concept of the "intellect's" proper object, it can be stated that the "intellect" intuitively grasps the causal relationships which surround a concrete experience in reality. These causal relationships can be either intrinsic or extrinsic. By "causal relationships" is meant those that give some insight into the "why" or more ultimate explanation for a particular piece of experience, especially as that piece of experience relates to the spiritual order.

Mr. Patmore introduces a second major note to his concept of the poet's intellectual vision, or what the "intellect" grasps, when he speaks of individuality in poetry.

As the human face, the image of the soul, is incomparably the most beautiful object that can be seen by the eyes, the soul itself is the supreme interest and attraction of the intellectual vision; and the variety of this interest and attraction is limited only by the number of those who, in action, manners, or art, are endowed with the faculty of expressing themselves and their inherent distinction,

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which could it be fully displayed, would be found to be absolutely unique in each person.<sup>1</sup>

That Mr. Patmore is speaking of a personal as well as an intuitive insight into concrete reality in the above statement is indicated by a further comment which he makes concerning individuality in the act of real apprehension.

...it is a peculiar mode of seeing, a reflection of truth coloured but not obscured by the individual character, which in each man of genius is entirely unique.<sup>2</sup>

It is clear, then, that Mr. Patmore does introduce a personal element into the very act of real apprehension. This personal element is the "individual character" or those qualities which distinguish one person from another. These individual qualities act as a type of prism refracting the poet's vision of concrete reality so that the real apprehension of the poet is both an insight into concrete reality and a measure of those qualities which make one poet's vision of reality distinct from another's.

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.110.

2. Ibid., p.291.

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The best part of the best play of Shakespeare is Shakespeare himself, the vast, wholesome, serene, and unique individuality which stands above and breathes through tragedy and comedy alike.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, as a second major note of Mr. Patmore's concept of the poet's intellectual vision, it can be stated that the "intellect's" grasp of reality is a uniquely personal insight which also captures some of the poet's own distinctive qualities of character.

The assertion that the value of the words of a poet does and ought to depend very much upon his personal character may seem, at first glance, a violent paradox; but it is demonstrably true. ...in the case of the poet, the powers of language are so developed as to become the very glass of the soul, reflecting its purity and integrity, or its stains and insincerities, with a fidelity of which the writer himself is but imperfectly conscious.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Patmore's concept of what the "intellect" intuitively grasps can be concisely recapitulated in a twofold statement: first, the intellect grasps the causal relationships - both intrinsic and extrinsic - which surround a concrete reality without grasping the abstract essence of that reality; and second, the "intellect" indirectly captures some of the unique qualities of the poet's own character in so far as its intuitive grasp of

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1. Ibid., p.165.

2. Ibid., pp.35-36.

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reality is a uniquely personal one - in the sense of individualistic.

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Mr. Maritain is very explicit in answering his own question, "...what is the thing grasped by poetic intuition?"

Our previous consideration of poetic knowledge already contained the answer: poetic intuition is not directed toward essences...Poetic intuition is directed towards concrete existence as connatural to the soul pierced by a given emotion; that is to say toward some singular existent, toward some complex of concrete and individual reality, seized in the violence of its sudden self-assertion and in the total unicity of its passage in time...But poetic intuition does not stop at this given existent; it goes infinitely beyond. Precisely because it has no conceptualized object, it tends and extends to the infinite, it tends toward all the reality, the infinite reality which is engaged in any singular existing thing, either the secret properties of being involved in its identity and in its existential relations with other things, or the other realities, all the other aspects or fructifications of being, scattered in the entire world, which have in themselves the wherewithal to found some ideal relation with this singular existing thing, and which it conveys to the mind, by the very subjectivity spiritually awakened.<sup>1</sup>

In the above analysis of the thing grasped in poetic

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1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition In Art and Poetry, pp.91-92.

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intuition, Mr. Maritain stresses three notes, one after the other, which are ultimately formed into one answer. The first of these notes is the fact that poetic intuition is directed toward concrete existence and toward the singular existent as opposed to essences. The second of these notes is the fact that poetic intuition does not stop at the singular existent but goes beyond - infinitely beyond - so as to grasp all the possible existential relationships attached to that thing as a concrete being. The third of these notes is that the existential relationships which surround a concrete being are not grasped by themselves, but rather they are grasped simultaneously and in union with the subjectivity of the poet. That is to say that what the poet grasps in the act of poetic intuition is a fusion between a thing in its existential relationships and the very soul of the poet in some of its deepest and most essential aspects - its "subjectivity spiritually awakened".

In other words, the primary requirement of poetry, which is the obscure knowing, by the poet, of his own subjectivity, is inseparable from, is one with another requirement - the grasping, by the poet, of the objective reality of the outer and inner world: not by means of concepts and conceptual knowledge, but by means of an obscure knowledge which I shall describe in a moment as knowledge through affective union....Hence the perplexities of the poet's

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condition....All that he discerns and divines in things, he discerns not as something other than himself, according to the law of speculative knowledge, but, on the contrary, as inseparable from himself and from his emotion, and in truth as identified with himself.<sup>1</sup>

The most important point, therefore, to be noted in Mr. Maritain's analysis of what is grasped in the act of poetic intuition is that it is one - a fusion of thing and self. It is experience reaching the very depth of the soul and becoming part of the poet - not by the process of intentional abstraction but by the process of affective union, that is, feeling conveying to the highest part of man's intellect the total significance of a particular contact with reality.

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In comparing Mr. Patmore's analysis of what the "intellect" grasps in the act of "real apprehension" with Mr. Maritain's analysis of what the intellect grasps in the act of "poetic intuition", it is clear that both agree in a negative manner; namely, that essences are not the proper object of poetic intuitions. In place of a grasp of the essence of a particular reality, both Mr.

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1. Ibid., p.83.

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Patmore and Mr. Maritain posit a peculiar grasp of the relationships which are attached to a particular reality or piece of experience. However, in order to be really clear, this latter agreement must be further analyzed.

For Mr. Patmore this peculiar grasp of reality is the proper object of the "intellect". However, for Mr. Maritain this peculiar grasp is a requirement for what is actually the proper object of the intellect's activity in poetic intuition - the fusion of self and thing or the affective union of self and thing that takes place in the highest part of the intellect, the "preconscious". Mr. Patmore does recognize the importance of a personal element in the act of real apprehension, but the individuality which the act of real apprehension captures is not Mr. Maritain's preconscious.

Therefore, compared to Mr. Maritain's philosophic analysis of "the thing grasped by poetic intuition", Mr. Patmore's analysis of the thing grasped by the "intellect" in the act of real apprehension shows an incorrect emphasis resulting from a deficient concept. The wrong emphasis is Mr. Patmore's insistence upon the existential relationships of a particular reality as the proper object or main reason for the act of poetic intuition. Mr.

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Patmore is thereby putting the major part of his poetic attention upon what Mr. Maritain calls only one of the requirements of poetic intuition. And in failing to understand that the ultimate reality grasped in poetic intuition is a union of "Thing" and "Self" - what Mr. Maritain explains as an affective union within the deepest recesses of the poet's preconscious of the intellect - Mr. Patmore shows a positive deficiency in his concept of the thing grasped by the intellect in the act of creative intuition. Mr. Patmore does not appreciate that the poet's self - his essential, not his individual self - is by far the most important part of a real apprehension, or what Mr. Maritain calls "poetic intuition".

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Section 3

The Nature of the "Intellect"

In considering the nature of that faculty which Mr. Patmore calls the "intellect" - or in attempting to determine to which of man's faculties his concept of "intellect" actually corresponds - it is necessary to begin by reviewing the conclusions arrived at in the previous sections. Mr. Patmore clearly indicates that the "intellect" is a distinct faculty or a distinct quality of man's cognitive power. Its proper object is twofold: first, it grasps the existential relationships which are connected with a concrete being; and second, it captures in its existential grasp some of the individual characteristics of the poet as he is effected by that concrete being. As a cognitive faculty, the "intellect" operates in a directly intuitive manner without any reasoning process.

In general, Mr. Patmore emphasizes that the "intellect" is a faculty of "direct vision", a kind of perceptive power whose insights come via an "accumulation of impression". It is in this context that two additional notes concerning the "intellect" can be examined. The first is that at the moment of real apprehension the poet knows that he knows without having a complete awareness of

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what he knows. The complete awareness of what he knows comes only after he has been successful in expressing his real apprehension in a creative work. Mr. Patmore speaks of the moment of real apprehension as being a time of "potential" knowledge in the following statement.

"The harvest of a quiet eye," and the learning of the ear which listens in a silence even of thought, are the wealth of a pure intellect. And the fainter and the more remote the whispers which are heard in such silence, the more precious and potential are they likely to be.<sup>1</sup>

The "silence" that Mr. Patmore speaks of in the above quotation is the absence of any thought process. Therefore, this statement stresses the point that, because the real apprehension grasped by the poet's intellect is not a conceptual insight into reality, what the intellect knows at the moment of real apprehension is not yet in its complete or final form as knowledge.

A man may not be able to convey to another his real apprehension of a thing; but there will be something in his general character and way of discoursing which will convince you, if you are a man acquainted with realities, that he has truly got hold of what he professes to have got hold of, and you will be wary of denying what he affirms.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.293.

2. Ibid., p.282.

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This last statement again emphasizes that real apprehension in itself is not a final form of knowledge. In other words, the poet knows that he knows without knowing completely or specifically what he knows. Mr. Patmore always implies this notion of real apprehension being "potential" knowledge in his descriptions of the act of real apprehension through the inclusion of such terms as "whispers", "loving guess", and "accumulation of impression".

The concept of "potential knowledge" must be understood if Mr. Patmore's concept of the nature of the "intellect" is to be grasped because it affords a basis for his distinction between the "intellect" and the "understanding". The "intellect" grasps a type of knowledge which can not be grasped by the "understanding". The reality of the "intellect" as a distinct cognitive faculty is thus established by its ability to grasp a higher type of knowledge - a knowledge which is more extensive in its relationships and which thereby demands a new kind of cognitive activity in order that it be known completely. That new kind of cognitive activity is creative activity. Therefore, at this point, the "intellect" is beginning to emerge as a distinct cognitive faculty which is the source of creative activity in the poet.

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Because the "intellect" grasps "potential" knowledge, it must have the help of another power in order to bring its real apprehension to a form of complete knowledge. Mr. Patmore assigns the imagination this task of helping the "intellect" express its real apprehension in a form that makes it completely knowable to the poet, that is, that allows the poet to say what he has apprehended.

Stupid persons fancy they derogate from the supremacy of the pure intellect or genius by observing that it is always associated with a vivid imagination, which they regard as a faculty for seeing things as they are not....whereas the truth is that the intellect is the power by which such things are discerned: and the imagination is that by which they are expressed.... and poets deal in images and parables simply because there is no other vehicle for what they have to say.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Patmore's explanation of the relationship between the "intellect" and the imagination regards the "intellect" as that faculty which is the source of creative activity in the poet. The "intellect" knows that it has something to say, but it can not say it without the help of the images and parables given to it by the imagination. The "intellect" is thus the instigator of the activity of creative expression. And always it must be kept in mind

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1. Ibid., p.295.

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that this activity of creative expression is a cognitive activity through which the poet comes to know completely what he has apprehended.

And the fainter and the more remote the whispers which are heard in such silence, the more precious and potential are they likely to be. It is no condemnation of the thought of Hegel that he is reported to have replied to some question as to the meaning of a passage in his writings, that "he knew what it meant when he wrote it."<sup>1</sup>

To briefly recapitulate the first important note of Mr. Patmore's concept of the nature of the intellect, a tentative definition of the "intellect" can be stated. The "intellect" is a distinct cognitive faculty, in the sense of a distinct quality of man's cognitive power, which initiates creative activity for the purpose of achieving a complete knowledge of what it has intuitively grasped through experience. The "intellect" is thus distinguished from the "understanding". (For Mr. Patmore, the "understanding" is that faculty which corresponds to that reasoning faculty commonly called intellect). Thus, the "intellect" according to Mr. Patmore, fulfills a twofold poetic operation: first, it is the faculty which

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1. Ibid., p.293.

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grasps real apprehensions - poetic intuitions; and second, it is the faculty which directs the imaginative activity - poetic expression.

The second important note concerning the nature of Mr. Patmore's "intellect" is that

...it cannot be cultivated, as the understanding and memory can be and need to be; and it cannot in the ordinary course of things be injured, except by one means - namely, dishonesty, that is, habitual denial by the will, for the sake of interested or vicious motives, of its own perceptions.<sup>1</sup>

In effect, what Mr. Patmore is saying here is that the "intellect" in its operations is an "infallible" faculty. It cannot err in either its perceptive or directive activities unless the poet deliberately sets out to deny, in some manner, part or all of his real apprehension. This "infallible" factor again emphasizes the distinctive nature of the "intellect" as a faculty engaged in its own cognitive or creative activity - an activity beyond the capacity of "understanding" and "memory". In one sense, the "intellect" is already a perfect faculty ready for operation from man's first conscious moment. And the reason for this perfection is the fact that the "intellect"

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1. Ibid., pp.289-90.

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is a distinct perceptive faculty which knows directly in and through experience without the media of abstraction or judgment. The "intellect" does not say this is true, but rather that this is. Therefore, as an "infallible" faculty, the "intellect" is designated by Mr. Patmore as a distinctly higher faculty which deals directly with intuitive knowledge.

A brief review of the two notes - "potential" knowledge and "infallible" faculty - indicates that Mr. Patmore's "intellect" is an attempt to designate a really distinct cognitive power whose raison d'etre is creative activity. Mr. Patmore recognizes the need for such a distinct power in order to explain two aspects of poetic experience: the first, the fact that at the moment of real apprehension the poet knows that he knows without knowing fully what he knows; and the second, that at the moment of poetic expression his only concern is whether to create or not to create. For Mr. Patmore, it is the "intellect", a distinct cognitive power, which initiates creative activity in order to know completely its particular intuitive grasp of reality.

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Mr. Maritain sums up his analysis of the source of creative activity in man with the following words.

Thus, when it comes to poetry, we must admit that in the spiritual unconscious of the intellect, at the single root of the soul's powers, there is, apart from the process which tends to knowledge by means of concepts and abstract ideas, something which is preconceptual or non-conceptual and nevertheless in a state of definite intellectual actuation: not, therefore, a mere way to the concept...but another kind of germ, which does not tend toward a concept to be formed, and which is already an intellectual form or act fully determined though enveloped in the night of the spiritual unconscious.<sup>1</sup>

In this section, Mr. Maritain establishes three points: first, that the ultimate creative source of poetry is the spiritual unconscious of the intellect; second, that this faculty is concerned with an intellectual act - though in a nonconceptual or preconceptual manner; and third, that the preconceptual intuition of the spiritual unconscious is not fully conscious to the poet. The following analysis will cover these three points.

Mr. Maritain establishes the spiritual unconscious or preconscious of the intellect as a distinct power of man's soul. It is a root or apex power involving all man's faculties in so far as all his faculties ultimately emanate

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1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, p.80.

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from this highest, most essential source.

What matters to us is the fact there exists a common root of all the powers of the soul, which is hidden in the spiritual unconscious, and that there is in this spiritual unconscious a root activity in which the intellect and the imagination, as well as the powers of desire, love, emotion, are engaged in common.<sup>1</sup>

According to Mr. Maritain, it is precisely in that area of man's soul where all his powers partake of a common root source of activity that man's creative source is to be found.

And because poetry is born in the root life where the powers of the soul are active in common, poetry implies the fruit neither of the intellect alone, nor of the imagination alone. Nay more, it proceeds from the totality of man, sense, imagination, intellect, love, desire, instinct blood and spirit together. And the first obligation imposed on the poet is to consent to be brought back to the hidden place, near the center of the soul, where this totality exists in the state of a creative source.<sup>2</sup>

Having established the spiritual unconscious or preconscious of the intellect as a distinct root or apex power in man's soul - and having designated this power as the source of creative or poetic activity, Mr. Maritain proceeds to assign this special power an intellectual activity.

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1. Ibid., p.78.

2. Ibid., p.80.

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In a way similar to that in which divine creation presupposes the knowledge God has of His own essence, poetic creation presupposes, as a primary requirement, a grasping, by the poet, of his own subjectivity... The essential need of the poet is to create; but he cannot do so without passing through the door of knowing, as obscure as it may be of his own subjectivity. For poetry means first of all an intellectual act which by its essence is creative... Thus it is that works of painting or sculpture or music or poetry the closer they come to the sources of poetry the more they reveal, one way or another, the subjectivity of their author.<sup>1</sup>

The "grasping, by the poet, of his own subjectivity", of which Mr. Maritain speaks, is the primary intellectual act of the spiritual preconscious. It is primary in a twofold sense: first, in so far as this grasp of the poet's subjectivity occurs with and through the poet's grasp of some concrete reality - but remains the primary incentive of that grasp; and second, in so far as this grasp of the poet's subjectivity is the primary requirement which precedes the creative activity of poetry.

Taking primary in its first sense, Mr. Maritain makes it clear that the poet's grasp of his own subjectivity is "inseparable" from his grasp of the "objective reality of the outer and inner world". The previous section which dealt with Mr. Maritain's

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1. Ibid., p.82.

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explanation of poetical intuition stressed this point. The poet does not directly know nor seek to know himself. But in so far as a poetic intuition takes place in the preconscious of the intellect, then, this means that a powerful emotion has penetrated to the preconscious and has brought about an affective union between reality and some part of the preconscious. In the first sense then, the preconscious is involved in the intellectual act of grasping itself in so far as it is involved in a poetic intuition; however, intellective here must refer to a nonconceptual and non-conscious or "preconscious" act of knowledge in which the poetic intuition takes place without the poet knowing what it is.

Of itself poetic intuition proceeds from the natural and supremely spontaneous movement of the soul which seeks itself by communicating with things in its capacity as a spirit endowed with senses and passions.<sup>1</sup>

...And we conclude that at the root of the creative act there must be a quite particular process, a kind of experience or knowledge without parallel in logical reason, through which Things and Self are obscurely grasped together.<sup>2</sup>

The particular "preconscious" nature of the

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1. Ibid., p.89.

2. Ibid., p.84.

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intellective act of the spiritual unconscious or pre-conscious of the intellect as mentioned above introduces the second sense in which the "grasping, by the poet, of his own subjectivity" is the primary act of the spiritual preconscious, that is, primary to the creative activity which produces the work of art or poetry. To understand this second instance of the primacy of the poetic intuition, it is necessary to understand the significance of the terms which Mr. Maritain uses to designate the creative source in man, "the spiritual unconscious or preconscious of the intellect".

I would observe especially that the word unconscious, as I use it, does not necessarily mean a purely unconscious activity. It means most often an activity which is principally unconscious, but the point of which emerges into consciousness. Poetic intuition, for instance, is born in the unconscious, but it emerges from it; the poet is not unaware of this intuition, on the contrary it is his most precious light and the primary rule of his virtue of art.<sup>1</sup>

As the above statement indicates, when the poet becomes aware of the urge to create or write a poem, he is aware that he has something to create but he does not know what it is. In other words, in the "first movement

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1. Ibid., p.67.

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of art", the poetic intuition - which is the thing to be expressed - is principally unconscious because the poet does not know what it is; however, a "point" of the poetic intuition has emerged "into consciousness" in so far as the poet knows that he has something to express creatively. Thus, the poetic intuition lodged in the preconscious except for a "point" of which pierces the consciousness is the "primary rule" of the poet's "virtue of art". This is to say that the poet's obscure grasp of his own subjectivity in a poetic intuition born in the preconscious of the intellect is essentially primary to the actual process of art or working out of what the poet wishes to express.

My last remarks will deal with the second of the two aspects that can be distinguished in poetic intuition, namely poetic intuition as creative.

From the very start, the instant it awakens the substance of the poet to itself and to an echoing secret of the reality, it is, in the depth of the nonconceptual life of the intellect, an incitation to create.<sup>1</sup>

To briefly recapitulate Mr. Maritain's analysis of the source of creative activity in man, it can be stated that this source is to be found in a part of man's soul called the "spiritual unconscious or preconscious of the intellect". This part of man's soul represents a

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1. Ibid., p.98.

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root or apex power for all man's faculties in so far as the latter emanate from this highest, most essential source of activity. The poetic intuition is born in this area of man's soul when a powerful emotion - carrying with it the total significance of a poet's reaction to reality - brings about an affective union between some part of the preconscious and reality. The poetic intuition is thus a union of self and thing within the preconscious of the intellect. When the poet is aware of the urge to create, he knows that he has something to say but he does not yet know what it is. This fact illustrates that the preconscious does perform intellectual activity - in so far as it gives itself to poetic intuition - but at the same time it emphasizes that this intellectual activity is principally unconscious, though a "point" of the poetic intuition can reach the consciousness of the poet. The poetic intuition is the germ of poetry since the poem is the poetic intuition expressed. Therefore, at no time does the poet directly know or seek to know himself since his subjectivity is only a part of the poetic intuition - objective reality being the second part. Nevertheless, what is primary to the poet in both the birth of poetic intuition and the

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poetic knowledge resulting from the poetic intuition expressed is the fact that his preconscious or subjectivity has been awakened to itself in and by poetic intuition. Therefore, the ultimate source of creativity in man is the spiritual preconscious of the soul seeking to know itself through that intercommunication with reality that takes place in poetic intuition.

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Though both the "intellect" and the "preconscious of the intellect" are sources of creative activity in man and though both the "intellect" and the "preconscious of the intellect" are concerned with intellectual activity which at first is not fully conscious to the poet, there is an essential difference between them. Mr. Patmore establishes the "intellect" as a distinct faculty whose concern is to discern "living truth" which is real apprehension. In distinguishing the "intellect" from the "understanding" - the faculty of reasoning - and from the "memory", he makes the "intellect" a truly separate faculty having its own operation and its own proper object. However, on the other hand, Mr. Maritain establishes the "preconscious of the intellect" as a distinct part of man's soul without designating it as a separate faculty. This

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fact is very important to Mr. Maritain because the "preconscious of the intellect" represents that apex or root power in man's soul - that ultimate source of activity shared in by all man's faculties in so far as they emanate from it. Thus the "preconscious" is that area in man's soul in which all the faculties "are active in common". Essentially speaking then, Mr. Patmore makes the creative source in man a distinct faculty whereas, Mr. Maritain makes it that ultimate point in man's soul where all the faculties of man "are active in common" in so far as they all emanate from this ultimate source of activity.

This essential difference, as described above, between the nature of the "intellect" and the "preconscious of the intellect" is responsible for the other differences which further distinguish the "intellect" from the "preconscious" as the source of creative activity in man. The second major difference is a "poetic" one. Here the term "poetic" is used in a highly specialized sense as determined by Mr. Maritain.

Art and poetry do without one another. Yet the two words are far from being synonymous. By Art I mean the creative or producing, work-making activity of the human mind. By Poetry I mean, not the particular art which consists in writing verses, but a process both more general and more primary: that inter-communication between the inner being of things and

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the inner being of the human Self...<sup>1</sup>

The "preconscious of the intellect" gives itself to the creative intuition so as to become an essential part of it through an affective union that unites a part of the "preconscious" or true self of the poet with some objective being in reality. It is this giving of itself in the creative intuition born in the area of the "preconscious of the intellect" that makes the creative intuition a "poetic" intuition - that is, "a union of Self and Thing". The "intellect" of Mr. Patmore's theory is incapable of a "poetic" intuition since it is a distinct faculty which "discerns" a "living truth", and hence as a separate faculty it must hold itself back from any "poetic" union lest it be incapable of performing its specific operation - real apprehension. There is a vast difference between the area of the soul in which poetic intuition is born and a faculty of the soul which perceives truth as it effects the person of the poet.

This "poetic" difference between the "intellect" and the "preconscious of the intellect" emphasizes a third major difference between these two sources of

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1. Ibid., p.3.

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creativity - the incentive that each provides to the potential poet. Both sources are concerned with providing the poet with the "germ" of poetry, that is, what the poet wishes to say by means of his creative or work-making activity as an artist. However, the "intellect" must necessarily be concerned with its proper object since it is a separate faculty. That proper object is a real apprehension which is a new insight into truth. Therefore, even though Mr. Patmore distinguishes the abstract truth from "living truth", knowing the inner being of objective reality still remains the main incentive for the artistic expression of the real apprehension. It is true that the poet is expressing the real apprehension in its existential demensions and not in its essential notes, but still within this context the prospects of grasping a new insight into objective reality must remain the main incentive for the creative activity of the potential poet. On the other hand, Mr. Maritain's analysis of the "pre-conscious of the intellect" giving itself to become an essential part of the poetic intuition will necessarily and significantly involve the "preconscious" in poetic knowledge. In other words, that knowledge of his own true self - the "preconscious" - will always remain the poet's

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"most principal" cognitive experience gained in expressing his poetic intuition. The poet is still seeking to know directly his poetic intuition which is a union of self and thing, but the ultimate reward and hence ultimate incentive must be that knowledge of himself which can only come in poetic expression.

To briefly recapitulate the judgments of this section concerning the "nature of the intellect", it can be stated that Mr. Patmore has failed to adequately explain the source of man's creative activity. Mistakenly he has identified this source with a distinct faculty instead of seeing it as a distinct part of man's soul. This mistake has prevented him from understanding the importance of the poet's subjectivity to creative intuition - both as an essential part of the "poetic" intuition and as the ultimate incentive for expression of that "poetic" intuition.

