SYDNEY INTELLECTUAL RADICALISM:

A QUEST FOR ANCHORAGE

(1935-1945)

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PREFACE

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to the myriad number of people who have helped me with the task in hand.

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I owe special gratitude to Mr. Donald Horne who generously allowed me access to his collection of private papers without which my task could not have been achieved. Professor Douglas McCallum very kindly gave of his time to assist with the many queries that I directed at him.

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INTRODUCTION

It is best to start at the beginning by outlining the stages by which this thesis was formulated. My curiosity was initially aroused by the work of anarchist poet Harry Hooton. Hooton's philosophy as expounded in a magazine called 21st Century: A Magazine of Creative Civilization,[1] struck me as so extreme in its proclamations of a new urban utopia that I was propelled to inquire further. In so doing, I found myself moving backwards in time to the forties and thirties and in the process discovering that Hooton had crossed paths with a small group of loosely associated young radicals centered around Sydney University in the late thirties and early forties. The group that emerged comprised: Oliver Somerville, a schoolteacher and minor poet, Harold Stewart, poet, James McAuley also a teacher and a poet, Donald Horne an undergraduate and Douglas McCallum, undergraduate.

Since most of this group had subsequently earned a respectable reputation in their respective fields, it struck me as all the more curious that they had even briefly toyed with the ideas of an anarchist poet whose "philosophy" seemed solipsistic and untenable. My curiosity was further piqued by the realization that the

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1. H. Hooton, 21st Century: A Magazine of Creative Civilization. No.1. September (1955)

intellectual grouping I had unearthed had at some stage been influenced by the ideas of John Anderson, Professor of Philosophy at Sydney University. At this stage, the focus of my curiosity shifted to the men in the middle. It seemed strange that highly intelligent minds nurtured in a tradition of freethought and critical enquiry, should also be found to be loitering on the peripheries of a highly eclectic and confused brand of philosophical anarchism. The question was why?

I then decided that in order to answer this question I needed to know the nature, extent and limitations of Anderson's influence on Somerville, Stewart, McAuley, Horne and McCallum. At the same time, I needed to know more about Hooton's ideas and the extent, if at all, to which his ideas were a folie à deux. Failing an association as intimate as this, then I wanted to know why Hooton was even faintly attractive.

This was to involve an exploration of the intellectually formative experiences of each of the individuals concerned. The pattern that I have followed has been to look at Andersonianism generally, outlining both its positive appeal and its limitations as experienced by the individuals involved, and then seeing where Hooton's views briefly intercepted the process whereby each moved towards his own personal position.

Because the scope of the thesis is limited to the tentative early exploration of young intellectuals, it

does not venture into an assessment of the ideological positions arrived at by them in the final settling. In the case of Oliver Somerville, his early death in a car accident in 1946 precluded any such development. However, with James McAuley, Donald Horne and Douglas McCallum there has been subsequent change, a development that lies over and above the immediate concerns of this study. Similarly, Harold Stewart's sequestered life in Japan lies outside our scope. The study has concentrated on approximately a decade (1935-1945) within which an intellectual fermentation was seen to be taking place.

My general method has been to look at the exchange of ideas amongst an intellectual elite grappling with unformulated yearnings for cultural anchorage. As such, the nature of my research, as a species of cultural/intellectual history, is a category fraught with intangibles. However, intellectual history is not an excuse for impressionistic ephemera; as one historian of ideas expressed it: "intellectual history though artistic, strives for the fidelity of a portrait".[2] My attempt to ensure fidelity of image has involved looking at the society in which the questing spirit was seen to function, to ask why? and to extrapolate from that. All I claim is that it illuminates one small segment of

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2. P. Gay, "The Social History of Ideas: Ernst Cassiver and After" in The Critical Spirit (edited by) Kurt Wolff and Barrington Moore, Jr. (Boston, 1967).

a society in the process of reassessing itself.