As a corollary to the above judgments, it should be pointed out that Mr. Patmore's failure to place the creative source in that part of man's soul where all his faculties are active in common must affect his theory in its attempt to explain the totality of poetry. The response of the whole person which characteristically describes the poetic response to reality can not be

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perceived by a single faculty and hence can not be adequately expressed by the proper object of a single faculty. It is easier to understand now why Mr. Patmore was deficient in his explanations of the place of emotions in the origin of real apprehension. The joining of thought and emotions in poetry can not adequately take place unless one understands the nature of the "pre-conscious" as an "apex or root" power in which all the faculties of man "are active in common". Likewise, the union of self and thing which takes place in poetic intuition is due to the force of the poet's total response pushing itself by means of a powerful intentional ( taken here in the sense that it carries with it a meaning beyond itself ) emotion beyond man's conscious faculties to the preconscious area of his soul - an area which alone is capable of receiving such a total response. Thus Mr. Patmore's failure to place the poet's deepest, truest self in real apprehension must also be viewed as a result of his failure to originate poetry in the "preconscious" or area of totality in man's soul. Mr. Maritain's remarks in this regard have a special significance to the above evaluation of Mr. Patmore's poetic theory.

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And the first obligation imposed on the poet is to consent to be brought back to the hidden place, near the center of the soul, where this totality exists in a state of creative source.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Ibid., p.80.

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Section 4

The "Intellect" and Its Poetic Direction

The present section is not primarily intended to serve as a review for the three previous sections, though a restatement of the major notes of Mr. Patmore's "intellect" must be included. In the previous sections, these major notes were analyzed and evaluated for their individual degree of conformity with the corresponding notes in Mr. Maritain's philosophical analysis of the intellect's role in the making of poetry. The purpose of the present section is to determine the "Poetic Direction" of the "intellect". That is, to evaluate its orientation toward the making of poetry - to render a final judgment as to whether a knowledge of Mr. Patmore's concept of "intellect" would be a help or a hindrance to a poet or a speculative literary critic. To accomplish this task, the present section will gather together the previously analyzed concepts of both Mr. Patmore and Mr. Maritain in order to examine more clearly the relationships existing between them. Additional criteria pertinent to the matter and problem of this section will also be introduced. The final judgment will be made on the basis of the above examination.

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...I make no ridiculous pretence of invading the province of the theologian by defining or explaining dogma. This I am content with implicitly accepting; my work being mainly that of the Poet, bent only upon discovering and reporting how the "loving hint" of doctrine has "met the longing guess" of the souls of those who have so believed in the Unseen that it has become visible, and who have thenceforward found their existence to be no longer a sheath without a sword, a desire without fulfilment.<sup>1</sup>

Though expressed in terms which are more poetical than scientific, Mr. Patmore's words offer the best insight into the reality that he wished his speculative poetical theory to represent. Evident throughout the entire statement is Mr. Patmore's dependence upon the "intellect". He is not concerned with definition or scientific explanation, for these would be operations of the "understanding" - the faculty of reasoning and conceptual knowledge. Rather, Mr. Patmore is concerned with acquiring insights in an intuitive manner which is the province of the "intellect". Intuition is indicated by the fact that he is bent upon "discovering" the invisible truths of doctrine as they have become "visible", that is, as they have impressed themselves upon the poet

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1. Coventry Patmore, The Rod, The Root, and The Flower, p.v.

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in experience. Concrete existence is reaching the depth of the poet's soul precisely as concrete existence - and the key to such an intuitive operation is a kind of affective determination in which the "loving hint" of doctrine meets the "longing guess" of the poet's soul. By affective determination is meant that the Poet's particular feeling is able to directly convey to him the full significance of a particular experience. In other words, Mr. Patmore is emphasizing through the above passage the poet's ability to "feel the truth".

The full significance of a particular experience grasped by the "intellect" is the real apprehension. Resulting from nonconceptual activity, the real apprehension itself is nonconceptual. Real apprehension is "living truth" - the existential value of a concrete being realized through the experience of the poet. This existential value is not the abstracted essence, but the countless relationships which a concrete being can have with other beings, both logical and real - natural and Supernatural. The poet's apprehension is real because the "Unseen" has become "visible" in reality - a concrete being or a relationship to a concrete being. The poet has apprehended rather than comprehended the real because

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he has "taken hold of" experience, that is, he has grasped the existential value of a concrete being directly in and through his experience via affective determination and not abstraction of universals. But the poet has grasped more than existential value, he has also captured an insight into himself. The real apprehension is a "longing guess" which means that some of the individual qualities of the poet's character have both predisposed the poet to make his particular real apprehension and restricted the actual area of experience in which the apprehension was made. The poet may not be actively reasoning at the moment of real apprehension, but the man he is will cause him to look a certain way and see certain things. The real apprehension thus captures something of the uniqueness of the poet - his individual characteristics - in so far as a particular real apprehension happens to a particular poet.

However, this existential and individual insight into reality which constitutes the real apprehension grasped by the "intellect" is not fully conscious to the poet. What he has at the moment of real apprehension is the existential assurance of a "loving hint" and a "longing guess", but such an assurance is potential knowledge in

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so far as the poet must express his real apprehension to know completely what it is. The moment of real apprehension assures the poet that he has really got something, but the poet must become a "reporter" in order to know better that which he already knows. Finally, what the poem will be is determined entirely by the real apprehension, for the poet does not have the ontological responsibility of the philosopher or theologian - such would be a "ridiculous pretence".

From Mr. Patmore's passage, quoted above, and its explanation, it is clear that the "intellect" does lead to poetic - in the sense of creative - activity. The imagination is inspired by the real apprehension to seek images and analogies that will adequately express the real apprehension. The real apprehension thus becomes the germ of poetry, and, in Mr. Patmore's poetic theory, the ultimate criteria to be judged in poetry. As Mr. Patmore comments in one of his essays entitled, "Poetical Integrity", the poet must first of all convince his reader that he has habitually something to say - even if he does not say it well at times - before one can

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really be moved by his better poetical expressions.<sup>1</sup> Such an emphasis by Mr. Patmore is not simply a superimposition upon his theory of poetry reflecting the zeitgeist of the Victorian era; rather it is the direct working out of his concept of the "intellect" and its relationship to poetry.

The main purpose of the "intellect" is to really apprehend some aspect of reality. However, what the real apprehension ultimately amounts to is a new insight into an aspect of reality - an aspect which has hitherto remained hidden to the logical ways of the "understanding" or been overlooked as too commonplace.

The statesman, the social reformer, the political economist, the natural philosopher, the almsgiver, the hospital visitor, the preacher, even the cynical humorist, has each his function, and each is rightly more or less negative; but the function of the poet is clearly distinguished from all of these, and is higher though less obtrusive than any. It is simply affirmative of things which it greatly concerns men to know, but which they have either not discovered or have allowed to lapse into the death of commonplace.<sup>2</sup>

This statement by Mr. Patmore fits in perfectly with his

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, pp.38-99.

2. Ibid., pp.42-43.

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understanding of the function of the "intellect" in providing the poet with a real apprehension which in turn becomes the reality of poetic expression. The "intellect" as an intuitive faculty allows the poet to grasp a "living truth", that is, to see the evidence of truth in experience affecting the poet. This is not to accuse Mr. Patmore of using his poetical theory, and especially his concept of the "intellect", as a substitute for philosophic or theological speculation. He makes every effort to distinguish the "intellect" and its "real apprehension" from reasoning and essential knowledge. It is more accurate to say that Mr. Patmore has chosen to place his emphasis upon the content of poetry, and as a result he has orientated his entire poetic theory - beginning with the "intellect" - toward proving that poetry should have a significant content. An intuitive "intellect" assures the poet of a new insight, that is, a grasp of reality which adds an existential dimension to the ordinary essential grasp of being. The poet's ability to feel the truth allows him to dig up the hidden and commonplace as new personal insights. The poet's apprehension is real because it comes from reality and has gone directly to the poet's "intellect" as

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experience reaching the soul of the poet. Thus the poet's real apprehension becomes significant because it is a new personal insight into reality which can not come by any other means. This is the direction that Mr. Patmore gives his concept of the "intellect". He points it toward real apprehension which in turn becomes poetic expression; thereby, he assures the poet and the critic that the poem will be what it is because it has something real to say, that is, a new personal insight into reality. Gerard M. Hopkins clearly points out this "direction" in Mr. Patmore's poetry when he makes the following comment:

'The faults I see in him are bad rhymes; continued obscurity; and the most serious, a certain frigidity when, as often, the feeling does not flush and fuse the language. But for insight he beats all our living poets, his insight is really profound, and he has an exquisiteness, farfetchedness, of imagery worthy of the best things of the Caroline age.'<sup>1</sup>

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Mr. Maritain clearly indicates the direction he wishes his explanation of the origin of poetry and initiation of the creative process in man to take, when he states:

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.301.

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There has been a direction - the right one - which pointed straight to poetry itself. In the process of transforming nature, language, and the logical or intelligible sense, everything was directed, as to the final end, to the poetic sense itself: in other words, to the pure, free, and immediate passage, into the work, of the creative intuition born in the depths of the soul.<sup>1</sup>

For Mr. Maritain, the ultimate cause of poetry and for poetry is the free and adequate expression of the poetic intuition. Mr. Maritain began his research into the nature of poetry by seeking the source of man's creative intuition. This he found to be the spiritual unconscious or preconscious of the intellect. This is the deepest region of man's soul - in the sense that it is the apex or root source from which all the faculties emanate. Here is an area in which man is totally one, and hence poetry has to be born in that area because poetry characteristically involves all man's faculties.

The concept of the spiritual unconscious or preconscious of the intellect presented Mr. Maritain with the key needed to explain poetry. The total reaction of the poet to reality penetrates to this area of common

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1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition In Art and Poetry, p.56.

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activity by virtue of the strong emotion attached to the total reaction. This strong emotion unites itself with the spiritual unconscious or preconscious of the intellect through an affective union - and this becomes the poetic intuition. The poetic intuition is thus an inseparable union of the deepest, most total self of the poet - his subjectivity - and some aspect of concrete reality. This union of self and thing is not a concept but it is something real and new lodged in the preconscious of the intellect. By designating such an intuition as a poetic intuition, Mr. Maritain is stressing the unique affective union or intercommunication which takes place between concrete being and the subjectivity of the poet. And because the poetic intuition occurs in the spiritual unconscious or preconscious of the intellect, it becomes the only means open to man to know the deepest part of his own soul.

As a result, we may say, it seems to me, that in the attainments of poetic intuition what is most immediate is the experience of the things of the world, because it is natural to the human soul to know things before knowing itself; but what is most principal is the experience of the Self - because it is in an awakening of subjectivity to itself that emotion received in the translucent night of the free life of the intellect is made

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intentional and intuitive, or the determining means of a knowledge through congeniality.<sup>1</sup>

As the above quotation indicates, once this union of self and thing takes place within the preconscious of the intellect then the preconscious itself becomes alive - or as Mr. Maritain puts it "awakens" - to the possibility of knowing itself. This knowledge of the poetic intuition is poetic knowledge which comes about when the poetic intuition is brought to the state of consciousness through an intellectual-sensuous form which in turn becomes the artistic pattern for the actual expressed poem. The working out of the form which will express the poetic intuition is the art process as such, but the ultimate energy behind this art process is the dynamism of the preconscious of the intellect using the practical or working reason to know itself through expression of the poetic intuition lodged in its area. Because the spiritual unconscious or preconscious of the intellect is not a reasoning faculty, it does not form concepts. Therefore, when the poetic intuition begins to emerge from the preconscious as something to be known,

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1. Ibid., p.93.

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the poet is only aware of its presence - that is, he knows that he knows but he does not yet know what he knows. The intellectual-sensuous form must be formed before the poet can consciously know what he knows - or what is more important - know something of his own subjectivity in the work he creates.

God's creative Idea, from the very fact that it is creative, does not receive anything from the things, since they do not yet exist. It is in no way formed by its creatable object, it is only and purely formative and forming. And that which will be expressed or manifested in the things made is nothing else than their Creator Himself, whose transcendent Essence is enigmatically signified in a diffused, dispersed, or parceled-out manner, by works which are deficient likenesses of and created participations in it. And God's Intellect is determined or specified by nothing else than His own essence. It is by knowing Himself, in an act of intellection which is His very Essence and His very Existence, that He knows His works, which exist in time and have begun in time, but which He eternally is in the free act of creating.

Such is the supreme analogate of poetry. Poetry is engaged in the free creativity of the spirit. And thus it implies an intellectual act which is not formed by things but is, by its own essence, formative and forming.<sup>1</sup>

"An intellectual act which is not formed by things but is, by its own essence, formative and forming", is what Mr. Maritain was referring to in his original statement cited at the beginning of the present discussion -

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1. Ibid., p.81.

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"...the pure, free, and immediate passage, into the work, of the creative intuition born in the depths of the soul". Therefore, the meeting of these two quotations in the above explanation, indicates that the dominant orientation in Mr. Maritain's analysis of the origin and creation of poetry centers about the dynamic creative urge of the preconscious of the intellect to know itself in its poetic intuition freely expressed. The entire body of Mr. Maritain's explanation moves in the direction of the poetic intuition freely expressed - not primarily for its insight into reality, though this is part of the poetic intuition, but for the knowledge of one's own subjectivity which is also a part of the poetic intuition.

In order to place Mr. Maritain's explanations in a better perspective for the important judgment upon the "poetic direction" of Mr. Patmore's concept of the "intellect" which is to follow, some remarks by Dr. Paul Marcotte are here included. Their inclusion does not imply that Mr. Maritain is deficient in his analysis, for indeed Dr. Marcotte bases his analysis, in good part, upon Mr. Maritain's writings. Rather, the remarks of Dr. Marcotte on the nature of the poetic intuition are intended to give an added scope to the philosophical analysis of

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Mr. Maritain - a scope having the advantage of coming from one who is a speculative literary critic by profession.

The nature of a particular poetic intuition - and no two poetic intuitions are identical - is determined by the thing or things in reality with which the poet clashes significantly and by the particular general experience of the poet. No two poetic intuitions can be identical because no two poets can have the same general experience. The perception of the thing or things in reality with which the poet clashes significantly may be viewed as a projectile. His particular general experience may be viewed as an optical prism which refracts the projectile which causes it to enter the preconscious of the soul at some particular angle. The angle of refraction in turn determines the "part" of the poet's Self with which the projectile is joined to constitute the particular poetic intuition. Now, there is a point here that must be made as explicit as possible. The "part" of the poet's Self that partially comprises the poetic intuition is a "part" of the poet that is common to all men. It is not an aspect of his own individuality. Therefore, in attempting to express it, the poet is attempting to express himself; but the himself that he is attempting to express belongs to every human being. This is the real source of the universality of poetry. While it is true to say that only the poet who makes a particular poem could have made it, it is important to realize that this is because no one else could have had the same particular general experience.<sup>1</sup>

Before commenting on the above passage, it is necessary to present Dr. Marcotte's definition of "general experience"

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1. Paul Marcotte, "Poetry and the Creative Process", Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa pp.394-395.

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...it is all the reality that he has ever experienced from whatever time human beings begin to experience until and sometimes even including the clash with reality which produces a given poetic intuition. The poet's general experience may even include the reality which he experiences after a poetic intuition is produced when there is, as there often is, a significant time lag between the first presence of a poetic intuition in the preconscious of his soul and the time when he successfully expresses it.<sup>1</sup>

In the above essays, Dr. Marcotte considers the nature of poetic intuition and orientates this concept toward the two most evident qualities of poetry - its individuality and its universality. These are the two most striking elements to the reader or experiencer of poetry, and Dr. Marcotte as a speculative literary critic is careful to explain their difference and their harmony in a single piece of poetry. The universality of poetry comes from the poet's subjectivity or "Self" which is a part of the poetic intuition. This self is common to all men because it is the spiritual unconscious or preconscious of the intellect - a root power which is common to men.

Nevertheless, there is a place for the

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1. Paul Marcotte, "Literature and Truth", "Inscape", p.6.

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individuality of the poet, though it is not in the poetic intuition as the "Self" is in the poetic intuition. The individuality of the poet is the poet as he has been formed by "general experience" - a general experience which is peculiar to him alone. Therefore, when the poet reacts significantly to reality - that is, when his clash with a particular thing or things reaches the preconscious of the intellect by virtue of a powerful emotion - he must react individually. By this is meant that his particular general experience - acting like a prism - causes his reaction to reality to "slant" as it penetrates to the preconscious. In other words, by virtue of a particular general experience a particular "part" of the preconscious is involved in a poetic intuition. Therefore, the general experience of the poet is that which makes the poetic intuition the particular poetic intuition that it is, but that which the poetic intuition contains is a piece of the preconscious which is common to all men. Thus the poetic intuition is both one and universal at the same time.

The proper function of literature is to express poetic intuitions. The proper effect of literature is to render poetic knowledge, knowledge of poetic intuitions expressed....It is knowledge of self, not the individual self of its maker, but the self

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which both maker and experiencer have in common, knowledge of the preconscious of the soul.... Each piece of literature has something to reveal about oneself that could not be found anywhere else in the universe. This is because no two men have exactly the same general experience and, consequently, no two men can ever have the same poetic intuitions. All of this explains why every piece of literature is at once universal and unique.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Marcotte emphasizes a "direction" for poetry which is not essentially different from Mr. Maritain's view. He too recognizes the essential dynamism of the preconscious seeking to know itself in the expression of its poetic intuition which contains both self and thing. However, Dr. Marcotte indicates a direction which allows for a more supple inclusion of the individuality of the poet's general experience. Dr. Marcotte orientates his explanation of the nature of poetic intuition to include its uniqueness as well as its universality - that is, poetry ultimately expresses a universal self, but a universal self which only this particular poet could reveal in his particular poetic intuition expressed.

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1. Ibid., p.12.

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In coming to the final evaluation of this section, it would be well to once again state its purpose. Though this section comes at the end of the chapter - after the individual notes which comprise Mr. Patmore's concept of "intellect" in poetry have been separately examined and evaluated - its purpose is not primarily that of a summary. Rather, its main purpose is to take the complete concept of "intellect" and evaluate it from the point of view of the particular emphasis it places upon poetry in general. In other words, this last section deals with the poetic orientation of Mr. Patmore's concept of "intellect", that is, an orientation that is concerned with the concept's implications for and influence upon poetry rather than with the concept's conformity with an analysis of one of the faculties used in poetry. This latter "conformity" has been the subject of the previous judgments of this chapter. The former meaning of "orientation" - implications for and influence upon poetry in general - is what is meant by "poetic direction" and as such it is the area of concern for the judgments to follow. Whenever the term "poetic direction" is used, it will be used in the above sense of "poetic orientation" as it relates to

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the "former" meaning and not the "latter".

Generally, both Mr. Patmore's concept of "intellect" and Mr. Maritain's concept of the "preconscious of the intellect" imply a creative intuition as the germ of a potential poem. In particular, however, there is a major difference in the kind of creative intuition that each concept implies, and from this difference there results a difference in poetic direction or the emphasis that each concept places upon poetry in general. Mr. Patmore conceives the "intellect" and its creative intuition, the "real apprehension", in such a way as to assure that the poet will have a significant, new personal insight into some aspect of reality. This insight is significant because it can only come through the activity of the "intellect" in those who wish to develop this faculty. This insight is new and personal because in its origin it is individually unique and involves the affective response of man as well as his rational response. On the other hand, Mr. Maritain's analysis of the "preconscious of the intellect" and the "poetic intuition", which is the creative intuition born in the preconscious, brings out the true subjectivity which must be a part of poetry along with the new

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insight into reality.

The difference between these two approaches to poetry is this: Mr. Patmore has the poet seeing into reality in an intuitive, personal manner - while Mr. Maritain has the subjectivity of the poet affected by reality and through this affective union the poet's subjectivity or preconscious and reality are united into a new thing, the "poetic intuition". As a result of this difference in approach a difference in emphasis emerges. In Mr. Patmore's view, what the poet is primarily seeking is the knowledge of the new insight into reality; while in Mr. Maritain's view, what the poet is primarily seeking is a knowledge of the subjectivity or preconscious which was involved in the poetic intuition. In both Mr. Patmore's and Mr. Maritain's view what the poet creatively expresses is the creative intuition, but, nevertheless, there still remains the difference in emphasis as explained above.

This difference in emphasis in which one is primarily seeking the truth of personal insight into reality and the other a knowledge of one's deepest subjectivity brings about the following difference in poetic direction. Mr. Maritain stresses the essential freedom of the creative energy of the preconscious as

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it seeks to know itself through a conscious knowing of the poetic intuition, accomplished through artistic or creative activity. However, Mr. Patmore stresses more the depth of insight into reality per se and the essential freedom or dynamism of man's creative energy becomes secondary to the insight into reality that can come from creative expression. In other words, Mr. Patmore's concept of the "intellect" and its creative intuition, the "real apprehension", gives first emphasis or is orientated toward the thing grasped in creative intuition - the thing being the new personal insight into an aspect of reality; while Mr. Maritain's concept of the "preconscious of the intellect" and its creative intuition, the "poetic intuition", gives first emphasis or is orientated toward the free and dynamic expression of the poetic intuition which contains a knowledge of Self attainable in no other way except in the expression of that poetic intuition. What Mr. Patmore's poetic direction has lost as the result of his concept of "intellect" is that self-motivation or hidden, dynamic energy of the preconscious seeking to know itself in poetic expression; and, as a result, he must find his poetic motivation in the insights that can result from

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poetic expression. This is why Mr. Patmore has placed such a heavy stress upon the service that poetry can do for religion and morality.

The steam-hammer of that Intellect which could be so delicately adjusted to its task as to be capable of either crushing a Hume or cracking a Kingsley is no longer at work, that tongue which had the weight of a hatchet and the edge of a razor is silent; but its mighty task of so representing truth as to make it credible to the modern mind, when not interested in unbelief has been done...And far be it from me to pose as other than a mere reporter, using the poetic intellect and imagination so as in part to conceive those happy realities of life which in many have been and are an actual and abiding possession; and to express them in such a manner that thousands who lead beautiful and substantially Catholic lives, whether outside or within the visible Church may be assisted in the only true learning, which is to know better that which they already know.<sup>1</sup>

Before concluding this section, the above judgment upon the poetic direction of Mr. Patmore requires some additional clarification. In citing the main reason for the difference of emphasis between Mr. Patmore and Mr. Maritain to be the former's stress upon the insight into reality as opposed to the latter's stress upon the subjectivity or preconscious Self which

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1. Coventry Patmore, The Rod, The Root and The Flower, p.vi.

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is a part of poetic intuition, it should not be concluded that Mr. Patmore had no appreciation of the revelation of self in poetry. The following chapter dealing with poetic expression, and especially his concept of "style", will bring out more completely the place that personality had in Mr. Patmore's concept of poetry. However, this chapter has dealt with the question of the self that is involved in the creative intuition and it is in this area that a clarification concerning the orientation or poetic direction that Mr. Patmore's concept of "intellect" gives to poetry should be made.

As was previously explained the self which Mr. Patmore saw involved in poetic conception was the uniqueness or individual characteristics of the poet "colouring" the real apprehension. And as was previously evaluated, this concept of uniqueness in poetic concept does have a certain conformity with Dr. Marcotte's explanation of the place of the poet's "general experience" making the poetic intuition a particular one which only a poet with a particular "general experience" could possibly have had. However, Dr. Marcotte's explanation of the place of "general experience" in poetry integrated

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the uniqueness of poetic intuition with its universality, the latter coming from that "part" of the preconscious involved in poetic intuition because the preconscious is essentially the same in all men. Therefore, it should be pointed out that though Mr. Patmore stresses the fact that the personality of the poet is involved in poetic intuition, it is only the individual personality. He does not include the notion of the universal Self of the preconscious.

In conclusion, then, the emphasis or orientation which Mr. Patmore's concept of "intellect" and its creative intuition, "real apprehension", gives to poetry in general is incorrect in so far as it stresses the insight into reality or content of poetry instead of the free, dynamic energy of man's creative self seeking a knowledge of itself as part of the poetic intuition. Mr. Patmore's poetic direction is incomplete in so far as it stresses uniqueness in poetic conception without stressing the universality of creative intuition which comes from the preconscious which is part of the poetic intuition.

## Chapter II

## THE IMAGINATION IN POETRY

Stupid persons fancy they derogate from the supremacy of the pure intellect or genius by observing that it is always associated with a vivid imagination, which they regard as a faculty for seeing things as they are not. Shelley made a mistake in a totally different direction when he declared that the imagination is the power by which spiritual things are discerned: whereas the truth is that intellect is the power by which such things are discerned, and imagination is that by which they are expressed.<sup>1</sup>

In the above statement, Mr. Patmore clearly indicates the viewpoint from which he analyzes the imagination as a poetic faculty. The present chapter will examine and evaluate Mr. Patmore's emphasis upon the imagination as the power by which spiritual things are expressed. In effect, then, this chapter will render a judgment upon Mr. Patmore's poetical theory as it relates to the process by which the poet expresses his real apprehension through the production of a poem. To facilitate this judgment, this chapter has been divided into the following sections: "The Imagination and Poetic Imagery", "Poetic Inspiration", "'Style" In Poetry", and "Poetic Integrity".

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae and other essays, p.295.

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The norm is taken from the philosophical analysis of Mr. Maritain with supplementary material added from the writings of Mr. T.S. Eliot and Dr. Paul Marcotte.

## THE IMAGINATION IN POETRY

### Section 1

#### The Imagination and Poetic Imagery

Within the context of poetic expression, Mr. Patmore clearly distinguishes the function of the imagination from that of the intellect.

Shelley made a mistake in a totally different direction when he declared that the imagination is the power by which spiritual things are discerned: whereas the truth is that the intellect is the power by which such things are discerned, and the imagination is that by which they are expressed.<sup>1</sup>

As the "power of expression", it becomes the function of the imagination to find those images which will enable the poet to express the truth and feeling contained in his real apprehension.

Imagination is rather the language of genius: the power which traverses at a single glance the whole external universe, and seizes on the likenesses and images, and their combinations, which are best able to embody ideas and feelings otherwise inexpressible.<sup>2</sup>

The realm of the imagination is the external world of the senses, and it chooses from this realm concrete analogues or images which can embody the spiritual,

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1. Ibid., p.295.

2. Ibid., p.304.

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"living truth" apprehended by the intellect. The imagination does not discover or discern spiritual truth itself, but tracks the lower likenesses of those truths as contained in the external world of the senses. Thus, imagination does not give the poet any further insight into truth, but rather the imagination makes the once inexpressible truth of real apprehension sensibly credible or fully known to the poet in the poem.

The poet's eye glances from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven; and his faculty of discerning likeness in difference enables him to express the unknown in the terms of the known so as to confer upon the former a sensible credibility, and to give to the latter a truly sacramental dignity.<sup>1</sup>

The above examination represents Mr. Patmore's concept of the imagination in a succinct form. However, there are several points in that examination which require further analysis or clarification. The first is that the imagination "enables the poet to express the unknown in terms of the known". The unknown is the real apprehension and it is such because it is an intuitional or non-conceptual insight into reality. As previously discussed, the real apprehension is potential knowledge

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1. Ibid., p.306.

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until the poet succeeds in expressing it in the poem.

The images of the imagination are thus the "terms" or means by which the poet renders potential knowledge actual, that is, the means by which the poet gives conscious form to that which before was not fully conscious to him.

This conscious form makes the unknown known.

The soul contains world upon world of the most real of realities of which it has no consciousness until it is awakened to their existence by some parable or metaphor, some strain of rhythm or music, some combination of form or colour, some scene of beauty or sublimity, which suddenly expresses the inexpressible by a lower likeness.<sup>1</sup>

However, beyond this psychological necessity of giving non-conceptual knowledge a conscious form by which it may be fully known, Mr. Patmore sees a greater significance for the images supplied by the imagination. These images convey not only a conscious credibility but also a "sensible credibility". It is this latter point which really brings the poet's intellect and imagination together as an indispensable unit for the job of poetic expression. The real apprehension is a "living truth" in so far as it is grasped in the experience of the poet, but ultimately the real

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1. Ibid., p.306.

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apprehension is a spiritual truth since it goes beyond concrete being to include the various relations which surround that being or event. This experiential grasp of spiritual relationships is at the core of real apprehension. Therefore, as Mr. Patmore sees it, the problem for the poet is to express these spiritual relationships as the "living truths" they are. In this context, the imagination supplies the images which are the means of giving these spiritual relationships a "sensible credibility".

According to Mr. Patmore, this "sensible credibility" is ultimately based on the fact that the images of the imagination are analogical in their signification. In other words, the images are not just signs of an idea as words are of a concept, but rather they are realities which in an analogical manner are "lower likenesses" of the spiritual reality contained in the real apprehension. It is because of this analogical signification which Mr. Patmore gives to the images of the imagination that he attaches so much importance to the "sensible credibility" of poetic expression. The material images are to the spiritual truths of real apprehension in the poetic or intuitional order what

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words are to the concepts of reason in the logical order. Images and words are both means of expression, but the images have a more vital and closer connection with what they are expressing because they express by way of analogy and not merely by comprehension. It is in this sense that Mr. Patmore speaks of the poem as "the song that is the thing it says".

Such likenesses, when chosen by the imagination, not the fancy, of the true poet, are real words - the only real words; for "that which is unseen is known by that which is seen," and natural similitudes often contain and are truly the visible ultimates of the unseen.<sup>1</sup>

Before proceeding further in this analysis of the function of the imagination as the power of expression, all that has been said so far can be succinctly summarized through three accumulative statements: first, the imagination expresses the unknown; second, the imagination expresses the unknown sensibly; third, the imagination expresses the unknown sensibly by way of analogy.

Having examined the imagination as the "analogy-discovering" faculty, it still remains to consider what determines which image will be used in a particular

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1. Ibid., p.221.

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instance of expression. Mr. Patmore is most insistent that there be an over-all order in the poetic process - an order which must come from the intellect and the truth it apprehends.

In the first class, which contains all the greatest poets, with Shakespeare at their head, intellect predominates; governing and thereby strengthening passion, and evolving beauty and sweetness as accidents - though inevitable accidents - of its operation....Such poets are truly spoken of as masculine....In the other class...the "beatitude", the beauty and sweetness, is essential, the truth and power of intellect and passion the accident. These poets are...justly described as feminine.<sup>1</sup>

The distinction here between "masculine" and "feminine" poets is clearly based upon whether the "truth and power of intellect and passion" or a direct concern for "beauty and sweetness" is the ultimate order in the poetic process. Mr. Patmore places the "masculine" poets in the first rank, and he thereby acknowledges that the real apprehension of the intellect is that which should direct and dominate the poetic process of expression. Mr. Patmore further describes this "masculine" dominance when he states that the

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1. Ibid., p.61.

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masculine power of the intellect consists scarcely so much in the ability to see truth, as in the tenacity of spirit which cleaves to and assimilates the truth when it is found, and which steadfastly refuses to be blown about by every wind of doctrine and feeling.<sup>1</sup>

In this last statement, Mr. Patmore views the poetic quality of "masculinity" within the context of poetic expression. The "tenacity" of spirit which "cleaves to and assimilates" the truth is nothing more than the "intellect" striving to fully know the potential knowledge of the real apprehension. It is the intellect maintaining its dominance in so far as the "truth and power of intellect and passion" ultimately direct and choose all that must be a part of poetic expression. It must always be remembered that the imagination is nothing more than a power of expression; it does not discern truth. As a result of its being merely a power of expression, the imagination is vitally dependent upon the intellect's "tenacity of spirit" which "cleaves to and assimilates" truth. The imagination thus operates in contact with a spiritual truth - real apprehension - which it did not discern, but which it must express in

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1. Ibid., p.88.

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terms of concrete images based upon analogy.

Therefore, according to Mr. Patmore, the imagination searches for and finds the appropriate images to express a real apprehension, but the appropriateness of the images depends upon their conformity with the real apprehension. This means that the imagination is ultimately ordered in its operation by the truth of the real apprehension, and it is the intellect seeking to fully know this real apprehension which keeps this real apprehension in contact with the imagination.

Therefore, to answer the question of whether the imagination actually chooses the images for a particular piece of poetic expression, it must be stated that the imagination only finds or discovers the images - it does not judge their appropriateness or correctness. The intellect is more responsible for this latter process. The intellect presents the truth of real apprehension to the imagination and the imagination seeks a concrete analogue for that truth. Thus it is the masculine power of the intellect seeking to fully know the real apprehension which accepts or rejects a particular image. However, according to Mr. Patmore, it would be more accurate to say that the imagination acts on the initiative

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of the intellect and in contact with the intellect and it is this fact which assures the appropriateness of the images which the imagination discovers in reality.

The vulgar cynic, blessing when he only means to bray, declares that love between the sexes is "all imagination". What can be truer?...Because the imagination deals with the spiritual realities to which the material realities correspond, and of which they are only, as it were, the ultimate and sensible expression.<sup>1</sup>

To recapitulate and conclude this examination of Mr. Patmore's understanding of the imagination and poetic words, it can be stated that he clearly establishes the imagination as the power of expression in contradistinction to the intellect which is the power of discerning truth. As a power of expression it becomes the function of the imagination to discover images in reality which are material analogues of the spiritual truths apprehended by the intellect. Thus the words chosen by the poet, that is the images he uses to express his real apprehension, are what Mr. Patmore calls "real words". The term real indicates that they do more than simply signify the real apprehension, rather they are

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1. Ibid., p.306.

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analogues of the real apprehension. Implicit in the discovery of "real words" is the constant dominance of the intellect through out the process of poetic expression. Mr. Patmore terms this dominance the "masculine" power of the poet. This masculine power of the poet or dominance of the intellect means that the imagination works on the initiative of and in contact with the intellect seeking to know the potential knowledge of its real apprehension. Therefore, the real apprehension itself is the ultimate criterion of what images are to be used, that is, of what poetic words are to be chosen by the poet.

To a soundly trained mind there is no surer sign of shallowness and of interior corruption than that habitual predominance of form over formative energy, of splendour of language and imagery over human significance.<sup>1</sup>

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Mr. Maritain states that poetic expression has two essentially distinct stages - the first is the "transient" stage and the second is the "final" stage.

Both are directed and ultimately caused by the poetic intuition which in the process of poetic expression is

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1. Ibid., p.36.

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a "meaning set free in a motion". To understand these concepts of Mr. Maritain, it is necessary to return to the preconscious of the intellect which is the "area" in man's soul where the poetic intuition is born. The preconscious of the intellect represents the "common root of all the powers of the soul" in so far as all the powers of man's soul emanate from a common or root source. Therefore, in the preconscious of the intellect all the faculties of man share in a common activity - an activity "in which the intellect and the imagination, as well as the powers of desire, love and emotion, are engaged in common." For Mr. Maritain then, poetry can not be the fruit of one faculty alone, but rather it must fulfill an essential requirement of totality - a "totality of man, sense, imagination, intellect, love, desire, instinct, blood and spirit together".<sup>1</sup>

Thus the beginning or first stage of poetic expression is the poetic intuition - that affective union of self and thing - starting to expand in the area of the preconscious. This expansion is called by Mr. Maritain "intuitive pulsions" which are "a complex of virtual

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1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, p.80.

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images and emotion, stirred in the fluid and moving world of the creativity of the spirit, and essentially tendential, dynamic and transient".<sup>1</sup> In other words, when the poetic intuition is born in the preconscious of the intellect, it spontaneously alerts all the powers of man's soul to its presence and, as it begins to pass through the preconscious level of man's soul to the conscious level, it automatically draws to itself whatever will be needed for its expression. Mr. Maritain calls this passage a "meaning set free in a motion".

It must be remembered that this first stage in the process of poetic expression takes place in the preconscious of the intellect and as such is principally unconscious to the poet. The poet does not know what he is to create in this first phase; he is only aware that he has within him something moving toward creative production. However, the important point is that this first stage of poetic expression is already the beginning of "operative exercise", that is, the start of the art process tending toward the creative expression of a poetic intuition. In this first stage - the transient stage -

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1. Ibid., p.203.

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the poetic intuition has, so to speak, triggered the operative mechanism of all man's powers and at the same time directed this mechanism toward the expression of that poetic intuition. By terming this first stage a "transient" stage, Mr. Maritain wishes to emphasize that it is principally a preconscious stage but, nevertheless, a true beginning of the operative activity that will result in a poem. It is the poetic intuition involving the preconscious of all man's powers within its own dynamic, creative tendency.

But with the first stage of poetic expression the operative exercise has already started; and as soon as the operative exercise starts, the virtue of art begins to be involved. Already in the first stage of poetic expression, through intuitive pulsions, intelligence is on the alert, only, I mean, to listen, to listen to poetic intuition, and to what is given by it, the music of imaginal and emotional pulsions; and it may happen, now and then, that at the same time the first line of the future poem is also given.<sup>1</sup>

The second stage of poetic expression - the "final" stage - involves the actual selection of words that expresses the poem. In distinction to the first stage, the final stage is principally conscious in so far as the intuitive pulsions of the poetic intuition have

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1. Ibid., p.206.

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penetrated into the conscious areas of man's powers.

But in this second stage, and in proportion as the process of production develops, creative intelligence is also at play as working reason, accomplishing a properly so-called artistic task, applying the secondary rules of making, taking care of the arrangement of words, weighing and testing everything. Here all the patience and accuracy, all the virtues of craftsmanship are involved, and intelligence works and works again, takes up the task anew, uses all that it knows, displays the most active sagaciousness to be true to its own superior passivity, to the indivisible inspiring actuation received - poetic intuition and wordless meaning or melody - to which it does not cease listening. And this effort of supreme loyalty can be resumed even after years.<sup>1</sup>

It is the second stage that introduces the process of art into the process of poetic expression in a manner which makes the poet conscious of his practical intellect shaping and arranging what will eventually be a poem - the knowable expression of the poetic intuition. Mr. Maritain distinguishes this conscious activity of art from the dynamic, intuitive tending to the poetic intuition itself. The latter is both primary and ultimate. The first phase of poetic expression is the poetic intuition achieving a virtual expression of itself through its own intuitive pulsions radiated within the totality of the preconscious. The second stage of poetic expression

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1. Ibid., p.207.

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is this virtual expression making use of the practical intellect and its virtue of art to bring about a fully conscious expression of poetic intuition.

For poetic intuition, as concerns its operative exercise, perfects itself in the course of artistic process....I do not mean that the beginning poetic intuition is something either formless or fragmentary...I mean that poetic intuition, though full and complete from the very start, involves, at the beginning, a great part of virtuality. It is with the steady labor of intelligence intent on the elaboration of the form that this virtuality contained in poetic intuition actualizes and unfolds itself all along the process of production. And then the very exercise of artistic science and intellectual perspicacity, choosing, judging, cutting out all the nonsignificant, the fat, the superfluous, causes - precisely because it is always listening to creative emotion and appealing to it - new partial flashes of poetic intuition to be released at each step of the work. Without this steady labor poetic intuition would not, as a rule, disclose its entire virtue.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, to recapitulate Mr. Maritain's analysis of poetic expression his more important conclusions can be restated. First, poetic expression consists of two essentially distinct stages - the transient and the final. The transient stage is the virtual expression of the poetic intuition by means of the intuitive pulsions which it radiates within the totality of the preconscious. The second or final stage of poetic expression is the

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1. Ibid., p.103.

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actual artistic expression of the poem through words. Mr. Maritain calls the intuitive pulsions the "natural" signs of the poetic intuition and the words of the poem the "social" signs of the poetic intuition.

Second, there is an essential difference between the first and second stage, as above stated, because the first stage is purely the result of the free creative activity of the preconscious awakened to itself as a creative source by the poetic intuition lodged within it. The second stage involves the conscious activities of art and craft, though this second stage is still ultimately directed and caused by the poetic intuition passing through its area of operative intellect and conscious imagination. The ultimate success of poetic expression depends upon the first stage being brought successfully through the second stage - or in successfully expressing the "natural" signs with "social" signs.

Third, the response of the different faculties to poetic expression is essentially a spontaneous one because it is poetic intuition which causes both stages. Spontaneous is used here in the sense that the poet can not control what might be called forth by a particular poetic intuition. A faculty may delay in its response

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because it has nothing to give, but in this case there is no way of telling how long the delay will last.

Fourth, the words of a poem are a conscious attempt on the part of the poet to express the intuitive pulsions or natural signs issued by the poetic intuition in the preconscious area of man's soul where all man's faculties participate in a common source activity.

What I should like to stress is the fact that in creative intuition we have the primary rule to which, in the case of the fine arts, the whole fidelity, obedience, and heedfulness of the artist must be committed. I also should like to stress the fact that between this primary, primordial, primitive rule and all the other rules of making, however indispensable they may be, there exists an essential difference...because it deals with the very conception, in the bosom of the spirit of the work to be engendered in beauty. If creative intuition is lacking, a work can be perfectly made, and it is nothing; the artist has nothing to say. If creative intuition is present, and passes, to some extent, into the work, the work exists and speaks to us, even if it is imperfectly made and proceeds from a man - who has the habit of art and a hand that shakes.<sup>1</sup>

As a useful supplement to Mr. Maritain's distinction between the virtual "intuitive pulsions" as the "natural" signs of the poetic intuition and the expressed images of a poem as the "social" signs of the

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1. Ibid., p.45.

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poetic intuition, Mr. Eliot's concept of the "objective correlative" can be presented.

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.<sup>1</sup>

The usefulness of Mr. Eliot's concept of the "objective correlative" is that it clarifies what Mr. Maritain means by the term "social" sign for the external images of a poem. As Mr. Eliot explains, the objective correlative of a poem is the sensory formula or exact experiential equivalent for a particular emotion. This particular emotion is part of the significant emotion which is the poetic intuition expressed in a poem and viewed appetitively. Viewed, then, as an objective correlative, an image in a poem is an external "equivalent" or "correlative" capable of producing in the experiencer of the poem via the external and internal senses the same conscious pattern that the poet followed in externalizing his poetic intuition. Strictly speaking then, the "objective correlative" is that by which the poetic intuition is

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1. T.S. Eliot, Selected Essays, p.145.

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expressed in the sense of that in which the poetic intuition is expressed, for the "objective correlative" is a part of the poetic intuition expressed.

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Mr. Patmore's understanding of the process of poetic expression is basically correct in so far as it is ultimately ordered toward the expression of the real apprehension grasped by the poet's intellect. Mr. Patmore's explicit distinction between the imagination and the intellect on the basis that the latter is the power which discerns truth and the former is the power which expresses this truth is in conformity with Mr. Maritain's analysis of the poetic intuition as the real "source" of poetic expression in both the preconscious "transient" stage and the conscious "final" stage. Therefore, Mr. Patmore is correct in maintaining that the imagination must work on the initiative of the "intellect" seeking to come to a fuller, more conscious knowledge of its real apprehension. Also in this connection, though Mr. Patmore does not explicitly distinguish the conscious, working reason from the intuitive reason, his concept of the "masculine" dominance of the "intellect" does show his awareness of the conscious function which the intellect or rational

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faculty of man must assume in poetic expression. In short, Mr. Patmore's explicit distinction between the "intellect" and imagination on the basis of the different functions each must fulfil shows a keen appreciation and basic correctness as regards the poetic intuition as the "source" of poetic expression. However, Mr. Patmore is lacking in the keen analysis of Mr. Maritain and this prevents him from satisfactorily stressing the spontaneity with which the imagination responds to the creative energy of the poetic intuition. This is to say that Mr. Patmore appears to give the imagination too conscious a role in finding or discovering the images that express the real apprehension. This is partly due to Mr. Patmore's failure to comprehend the "preconscious" level of activity or the transient stage of poetic expression. It is in this stage that the process of poetic expression has truly begun in so far as the "intuitive pulsions" have alerted man's faculties on the preconscious level so that they may eventually supply on the conscious level the required elements.

Mr. Patmore's view of poetic imagery as "real words" is in conformity with Mr. Eliot's concept of "objective correlatives" is so far as the concept of

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"real words" emphasizes that the poetic image is an experiential equivalent or correlative for the poetic intuition expressed. Therefore, both the concept of "real words" and the concept of "objective correlatives" regard the poem as that in which the poetic intuition is expressed and not simply that by which the poetic intuition is expressed - the latter explanation being that which accounts for the particular relationship which exists between a word and the concept it expresses. Moreover, Mr. Patmore's use of the adjective "real" - implying that the image as a "lower likeness" has an objective or analogical sensuous conformity with the real apprehension - fits Mr. Eliot's demand that the "objective correlative" be an exact equivalent for a particular emotion - implying that the poetic image must affect the reader in such a way that this new experience is part of the total experience that is the poetic intuition expressed.

To conclude this section, Mr. Patmore's explicitness in distinguishing the imagination as merely a power of expression shows his keen awareness of that ultimate ordering that must take place in poetic expression - an ordering that recognizes the poetic intuition as the "source" that must communicate itself to every phase in

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order to be in every part of the poem.

The Tempest, like all very great works of art, is the shortest and simplest, and indeed the only possible expression of its "idea". The idea is the product of genius proper; the expression is the work of imagination.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.304.

## THE IMAGINATION IN POETRY

## Section 2

## Poetic Inspiration

The mere fact that a poet has had a real apprehension of some spiritual truth in reality does not mean for Mr. Patmore that the poet can ipso facto sit down and write his poem. What is yet needed before the actual work of poetic expression can begin is poetic inspiration. This poetic inspiration consists of a "sudden illumination" in which the manner and material for expressing the real apprehension is discovered.

'So I can go on hoping that after years of thinking and note taking, as was the case in the composition of the "Angel", in the ripeness of time and knowledge, a sudden illumination will come, and I shall write the whole poem off as easily as a letter, as I did the "Angel".<sup>1</sup>

Here Mr. Patmore describes his own experience in writing poetry, an experience which demonstrates the relation which poetic inspiration has to the process of poetic expression.

As the above quotation implies, poetic inspiration or "illumination" represents the moment when the poet must decide in a practical manner whether to express

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1. Frederick Page, Patmore, A Study In Poetry, p.85.

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his real apprehension or whether to suppress it. The reason for this moment of decision in the practical order is a discovery made by the poet of the satisfactory mode of expressing his real apprehension. The means are satisfactory in the sense that the poet is aware, in general, that he has found the proper mode of expression for his real apprehension.

'I don't at all see at present how the subject is to be treated, but I have the great negative qualification of knowing exactly how it ought not to be treated. And this perhaps is as much knowledge as it is good for a poet to have before the actual commencement of his work. For the discovery of the mode of treating a subject is a great inspiration and delight, and ought to be co-instantaneous with the actual composition.'<sup>1</sup>

In this last statement, Mr. Patmore distinguishes between "negative qualification" and poetic "inspiration". Both represent aspects of a concept previously explained - the fact that, at first, the real apprehension represents only "potential" knowledge to the poet or an awareness that he has something to say but does not know fully what it is. "Negative qualification", then, is the "potential" knowledge or real apprehension via the "masculine" dominance of the "intellect" rejecting the

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1. Ibid., p.85.

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material at present offered by the imagination. On the other hand, and in contrast to "negative qualification", poetic "inspiration" is the poet's awareness that his imagination has discovered the "poetic words" needed to bring his "potential" knowledge of real apprehension to a fully conscious knowledge, which can be externalized in a poem.

This concept of "poetic inspiration" helps to complete Mr. Patmore's explanation of the process of poetic expression as presented in the previous section. As explained above, the fact that the poet has a "sudden illumination" means that he does his final work of expressing his real apprehension from a conscious plan that has been presented to him by his imagination. Mr. Patmore's concern for the presence of such a plan is not the speed with which he could thus write a particular poem, but rather it is the assurance that the poem will be the expression of the real apprehension. In effect then, poetic "inspiration" is the poet's guarantee that all has gone well in the analogy-discovering activity of the imagination and that the real apprehension can be successfully expressed in a poem if the illumination is faithfully followed. Mr. Reid comments, in this connection,

on the relationship between illumination and poetic expression by pointing out that

In effect, literature is controlled not by technique or fanaticism but by inspiration; and, underneath every work of art there are laws which determine matter and form, which, in fact, condition the expression of particular feelings in different form but of which the artist is by no means necessarily conscious.<sup>1</sup>

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Mr. Maritain analyzes the poetic experience commonly called "inspiration" as the poet's awareness of the beginning of the process of poetic expression. What the poet is actually aware of is the poetic intuition entering into the conscious substance of the poet by virtue of the energies that were concentrated about it during the "transient" or preconscious stage of expression.

It is not surprising that at a given moment this same poetic intuition, acting no longer in the manner of an hypnotic but rather of a catalytic agent, should make the virtual energies concentrated around it pass into act. Then, from the single actuation of all the forces of the soul withdrawn into their root vitality, a single transient motion will result, which manifests itself either negatively, by a breaking of barriers, or positively, by the entrance of poetic intuition into the field of consciousness.<sup>2</sup>

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.188.

2. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, p.179.

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As the above statement implies, poetic "inspiration" manifests itself in many different forms, but what is important to note is that it is not something coming from outside the poet. It is poetic intuition passing into act, that is, poetic intuition drawing upon the conscious faculties of man for its own conscious expression.

If the above remarks on poetic experience are true, it appears that poetic intuition is the most essential and spiritual, the primary element and catalytic agent of inspiration, and that all the other features which characterize inspiration develop by a happy chance ( what Aristotle called good fortune ), dependent on an unforeseen moment of psychological suspense but intact dynamic integrity, and also on the temperament of each individual, his natural inclinations, and his capacity for fidelity to spiritual repose.<sup>1</sup>

At this point, it would be useful to briefly consider an over-all view of the process of poetic expression. This over-all view is taken from Dr. Marcotte's article, "Poetry and The Creative Process" which makes use of Mr. Maritain's analyses to comment upon Mr. Eliot's description of the creative process.

Now that we have discovered the causes of the initial movement of art, we are prepared to follow its progress towards the poem which is its end. This initial movement of art is the conscious manifestation of the poetic intuition straining to escape from the

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1. Ibid., p.180.

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preconscious of the soul. In order to escape, it must be transformed into a form that can exist outside of the dark spiritual womb in which it was conceived. To be more precise, it must be transformed into an intellectual-sensuous form. The ultimate source of the poet's intellectual-sensuous forms is, of course, reality. We have already noted that the poet possesses a particular general experience. This is the sum-total of all the ideas and images that he has experienced. Now, if there is an image or an idea or some combination of images and ideas among his store which is capable of expressing his poetic intuition, his attention is attracted to it and the initial movement of art grows gradually less vivid because he has begun to make. Sometimes images are altered and sometimes they are combined. Ideas are arranged into more or less intricate patterns. As this activity proceeds, the poet comes to know his poetic intuition better; and this activity continues until the poet has made an artistic ideal. When this has been made, the activity ceases, art rests, because the poet has expressed his poetic intuition to himself. He now possesses poetic knowledge, that is to say, he now knows his poetic intuition.<sup>1</sup>

The above explanation needs no further clarification.

However, by way of recapitulation to this section's norm, special attention should be called to the fact that the goal of poetic "inspiration" or the initial movement of art is the formation of an intellectual-sensuous form - the artistic ideal - which is the poetic intuition expressed in the conscious substance of the poet. The artistic ideal is not the poem, but the pattern or

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1. Paul Marcotte, "Poetry and the Creative Process", Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, p.395-396.

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exemplary cause from which the poem is made by the craftsmanship of the poet.

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The judgment which this section must render is whether Mr. Patmore's "sudden illumination" corresponds more with Mr. Maritain's explanation of poetic "inspiration" or with Dr. Marcotte's concept of the "artistic ideal". This is not to imply that there is any contradiction between the two latter concepts, but simply it is to point out that they are two separate realities that explain two different parts of the process of poetic expression. Mr. Maritain's "inspiration" which corresponds with Dr. Marcotte's "first movement of art" is precisely what the latter descriptive phrase indicates - the first movement of the poetic intuition into the conscious area of man's mind. This is to say that inspiration is the poet's awareness that his poetic intuition is moving toward a conscious expression that is an intellectual-sensuous form called the artistic ideal - the goal of the art process per se. What follows the artistic ideal - if anything does follow - is craft, or the transferring of the artistic ideal into the actual words of the poem. In this latter process the poet is

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consciously following the pattern or form of the artistic ideal.

Keeping in mind the above distinction between poetic inspiration, or the first movement of art, and the artistic ideal, Mr. Patmore's concept of "sudden illumination" appears to conform more with the concept of the artistic ideal. The first reason for this is that Mr. Patmore places the "sudden illumination" immediately before the actual process of craft. In other words, his description of "sudden illumination" as it fits into the process of poetic expression indicates that the poet is now ready to put his real apprehension into words - words that he knows will express that real apprehension. The second reason for associating "sudden illumination" with artistic ideal is the nature of the former. As it relates to the poetic theory of Mr. Patmore, the "sudden illumination" is the result of the poet's imaginative activity, that is, "after years of study and note-taking", the poet's imagination finally discovers the images or analogical expressions that will express the real apprehension. "Sudden illumination" is the poet's awareness of this discovery made by his internal senses. The important point here is that,

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according to Mr. Patmore's description, the poet is aware of the actual content of the discovery and not simply the "first movement of art".

Therefore, to conclude this evaluation of Mr. Patmore's concept of poetic illumination, the reality which this concept describes is a legitimate and necessary one - the poet's need for an artistic ideal. However, in his use of terminology, Mr. Patmore has extended the ordinary meaning of poetic "illumination" beyond the "first movement of art". And finally, as a corollary to the above judgment, it can be stated that his idea of "sudden illumination" further strengthens his concept of the imagination as the faculty of poetic expression as opposed to being a faculty of discernment. In other words, the concept of "sudden illumination" emphasizes by implication the creative role of the imagination "to track likenesses in differences" that will adequately express the real apprehension in the internal senses of the poet. However, Mr. Patmore's failure to clearly distinguish the "first movement of art" from the artistic ideal is most likely why in the explanation of the process of poetic expression he appears to have the poet too conscious in the early stages.

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In other words, Mr. Patmore's descriptions tend to make the poet's awareness of the artistic ideal the first movement of art. Though such a confusion may not interfere with one's actual writing of poetry, it can influence one's analysis of the process of poetic expression and one's view of the nature of poetry itself. Mr. Patmore's great emphasis upon the content of poetry and the poet's obligations in this regard ( which emphasis and obligations are discussed in the chapter on "Poetry and Religion" ) indicate such an influence - an influence that holds the poet to be conscious when he should be unconscious. Perhaps this influence is a key to the problem in Mr. Patmore's own artistic endeavors when as one of the "Prophets Who Cannot Sing", he found that he could no longer write poetry and turned to the use of short aphoristic prose expressions.

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## Section 3

## "Style" In Poetry

The absolute pre-eminence of style above other artistic qualities seems not to have been sufficiently perceived or at least insisted upon by critics, and a few words on that subject are therefore proper in a notice of a writer whose individuality, though it may not be forcible, is more clearly and delicately pronounced than it is in any other poet of our day.<sup>1</sup>

In the above statement concerning the minor poet, William Barnes, Mr. Patmore clearly stresses two points which will be evaluated in this section: first, the importance of "style" in poetic expression; and second, the essential connection between "style" and the expression of the poet's "individuality". Mr. Patmore describes "style" as the poet's ability to express his unique personality in the poem.

This unique character is, in its expression, what is called "style" - the sure mark of genius, though the world at large is unable to distinguish "style" from manner, even from mannerism.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Patmore further refers to "style" as the "sanctity of art" indicating that to achieve "style" is to reach

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.109.

2. Ibid., p.291.

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the highest level of poetic expression.

In order to understand this connection between "style", "individuality", and the "sanctity of art", the nature of the real apprehension must be recalled. Essentially, the real apprehension is an intuitive insight into the spiritual significance of the relationships surrounding a particular experience - an intuitive insight which is "coloured" but not obscured by the personality of the poet. Therefore, if the poet is successful in expressing his real apprehension according to its most subtle shade of meaning, then, by that very fact, he will have "style" because he will thereby have succeeded in expressing his unique personality which "coloured" his real apprehension. Thus, when Mr. Patmore praises a poet for his ability to express his unique personality or character in a poem, in effect he is praising him for a perfect artistic expression of his real apprehension. This conclusion is clearly born out by Mr. Patmore's remarks concerning William Barnes, a poet whom he singled out for his "style".

The words of Barnes are not the carefully made clothes but the body of his thoughts and feelings. And still rarer praise of his work is that he never stops in it till he has said all that should be said, and never exceeds that measure by a

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syllable; and about this art there is not the slightest apparent consciousness either of its abundant fullness or its delicate reticence. He seems, in fact, never to have written except under the sense of a subject that makes its own form, and feelings which form their own words - that is to say, he is always classic both in form and substance.<sup>1</sup>

The pre-eminence of "style" is first of all a regard for the artistic achievement of a real apprehension fully and accurately expressed. Moreover, included within this context of perfect artistic expression of the real apprehension, is Mr. Patmore's concern and regard for that poetic discipline with which the poet carefully listens to his poetic "inspiration" and maintains the "masculine" dominance of the intellect throughout the period of poetic expression.

But consciousness is the life of art, and there must be a quiet rejoicing in strength, solidity, and permanence, to give these characters that power over the imagination which a work of art must have.<sup>2</sup>

Artistic discipline, then, is a conscious effort on the part of the poet to include in his poem only that which is part of his real apprehension and nothing more. As such this conscious activity is mainly negative by which

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1. Ibid., p.112.

2. Ibid., p.173.

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the poet avoids using the poem simply as a personal sounding board for political or philosophical views. Artistic discipline thus requires that the poet assume an impersonal or self-less attitude toward the process of poetic expression.

Self must, however, be eliminated from a man's consciousness before the "how", which is the first essential in art, can make itself heard above the voice of the comparatively insignificant "what".<sup>1</sup>

This last statement by Mr. Patmore concerns the very essence of style - the poet's ability to express his true self while eliminating the conscious self. The true self of the poet is his "individuality" or the most unique characteristics that set him apart from all other persons. It is the poet's individuality which "colours" his real apprehension. Therefore, the true self of the poet is that unique personality which the poet unconsciously reveals when he expresses his real apprehension with conscious artistic faithfulness:

...and the words of the man will infallibly declare what he thus inwardly is, especially when, in the case of the poet, the powers of language are so

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1. Ibid., p.52.

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developed as to become the very glass of the soul reflecting its purity and integrity, or its stains and insincerities, with a fidelity of which the writer himself is but imperfectly conscious.<sup>1</sup>

If the writer were to try to consciously express himself and not his real apprehension, then, the poet would be expressing that self which must be eliminated from poetry - the self which gives rise to "oddity" and "eccentricity" instead of "individuality" and to "mannerisms" instead of "style".

To briefly recapitulate Mr. Patmore's understanding of "style" several key terms should be recalled. "Style is the "sanctity of art" in so far as it is the result of a perfect artistic expression of the poet's real apprehension. Essentially, "style" is the expression of that "individuality" - the poet's unique personality or characteristics - which has "coloured" the real apprehension. To express this exact "shade" of the real apprehension the poet must assume an impersonal attitude toward his poetic expression - an attitude requiring conscious artistic discipline to avoid any expression of self which is not the result of an

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1. Ibid., p.36.

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accurate expression of the real apprehension. Thus, the real apprehension, if faithfully adhered to and accurately expressed, will infallibly reveal the true self of the poet, therein assuring him of "individuality" and "style" in his poetry.

As a necessary adjunct to the above analysis of Mr. Patmore's understanding of "style", it must be made clear that though "style" is ultimately a derivative of the poet's "individuality" it is not an intangible quality. Rather, it is a "quality of art" which, from the contexts in which he speaks of it, means a conscious functioning of the poet's craftsmanship - e.g. his use of language and versification.

Style, which is the true expression of the poet's individuality - the mark by which we discover, not what, but how, he thinks and feels - is always suffocated, in Rossetti's most characteristic work, by voluntary oddities of manner and a manifest difficulty in so moving in the bonds of verse as to convert them into graces. If subtle thoughts and vivid imagery were all that went to make a poet, Rossetti would stand very high. But these qualities must have the running commentary and musical accompaniment of free feeling, which only a correspondingly subtle and vivid versification can express...<sup>1</sup>

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1. Ibid., p.80.

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The "running commentary and musical accompaniment of free feeling" of which Mr. Patmore speaks is the effect of poetic inspiration. Thus what Mr. Patmore is inferring in the above statement is the necessity for the poem's external craft being the conscious working out of poetic inspiration and not simply a display of craft for its own sake. According to Mr. Patmore, the former use of craft is displayed when the poet's use of language and versification conveys the poetic thought and feeling of the real apprehension as contained in the poetic inspiration. Poetic language or verse which calls attention to itself instead of to the real apprehension is an obstacle to the poetic expression and an example of mannerism. Language and verse of this latter type are incapable of revealing the poet's "individuality" and are thus a hindrance to "style" which can be achieved only when the "former use of craft" is present in the poem.

Rossetti as a versifier was not less technically defective than Rossetti as a painter; his best poems and his best paintings are the outcome, not only of very high aims...but of very high aims deeply and characteristically felt; and his superiority to many far more technically perfect artists results from the fact that his characteristic

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feeling is strong enough to make itself powerfully, however indistinctly, perceived through the mist and obstructions of his mannerism and defective verse.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, the ideal "style" is a use of language and versification that is not just the "clothes" but the "body of poetic thought and feeling". Such a use will automatically reveal the poet's true self - his "individuality".

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Mr. Maritain speaks of two selves - the "creative Self" and the "self-centered ego" - when considering the "essential disinterestedness of poetic activity".

All the preceding considerations on poetic knowledge help us to understand the essential disinterestedness of poetic activity. They also oblige us to realize that a crucial distinction must be made between the creative Self and the self-centered ego.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Maritain then goes on to explain that the "creative Self" of the poet is not his "individuality" - "being that which excludes from ourselves that which other men are" - but his "personality" which is "the subsistence of the spiritual soul communicated to the whole fabric

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1. Ibid., pp.80-81.

2. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, p.105.

of the human being and holding it in unity ...." Therefore, the "creative Self" of the poet or that Self which is engaged in the creative intuition of the poet is his "subjectivity" or the preconscious of the soul. The conclusion which Mr. Maritain draws from this distinction between the "creative Self" of the poet and the "self-centered ego" is the fact that "egoism is the natural enemy of poetic activity."

Mr. Maritain uses the term "egoism" to refer to that conscious effort on the part of the poet to use his poem simply as a vehicle of revealing his individual or self-centered ego.

To have the artist himself become, as Blackmur puts it, the hero manifested through the work, was the final result toward which this general trend tended. A phenomenon which can be described as a shift toward the human ego, and an overturn or "catastrophe" of that advent of the creative Self in art which I tried to outline in the first chapter. In its pure line and genuine direction, this advent of the Self had to do with the act of poetic knowledge and the creativity of the spirit grasping obscurely, through the Self, both Things and Self, revealing both in the work for the sake of the work. To prevent such a considerable spiritual adventure from deviating toward amor sui, and a confession or rather an epiphany of the ego offered to the world, for the sake of the human subject, not the work...<sup>1</sup>

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1. Ibid., p.148.

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In condemning "egoism", Mr. Maritain clearly establishes the basis of "poetic disinterestedness" - the primary concern of the poet must be the creation of the poem in which he expresses his poetic intuition. However, poetry does involve the self as part of the poetic intuition - this is the true creative Self of the poet, a part of his preconscious of the soul affectively joined with reality in the poetic intuition which is born in the preconscious.

Thus, by necessity of nature, poetic activity is, of itself, disinterested. It engages the human Self in its deepest recesses, but in no way for the sake of the ego. The very engagement of the artist's Self in poetic activity, and the very revelation of the artist's Self in his work, together with the revelation of some particular meaning he has obscurely grasped in things, are for the sake of the work. The creative Self is both revealing itself and sacrificing itself, because it is given; it is drawn out of itself in that sort of ecstasy which is creative, it dies to itself in order to live in the work ( how humbly and defenselessly ).<sup>1</sup>

In order to complete Mr. Maritain's philosophical analysis of the essential disinterestedness required in the process of poetic expression, two concepts from speculative literary criticism should be added. The

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1. Ibid., p.107.

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first is Mr. T. S. Eliot's distinction between the "conscious and unconscious" activity in poetic expression. He describes this double activity in an essay entitled "The Three Voices of Poetry" which analyzes three kinds of poetry, lyric, narrative, and dramatic.

In the poem in which the first voice, that of the poet talking to himself, dominates, the "psychic material" tends to create its own form - the eventual form will be to a greater or less degree the form for that one poem and for no other. It is misleading, of course, to speak of the material as creating or imposing its own form: what happens is a simultaneous development of form and material; for the form affects the material at every stage; and perhaps all the material does is say "not that! not that!" in the face of each unsuccessful attempt at formal organisation; and finally the material is identified with its form.

The "psychic material" of which Mr. Eliot speaks is ultimately the creative intuition of the poet, and the poet's job is to assure himself that nothing impedes the process by which this creative intuition or "psychic material" takes its eventual conscious form of expression. Positively and consciously, the poet does what he can to assist the process of poetic expression by giving form and material, but ultimately these are "transformed" by the "catalytic" action of the creative intuition.

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1. T.S. Eliot, The Three Voices of Poetry, p.22.

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Therefore, part of the process of poetic expression remains unconscious until the very moment when the poem is finished - the moment when for the first time the poet becomes fully conscious of what he wanted to say. However, this unconscious element is no excuse for poor craftsmanship on the part of the poet as a maker of a poem.

There is a great deal, in the writing of poetry, which must be conscious and deliberate. In fact, the bad poet is usually unconscious where he ought to be conscious, and conscious where he ought to be unconscious. Both errors tend to make him 'personal'. Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, for Mr. Eliot, Poetic expression demands poetic "impersonality" -that is the poet being "unconscious" and "conscious" at the right times during the creative process.

The second concept to be added to the norm being established for this section is Dr. Marcotte's full explanation of the part played by the poet's "general experience" in poetic intuition and poetic expression.

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1. T.S. Eliot, Selected Essays, p.7.

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The general experience of an artist contributes in at least two essential ways to the production of a fine artifact. First, a particular poetic intuition is what it is because an artist's general experience is what it is....an artist's particular general experience "shapes" or "moulds" his significant reactions to reality, his poetic intuitions, his "inspirations". Second, an artist's particular general experience is the ultimate source of his "objective correlatives", the objects, the situations, or the chains of events, by the literal or imaginative representation or imitation of which he will be able to express his poetic intuitions. In other words, it may be said that an artist depends upon his particular general experience in two distinct but related ways: first, the absolutely unique quality of his poetic intuition is the result of his particular general experience; and second, the reality by means of which he expresses his poetic intuition in these words is the result of his particular general experience.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Marcotte clearly explains the place which the poet's individuality, taken in the sense of his material and acquired differences from other persons, can have. He explains how there is room in poetry for a truly unique poetic expression; for, as Dr. Marcotte comments:

Each piece of literature has something to reveal about oneself that could not be found anywhere else in the universe. This is because no two men have exactly the same general experience and consequently, no two men can ever have the same poetic intuitions. All of this explains why every piece of literature is at once universal and unique.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Paul Marcotte, "Literature and Truth", "Inscape", p.7.

2. Ibid., p.12.

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In order to have a "full" explanation of Dr. Marcotte's idea of "general experience" in poetry, and in particular, poetic expression - it is necessary to briefly outline his explanation of poetic expression itself.

When a poet has a poetic intuition to express to himself, he has to transform it into an intellectual-sensuous form, he has to make an artistic ideal.<sup>1</sup>

An understanding of the place which the artistic ideal holds in the making of poetry is very important to a complete understanding of poetic expression. The process of poetic expression is, in essence, the poet trying to know his poetic intuition. However, the process by which the poet comes to know his poetic intuition is an art process, that is, the working out of a conscious form in which the creative intuition can be known. Now the form in which the creative or poetic intuition is consciously known is the artistic ideal.

The artist has already been defined as a man who makes a fine artifact. A fine artifact is a thing made which expresses a poetic intuition successfully. Strictly speaking the "idea" with which the artifact must conform is "the exemplary form

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1. Paul Marcotte, "Poetry and the Creative Process", Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, p.397.

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or mental type which the agent deliberately imitates in production". This has sometimes been called the "artistic ideal". The artistic ideal is an intellectual-sensuous form. It is known by the artist; his knowledge of it is poetic knowledge. Poetic knowledge is knowledge of a poetic intuition expressed. It must be remembered that poetic intuitions exist in the preconscious of the soul and in their "pure state" in the preconscious they are nonconceptual. The artistic ideal is the poetic intuition expressed, not in reality, but in the conscious substance of its maker. The artistic ideal is the end towards which the artist makes. This is why Maritain says that "art remains entirely by the side of the mind".<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Marcotte's explanation of the artistic ideal as the intellectual-sensuous form in which the artist consciously knows his poetic intuition is essential for understanding the place of craft in the process of poetic expression.

When the artist has successfully made an artistic ideal, he is in a position where he can express his poetic intuition in reality. The artistic ideal in its "pure state" exists in the conscious substance of its maker. In order to get it to exist outside himself an artist must "shape" matter to receive it. If the artist is a poet, the matter out of which he makes is words. Words is the material cause of pieces of literature. Words are "shaped" by selecting the right words and placing them in the right order. The poet is directed in his selecting and ordering of the words by the artistic ideal. The artistic ideal is the exemplary cause

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1. Paul Marcotte, "Literature and Truth", "Inscape", pp.7-8.

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of the piece of literature that is produced. The activity involved here is not strictly speaking art - it is craft, and this activity is and should be entirely conscious.<sup>1</sup>

The above distinction between the function of art in giving the poet his artistic ideal and the function of craft in giving the poet his external poem clarifies Mr. Eliot's observation that there are times when the poet must be "unconscious" and "conscious". The poet must be "unconscious" during the art process and "conscious" during the activity of craft. At this point, then, the completed norm for judging the complicated concept of "style" as presented by Mr. Patmore may be summarized to include the integrated ideas of the three authorities used.

Mr. Maritain indicates the most basic revelation of self that can take place through poetry. This basic revelation of self is a part of the preconscious of the soul which is a part of the poetic intuition. Consequently the poet must be concerned with knowing his poetic intuition if he wishes to gain any insight into himself. Poetic intuition does not of itself contain anything of

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1. Ibid., p.8.

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the poet's individual material or acquired characteristics - the "self-centered ego" - and therefore, if a poet explicitly seeks an individual knowledge of himself - that is, how he differs from the rest of mankind - then, he will interfere with the process of poetic expression. The reason for this is that he will be striving to express something that is not a part of the poetic intuition as such. Mr. Eliot emphasizes the need for an "impersonal" approach to the task of poetic expression by observing that the poet must be "unconscious" in giving full sway to the spontaneous, "catalytic" action of the creative germ forming its objective correlatives - while being "conscious" to prevent any selection of an objective correlative made for an ulterior motive. Dr. Marcotte clarifies two points in the above explanations. The first point is the effect that the poet's general experience can have upon poetry. The particular general experience of the poet makes the poetic intuition a particular poetic intuition which no other person could possess and gives him the material for his objective correlatives. The second point is the difference between art and craft in poetic expression. The art process is complete when the poet has an "artistic ideal" which is

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the poetic intuition expressed in an intellectual-sensuous form in the conscious substance of the poet. Craft is the selections and ordering of the right words to externalize the artistic ideal. Art is the "unconscious" activity of the poet in so far as the poetic intuition calls forth its own intellectual-sensuous form; craft is the "conscious" activity of the poet in so far as he is consciously following the pattern of the artistic ideal which is poetic knowledge of the poetic intuition.

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Mr. Patmore's concept of "style" includes both a definition of its nature and the condition necessary for its successful expression. Concerning the nature of "style", Mr. Patmore makes it a quality of craft in so far as it is the expression of or mark by which the poet's "individuality" is revealed. Negatively, it is an avoidance of mannerisms or the use of craft for its own sake. Positively, it is a use of craft to render a perfect expression of the poet's real apprehension which is "coloured" by his "individuality". Ultimately, then "style" has its source in the real apprehension which is individualized by the poet's unique

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personality or inherent characteristics that make him different from other men. Now in so far as Mr. Patmore imposes a negative and positive obligation upon the poet to use his craft in such a manner that it exists only for the end of expressing or externalizing the poetic intuition, he is in agreement with the above norm. Therefore, the idea that craft is ultimately determined by the poetic intuition to be expressed is correct.

However, this evaluation of Mr. Patmore's concept of the nature of "style" must cover several specific points in order to be complete. The first is whether the poet's craft can reveal his individuality. As explained in a previous section, Mr. Patmore's concept of "individuality" fits more the psychological idea of personality - the acquired characteristics that set a man apart from others - than the metaphysical concept of personality based on the preconscious of the soul - an area essentially the same in all men. Therefore, as also pointed out in a previous section, Mr. Patmore's concept of "individuality" in poetry has relevance only when analyzed from the view point of Dr. Marcotte's "general experience" and not from the view point of Mr. Maritain's "creative Self". Now the "general experience"

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of a poet is that which makes a poetic intuition a particular poetic intuition which only a particular poet could possess. Therefore, in so far as Mr. Patmore stresses that the poet's craft will reveal a particular poetic intuition of a particular or individual poet, he is correct. In other words, in so far as the poetic intuition has a unique aspect so can the craft have a unique aspect.

However, a qualification must be made concerning Mr. Patmore's stress upon the "individuality" revealed in poetry. The self of the preconscious - the creative Self - is the self revealed in poetry since it is one of the two parts of the poetic intuition. There is a vast difference between the revelation of the creative Self and the individuality of the poet resulting from his general experience. When the term particular poetic intuition is used what is meant is that a particular aspect of the preconscious is involved, but the preconscious itself is universally the same in all men. Thus a poem may stand as a poem which only a particular poet could have written since his general experience is unique, and hence his poetic intuition is unique - but this means that the reader is seeing a particular aspect

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of a "universal". The self revealed in poetry is common to all men, though that part of the self could only have been revealed through the unique poetic intuition of a poet having a particular general experience. Therefore, in revealing the poetic intuition, craft does not reveal an individual self as part of the poetic intuition. Rather, it reveals directly a creative self or universal self which is part of the poetic intuition, and only incidentally through the objective correlatives and the particular aspect of the universal Self revealed does the "individuality" or "general experience" of the poet show through. Therefore, as regards Mr. Patmore's stress upon the poet's "style" as revealing the "individuality" of the poet, it can be concluded that in so far as this stress does not hinder the craftsmanship of the poet in the working out of his poetic intuition, it is correct; but, in so far as style is sought in order to reveal the "individuality", then some qualification is needed. Mr. Patmore is incorrect in seeking style as basically the medium through which the poet's "individuality" is revealed. This error results from confusion in making the individual self a quasi-part of the poetic intuition.

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Moreover, Mr. Patmore's heavy stress upon the fact that the style does catch the particular aspect of the poetic intuition leads to a wrong emphasis upon style itself. As a quality of craft, style is a means to an end - the external expression of the poetic intuition. Mr. Patmore's emphasis tends to confuse this end. Mr. Patmore's confusion does not result in eccentricity or oddity for its own sake - these he condemns - but it does tend to condemn any style that is significantly different or eccentric rather than correct. The reason for this latter is that Mr. Patmore wants style to catch the shade of individuality which has coloured the real apprehension. In other words, Mr. Patmore tends to give his concept of "style" an end beyond an end because, ultimately, he is more concerned with its expression of "individuality" than with its basic correctness in expressing the poetic intuition. This latter demand for "style's" end beyond an end is the reason for Mr. Patmore's difficulty in appreciating the poetry of G.M. Hopkins.

Perhaps part of his difficulty in appreciating Hopkin's poetry was his feeling that the Jesuit's manner drew attention to itself rather too aggressively. For Patmore, the personality revealed

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in the highest kind of poetry is something other than a manner; it is a reflection of the poet's real self, which can be expressed only when freakishness and coarseness have been removed. His consistently high praise of William Barnes's poetry undoubtedly arose from his conviction that in Barnes's work the delicate and intangible traits which express personality are invariably revealed.<sup>1</sup>

Though Mr. Patmore's concept of "style" can be criticized for its over-emphasis upon the revelation of the "individuality" of the poet, it can not be criticized for its demand that the poet make every effort to eliminate his selfish interest or egotistical aspirations for poetic expression. As was mentioned earlier, Mr. Patmore correctly made style a quality of the poet's craft as that craft is ultimately directed by the creative intuition of the poet. Mr. Patmore's concept of "style" is most certainly against any use of craft as a decorative end in itself; basically, it had to express the real apprehension of the poet and in this requirement for "style" Mr. Patmore is in agreement with Mr. Maritain's and Mr. Eliot's artistic demand for a "disinterested" and an "impersonal" approach to poetic expression.

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.189.

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Is it not rather that the power to appreciate either the matter or form of genuine art in writing is dying out...Lawlessness, self-assertion, oddity instead of individuality, and inorganic polish where there should be the breathing completeness of art are no longer the delight only of the "groundlings."<sup>1</sup>

Though Mr. Patmore makes no explicit distinction between the process of art terminating in the "artistic ideal" and the process of craft ordering and choosing the right words in accordance with the "artistic ideal", he does show an implicit awareness of times when the poet must be "unconscious" - the process of art - and when the poet must be "conscious" - the process of craft. This implicit awareness of the two levels of activity is shown in his comments upon the poet William Barnes whom he considered to be a "classic" stylist. Mr. Patmore admires two outstanding qualities in Mr. Barnes's poetry: first, his "unlaboured" finish; and the second, the perfect economy of his expression. By "unlaboured finish" Mr. Patmore is referring to the influence of poetic "inspiration" at which stage in the process of poetic expression the poem is more given to the poet than worked

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.115.

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for. By perfect economy of expression Mr. Patmore is referring to the faithfulness with which the real apprehension is rendered, a faithfulness which carefully avoids the decorative and which humbly selects a verse that fits the real apprehension to be expressed. Therefore, though Mr. Patmore is not explicit in his distinction between the "conscious" and "unconscious" activities in poetic expression, his concept of "style" does generally conform with the demands of "disinterestedness" and "impersonality".

In summarizing the above evaluation of Mr. Patmore's concept of "style", it can be stated that he correctly makes "style" a quality of craft as the latter is ultimately directed by the creative intuition. Also, Mr. Patmore correctly demands as a prerequisite of "style" an artistic discipline that generally fits the demands of "impersonality" in poetry. However, Mr. Patmore's concept of "style" is wrong in its heavy stress upon the revelation of the "individuality" of the poet. This heavy emphasis is wrong in so far as it tends to make the individuality of the poet the self known in poetic knowledge. Following from this error, Mr. Patmore assigns poetic expression, through the concept of

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"style", the difficult task of revealing what is not a part of the creative intuition, but only that which contributed to make the creative intuition a particular one which only a particular poet could have. The difficulty of this task has given the concept of "style" a kind of end beyond an end which can unduely influence the poet's choice of words and verse. This influence is not an obvious one but its traces can be seen in Mr. Patmore's insistence upon the "classic" style having a "dainty perfection", a polish that must not be noticed at any cost. In effect, Mr. Patmore is violating his own concept of poetic expression that the "style" be directed by the real apprehension in so far as he makes the shade of "individuality" which "coloured" the real apprehension rather than the real apprehension itself the ultimate criterion of "style".

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## Section 4

## Poetic Integrity

As was stated at the beginning of this chapter, this last section is intended to be more than a mere summary of the previous concepts which have comprised Mr. Patmore's understanding of the process of poetic expression. The purpose of this last section is to present a concept which, though it depends upon the above previously discussed concepts for its complete sense, is distinct and therefore demands a separate evaluation. Such a concept is "poetic integrity". With this latter concept Mr. Patmore seals his concept of poetic expression with a final norm that can be used to determine whether, in fact, the piece of work made of words is a poem or merely a piece of descriptive writing.

Mr. Patmore bases his distinction between real poetry and what is simply "beautiful" writing on the former's ability to display a "touch of genuine humanity".

The slightest touch of genuine humanity is of more actual and poetic value than all that is not human which the sun shines on. The interest of what is called "descriptive" or "representative" in real poetry and all real art is always human, or, in other words, "imaginative."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Ibid., p.37.

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At first, the expression "touch of genuine humanity" may appear to have little connection with any critical evaluation of literature. However, Mr. Patmore is quick to add that by "genuine humanity" he means an "imaginative" touch. Here one must briefly recall his concept of the imagination. The latter is the faculty of expression for the real apprehension of the intellect. Thus, to find out whether one is reading a true poem one, must look for an "imaginative" expression, that is, the use of words to express a real apprehension.

A description by Wordsworth, Coleridge or Burns, a landscape by Crome, Gainsborough or Constable, is not merely nature, but nature reflected in and giving expression to a true state of mind. The state of mind is the true subject, the natural phenomena the terms in which it is uttered.<sup>1</sup>

The "state of mind" of which Mr. Patmore speaks is the real apprehension. And it is the "state of mind" or real apprehension which initiates and directs the imagination to find the "real words" or analogues in

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1. Ibid., p.37.

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nature which express the spiritual truths of the real apprehension. This, then, is what Mr. Patmore is referring to when he speaks of the "slightest touch of genuine humanity" or the "human significance" by which all poetry must ultimately be recognized.

To a soundly trained mind there is no surer sign of shallowness and of interior corruption than the habitual predominance of form over formative energy, of splendour of language and imagery over human significance.... Much of this poetry has about as much relation to actual or imaginative reality as the transformation scene of a pantomime; and much more - called "descriptive" - has as low a degree of significance and betrays so inhuman an absorption in the merest superficialities of nature that when the writer pretends to deal with those facts and phenomena of humanity which, directly or indirectly, are the main region of every true poet's song, he has to overcome our sense that he is a habitual trifler before he can gain credit for sincerity, even when he is giving utterance to what may really be a passing strain of true poetic thought and feeling.<sup>1</sup>

In the above statement, Mr. Patmore lists some of the points of his critical canon. At the basis of this critical canon is the above explained concept of human or imaginative significance - an artistic expression of a real apprehension. Signs that this human significance is not present or present to a very low degree in a particular work are the lack of harmony or balance between

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"formative energy" and the actual form of the poem and the disproportion between a "splendour of language and imagery" and what should be "real words" chosen by the imagination. In the instance of a lack of balance between the form and "formative energy", Mr. Patmore is referring to a lack of poetic inspiration. This lack can exist at the beginning of the process of poetic expression - which means that the poet "has jumped the gun" and started to write before his imagination has discovered the adequate plan for the poem, or during the writing of the poem - which means that the poet, at some point in the poem, is no longer guided by the poetic inspiration. In the instance of a disproportion between a "splendour of language and imagery" and what should be "real words" having true "human" or imaginative significance, Mr. Patmore is referring to an intrusion of mannerism on the part of the poet - a conscious seeking of some selfish end rather than a pure use of language for the purpose of expressing the real apprehension. In both of the above instances, Mr. Patmore accuses the poet of "insincerity", and, in both of the above instances, this insincerity ultimately has its sources in the fact that the poet has consciously chosen

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to depart from the true poetic imaginative expression of a real apprehension.

Poetic integrity is the result of poetic sincerity, for it is the judgment rendered upon the poet that he has, in fact, succeeded in expressing "true poetic thought and feeling". Such a poet has used his language, imagery, and form for the sole purpose of expressing a real apprehension. The test for poetic integrity is the balance between form and inspiration, imagery and a real apprehension to be expressed. This balance means that the piece of work made of words which confronts one is a true poem because everything in it - form, imagery, rhythm - combines to be a "single true thing", that is, an imaginative expression of a real apprehension which has sacrificed any conscious self-seeking to the following of true "poetic inspiration".

When, on the other hand, some familiarity with the poet's work has assured you that, though his speech may be unequal and sometimes inadequate, it is never false; that he has always something to say, even when he fails in saying it: then you will not only believe in and be moved by what he says well; but when the form is sometimes imperfect you will be carried over such passages, as over thin ice, by the formative power of passion or feeling which quickens the whole; although you would reject such passages with disgust were they found in the writing

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of a man in whose thoughts you know that the manner stands first and the matter second.<sup>1</sup>

This last statement by Mr. Patmore, taken from the close of his essay of "Poetical Integrity", offers an opportunity for comment which at the same time can be a recapitulation of the previous explanation. Poetic integrity amounts to calling a writer a true poet. The poet gains this trust from his reader by being sincere in his writings. This poetic sincerity means that the poet has demonstrated through his writing that he has something to say - a real apprehension - and that he has placed his imagination under the direction of the intellect for the purpose of expressing that something. The sincere poet may not be completely successful in the expression of his real apprehension, but such attempts will help his reputation as a "sincere" poet and, in turn, this will bring more readers to his better expressed poetry. Mr. Patmore makes the experience of the inner harmony of all the parts of the poem the test of sincere poetry, and thus this latter concept becomes his practical criterion for the distinction between poetry

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1. Ibid., p.39.

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and non-poetry, or between mere description and an "imaginative" or "human" use of imagery. Poetic integrity, therefore, is Mr. Patmore's critical canon by which he distinguishes the poet from the non-poet and the poem from the non-poem.

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Mr. Maritain in a chapter entitled "The Purity of Art" discusses the kind of imitation that is characteristic of true art.

And the things made present to the soul by the sensible symbols of art - by rhythm, sound, line, colour, form, volume, words, metre, rhyme and image, the proximate matter of art - are themselves merely a material element of the beauty of the work, just like the symbols in question; they are the remote matter, so to speak, at the disposal of the artist, on which he must make the brilliance of a form, the light of being, shine. To set up the perfection of imitation materially considered as an end would therefore involve ordering oneself with a view to what is purely material in the work of art; a servile imitation absolutely foreign to art.<sup>1</sup>

Clearly, Mr. Maritain stresses that the words and rhythm of a poem are not there for their own sake, either because of their own beauty or because of their own truth - that is, their ontological conformity with a

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1. Jacques Maritain, Art and Scholasticism, pp.45-46.

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being in reality. Rather, these external elements of a poem are the "proximate matter" to which the artist must give the completeness of a new form ultimately dictated by his creative intuition.

What is required is not that the representation shall conform exactly to a given reality, but that through the material elements of the beauty of the work there shall be transmitted, sovereign and entire, the brilliance of a form - of a form, and therefore of some truth.... But if the joy produced by a work of beauty proceeds from some truth, it does not proceed from the truth of imitation as a reproduction of things, it proceeds from the perfection with which the work expresses or manifests form...it proceeds from the truth of imitation as manifestation of a form.<sup>1</sup>

As Mr. Maritain stated in his work Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry,

In poetry, there is only the urge to give expression to that knowledge which is poetic intuition, and in which both the subjectivity of the poet and the realities of the world awake obscurely in a single awakening.<sup>2</sup>

Thus the truth of poetry is poetic knowledge, that is, the poet coming to a conscious knowledge of his poetic intuition. This knowledge will be true if the poet has succeeded in giving the proximate matter of the poem -

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1. Ibid., p.46.

2. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, p.130.

words, imagery, rhythm, etc. - the form which is the poetic intuition expressed. The fact that the poet is expressing his poetic intuition and not seeking a strict ontological imitation of reality is the reason for the fundamental freedom of the art activity. In this sense, the art process sets up its own rules, rules that can not be interfered with if the poet is to achieve poetic knowledge - the "truth" of imitation as manifestation of a form and not as the reproduction of things.

Art has to be on its guard not only against being carried away by manual dexterity and servile imitation, but also against other foreign elements which threaten its purity. For example, the beauty to which it tends produces a delight but the high delight of the spirit, the absolutely contrary of what is called pleasure, or the agreeable tickling of the sensibility; and if art seeks to please, it commits a betrayal and tells a lie. So its effect is to produce emotion, but if it aims at emotion, at affecting or rousing the passions, it becomes adulterate, and another element of deceit thereby enters into it.<sup>1</sup>

Having already examined Mr. Maritain's concept of imitation in art with its stress upon the essential freedom of art from any outside conformity since it has its own form to impress upon its proximate matter, this last concept of "purity" in art is easily appreciated and

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1. Jacques Maritain, Art and Scholasticism, p.50.

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understood. The artist can have only one objective - the expression of his creative intuition; to make any one aspect of his art or craft the end for which he creates - though it be only a temporary end - would be to interfere with the essential freedom of the art process and thereby contaminate the "purity" of art. The expression of the creative intuition can have many by-products, but the ultimate purpose of that expression must be poetic knowledge; it can not be beauty in itself, nor a particular kind of emotion, nor a moral lesson, nor a demonstration of proficiency in craft.

Dr. Marcotte in his discussion of the relationship that exists between the "artist and the fine artifact", gives further clarification to Mr. Maritain's idea of poetic "purity". Dr. Marcotte introduces the concepts of artiological truth and falsity in order to explain how an artist can fail as an artist. Practically speaking, that is, from the view point of the practical critic who must deal with the piece of work made of words and determine whether or not it is art, artiological truth and falsity is sought in the conformity between the artistic ideal of the poet as the exemplary cause and the poem which is the "new thing made of words". When the poet has succeeded

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in imitating his artistic ideal as an exemplary cause, the new thing made of words is artiologically true, or more simply still, is a poem. If the poet has not succeeded in imitating his artistic ideal, then that which results is artiologically false. Ultimately, then, artiological truth and falsity depend upon whether the poet has succeeded in expressing his poetic intuition which in turn is the exemplary cause of the artistic ideal. It will be remembered that the artistic ideal is the end of the art process, strictly speaking, since it is the poetic intuition expressed in the conscious substance of the poet in an intellectual-sensuous form. In its truest sense, artiological truth has to do with the conformity between the poetic intuition and the artistic ideal, but, from the view point of the practical critic, this conformity must and can be judged from the poem back to the artistic ideal.

The practical critic may come in contact with the artifact and as a result of this contact, his conscious matter may be "shaped" and "moulded" into a form which is "congruent" with the form which is called the artistic ideal in the mind of the artist. When this happens the practical critic knows that the piece of work made of words is a thing - not merely the sign of something other than itself. He knows that it is a piece of literature and not a piece of scientific writing. Everything that is is true; therefore, the practical critic knows that the artifact

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is in conformity with its artistic ideal. But the artistic ideal is the poetic intuition expressed in the conscious substance of its maker.<sup>1</sup>

Because of its clarity of explanation, the concept of artiological truth and falsity allows an equally specific analysis of the possible causes for artiological falsity and artistic "insincerity". The following causes of artiological falsity or insincerity are taken from the above mentioned article by Dr. Marcotte.

The first and most obvious reason is because its maker did not have a poetic intuition to express...A second reason may be because an artist does not possess the necessary "objective correlatives" with which to construct the artistic ideal that is required to express the poetic intuition in his conscious substance...A third reason may be because a man does not possess sufficient art to construct the required artistic ideal even though he does possess the required "objective correlatives"...A fourth reason may be because a man is artistically insincere. The question of artistic insincerity only arises when a man who has a poetic intuition, and the "objective correlatives" with which to construct an artistic ideal, and the virtue of art required for such construction, allows some ulterior motive to interfere with the good work that he is making. Perhaps he alters his artistic ideal to please popular taste or to suit his publisher or to teach a lesson or for any one of a thousand motives. The artist who so acts is guilty of artistic insincerity and the work which he makes is artiologically false...In such cases, artiological falsity is absolute when obeying the ulterior prevents the artist from expressing his

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1. Paul Marcotte, "Literature and Truth", "Inscape", pp.8-9.

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poetic intuition. Artiological falsity is relative when obeying the ulterior motive does not prevent him from expressing the poetic intuition but mars the clarity of its expression. The former situation destroys fine art, the latter situation renders it inferior. A fifth reason may be because a man lacks manual dexterity...a man may be unable to express his poetic intuition because he does not possess a high degree of craft to "shape" and "mould" words in accordance with his artistic ideal.<sup>1</sup>

These above mentioned five causes of artiological falsity are most complete in their coverage of both the artistic process which "remains entirely by the side of the mind" and the process of craft or manual dexterity. The fourth reason which covers the concept of artistic insincerity is most useful in its distinction between the absolute and relative falsity which results.

To recapitulate the norm for this present section dealing with Mr. Patmore's concept of "poetic integrity", it can be stated that Mr. Maritain clearly distinguishes poetry from non-poetry through his explanation of the kind of imitation that is proper to the fine arts. Mr. Maritain's concept of poetic "purity" is made more explicit through Dr. Marcotte's concept of artiological truth and falsity. The latter concepts allow for a practical listing of voluntary and involuntary

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1. Ibid., pp.9-10.

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hindrances that the artistic expression of a poetic intuition can encounter.

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Mr. Patmore's distinction between a use of words that have a human or imaginative touch and those that are merely an accurate description of nature fits Mr. Maritain's distinction between an imitation that is an "imitation as manifestation of a form" and that which is an "imitation as a reproduction of things". The basic similarity between these two distinctions is that both make the creative intuition and not an accurate description of reality the proper end of poetic expression. For Mr. Patmore this creative intuition is the "state of mind" or "real apprehension", and for Mr. Maritain it is the "poetic intuition". Therefore, in general, Mr. Patmore's concept of "poetic integrity" is correct in so far as it demands that all the elements of a poem make a "single true thing", that is, that all the elements of the poem have their existence ultimately justified by the fact that they are helping to express the poet's "state of mind".

Though Mr. Patmore makes poetic integrity a quality attached to the poet, this concept has its basis in a critical evaluation of the poet's works and not his

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personal life. Thus from a more practical view point, Mr. Patmore's stress upon such signs of a lack of integrity in the poem itself as dominance of "form over formative energy" and a "splendour of language and imagery" instead of "real words" chosen by the imagination are legitimate critical canons according to Dr. Marcotte's five reasons explaining artiological falsity. Because Mr. Patmore lacks the explicit concept of the "artistic ideal" as the exemplary cause of the poem itself, his signs of a lack of integrity are not specific in designating the precise part of the process of poetic expression that can be effected by a lack of poetic sincerity or integrity. However, the two signs which Mr. Patmore does use do fit in general with the artistic and the craftsmanship aspects of poetic expression. The point being made here is this, that Mr. Patmore's practical consideration of poetic integrity does show an awareness that the creative intuition can be hindered on two levels - the level of poetic inspiration which would correspond with the process of art as explained by Dr. Marcotte, and the level of "real words" which would correspond to the level of craft as explained by Dr. Marcotte. Therefore, Mr. Patmore's stress upon the poet

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following his poetic inspiration or "formative energy" and upon the poet being satisfied with "real words" instead of a "splendour of language and imagery" chosen for its own sake is in general conformity with Dr. Marcotte's concept of artiological falsity and the causes that can bring it about.

To recapitulate, then, Mr. Patmore's idea of "poetic integrity" is generally correct in a twofold manner. First, it satisfactorily differentiates true poetic description or use of nature from a non-poetic or scientific use of nature description. Second, from a practical view point, it does offer the critic some sound direction in making him go to the work for his critical judgment, and when in contact with the work, it directs the critic's awareness to the artistic level and the level of craft in the production of the poem. Mr. Patmore is not clear in distinguishing these two levels, and this lack of clarity can be explained by his failure to posit any explicit concept of "artistic ideal" as the exemplary cause of the poem. Nevertheless, in demanding that the poet have something to say and that he avoid any falsity in saying it, Mr. Patmore has established himself as an honest critic and demonstrated

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that he did in fact criticize from "principles" and not mere impressions.

Sensitiveness or natural "taste", apart from principle, is, in art, what love is apart from truth in morals...A few infallible and, when once uttered, self-evident principles would at once put a stop to this sort of representation among artists; and the public would soon learn to be repelled by what now most attracts them, being thenceforward guided by a critical conscience, which is the condition of "good taste."<sup>1</sup>

By way of a corollary to this section and to the whole chapter dealing with the imagination and the process of poetic expression, it can be noted that generally Mr. Patmore is accurate in his appreciation of the artistic discipline required by true art. This is another way of saying that the closer his theory comes to the actual writing of poetry the more correct it is. This trend in his theory shows the basically practical outlook of Mr. Patmore as well as his deep respect for the art of poetry. However, this trend also can be the key that will unlock some of the obscurity in his own poetry - an obscurity which reflects a misunderstanding of the nature of poetry - especially poetic intuition.

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.3.

## Chapter III

## POETRY AND RELIGION

The poetic goal of Mr. Patmore was the "elevation of dogma to song". Thus, it is not surprising that as a critic he made a definite effort to include in his poetical theory the principles by which such a goal could be justified.

...I make no ridiculous pretence of invading the province of the theologian by defining or explaining dogma....my work being mainly that of the Poet, bent only upon discovering and reporting how the "loving hint" of doctrine has "met the longing guess" of the souls of those who have so believed in the Unseen that it has become visible...<sup>1</sup>

As the above statement implies, Mr. Patmore's poetic goal and the resulting critical principles that it engendered were not tangents but a principle part of the main body of his poetical theory. In seeking to elevate dogma to "song" or poetry, he was attempting to make theology a true subject of poetry and not just a didactic strain.

This true poetic concern of Mr. Patmore must be kept in mind if the present chapter and its evaluation is to be fully appreciated. The general purpose of this chapter on "Poetry and Religion" is to evaluate how

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1. Coventry Patmore, The Rod, The Root, and The Flower, p.v.

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successful Mr. Patmore was in solving those poetic problems that arose in his consideration of the relationships between poetry and religion. Mr. Patmore saw in theology a means of revitalizing the poetry of his day - not a means of escaping from it. As a result, the concepts he introduced in this area will be viewed as the logical or practical consequences of his understanding of the nature and role of the "intellect" and the imagination in poetry. To accomplish the general purpose mentioned above, the present chapter will be divided into three sections: "The Religious Function of Poetry", "Poetry and Dogma", and "Poetry and Morality". These three sections are intended to conveniently separate the main relationships between poetry and religion which Mr. Patmore considered. As in the previous chapters, each section will receive its own evaluation.

## POETRY AND RELIGION

## Section 1

## The Religious Function of Poetry

To say that Mr. Patmore conceived of a "religious function" for poetry is not to imply that he considered poetry a substitute for religion. Rather, this concept of the religious function of poetry grew out of his realization of the complementary service poetry could provide for man's religious needs. For Mr. Patmore, poetry was a complement to religion first, because it presented man with experiential insights into the spiritual causes of the world of experience and, second, because it could help to induce man to accept an "ideal life". Mr. J. C. Reid's comments upon the "religious function" of Mr. Patmore's poetry and critical theory stress these two functions.

The implication is that the essential content of great art is moral or religious in that, without even fully comprehending the moral values implicit in their work, the great writers the 'seers', by their understanding of human beings, and by their intuitive insights into the 'extra dimensions of existence', offer empirical proof of the reality of the truths expressed in religion.<sup>1</sup>

The common object of both religion and art should be

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, pp.184-185.

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the stimulating of men to the pursuit of the ideal life.<sup>1</sup>

In order to appreciate and understand Mr. Patmore's conclusions concerning the religious function of poetry or how it could complement the specific functions of religion, it is necessary to briefly re-examine his key concepts of "intellect", "real apprehension", and "imagination". Poetry has its origin in the "intellect" which is a faculty that attains an intuitive insight into reality. This intuitive insight or "living truth" which the "intellect" grasps is a "real apprehension" which, though coloured by the poet's individuality, gives the poet a valid experiential contact with the spiritual causes which underlie the external world of the senses. In turn, the imagination as that faculty which expresses the "real apprehension" is regulated by the spiritual truth apprehended by the "intellect", and its images become "real words" analogously expressing the true relationships that exist between the spiritual and material orders. Evident in the above short recapitulation is the fact that Mr. Patmore's concept of poetry does indeed emphasize the

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1. Ibid., p.184.

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special advantage that the poet has in seeing the abstract concepts of theology ( or any other science ) in a new experiential manner - an intuitive grasp of "living truth". Therefore, poetry can be a complement to the speculative religious knowledge which a man possesses.

Closely connected with poetry's ability to give an experiential insight into abstract truth, is its ability to persuade man to accept truth or an "ideal". In this connection, Mr. Patmore speaks in terms of poetry's "power of appeal".

To conclude, I think that it must be manifest to fitly qualified observers, that religion, which to timid onlookers appears to be on a fair way to total extinction, is actually, both by tendency from within and compulsion from without - through heresies and denials of all that cannot be "realized" - is in an initial stage of development, of which the note will be real apprehension, whereby Christianity will acquire such a power of appeal to the "pure among the Gentiles", i.e., our natural feelings and instincts, as will cause it to appear almost like a New Dispensation...<sup>1</sup>

As the above quotation clearly implies, poetry's "appeal" is again based on its experiential manner of viewing reality. According to Mr. Patmore, poetry can be of help in bridging the gap between a speculative knowledge of

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.282.

religious truths and an intuitive knowledge of religious truths gained through experience. Religion must be lived before its truth can be tested by the actual benefits it brings to one's life. For Mr. Patmore, poetry was the means by which a person could communicate his religious experience to another in a way that would induce the other to want a similar religious experience. Therefore, in so far as poetry could pass on religious truths as part of experience, it could be a profound influence upon mankind in stimulating a new interest in religion - an interest in testing religion by experience rather than argument. In this sense, poetry persuades men to live an "ideal life".

Intellectual assent to truths of faith, founded on what the reason regards as sufficient authority for, at least, experimental assent, must, of course, precede real apprehension of them, as also must action, in a sort experimental, on faith of truths so assented to; but such faith and action have little affective life, and are likely soon to cease, or to become mere formalities, unless they produce some degree of vital knowledge or perception.<sup>1</sup>

Indirectly, poetry fulfills another complementary religious function in so far as it influences man for the better as a thing of beauty.

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1. Ibid., p.219.

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'There is no true poem or novel without "a moral": least of all such as, being all beauty ( that is to say, all order ), are all moral....A "moral" is only inartistic when the artist has not sufficient strength of character and language to make it a real force, either as the kernel of disaster or felicity.'<sup>1</sup>

Commenting in connection with the above statement, Mr.

J. C. Reid observes that Mr. Patmore was strongly influenced by the Thomistic concept of beauty.

There is an echo of Aquinas here, as there is also in his often-expressed view that 'order' and 'health' in literature, which proceed from an intuition of the laws of justice and truth and goodness, are the sources from which beauty springs.<sup>2</sup>

In noting the influence of the Thomistic concept of beauty, the splendor of order resulting from the harmony of the transcendental qualities of goodness and truth, Mr. Reid also perceives that the "order" in poetry that gives beauty is something that comes from outside the work itself. That is, according to Mr. Patmore, poetry gets its beauty from the beauty of the ontological and moral orders. Here again Mr. Patmore is consistent with his concept of poetic creation. The "germ" of poetry

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.185.

2. Ibid., p.185.

is the "real apprehension" - an intuitional insight into the spiritual causes of the material order. If the poet is faithful in his imaginative expression of his "real apprehension", then he will automatically be expressing some of the "order" - ontological and moral - which makes up reality, and, in so doing, poetry will share in the quality of beauty. By sharing in beauty in this manner, poetry had to be an influence for good - moral good.

But it is a fact of primary significance, both in morals and in art ( a fact which is sadly lost sight of just now ), that the highest beauty and joy are not attainable when they are more or less the accidents of the exercise of the manly virtue of the vision of truth.<sup>1</sup>

Two points should be noted as implicit in what has gone before. First, in seeking to point out the "religious function" of poetry, Mr. Patmore is actually making a practical application of his poetic theory; he is not merely attempting to introduce religion into his poetry. In other words, his analysis of the process of poetic intuition and expression lead him to discover the complementary relationships that exist between poetry and religion. Second, Mr. Patmore's enthusiasm over the above discovery is not so much that of the religious poet as it

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principles In Art, Religio Poetae and other essays, p.62.

is that of a "great poet. Mr. Patmore saw in his speculations concerning the complementary religious role of poetry a way to revitalize the poetry of his day - a way which he believed was born out by the example of the "great" writers of the past.

In the very greatest poets, the standard of human law has been absolute sanctity...and every poet - the natural faculties of the poet being presupposed - will be great in proportion to the strictness with which, in his moral ideal, he follows the counsels of perfection.<sup>1</sup>

This last point is important for a balanced appreciation of Mr. Patmore's strong emphasis upon the "religious function" of poetry. He is not concerned so much with the distinction between poetry and non-poetry ( as was implicit in his concept of "poetic integrity" ), but rather he is concerned more with the distinction between poetry and "great" poetry.

Theodore Maynard has called Patmore the most considerable Catholic poet since Dante. He stands to our age much in the same position as Dante stood to his. He has not only pointed out the way for the regeneration of poetry, but has taken us a considerable distance along the road of achievement.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Ibid., p.19.

2. Calvert Alexander, S.J., The Catholic Literary Revival, p.69.

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Just as it was necessary to briefly recapitulate some previous critical concepts of Mr. Patmore in order to understand his concept of the "religious function" of poetry, so too in establishing a norm for this section it is necessary to recapitulate some of the previously discussed concepts of Mr. Maritain. It will be recalled that the "poetic intuition" which is the "germ" of poetry is a single new unit of "Thing and Self". This is to say that, though the poetic intuition does contain a certain insight into reality, this insight in se is not known separately by the poet. What the poet comes to know when he successfully expresses his poetic intuition in the conscious substance of his mind is that affective union of a particular "part" of his own preconscious and a particular aspect of reality to which he has significantly reacted. Significantly is used here in the sense that this particular clash with reality has penetrated by means of a strong emotion to the preconscious area of the soul.

Hence the perplexities of the poet's condition. If he hears the passwords and the secrets that are stammering in things, if he perceives realities, correspondences, ciphered writings that are at the core of actual existence, if he captures those more

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things which are in heaven and earth then are dreamt of in our philosophy, he does not do so by knowing all this in the ordinary sense of the word to know, but by receiving all this into the obscure recesses of his passion. All that he discerns and divines in things he discerns and divines not as something other than himself, according to the law of speculative knowledge, but, on the contrary, as inseparable from himself and from his emotion, and in truth as identified with himself.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, what the poet ultimately and primarily knows through his creative activity is his own significant reaction to reality as that reaction has become inseparably joined to a particular part of his preconscious.

In commenting upon the theological and philosophical content of Dante's Divine Comedy, Mr. Eliot introduces the concept of the distinction between "philosophical belief and poetic assent". Mr. Eliot explains this distinction as it specifically applies to an experiencer of literature - or of the Divine Comedy - by pointing out that "poetic assent or belief" amounts to a deliberate "suspension of belief".

You are not called upon to believe what Dante believed, for your belief will not give you a groat's worth more of understanding and appreciation; but you are called upon more and more to understand it. If you

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1. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, p.83.

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read poetry as poetry, you will 'believe' in Dante's theology exactly as you believe in the physical reality of his journey; that is, you suspend both belief and disbelief. I will not deny that it may be in practice for a Catholic to grasp the meaning, in many places, than for the ordinary agnostic; but that is not because the Catholic believes, but because he has been instructed. It is a matter of knowledge and ignorance, not of belief or scepticism. The vital matter is that Dante's poem is a whole; that you must in the end come to understand every part in order to understand any part.<sup>1</sup>

What Mr. Eliot is pointing out is that a poem is not something to be learned or assented to - as a scientific explanation or thesis - but rather it is something to be experienced as a whole. But to experience the whole poem the reader must be able to "understand" or experience each part of that poem. Thus the reader of a poem is not required to believe a poem but he is required to appreciate or experience it. This distinction between "philosophical belief and poetic assent" is by no means an artificial device set up by Mr. Eliot to protect the reader of poetry from possible moral harm. Rather he bases this distinction upon the fact that the poet is not a philosopher when he writes poetry - he is a poet.

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1. T.S. Eliot, Selected Essays, p.258.

We are not to take Dante for Aquinas or Aquinas for Dante. It would be a greivous error in psychology. The belief attitude of a man reading the Summa must be different from that of a man reading Dante, even when it is the same man, and that man a Catholic.

It is not necessary to have read the Summa ( which usually means, in practice, reading some handbook ) in order to understand Dante. But it is necessary to read the philosophical passages of Dante with the humility of a person visiting a new world, who admits that every part is essential to the whole. What is necessary to appreciate the poetry of the Purgatorio is not belief, but suspension of belief. Just as much effort is required of any modern person to accept Dante's allegorical method, as is required of the agnostic to accept his theology.

In summary then, Mr. Eliot's distinction between philosophical and poetic belief is that whereas the former is a commitment the latter is only a state of mind which is willing to "accept" the objective correlatives of the poet "as possible".

In presenting a norm that will cover the relationship of beauty to poetry, it is possible to go directly to Dr. Marcotte since his article on "Literature and Beauty" is based upon the aesthetic philosophy of Mr. Maritain and presents the relationship in a very succinct form. Dr. Marcotte asks two questions. which apply to the present section: How does the maker of

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1. Ibid., p.20.

literature achieve beauty? In what does the beauty of literature consist?"<sup>1</sup>

In answer to the first question, "How does the maker of literature achieve beauty?", Dr. Marcotte sums up his explanation by stating that the "maker of literature's essential connection with beauty is both unsought and inevitable". The point that Dr. Marcotte is stressing is that if the poet succeeds in expressing his poetic intuition in the poem, then, regardless of the objective correlatives he has used, that poem will be a thing of beauty. Whether the reality to which the poet has significantly reacted or the realities he uses for his objective correlatives are regarded as beautiful in themselves is of no importance.

What alone matters is that the poetic intuition has been expressed, that the piece of work made of words is a new thing. If this is so, it is a thing of beauty and its maker shall have experienced the creative emotion which is aesthetic pleasure. In short, the maker of literature achieves beauty simply by making his object as well as he can. This is the answer to the first question, and this is an answer that is in complete accord with two very important conclusions reached by Jacques Maritain in his book *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Paul Marcotte, "Literature and Beauty", "Inscape", p.17.

2. Ibid., p.20.

Concerning the second question, "In what does the beauty of literature consist?", Dr. Marcotte definitely excludes either the "things that pieces of literature happen to represent" or the style as the causes of beauty in literature. Rather, the splendor of form which characterizes beauty is to be found in the arrangement of the words of a piece of literature to express the artistic ideal. Consequently the beauty of literature is essentially a "man-made" beauty.

...the beauty of literature consists of an artistic ideal and words, the words arranged so as to allow the artistic ideal to shine forth from them. When it is realized that words is the matter, and an artistic ideal the form of a piece of literature, it is clear that the beauty of literature is the splendor and brightness of a form unmistakably discernible in the proportioned parts of a matter.<sup>1</sup>

To briefly recapitulate the norm for this section, it should be recalled that the "germ" of poetry or the poetic intuition is more than an insight into reality - it is an affective union of reality and the poet's preconscious of the intellect - and what the poet primarily knows in poetic knowledge is that part of his preconscious which has been so affected by his clash with reality.

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1. Ibid., p.21.

Mr. Eliot's distinction between philosophical belief and poetic assent brings out the different attitudes of mind that a reader of poetry assumes from a reader of a piece of scientific writing. Finally, Dr. Marcotte clearly specifies the relationships which exist between beauty and literature by explaining that beauty in literature is a "man-made" beauty. Thus, if the poet successfully expresses his poetic intuition, he has made a poem that is automatically a "new thing of beauty".

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In evaluating Mr. Patmore's concept of the "religious function" of poetry - or the complementary role that poetry fulfills in a religious revival - three areas must be considered: first, poetry's ability to give an unique experiential insight into religious truths; second, poetry's ability to induce man to accept religion as something that can be lived; and third, poetry's participation in the beauty of the ontological and moral orders.

Concerning the first area - poetry's ability to give a unique experiential insight into religious truths - it must be concluded from the norms presented that Mr.

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Patmore is incorrect in assigning poetry in se such a religious function. Mr. Patmore saw this religious insight stemming from the very nature of the poetic intuition - the real apprehension. However, when compared with Mr. Maritain's concept of "poetic intuition", Mr. Patmore's concept of "real apprehension" puts a wrong emphasis upon the insight into reality that it grasps. Poetic intuition is an affective union of reality and the preconscious Self, and, consequently, what the poet comes to know in poetic knowledge - the poetic intuition expressed - is neither just reality nor just his Self; it is the affective union of the two. Therefore, it is an incorrect emphasis to conceive of poetry as simply a unique insight into reality. For this reason, any function assigned to poetry on the basis of such an incorrect emphasis must also be incorrect.

Accidentally, poetry may indeed express or communicate - depending upon whether the point of view is that of the poet or reader of poetry - religious insight, but only in so far as the "objective correlatives" or the poet's general experience influencing the poetic intuition is religious. However, Mr. Patmore's mistake is to seek this religious insight as an essential part

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of poetic intuition. In other words, Mr. Patmore has made no necessary qualification as regards his own enthusiasm over poetry's ability to give an experiential dimension to religion. He is correct in his insistence upon the fact that poetic expression is different from non-poetic expression because of the nature of poetic intuition, but his insufficient understanding of the nature of poetic intuition has kept him from correctly explaining the accidental insight into religious truth that poetry may give.

Concerning the second area - poetry's ability to induce man to accept an "ideal life" or religion as something that can be lived - a distinction between what is essential and what is accidental to poetry must again be made. As Mr. Eliot points out, poetry does demand an "acceptance" or suspension of belief on the part of its readers. Therefore, if a reader comes in contact with religious poetry and submits himself to the experience of the poem in the sense that he is willing to accept the possibility of religious experience, he may be influenced to try the experiment himself in his own life. However, on the other hand, it must also be kept in mind that poetry does not demand any belief in the sense of

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commitment in order to be appreciated. Thus, accidentally poetry may influence its reader through the religious experience it conveys to him. But essentially, poetry need not have any influence upon the life of its reader. Once again, then, Mr. Patmore's concept of the religious function of poetry has attempted to make an accidental effect of poetry an essential effect. It is important to understand the distinction being insisted upon here. Mr. Patmore is not so wrong in what he says poetry can do as he is wrong in explaining how poetry does it.

Finally, in considering Mr. Patmore's explanation of how poetry participates in the quality of beauty, it must be stated that here he has made an obvious error. Mr. Patmore has made the beauty of poetry dependent upon the beauty of reality. Such a concept is completely contrary to the explanation of Dr. Marcotte, as presented in the norm, who shows that poetry is beautiful if it accomplishes its essential purpose - the expression of the poetic intuition. The poem as a "man-made" object has its own being and its own beauty apart from any truth or goodness in reality. Accidentally, a poem may portray things as "objective correlatives" which in themselves

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participate in the order of moral rectitude or natural beauty, but such a participation on the part of the "objective correlatives" is secondary to their participation in the poem as a new thing of beauty in so far as it expresses the poetic intuition. Nevertheless, Mr. Patmore, characteristically more correct when describing the process of art rather than the process of poetic intuition, is correct in pointing out that beauty cannot be sought directly in poetic expression. In other words, he places the attainment of beauty in the right order - following upon the expression of the real apprehension - but his concept of what makes beauty in poetry is not correct.

Finally, by way of a note to the above three judgments upon his concept of the "religious function" of poetry, it must again be stated that Mr. Patmore's thoughts cannot simply be regarded as those of just another didactic poet. As the above judgments show, he did attempt to stay within his concept of poetic intuition and expression. His motive in making such an attempt was to revitalize the poetry of his day - he was interested in stimulating the writing of "great" poetry. This judgment concerning the relation of literature to the

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quality of "greatness" must come later on in the chapter. Nevertheless, this fact does not excuse Mr. Patmore's mistake of demanding from poetry in se - or essentially - a "religious function" which can only be an accidental effect of poetry.

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## Section 2

## Poetry and Dogma

As previously stated, each one of the sections in the present chapter are intended to cover certain specific relationships between poetry and religion as Mr. Patmore conceived of them. In the last section the relationships between poetry and religion in so far as these touch truth and beauty were examined and evaluated. In this section, "Poetry and Dogma", the relationships between poetry and religion in so far as these touch the poet's general experience and his consequent reaction to reality will be examined and evaluated.

Perhaps one of the most obvious questions that one would ask concerning Mr. Patmore's aim of "elevating dogma to song" is how this would be accomplished. Mr. Patmore's answer to such a query would be for the poet to treat of dogma as it effects man or as man lives it. In other words, Mr. Patmore considered that the truths of religion revealed an aspect of man's experience which contained some of his deepest passions and aspirations and as such dogma was of special interest to the poet.

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Not but that he knows better than to make his religion the direct subject of any of his poems unless it represents itself to him as a human passion, and the most human of human passions, as it does in the splendid Ode just noticed, in which God's long pursuit of final conquest of the resisting soul is described in a torrent of humanly impressive verse as was ever inspired by a natural affection.<sup>1</sup>

The above statement, made by Mr. Patmore concerning Francis Thompson's Hound of Heaven, is a concrete illustration of how dogma revealed a depth of thought and feeling that could not have been otherwise caught. Thus Mr. Patmore's answer to how dogma was to become "song" is clear. The poet had to apprehend dogma as a "living truth" or as it effected the thoughts and feelings of man.

However, in order to apprehend dogma as a "living truth", the poet had to have some knowledge of dogma.

But, wherever the elementary dogmas of Christianity are taught, there the man who is perfectly sincere and faithful is in the possibility of an infinitely precious experimental knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Coventry Patmore, "Mr. Francis Thompson, A New Poet", Fortnightly Review, p.22.

2. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.223.

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The knowledge of dogma which Mr. Patmore recommended should not be confused with the knowledge of dogma that a theologian would possess. In other words, it was not a question of the scientific understanding of dogma that Mr. Patmore saw as a help to the poet but rather it was the knowledge that comes through Faith.

The soul dares not believe its own marvelous guesses and instincts, unless, it can fall back upon definite dogma for confirmation and justification, nor can the corollaries of dogma, which are often of far more personal weight than dogma itself, be inferred without a definite premise.<sup>1</sup>

The Faith of the poet - and by Faith is meant a practicing Faith - was a point of departure for the poet in his activity of grasping real apprehensions.

As a point of departure for the poetic activity of grasping real apprehensions, the poet's Faith is a guide to the more significant areas of human experience - significant in the sense that the thoughts and feelings involved are of a deeper and more permanent nature.

Whereas many earlier poets had tried to express the inwardness of love, its fervour and passion, by removing it from earth, or from the restraint of law, Patmore set out to show that within the limitations of Christian marriage was to be found the most

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1. Ibid., p.254.

raptuous joy and the fulfillment of all human passion; and that in an exploration of the facts of marriage there lay as much chance for psychological subtlety as in the description of defeat, disillusionment and extra-marital adventure.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Patmore was not asking the poet to impose his beliefs upon his poetry, but he was asking the poet to let his poetry grow out of his Faith, especially as his Faith coloured his view of life and its daily experiences. A Faith which thus acted as a type of third-dimensional eye glass would give the poet the opportunity to "sing" of the truths of dogma in terms of natural feelings and experiences because the poet would be seeing his Faith as it was lived. Mr. Patmore's great appreciation of Spanish literature was based on the Spaniards' ability to view life in this manner.

With them, religion has been, as it was meant to be, a human passion; they have regarded dogma as the form of realisable, and, by them, realized experience.<sup>2</sup>

Religion as "realized experience" was the poetic insight that Mr. Patmore enthusiastically championed in his essays and poetry.

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.150.

2. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.157.

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The Incarnation is still only a dogma, . It has never got beyond mere thoughts. Perhaps it will take thousands of years to work itself into the feelings, as it must do, before religion can become a matter of poetry.<sup>1</sup>

For the Incarnation to work itself into the feeling of man was for it to become the subject of poetry and the matter of real apprehension. Mr. Patmore considered Francis Thompson as a poet who had succeeded in this task - and before him there was Homer, Shakespeare, Milton, and Dante. Concerning the latter, Mr. Patmore observed that

those passages in his poems which we read with the most passionate delight and real apprehension are precisely those in which the argument rises from the natural to the dizziest heights of spiritual probabilities.<sup>2</sup>

In brief, the matter of the poem need not be explicitly religious or dogmatic in its expression, but the feelings and thoughts that constitute the real apprehension of the poem should be those that have resulted from a view of life that is coloured by the poet's Faith. Simply speaking then, the poet's task - if he is interested in

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1. Calvert Alexander, S.J., The Catholic Literary Revival, p.69.

2. Coventry Patmore, Principles In Art, Religio Poetae and other essays, p.221.

exploring the new possibilities of dogma as a subject of poetry - is to really apprehend dogma.

I make no radiculous pretense of invading the province of the theologian by defining or explaining dogma...my work being mainly that of the Poet, bent only upon discovering and reporting how the "loving hint" of doctrine has "met the loving guess" of the souls of those who have so believed in the Unseen that it has become visible...<sup>1</sup>

In fairness to Mr. Patmore and before concluding this section, it should be pointed out as a preparation for the evaluation that will follow at the close of this section that the above thoughts on the relationships of poetry and dogma are an ideal, something that will produce "great" literature. Therefore, the critic must judge the possibilities afforded by Mr. Patmore's theories on the basis of whether, first, they will account for the production of poetry and whether, second, they will account for the production of "great" poetry.

Herein lies the strength, and also the weakness, of modern romance: its strength, inasmuch as the charm of the mediaeval colour and mystery is unfailing for those who feel it at all; its weakness, inasmuch as under the influence of that charm both writer and reader are too apt to forget the need for human and moral truth; and without these no great literature can exist.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Coventry Patmore, The Rod, The Root, and The Flower, p.v.

2. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, pp.62-63.

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Mr. Maritain has an insight into the above area of consideration when he observes the following:

The formal object of art is doubtless not in itself subordinate to the formal object of morality. Nevertheless, it is not only extrinsically and for the good of the human being that morality can influence the activity of the artist; it is concerned with this activity intrinsically as well - in the order of "material" and dispositive causality. For morality is not, as Kant would have it, a world of imperatives come down from the sky of liberty and foreign to the world of being. It takes its root in the whole reality, of which it manifests a certain order of laws; not to acknowledge it is to diminish the real and so to impoverish the materials of art. An integral realism is only possible for an art sensitive to the whole truth of the universe of good and evil, for an art pervaded by the consciousness of grace and sin and the importance of the moment.<sup>1</sup>

The significant point in this statement of Mr. Maritain is that he does admit that the artist's failure to understand the spiritual values of the supernatural order can "diminish the real and so impoverish the materials of art". This is fully explained when a previously discussed analysis by Dr. Marcotte concerning poetic expression is recalled. The goal of the artist is to transform his poetic intuition into the intellectual-

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1. Jacques Maritain, Art and Scholasticism, p.91.

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sensuous form called the artistic ideal. It is in the artistic ideal that the poet comes to have poetic knowledge - that is, a conscious knowledge of what his poetic intuition is. Now, as Dr. Marcotte has also pointed out, the "ultimate source of the poet's intellectual-sensuous forms is, of course, reality". To be more specific, Dr. Marcotte designates this reality as the cause of the poet's general experience which is "the sum-total of all the ideas and images that he has experienced". The significance of Mr. Maritain's previous statement can now be explained. A lack of Faith in an artist can seriously restrict his general experience, and this in turn can "diminish the materials of art". In general, then, it can be concluded from the above explanation that a lack of Faith in a poet can and will prevent him from both having certain poetic intuitions and from expressing certain ones that he may have. The reason for the former is the fact that, as Dr. Marcotte has explained, the Poet's general experience has a part to play in determining the particular poetic intuition that a poet will have. Therefore, in so far as Faith influences a poet's general experience it can influence

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the quality of poetic intuition and the expression of poetic intuition.

In his essay on "Religion and Literature", Mr. T.S. Eliot makes a significant observation concerning the "greatness" of literature:

Literary criticism should be completed by criticism from a definite ethical and theological standpoint.... The 'greatness' of literature cannot be determined solely by literary standards; though we must remember that whether it is literature or not can be determined only by literary standards.<sup>1</sup>

It is most important that this statement be understood properly. Mr. Eliot is not calling for a religious evaluation of literature qua literature, but rather for the ethical and theological references a work may contain either explicitly or implicitly.

Dr. Marcotte explains the full meaning of Mr. Eliot's statement in a special section of his essay, "Literature and Morality".

Whether a particular piece of work made of words is literature cannot be determined by ethical or theological standards. In other words, a piece of work made of words which is ethically or theologically indifferent or even unsound may still be a piece of literature. This fact is not always sufficiently appreciated by everyone. However, one piece of

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1. T.S. Eliot, Selected Essays, p.388.

literature may be "greater" than another piece of literature because it is ethically or theologically greater....An author's general experience is not being viewed here as the source of his "objective correlatives", but, rather, as that which partly determines the quality of his poetic intuitions. Since a piece of literature is a poetic intuition expressed, it is obvious that one piece of literature will be ethically greater than another according as one poetic intuition is ethically or theologically greater than another. A poet whose general experience is permeated by a Christian philosophy of life and who is informed that he has only six months to live will probably react to this news in a way that is ethically and theologically superior to that of a poet whose general experience is permeated by an atheistic philosophy of life. If each poet successfully expresses his reaction, the work of the former poet will be greater than the work of the latter poet - not artistically perhaps, but ethically and theologically. This is the real meaning of Mr. Eliot's statement...<sup>1</sup>

The important point which Dr. Marcotte's explanation makes explicit is that "greatness" in literature is the result of a non-artistic standard being applied to a piece of literature. In so far as a piece of work made of words is an expression of the author's poetic intuition, then it is a piece of literature and thereby a work of art and a new thing of beauty. Once this has been determined, the literary judgment<sup>2</sup> has taken place, and therefore,

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1. Paul Marcotte, "Literature and Morality", "Inscape", p.37.

2. By the literary judgment is meant the judgment of whether a particular piece of work made of words is a piece of literature.

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strictly speaking, the literary judgment per se is not concerned with the quality of the poetic intuition nor with the quality of the "objective correlatives" needed to express it. Greatness in literature, on the other hand, is a supplementary judgment which is concerned with the quality of the poetic intuition - not its expression - and with the quality of the "objective correlatives" - not their conformity with the artistic ideal. Nevertheless the distinction between the literary judgment, strictly speaking, and the supplementary judgment does not imply that the latter is not a valid judgment nor a useful judgment. To consider the "greatness" of literature is a legitimate concern for the literary critic, but this judgment - if it is to be a correct judgment - cannot as Mr. Eliot states "be determined solely by literary standards". Dr. Marcotte's clear explanation of this observation by Mr. Eliot not only specifies the nature of the supplementary judgment made concerning the "greatness" in literature, but it also specifies how, through the author's general experience, ethics and theology can actually be involved in the poetic intuition itself and not just be relegated to the author's

"objective correlatives". This latter fact explains how a piece of literature can have a definite ethical or theological implication without actually using "objective correlatives" which are not explicitly ethical or theological. This latter fact also explains Mr. Eliot's desire for Christian literature "which should be unconsciously, rather than deliberately and definitely, Christian."<sup>1</sup>

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Mr. Patmore's demand that dogma should enter poetry as "realisable and realised experience" and his admiration for Mr. Thompson's indirect treatment of dogma as "natural passion" are in basic conformity with Mr. Eliot's desire for literature that is "unconsciously, rather than deliberately and defiantly, Christian". This is to say that Mr. Patmore's concept of dogma becoming poetry by first becoming a part of the poet's general experience is a legitimate manner of seeking religious poetry that is not deliberately didactic. Moreover, Mr. Patmore's theory that dogma can in this way produce "great" poetry is plausible since he has established a non-artistic standard for determining this quality of greatness - "human and moral truth". In short,

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1. T.S. Eliot, Selected Essays, p.392.

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Mr. Patmore's concept of the relationship between dogma and poetry is implicitly in accordance with the distinction between a strictly literary judgment and a supplementary judgment, though this implicit distinction springs more from his concern that the poet's attempt to produce "dogmatic" poetry should not interfere with the true process of poetic intuition and expression.

Mr. Patmore is correct in viewing dogma as a "key" or guide to the extent that dogma can give the poet certain insights into experience that could not come in any other way. In other words, Mr. Patmore's concept of dogma as a "key" to experience does not contradict the concept of how a poet's general experience can influence the quality of his poetic intuition. Moreover, a lack of Faith can "diminish" the poet's possible store of "objective correlatives" and thereby hinder the poet's art from the viewpoint of material causality.

However, two qualifications must be made concerning the conclusions of the previous paragraphs. First, though the poet's general experience does influence the quality of his poetic intuition, the poet can not predetermine the kind of poetic intuition he will have. Therefore, Mr. Patmore is incorrect in his assumption that

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if the poet is led to a certain area of experience through the influence of dogma he will react significantly to it. The mere fact that the poet gives his attention to certain area of experience is no guarantee that he will significantly react or have a poetic intuition at the time and place he wishes. Mr. Patmore is correct in urging the poet to make dogma a part of his experience in order to make it a part of his poetic intuition, but he is not correct in assuming that a poetic intuition will necessarily follow an experience or series of experiences - no matter how much the poet desires such an intuition and gives his full attention accordingly. Second, though a lack of Faith can, in general, "diminish" the material cause of the artistic ideal - "objective correlatives" - this fact may not hinder the poet from expressing a poetic intuition with considerable religious insight. The reason for this is that the poet's indifferent or pagan experience may provide him with the "objective correlatives" needed for that particular poetic intuition. In other words, the poet has no way of telling before hand whether his general experience is sufficient to make him a "great" poet.

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This present section offers an opportunity to evaluate a statement made concerning the poetic theory of Mr. Patmore which may also serve as the summary for this section on "Poetry and Dogma": "It was Patmore's achievement that he reconciled these two tendencies, mysticism and the scientific spirit".<sup>1</sup> This statement is most typical of the over-all evaluations made of Mr. Patmore's critical literary thought. If "mysticism" is taken to include Mr. Patmore's heavy stress upon the importance of Faith in the poet's general experience and if "scientific" is taken to include his equally heavy stress upon a true poetic intuition and expression, the reader is in a position to judge his efforts at reconciling the two. On the basis of material presented in this section ( the purpose here is simply to give this point initial consideration, realizing that a complete evaluation can only come at the end of this thesis ), it is clear that Mr. Patmore did succeed in reconciling these two elements and deserves credit for expressing this reconciliation in critical essays per se. However,

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1. Calvert Alexander, S.J., The Catholic Literary Revival, p.56.

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Mr. Patmore was unable to make the necessary qualifications- as indicated in the above evaluation - that maintain the reconciliation or balance when applied to literature in general, and not just to "great" literature. On the other hand, Mr. Patmore's main concern seems to have been "great" literature, and so any final judgment must take this preoccupation into consideration.

## POETRY AND RELIGION

## Section 3

## Poetry and Morality

In keeping with the purpose of this chapter which is to treat of Mr. Patmore's concept of the relationships which exist between "Poetry and Religion", the present section will deal with Mr. Patmore's ideas concerning the treatment of immorality in poetry. As will be shown the ideas have a vital connection with Mr. Patmore's poetical theory, that is to say that they are neither afterthoughts added by Mr. Patmore himself nor mere fragmentary ideas explored by this thesis - rather they are part of a consistent outlook on poetry which has a foundation in the definite poetical principles developed by Mr. Patmore.

Mr. Patmore's ideas concerning the treatment of immorality in poetry can be summed up by the following observation:

Bad morality is not a necessary condition of good art; on the contrary, bad morality is necessarily bad art, for art is human, but immorality inhuman.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.15.

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In order to appreciate the full significance of the basic assumption that "art is human", the earlier treatment of the imagination must be recalled. In the section that treated "Poetic Integrity", Mr. Patmore distinguished the "human significance" of true poetry from mere descriptive writing. An examination of this distinction showed that Mr. Patmore identified the "human significance" of true poetry with true imaginative activity - that is, the imagination "tracking the lower-likenesses" for the spiritual truth of the real apprehension. Thus the word "human", when used in connection with poetry, signifies for Mr. Patmore not a conformity with external nature for its own sake, but rather a use of external nature to express the spiritual truth grasped by the intuition of the "intellect" in the act of real apprehension. Therefore, when Mr. Patmore says that "art is human", he is referring to the art process which is basically the imaginative expression of the poet's real apprehension. It is the spiritual truth or insight into some of the ultimate relationships that surround a concrete being that is the real determining factor of the art process. It is not external reality in se. This distinction is most important for the discussion that

follows.

Since it is the spiritual truth of the real apprehension which is the determining factor of the art process, it is not surprising that Mr. Patmore should make a further distinction in his discussion of the treatment of immorality in poetry. This further distinction is between the "objective correlatives" used in a poem and what Mr. Patmore calls the "theme" of a poem.

The loss by the poet of the privilege of plain-speaking is equivalent to the loss of the string which Hermes added to Apollo's lute. A whole octave has been withdrawn from the means of expression. Take a single example. Perhaps two or three of Iago's speeches are "coarser" than anything else in English poetry - there is nothing more so in the Bible itself; but the splendour, purity, and solidity of the most splendid, pure, and solid of all dramas that were ever written, depend in very large measure on the way in which these qualities are heightened by those very passages.<sup>1</sup>

In the above quotation, it can be clearly seen that Mr. Patmore distinguishes the "objective correlatives" used by Shakespeare for the speeches of Iago from the over-all effect of the play. This over-all effect of the play is what he calls the "one idea" of which the whole play is the "shortest possible expression". Thus the "one idea" relates clearly to the "real apprehension"

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1. Ibid., pp.15-16.

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which is the formal cause of the poem.

With the help of the above distinctions, it is possible to fully understand Mr. Patmore's observation that "bad morality is necessarily bad art, for art is human, but immorality inhuman." To begin with, Mr. Patmore is not speaking of the mere appearance of immorality as an "objective correlative" in a poem. This has been shown by his comment upon the "coarseness" of Iago's speeches. However, he is saying that the poet's real apprehension cannot grasp an insight into reality which is ultimately contrary to the Divine Law.

But there are two kinds of inflection and infraction of law: first, of the inner law, which is inflected when a man feels disposed to covet his neighbour's wife and does not, and inflected when he does; secondly, of the outer and vaster law of God's universal justice, which cannot be inflected, but only inflected even by sin and disaster; the law by which the man shall find it good that he has not followed his natural inclinations, and that by which the man who has done so shall be effectually convinced that the game was not worth the candle. It must be confessed that a large portion of the writings of the very best poets of the past and passing generation has been not art at all, since the one real theme of art has been absent.<sup>1</sup>

In the above quotation, Mr. Patmore clearly presents his concept of how art can be "immoral" and how

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1. Ibid., pp.17-18.

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it can't be so. He allows art to be realistic. It can portray either an inflection or infraction of the "inner law" - the commandments - but in doing so the poem can not have a theme which denies the ultimate triumph of God's "universal justice". This fact does not mean that Mr. Patmore demands an explicit moral at the end of every poem nor that poetical justice must dictate the ultimate solution of a situation or plot. Rather, he means that the real apprehension in se must be a real insight into reality - a "living truth" which grasps some of the ultimate relationships which surround a concrete being. Therefore, according to the poetical theory of Mr. Patmore, the real apprehension may be an insight into sin, but of its very nature the real apprehension can not see sin as violating the "outer and vaster law of God's universal justice". The poem may portray the sale of a soul to the devil, but the "theme" of the poem can not be such that it sees this as the highest good of man.

The old commonplace that "Art is essentially religious" is so far true that the true order of human life is the command and in part the revelation, of God; but all direct allusion to Him may be as completely omitted as it is from the teaching of the

Board School, and yet the art may remain "essentially religious."<sup>1</sup>

What must be kept constantly in mind when discussing Mr. Patmore's concept of "the one real theme of art" is that the real apprehension is essentially an insight into reality which is coloured but not obscured by the poet's personality. Moreover, the reality into which the poet sees is the ultimate reality - in other words, the poet sees through and beyond the present experiences of his senses to the spiritual truths or causes of which they are the analogates. Therefore, it is a contradiction in terms to have a real apprehension which sees sin as man's ultimate good, simply because nowhere in reality can such a "truth" be seen. Mr. Patmore's position in this entire discussion dealing with "Poetry and Morality" is not that the poets should be more religious in their subjects, but that they should be expressing only real apprehensions.

'If the poet represents folly, vice or any kind of uncomeliness it is not in order to contemplate such evils in themselves, but in order to supply foils

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1. Ibid., p.18.

which shall set forth more strongly the irrefragable splendour of truth embodied in sensible loveliness.<sup>1</sup>

When Mr. Patmore insists that "art is human", he is viewing art from the point of view of the real apprehension: that is, the relationship which exists between the individual and experience via the intuition of the "intellect" grasping the spiritual truths embodied in experience.

'The artistic confines itself...to phenomena and to the First Cause, and takes not of no relationships between the former and the latter, but such as are immediate and direct. The artist does not regard phenomena as unreal but rather as the only realities, apart from his soul and from God....The artist reveals reality whenever he exhibits or suggests the true relation of any object to the rest of the universe.'<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, art or poetry which in its theme "exhibits or suggests" immorality is "bad art" because it is attempting to express a non-reality as a reality. Such a poet is not "revealing reality". Sin exists, but in its relationship "to the rest of the universe" sin can not exist as the highest good or something having no

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.185.

2. Ibid., pp.44-45.

further consequences beyond the mere act. If the poet fails to realize this, then he automatically misses expressing "the one real theme of art".

According to Mr. Patmore, in missing the "one real theme of art" the poet is necessarily limiting his power of poetic expression.

In the highest poetry, like that of Milton, these true modes of inflection, metrical, linguistical, and moral, all chime together in praise of the true order of human life, or moral law. Where this is not recognized there is no good art.<sup>1</sup>

Again, in making such an application, Mr. Patmore is being perfectly consistent with his previous poetical ideas. For him, poetic expression is controlled by the real apprehension to be expressed. The poet's imagination is a power of expression and not one of insight. A deficiency in the real apprehension must necessarily show up in the poetic expression. This is the meaning of the above statement by Mr. Patmore. In so far as "law" has a part to play in the quality of the real apprehension then it must have a part to play in the laws of poetic expression.

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, p.16.

Masculine law is always, however, obscurely, the theme of the true poet; the feeling, with the correspondent rhythm, is its feminine inflection, without which the law has no sensitive or poetic life. Art is thus constituted because it is the constitution of life, all the grace and sweetness of which arise from inflection of law not infraction of it, as bad men and bad poets fancy.<sup>1</sup>

"Masculine law" or the dominance of the "intellect" and its real apprehension over the process of poetic expression is a poetic law. This poetic law demands that the poet use the elements of craft accordingly as they express the poetic inspiration and not for the sake of their own beauty or novelty. According to Mr. Patmore, then, if the poet lacks the ultimate truth of moral law - in the sense of "inflection" and "infraction" as previously explained - then he is incapable of implementing the poetic law of the dominance of the "intellect" because he has no truth with which to guide his process of poetic expression. The result is a poetry which lacks the inner harmony or balance of being the "shortest possible expression" of the poet's "idea". This is to say that the poem will include elements which are there for their own sake and not for the sake of the real apprehension.

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1. Ibid., p.73.

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If, in the utterance of what he offers to you as the cry or deep longing of passion, you catch him busily noticing trifles - for which very likely he gets praise - "accurate observation of nature" - you will put him down as one who knows nothing of the passion he is pretending to express.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, if the poet fails to grasp the ultimate effect of Divine Law in his real apprehension, then he will be forced to "pretend" - that is, he will be using craft for its own sake.

To briefly recapitulate, Mr. Patmore, in keeping with his understanding of the creative intuition of the poet being a real apprehension - that is, an insight into reality - has concluded that the real apprehension can not contradict the ultimate order with which God rules man and the universe. Any such poem which expresses an "idea" which contradicts this "outer and vaster law of God's justice" fails by that very fact to express the "one real theme of art". This does not mean that the poet may not portray immorality in his poem, but it does mean that when the poet uses an "objective correlative" which depicts immorality he must use it to heighten but not contradict the ultimate order grasped by his real

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1. Ibid., p.38.

apprehension. Mr. Patmore's concern is with the real apprehension and not with the "objective correlative". A failure to grasp the ultimate order of Divine law in creation has further consequences in the process of poetic expression. Without some fundamental truth in his real apprehension, the poetic law of "masculine dominance" of the "intellect" becomes impossible to impose because the process of poetic expression is ultimately ordered by the truth of real apprehension. A failure to impose the poetic law of "masculine dominance" means that the poet will be forced to "pretend" or to use craft for its own beauty and novelty and not for the expression of the real apprehension. In short, Mr. Patmore has carried over the ultimate order of the Divine Law which exists in creation to the order of poetic intuition and expression. He has made the artistic order of a poem dependent upon the moral order of reality.

The Decalogue is not art, but it is the guide-post which points direct to where the source of art springs; and it is now as in the days when Numa and Moses made their laws: - he is profane who presents to the gods the fruit of an unpruned vine; that is, sensitive worship before the sensitive soul has been sanctified by the habitual confession

of and obedience to the rational.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, it might be pointed out that Mr. Patmore's ideas concerning "Poetry and Morality" are in perfect conformity with his concepts concerning the process of poetic intuition and expression. In other words, he has not imposed these ideas upon his poetical theory, but rather the former are the logical application of the latter. In this sense, this section offers a summary of Mr. Patmore's poetical theory and an ultimate test of its accuracy.

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In establishing a norm for this section, certain concepts need to be reconsidered - namely, the nature of poetic intuition and the end of poetic expression.

For the content of poetic intuition is both the reality of things of the world and the subjectivity of the poet, both obscurely conveyed through an intentional or spiritualized emotion. The soul is known in the experience of the world and the world is known in the experience of the soul, through a knowledge which does not know itself.<sup>2</sup>

The above discription brings out the following points concerning the nature of poetic intuition. From

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1. Ibid., p.23.

2. Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, p.93.

a positive point of view, the poetic intuition is the poet's reaction to some aspect of reality - a reaction of the whole poet qua man since it involves the subjectivity of the poet. This is to say that the poetic intuition is born in the preconscious of man's soul where all his powers share in a common or root source of activity. Therefore, as a reaction to reality, the poetic intuition is significantly distinguished from all man's other reactions by two facts: first, it spontaneously involves the whole man in the preconscious "area" of his soul; and second, it arises from a powerful emotion penetrating to the preconscious of the soul following a clash with some aspect or aspects of reality. As a significant reaction to reality - in the sense explained above - the poetic intuition in se is essentially indifferent to the ontological order or being of reality. It is indifferent in the sense that it is not that it is not concerned with any ontological conformity arising from correct analysis. Rather, poetic intuition is concerned with reality as an existent that is grasped by the external senses of the poet and ultimately clashes with the whole person. In this sense, reality or the existent is an essential part of the

poetic intuition, but it is a part that is forever united to the new reality that it has helped to form - the poetic intuition.

It is clear that poetic intuition is filled with the subjectivity of the poet as well as with the thing grasped, since the thing grasped and the subjectivity are known together in the same obscure experience, and since the thing grasped is grasped only through its affective resonance in and union with the subjectivity.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, when considering reality in relation to the poetic intuition it is most important to realize that "the thing grasped is grasped only through its affective resonance in and union with the subjectivity", that is, as the new reality it is and not the reality it was.

Mr. Maritain, commenting upon the Thomistic distinction between art and prudence, clearly states the end of poetic expression.

As St. Thomas put it, Art, in this respect, resembles the virtues of the Speculative Intellect: it causes man to act in a right way, not with regard to the use of man's own free will, and to the rightness of the human will, but with regard to the rightness of a particular operating power. The good that Art pursues is not the good of the human will, but the good of the very artifact.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Jacques Maritain, The Responsibility of the Artist, p.93.

2. Ibid., p.23.

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The principle in the above quotation is simply this: in so far as poetic expression is a creative process, it comes entirely under the rules of art; but the rules of art are concerned solely with the "good of the artifact". This is to say that the artist has only one task to perform and that is to express his poetic intuition as best he can.

Artistic value and moral value belong to two different realms. Artistic value relates to the work, moral value to man. The sins of men can be the subject-matter of a work of art, from them art can draw aesthetic beauty - otherwise there would be no novelists. The experience of moral evil can even contribute to feed the virtue of art - I mean by accident, not as a necessary requirement of art.... Yet thus does art avail itself of anything, even sin. It behaves like a god; it thinks only of its own glory. The painter may damn himself, painting does not care a straw, if the fire where he burns bakes a beautiful piece of pottery.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, in so far as the process of art is concerned only with the making of its object, it is not concerned with the moral value or implications of that which it uses to make its object - nor is it concerned with the moral value or implications of the work of art in se. As applied to poetry, it can be stated that according to the rules of art, the poet is justified in choosing

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1. Ibid., p.29.

any "objective correlative" which expresses his poetic intuition.

The relationship between the artifact and reality may be recapitulated quite succinctly. Reality supplies the artist with his "objective correlatives"; however, the artist must represent elements of reality with whatever degree of faithfulness best enables him to express his poetic intuitions. Since this is why the artist imitates reality, the critic cannot evaluate an artifact by comparing what it appears to represent with reality. Such a comparison might indicate the logical truth of the artifact, but it certainly cannot be viewed as an indication of its artiological truth.<sup>1</sup>

As a recapitulation of the norm for this section dealing with Mr. Patmore's ideas concerning "Poetry and Morality" as it relates to the "objective correlatives" and the content of the poetic intuition, the following summary by Dr. Marcotte can be used.

To know that a piece of literature is a new thing of beauty made of words which expresses a man's significant reaction to reality, to know that an artist makes in order to attain poetic knowledge, and to know how a piece of fine art is made is to know that to deliberately attempt to teach morality, or anything else, would constitute a serious threat to the good of the work. To express a poetic intuition, a significant reaction to reality, is a very difficult task. This is why a fine artist must be free. This is where the concept of artistic freedom is encountered. Artistic freedom implies,

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1. Paul Marcotte, "Literature and Truth", "Inscape", p.11.

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among other things, that an artist must have a poetic intuition to express. His essential motive, therefore, is to express this poetic intuition.<sup>1</sup>

The concept in the above quotation which acts as a summary for the explanations concerning the nature of poetic intuition and the purpose of poetic expression is "artistic freedom". As explained by Dr. Marcotte, this concept is more than just a safeguard to assure an adequate poetic expression - it is a necessary condition of art arising from the very nature of poetic intuition and from the very purpose of poetic expression. What this fact means is this: any attempt by a poet or critic to infringe upon "artistic freedom" will necessarily entail a defective concept concerning the nature of poetic intuition or expression.

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Mr. Patmore's willingness to allow the poet the freedom of using an "objective correlative" which depicts evil is in some conformity with the concept of "artistic freedom" and shows an appreciation for some distinction between "artistic and moral values". The reason for the

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1. Paul Marcotte, "Literature and Morality", "Inscape", p.33.

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word "some" in the above judgment is Mr. Patmore's insistence that there is only "one real theme in art", the rectitude of the Divine Law. In effect, what Mr. Patmore is doing is insisting upon some moral relationship for the "poetic intuition" in se. To his credit it must be remembered that Mr. Patmore does not advocate didactic art or sentimental art, but, nevertheless, his insistence upon "human rectitude" as the "one real theme of art" is an infringement upon "artistic freedom".

From the above, it can be concluded that Mr. Patmore's lack of full appreciation for the concept of "artistic freedom" is the result of an error in his concept of poetic intuition and not just a desire to make poetry moral. Poetic intuition for Mr. Patmore is "real apprehension" which is a grasp of "living truth". As explained earlier, basically, real apprehension is an insight into some aspect of reality. Ultimately, then, real apprehension must be valued for its conformity to the ontological order. With such a viewpoint of poetic intuition, it is logical and consistent for Mr. Patmore to demand that the "theme" - or real apprehension expressed - have an ultimate conformity with the ultimate order

imposed upon reality by the Divine Law. His double distinction between "inflection" and "infraction" of the law seems to have been a kind of compromise to include the widest possible area of moral rectitude for pieces of literature whose themes deal with sin. In other words, it appears that Mr. Patmore was aware of some difficulty in applying his concept of poetic intuition ( real apprehension ) and its moral implications to works which were generally recognized as good poetry but which seemed to deal directly with sin in an amoral manner. His concept that the moral rectitude of a poem was intact as long as the "outer and vaster law of God's justice was not denied" apparently solved his dilemma.

Are those great poets wrong, then - the great dramatic poets, especially - whose works abound with representations of infraction of law and its consequent disasters? No. But there are two kinds of inflection and infraction of law: first, of the inner law, which is inflected...and inflected....; secondly, of the outer and vaster law of God's universal justice, which cannot be inflected, but only inflected, even by sin and disaster...<sup>1</sup>

What Mr. Patmore failed to understand is that the poetic intuition is not an analysis or discoverer of

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1. Coventry Patmore, Principle In Art, Religio Poetae, and other essays, pp.17-18.

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reality but a "significant reaction" to it. The difference here is great and has far-reaching implications for poetry. First, as a "significant reaction" the content of the poetic intuition, or what it is, is not known until the poetic intuition is consciously expressed in the form of the artistic ideal. This is because the poetic intuition is born in the preconscious of the intellect via a powerful emotion. Therefore, the poet has no way of predetermining when or where he will have a poetic intuition - much less has he anyway of predetermining its content. Second, when reality enters into the poetic intuition by means of an affective union with the preconscious of the intellect, it becomes part of a new thing - the poetic intuition. The "thing" in poetic intuition can not be separated as a distinct reality; it is forever joined to the subjectivity of the poet. What the poet comes to know in poetic knowledge is his "significant reaction" or poetic intuition - an affective union of "Thing and Self". Therefore, in se, poetic intuition is indifferent to the nature of the reality or "thing" that is a part of it. This fact excludes any essential relationship between

the poetic intuition in se and the moral order. The reality that is present in the poetic intuition takes on a new relationship because it is part of a new thing. That new relationship is indifferent to the moral order since it exists in a poetic intuition that takes its values from the artistic order as something to be made by man in order to be known. In short, in so far as the reality in poetic intuition is an integral part of the poetic intuition, it is, by that fact an integral part of the artistic order - an order essentially distinct from the moral order.

At this point in the evaluation of Mr. Patmore's thoughts on the relationship between "Poetry and Morality", it might seem strange that he could admit the necessity of "artistic freedom" in the poet's selection of the "objective correlatives" but not admit this necessity in the very act of poetic intuition. However, this contradiction in his theory can be explained by recalling the previous evaluations made concerning his concepts of the "intellect" and the imagination. Over-all, Mr. Patmore's poetical theory is most deficient when he analyzes the nature and process of poetical intuition. On the other hand, his poetical theory is

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most accurate when he analyzes poetic expression and the function of the imagination as the power of expression. Keeping the evaluations previously made in mind, it can now be seen how Mr. Patmore could insist upon "artistic freedom" in the selection of the "objective correlatives" - the process of poetic expression - and at the same time hedge upon this freedom in regard to the real apprehension - the process of poetic intuition.

Following his insistence upon the fact that true art must possess the "one real theme of art", Mr. Patmore attempted to integrate his whole concept of poetry around this point. As a result, he made a connection between the law of reality and the poetic laws - especially that of the "masculine dominance" of the "intellect". Such a connection is based upon his observation that the real apprehension as the creative intuition ultimately controls the process of poetic expression. In this observation, he is basically correct - as was pointed out in an earlier evaluation of his concept of the nature of poetic expression. However, Mr. Patmore's assumption that the quality of a particular poetic intuition is that which insures - other things being equal - a perfect balance of thought and feeling,

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of imagery and rhythm in a poem is not correct. It is incorrect because any poetic intuition - if it is adequately expressed - will demand just the right proportion of thought and feeling, et cetera. Balance or inner harmony in a poem, in so far as it is taken as a perfect expression of the poetic intuition, is a demand of the process of art and not of the particular quality of the poetic intuition. Therefore, Mr. Patmore's assumption that poetry which has a theme which is in accordance ultimately with Divine Law will insure a better artistic expression is incorrect. The laws of art in se are not dependent upon the laws of morality. Mr. Patmore is correct in assuming that "great" poetry - that which expresses theological or moral conformity - is dependent upon "greatness" in the poetic intuition, a theological or moral reaction. But as was pointed out in the previous section, the standards by which "greatness" in literature is judged are not themselves in the artistic order per se. Here again, Mr. Patmore has demonstrated his adequate understanding of the process of poetic expression along with his inadequate understanding of the nature of poetic intuition. Poetic

expression is ordered toward the good of the work - regardless of what it expresses. Mr. Patmore's failure to give the artist complete "artistic freedom" and his attempt to insure better artistic expression by means of the quality of the poetic intuition are both due to his failure to properly appreciate the last part of the previous sentence, "regardless of what it expresses".

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this last chapter is threefold: first, to recapitulate the general conclusions of each of the previous chapters; second, to give a general conclusion to the entire thesis; and third, to indicate areas of further possible research.

In the first chapter, Mr. Patmore's concept of the "intellect" as the faculty responsible for poetic intuition was examined and evaluated. Within this general area of investigation, it was found that Mr. Patmore was correct in viewing poetic activity as essentially cognitive in the sense that the formal cause of poetry is an intuition grasped through the poet's experience and fully known in the making of the poem. Mr. Patmore called this poetic intuition "real apprehension", and negatively he was correct in designation "real apprehension" as a non-conceptual type of knowledge. However, Mr. Patmore was incorrect in analyzing poetic intuition as the product of a separate faculty in man.

As the proper object of the "intellect", man's special intuitional faculty, real apprehension became a special intuitional insight into reality as the latter effected the person of the poet. Mr. Patmore further specified this intuitional insight as a grasp of some

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of the ultimate or spiritual causes that fully explain concrete reality. In all this, Mr. Patmore was correct in requiring the poet to be in contact with reality for his poetic intuition, but he was incorrect in making the poetic intuition an insight into reality rather than a significant reaction to it. Implied in this last statement is Mr. Patmore's failure to relate his concept of "intellect" to an "area" in man's soul - the "preconscious of the soul" - rather than a distinct faculty. Consequently, Mr. Patmore does not give the emotions an important enough part to play in causing poetic intuition. Therefore, instead of approaching the correct concept of poetic intuition - an affective union between reality and a "part" of the preconscious of the soul, which union is brought about by a powerful emotion resulting from the poet's clash with reality and penetrating to the preconscious of the soul - Mr. Patmore's concept of "real apprehension" falls seriously short. It remains simply another kind of insight into an aspect of reality and fails to account for what is also an essential part of poetic intuition when it is expressed - the poet's knowledge of his deepest self, the preconscious of the soul or that apex of the soul, in

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the sense of a root source, from which all man's faculties emanate.

Mr. Patmore did make an attempt to include in his concept of real apprehension some means by which the poet could come to know himself better. However, because he lacked a notion equivalent to the preconscious of the soul, the self he thought the poet came to know was the psychological self - the individuality or distinctive characteristics of the poet that set him apart from other men qua man. Mr. Patmore held that the real apprehension was influenced by the poet's individuality in so far as one poet could see an aspect of reality which another might miss. In effect, what Mr. Patmore was actually accounting for was the "particular general experience" of the poet which did indeed make the poetic intuition a particular one peculiar to that poet. However, the poet's particular general experience is not the self that is an essential part of the poetic intuition. As a result of this confusion between the self of the preconscious and the self of the particular general experience, Mr. Patmore could not adequately explain the universal aspect of poetry which stems from that "part" of the preconscious

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revealed in the poetic intuition expressed - the preconscious being that "area" of the soul which is common in all men. Nevertheless, Mr. Patmore did have a keen appreciation for the individuality of poetry, and he was correct in making the poet's individuality or his distinctive characteristics the cause of poetic individuality.

Finally, considered as the source of creativity in man, Mr. Patmore's concept of "intellect" was deficient in so far as it lacked the inner dynamic energy of the preconscious of the intellect seeking to know itself in the poetic intuition expressed. Though Mr. Patmore did recognize that real apprehension was only "potential" knowledge in the sense that it had to be expressed in a poem in order to be fully known, his concept of "potential" knowledge was not completely equivalent to the dark obscurity of the poetic intuition in the preconscious. That is to say that though the poet did not fully know what he had apprehended, he was aware of a certain conviction ~~concerning~~ some truth at the moment of real apprehension. Therefore, in offering the poet this conviction or confirmation of some spiritual truth, the "intellect" was not really giving the poet

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something new in the sense in which a poet's knowledge of his deepest self, the preconscious, is new. Because the "intellect" mainly confirmed the poet's belief, through its insight into reality, and did not offer the prospect of coming to a new knowledge of the poet's deepest self, Mr. Patmore incorrectly supplied the "intellect" - the creative source in man - with an extrinsic motive for creating a poem; namely, the good effect that the real apprehension expressed would have upon the reader.

In the second chapter, Mr. Patmore's concept of the imagination as the faculty responsible for poetic expression was examined and evaluated. Mr. Patmore's insistence upon "poetic integrity" - that the poet avoid the serving of any outside interests in the process of poetic expression and seek only to adequately express his real apprehension - showed that his basic understanding of the poet's task in poetic expression was correct. Within the framework of this basically correct approach to art, Mr. Patmore viewed the imagination as the power of expression - the faculty which supplied the "real words" or objective correlatives for the expression of the real apprehension. Negatively, Mr. Patmore was

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correct in insisting, through his concept of the "masculine" dominance of the "intellect", that the imagination had nothing to do with the actual poetic intuition. Consequently, the imagination was not the faculty concerned with knowing the real apprehension expressed. In other words, the imagination simply fitted objective correlatives to the truth grasped by the "intellect", and it was the latter which ultimately judged the correctness or appropriateness of a particular objective correlative for expressing the real apprehension.

Though basically correct in his approach to art as explained above, Mr. Patmore incorrectly made the poet too "conscious" where the poet ought to be more "unconscious". In other words, both "intellect" and imagination were too conscious while executing their respective roles in the early stages of poetic expression. Mr. Patmore did not explicitly contradict the correct explanation of the artistic process of making in which the internal senses supply the creative intuition with a form in the conscious substance of the poet, but he did fail to emphasize the spontaneous or automatic response of the imagination to the demands of the poetic

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intuition as the latter passes from the preconscious area of the soul into the conscious substance of the poet. In effect, what Mr. Patmore could not do was give adequate consideration to the fact that the art process begins in the preconscious, simply because he had no concept equivalent to the preconscious. This forced him to make the poet too conscious in the earlier stages of the art process.

Again, in keeping with his basically correct approach to art, Mr. Patmore rightly analyzed "style" as a quality of the poet's craft - that is, a quality of the poet's work by which he transforms a conscious pattern into a form. Mr. Patmore approached the concept of the artistic ideal - the poetic intuition as consciously known but not externally expressed - in his concept of poetic "inspiration". However, Mr. Patmore is incorrect in giving his concept of "style" an end beyond an end by ultimately valuing it as an expression of the poet's individuality, instead of as an expression of the poetic intuition in the order of craft. It is important to note that Mr. Patmore's error results from the "value" he placed on style, and this wrong value results from his misconception of the poetic intuition as containing

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the individual self rather than the preconscious self of the poet.

In the third chapter, Mr. Patmore's ideas concerning the relationships that exist between poetry and religion are examined and evaluated. Mr. Patmore was correct in pointing out that literature may contain an insight into religious truth and that literature may lead one to strive to live a better life. However, Mr. Patmore was incorrect in making these "religious" effects of literature essential. Mr. Patmore's errors arose, first, because he conceived poetic intuition as essentially an insight into reality instead of as a significant reaction to reality; and second, because he determined the greatness of pieces of literature on the basis of non-artistic standards and mistook these for artistic standards.

Because of his basically correct approach to art, Mr. Patmore did not become a "didactic" critic when he spoke of the influence of dogma and morality upon poetry. Mr. Patmore correctly saw the necessity of dogma influencing poetry by first becoming part of the poet's particular general experience - "realisable and realised experience". However, Mr. Patmore incorrectly

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implied that the poet could determine before hand the particular kind of poetic intuition he would have or that he could determine to which aspects of reality he would significantly react. In short, Mr. Patmore was accidentally correct in stressing that one is more likely to have a "religious" poetic intuition if he knows and lives his Faith, but he is essentially incorrect in implying that the poet can predetermine the "dogmatic" quality of poetic intuition.

Mr. Patmore definitely "hedged" upon artistic freedom - a concept which he generally admitted - when considering the influence of morality upon poetry. Though he was correct in admitting that the poet could choose that objective correlative which best expressed his poetic intuition, he was incorrect in allowing the poet the freedom to express a "theme" which might be immoral. In effect, what Mr. Patmore was doing was teaching that the poet could use immorality as an objective correlative, but that he could never express a poetic intuition which apparently had an immoral view of life. Mr. Patmore did restrict the extension of this view when he explained that by an immoral view of life he meant one which violated only the most universal of

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moral concepts - that God rewards virtue and punishes vice. Mr. Patmore's error in this regard may be traced to the fact that he mistakingly saw the poetic intuition as an insight into reality. In labelling a poem which had a view of life which was ultimately immoral as "bad art", Mr. Patmore was confusing the artiological order - that is, a conformity between the poetic intuition and the poem - with ontological order. Because of this confusion, Mr. Patmore incorrectly made some of the laws which govern poetic expression depend upon moral laws - for example, the law of "masculine" dominance of the "intellect" could only take effect when the poetic intuition had a correct moral outlook. Mr. Patmore did not intentionally try to limit poetry with the concepts of dogma and morality, but he simply tried to assure the production of "great" poetry within the framework of his own poetical theory.

In drawing a general conclusion to the entire thesis, it can be stated than an "objective" evaluation of Coventry Patmore's poetical theory allows the following statements to be made:

1. Mr. Patmore's poetical theory is most correct when it is concerned with explaining the making of

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poetry - poetic expression.

2. Mr. Patmore's poetical theory is most incorrect when it is concerned with explaining the origins of poetry - poetic intuition.

3. Mr. Patmore does have some significant insights into the relationships that exist between poetry and dogma if the proper distinction between what is only accidental and what is essential to poetry is made.

4. In the practical order, Mr. Patmore's poetical theory could be considered a stimulus to a potential poet to make "great" poetry provided that it is understood that "greatness" is determined by non-artistic standards.

5. Mr. Patmore's poetical theory is not outstandingly original, but in its major analyses or principles it is consistent and generally makes an attempt to cover the important aspects of poetry.

6. In assessing the over-all value of Mr. Patmore as a speculative literary critic, it can be stated that the breadth and depth of his analysis of poetry is sufficient to place him among the major speculative literary critics of English literature.

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Finally, to conclude this thesis a few remarks should be made concerning areas that might offer possibilities for future Patmorean research and evaluation.

Patmore is still potential...This the more remarkable because no poet since Wordsworth and Coleridge, not even Matthew Arnold, had such a clear conception of the poet's function.<sup>1</sup>

This thesis has attempted to remove the "potentiality" from Mr. Patmore as a speculative literary critic. Accordingly, his critical ideas concerning the origin of poetry, the expression of poetry, and the relation of poetry to religion have been analyzed and evaluated. However, this thesis would be doing a disservice to Patmorean study if it were to give the impression that Mr. Patmore's "potentiality" ends with the above mentioned considerations. It is this thesis' contention that these areas do contain the major literary critical concepts of Mr. Patmore and that these areas have been adequately evaluated; nevertheless, this is not to imply that there are not other areas which are still "potential". Outstanding among such areas is Mr. Patmore's insight into mystical experience and mystical literature. The

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1. Hebert Read, Collected Essays in Literary Criticism, pp.315-317.

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present thesis has not been able to touch this area because it requires another norm - an "objective" norm concerning the nature and expression of mystical experience. It could well be that Mr. Patmore's greatest contribution will be in this field when such an evaluation is definitely made. As in the field of speculative literary criticism, a number of authors have indicated Mr. Patmore's general concern for this area, and some have initially indicated the extent of Mr. Patmore's contribution to the area of mystical literature.

Secondly, though Mr. Patmore was incorrect in carrying over into literature some of his moral insights, this in no way takes away from the value these insights might have in se. Thus another area of Patmorean study could be analysis and evaluation of the contents of Mr. Patmore's essays as regards their insight into life itself or religion in se.

He did not aim at producing a well-rounded critical system, but at pithily, suggestively and forcefully restating basic truths about literature and about the relationship between art, life and religion, and this he did admirably.<sup>1</sup>

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1. J.C. Reid, The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, p.183.

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It is hoped that as the reader completes his examination of this thesis he will no longer find it necessary to wonder concerning the nature and accuracy of Mr. Patmore's thoughts concerning the "basic truths about literature", but it is hoped that he will still wonder "about the relationship" which Mr. Patmore saw between "life and religion".

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## Books

Alexander, Calvert, S.J., "Coventry Patmore", The Literary Revival, Three phases in its development from 1845 to the present, Milwaukee, Bruce Publishing Co., 1944, 54-70p.

This book is the most authoritative and comprehensive book on the Catholic Literary Movement. In the above chapter the author traces the influence of Patmore upon this Movement and its influence upon him. The chapter contains some excellent insights into Patmore's theory concerning poetry and dogma.

Burdett, Osbert, The Idea of Coventry Patmore, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1921, vii-213p.

This book is one of the first to relate some of Patmore's poetry to his prose. Half the book deals with the "Angel In The House". The author is mainly concerned with elucidating the poetic meaning rather than explaining Patmore's poetic theories.

Champneys, Basil, Memoirs and Correspondence of Coventry Patmore, 2 Vol., London, G. Bell and Sons, 1900, xxvi-396, 468p.

A close friend of Patmore, the author wrote the first biography of Patmore. Though restricted in some of the observations he could make because of contemporary parties still living, the author's work gives valuable information about the influence on Patmore's life and work.

Connolly, Terence L., S.J., Literary Criticism by Francis Thompson, Newly Discovered and Collected, New York, E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1948, xiv-617p.

This book contains some twenty-five references by Thompson to Patmore. Thompson defends Patmore's

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\* Unless otherwise stated in the anotation, the above books do not contain detailed explanations of Patmore's poetical theory. Nevertheless, these books do contain general criticism of Patmore's poetic endeavours, and they were useful as general background. This list shows the paucity of Patmorean criticism.

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Catholicism and its influence upon his philosophy and literary endeavours.

-----, Mystical Poems of Nuptial Love by Coventry Patmore, Boston, Bruce Humphries, Inc., 1938, xix-316p.

This collection of Patmore's later poetry, including the odes, contains valuable notes explaining the texts. These notes show the depth of the theological insight that Patmore was expressing in his poetry.

DeVere, Aubrey, "Coventry Patmore", Essays, Chiefly Literary and Ethical, London, Macmillan and Co., 1889, 126-150p.

This chapter is one of the earliest defences of Patmore's poetic style. The author discusses the "Angel In The House" and the first edition of the "Odes".

Eliot, T.S., Poetry and Drama, London, Faber and Faber Ltd., 1950, 135p.

This essay is a useful discussion of the three types of poetry - lyric, narrative, and dramatic. It is especially useful for the norm of this thesis because of Mr. Eliot's description of the poet's "conscious" and "unconscious" activity.

-----, Selected Essays, London, Faber and Faber Ltd., 1951, 516p.

This body of essays contains most of Mr. Eliot's major critical concepts and insights. As such, this volume has supplied most of the supplementary material used for the norm. These essays are established classics in the field of literary criticism.

-----, The Three Voices of Poetry, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1955, 23p.

The concluding part of this short essay is valuable for the norm since it contains Mr. Eliot's observations concerning the origins of poetry and creative activity in the poet.

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Freeman, John, "Coventry Patmore", English Portraits and Essays, London, Hadder and Stoughton, Ltd., 1924, 175-197p.

The author sketches the life and poetical achievement of Patmore. He concludes by reevaluating Patmore as following in the tradition of the English Metaphysical poets.

Gosse, Edmund, Coventry Patmore, New York, Scribner's and Sons, 1905, vi-213p.

The author is one of the first to trace the influence of Patmore's personality upon his poetry. He particularly points out the originality of Patmore's poetical task.

Harris, Frank, "Coventry Patmore", Contemporary Portraits, New York, Published by author, 1920, 191-210p.

The author discusses Patmore as a minor poet, but he does hail Patmore as a prime representative of the best in English character traits.

Johnson, Lionel, "Coventry Patmore's Genius", Post Limuminum: Essays and Critical Papers by Lionel Johnson, Edited by Thomas Whittemore, London, Elkin Matthews, 1909, 238-245p.

Like DeVere, Johnson gives testimony of the high personal and poetic regard for Patmore which his contemporary associates held.

Lucas, F.L., "Coventry Patmore", Ten Victorian Poets, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1948, 75-99p.

The author has a general discussion of Patmore's poetic techniques. He represents a critical group who consider Patmore's personality more interesting than his poetry.

Maritain, Jacques, Art and Scholasticism with other essays, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949, ix-177p.

This book is valuable for its sharp philosophic distinctions between art and prudence, the practical and speculative intellects, and poetry and religion. It is extremely helpful in understanding Mr. Maritain's Creative Intuition In Art and Poetry.

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-----, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry,  
New York, Meridian Books, Inc., 1958, 339p.

This book represents the most definitive statement of Mr. Maritain's analysis of the origins of poetry and the nature of the art process. Central to the entire book and of special importance to this thesis is the chapter dealing with the nature of "poetic intuition" and the "preconscious of the intellect".

-----, The Responsibility of the Artist,  
New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960, 120p.

This work is mainly a restatement and fuller explanation by Mr. Maritain of his earlier observations and analyses concerning the relationships between art and morality. In this regard it is a valuable book for a fuller understanding of Mr. Maritain's earlier works.

Oliver, E.J., Coventry Patmore, New York, Sheed  
and Ward, 1956, 211p.

This is the most recent biographical study of Patmore. The author has a chapter emphasizing the religious and mystical quality of Patmore's later prose writings.

Page, Frederick, Patmore, A Study in Poetry,  
London, Oxford University Press, 1933, 184p.

This book is an extremely sympathetic reevaluation of Patmore as a poet. The different phases of Patmore's poetry and prose are introduced biographically.

Patmore, Coventry, Principles In Art, Religio  
Poetae and other essays, London, Duckworth and Co., 1913,  
viii-362p.

As explained in the introduction, this volume is Patmore's own definitive collection of his critical ideas. This volume has never been systematically analyzed for its critical principles, though parts of it have been used to explicate a piece of his poetry.

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-----, The Rod, The Root, and The Flower, revised 2nd ed., G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1923, vii-234p. This volume contains aphoristic statements which represent Patmore's deepest insights into Catholic philosophy and theology. This volume has received limited attention in connection with Patmore's mysticism.

Peyton, Rev. Thomas, M.M., Coventry Patmore's Poetical Theory, ( Unpublished thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ottawa through the Department of English as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts. ), Aug. 1962, xii-95p.

The purpose of this thesis was to present that body of speculative literary principles that constituted Mr. Patmore's poetical theory. This thesis provided the groundwork for those subsections that were concerned with the presentation of Mr. Patmore's poetical theory. Some of its presentations were further clarified in the present thesis.

Read, Herbert, "Coventry Patmore", Collected Essays in Literary Criticism, London, Faber and Faber, 1938, 315-330p.

The author discusses Patmore as one who fought the trends of his own day. This author does service to Patmorean criticism by calling attention to the still "potential" position which Patmore enjoys in English literary history.

Reid, J.C., The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957, vii-358p.

This book is the first attempt to make a comprehensive presentation of the aesthetic and literary theories of Coventry Patmore. It makes a particular contribution in tracing the major influences upon the thought of Mr. Patmore. Though only one chapter is devoted to an explanation of Mr. Patmore's critical literary concepts, he does succeed within this short space to demonstrate the consistency of Mr. Patmore's critical position. A limited space prevents him from developing his explanations of Mr. Patmore's ideas and from presenting all Mr. Patmore's major critical literary concepts.

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## Articles

Baum, Paul Franklin, "Coventry Patmore's Literary Criticism", University of California Chronicle, XXv, No. 2, April 1923, 249-260.

This article is the only evaluation ever done of Coventry Patmore's practical criticism in the light of contemporary criticism concerning the same authors. The author concludes that Patmore's theoretical criticism is more valuable than his practical criticism. The article is important in affirming a body of critical principles used by Patmore, though he does not discuss them at length.

Bradley, Reverend Francis H., "Coventry Patmore", Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, VI, No.3, July-September, 1936, reprinted in booklet form.

A forerunner of Patmorean study, this article effectively suggests the need for a reevaluation of Coventry Patmore's fame as a poet. The author makes valuable evaluations of the theological and philosophical content of Patmore's poetry.

Marcotte, Paul, "Literature and Beauty", "Inscape", No.3, Winter 1959, 17-24p.

From the point of view of the speculative literary critic, the author analyzes the relationships that exist between literature and beauty. The article is valuable for its analysis which considers these relationships from the point of view of the maker of the literature and the experiencer of literature. Especially useful for the norm of this thesis is the fact that the author notes the degree of conformity between his own analysis and that of Mr. Maritain.

-----, "Literature and Morality", "Inscape", No.6, Winter 1961, 31-38p.

In separate sections, the author analyzes the relationships that exist between literature and morality. He considers these relationships

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with regard to the maker of literature, the experiencer of literature, and the piece of literature in se. The author also gives an explanation of Mr. Eliot's ideas in this area.

-----, "Literature and Truth", "Inscape", No.5, Spring 1961, 2-13p.

In its analysis of the relationships between literature and truth, this article makes a very useful distinction between ontological and artiological truth. It also includes an explanation of the universal and unique aspects of literature. The author gives some insight into Mr. Maritain's and Mr. Eliot's concepts of the process of making poetry.

-----, "Poetry and the Creative Process", Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa, XXX, No.4, October-December 1960, 385-399p.

This article is an explanation of the stages involved in the making of poetry from the poetic intuition to the externalized poem. It is valuable for its conciseness and for its explanation of terms. Mr. Eliot's observations on the origin of poetry are commented upon. The author also notes those parts of his analysis that have been taken from Mr. Maritain.

Patmore, Coventry, "Mr. Thompson a New Poet", Fortnightly Review, London, CCCXXV, Jan. 1894, 19-24.

This article is very important for its insight into Patmore's attempt to use Catholic philosophy and theology as subjects of poetry. Patmore reviews Thompson as a poet who has accomplished this task.

AN EVALUATION OF COVENTRY PATMORE'S  
POETICAL THEORY

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to make an "objective" evaluation of Mr. Coventry Patmore's principle of speculative literary criticism. By the word "objective" is meant an evaluation that makes use of a norm which is itself an analysis of the nature of poetry from poetic intuition to poetic expression. The method of this thesis will be to note the degree of conformity or non-conformity between the "objective" norm and the major speculative literary critical analyses or principles established by Mr. Patmore in his critical essays. This "objective" norm has been assumed for this task and consists of the aesthetic analyses of Mr. Jacques Maritain with supplementary material added from the writings of Mr. T.S. Eliot and Dr. Paul Marcotte.

In the first chapter, Mr. Patmore's concept of "intellect" as the faculty responsible for the origin of poetry - poetic intuition - is examined and evaluated. Though Mr. Patmore correctly recognizes the intuitional and non-conceptual nature of poetic intuition, his concept of "real apprehension" is seriously deficient in explaining the origin of poetry. As a new personal insight into the spiritual truths that ultimately explain

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the material order, the "real apprehension" grasped by the "intellect" accounts for the thing or objective reality that is part of the poetic intuition. However, ~~the~~ concept of "real apprehension" does not conform with Mr. Maritain's explanation of the poetic intuition as an affective union of thing and self. What Mr. Maritain's explanation means is that the poetic intuition is born in the preconscious of the intellect when a powerful emotion, resulting from a poet's reaction to reality, penetrates to some "part" of the preconscious. Objective reality and a "part" of the preconscious are thus affectively joined to become the poetic intuition that is eventually expressed in a poem. Mr. Patmore does include the idea of the poet's individuality being captured by the "real apprehension", but this notion of the poet's individuality conforms more with the poet's "particular general experience" than with the self or preconscious of the intellect that is a real part of the poetic intuition. Moreover, Mr. Patmore does try to explain the role of emotions in the origin of poetry, and, though he does implicitly recognize that they have a part to play in the origin of the "real apprehension", he does not give them an

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important enough role in the causing of the poetic intuition. Therefore, when evaluated by the norm assumed by this thesis, Mr. Patmore is deficient in explaining the role of emotions in the origin of poetry and in explaining how the self of the poet is included in the poetic intuition.

This latter deficiency is due to the lack of conformity between the "intellect" and the preconscious of the intellect. Mr. Patmore makes the "intellect" a separate faculty which is responsible for grasping "real apprehensions" or new insights into aspects of reality. Because the poet is not fully conscious of what he has grasped he must create a poem in order to come to a full conscious knowledge of his "real apprehension". On the other hand the preconscious of the intellect as explained by Mr. Maritain is not a separate faculty, but the root or apex power in man's soul from which all man's faculties emanate as from a common source. It is this "area" of man's soul that is affected by the poet's reaction to reality through a powerful emotion. When the poet has such a significant reaction to reality, a poetic intuition is born. Thus, Mr. Patmore's concept of "intellect" is deficient as an explanation of the

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origins of poetry because he makes it a separate faculty and because it is too active in the process of poetic intuition. These errors in analyses render Mr. Patmore's critical principles incapable of accounting for the universal aspect of poetry - the preconscious that is part of the poetic intuition - and too preoccupied with the content or thing that is part of the poetic intuition.

In the second chapter, Mr. Patmore's concept of imagination as the power of poetic expression is examined and evaluated. Generally, Mr. Patmore is correct in his analysis of the artistic process of making a poem. The imagination is not the faculty of poetic intuition but rather the faculty which supplies the "real words" or "objective correlatives" by which the poetic intuition is expressed. He also shows a keen appreciation for the impersonality of the art process through his concept of "poetic integrity" which requires that the poet be concerned only with expressing his "real apprehension" and not with any political or didactic purposes as such. Correctly, Mr. Patmore analyzes "style" as a quality of the poet's craft or that part of the process of poetic expression that is concerned with externalizing a conscious pattern of what the poetic intuition expressed

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should be. However, following upon his misconception of the nature of poetic intuition and of the "intellect" as a distinct faculty, Mr. Patmore makes the poet too conscious in the early stages of poetic expression. That is to say that in his explanation of poetic expression, Mr. Patmore implies that the poet can control the quality of his "objective correlatives" because he can control the quality of his "real apprehensions". This wrong emphasis might well explain why Mr. Patmore himself became one of those "Prophets Who Cannot Sing". He also gives his concept of "style" a wrong emphasis when he looks upon it as the means for expressing the individuality of the poet as contained in the "real apprehension". This gives "style" an end beyond any end since the function of style is to express the poetic intuition as contained in the conscious exemplar in the poet's mind - the artistic ideal. As a result of this double emphasis upon "style", Mr. Patmore's critical principles incorrectly stressed an artificial refinement in poetic expression.

In the third chapter, Mr. Patmore's concepts concerning the relationships between religion and poetry are examined and evaluated. His concept of the "religious

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function" of poetry is correct in so far as poetry may give insight into religious truth and may lead man to live a better life. However, Mr. Patmore is incorrect in making the "religious function" of poetry an essential function of poetry. In this connection Mr. Patmore mistakes the qualities that contribute to the "greatness" of poetry with strict artistic qualities that make a poem true and good in the artistic order. As a practical application of his more basic critical principles, his ideas in the area of poetry and religion show the deficiencies of his analysis of poetic intuition. Mistaking the poetic intuition for what is mainly an insight into reality, Mr. Patmore demands a conformity with reality that hinders artistic freedom. Incorrectly, he attempts to make the laws of poetic expression depend upon the laws of morality. Here again, Mr. Patmore is simply confusing ontological truth - the truth of reality - with artiological truth - the truth of poetry as an artifact.

In the summary and conclusions to the thesis, it is stated that Mr. Patmore's poetical theory is most correct when analyzing the process of poetic expression and most incorrect when analyzing the process of poetic

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intuition. Considering the breadth and depth of Mr. Patmore's critical analyses of the nature of poetry and poetic expression, he must be considered a major speculative literary critic of English literature. Mr. Patmore's insight into mystical experience and mystical literature still remains to be "objectively" evaluated.