One of the problems of the thesis has been the lack of an abundant source of material. James McAuley and Harold Stewart both destroyed personal papers relating to the period. Stewart delighted in relating the fact that, before leaving Australia for Japan and hoping never to return, he conducted a "grand bonfire" in the determination to destroy "every shred of documentary evidence". Fortunately he was not able to destroy letters that he had written to Donald Horne. Horne's private collection of correspondence dealing with the period also gave me access to some of James McAuley's letters. However, this means that the letters Horne wrote in reply to McAuley, Stewart et al have been lost.

Douglas McCallum was also forced to "burn the vanities" before leaving for Oxford in 1949. This left access only to material that survived its journey to the Public Libraries - a correspondence between Hooton and Somerville, some of Hooton's letters to the poet Marie Pitt, published poetry and the letters and articles published in little magazines and in the journals and newsletters of Sydney University. Donald Horne's collection of private papers was supplemented by published autobiographical material. Similarly, Sydney University Archives has only a very small collection of material relating to the Freethought and Literary Societies of the

period and material relating to Anderson had to be gleaned from University newspapers and official journals. Given the paucity of material, some parts of the thesis suffer from a claustrophobic introspectiveness. Concrete grounding, evidence of sustained thought and the logical development of ideas has not always been possible to trace. With gaps in the continuity of correspondence it has sometimes been necessary to surmise views ascertained by passing reference in subsequent letters.

Because the research involved in this study is totally original, there is no existing state of knowledge pertaining to the subject matter. The closest approximation in type is John Docker's Australian Cultural Elites.[3] In so far as he is concerned with the intellectual traditions of Sydney and Melbourne, Docker's analysis is an interesting one to consider. Essentially, Docker argues that Sydney's intellectual tradition is characterized by a social pessimism. He outlines two streams of the Sydney tradition - the literary and the philosophical. The Literary tradition, he argues, is characterized by a European romanticism that looks to the individual, rejects society and dwells in the realm of the metaphysically symbolic.[4] Poets are seen as the best example of this tradition. Docker cites Brennan, Slessor and A.D. Hope

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3. J. Docker, Australian Cultural Elites (Sydney 1974).

4. Docker, op.cit., Introduction.

in this context. For our purposes, James McAuley is the test case. Docker is concerned with the post-war McAuley and in particular with the views he put forward in his 1959 collection of essays on the End of Modernity.[5] From this, Docker argues that McAuley differs from the Europeanist's romantic rejection of Australian society because he is anxious to identify in Australia a cultural base for his European ideas: "That McAuley should see Australia as offering a unique historical opportunity for the realization of organicist concepts marks him sharply off from the romantic idealist tradition's fundamental disaffection with Australian society".[6] This may have been McAuley's position in the fifties but the McAuley of the early forties was more in line with the Europeanist's tradition of rejection and retreat. McAuley's somewhat olympian detachment from the theatrical display of his contemporaries endowed him with an aura of bemused sagacity. In the formative period of the thirties and forties, McAuley was pessimistic about the role of the artist in a society that lacked the strength and fecundity needed to support him.[7] In general then, Docker's literary, European, romantic, tradition would apply more aptly if he had chosen to relate it to the McAuley of the forties.

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5. J. McAuley, The End of Modernity (Sydney 1959).
6. Ibid., p.82.
7. Australian Broadcasting Commission interview of James McAuley by Tony Morphett, 1966 (Transcript in Mitchell Library, N.S.W.).

Docker's analysis of the philosophical freethought tradition of Andersonianism is broadly perspicacious, especially when dealing with Anderson's pluralism. However, Docker's emphasis is on the academic Andersonians - Partridge, Passmore, Baker, Eddy and the libertarians of the fifties, all of whom lie outside the scope of this study. Docker's overall conclusion that the Sydney tradition tends towards attitudes which "express detachment from society"[8] and manifest themselves as variants of "anarchism, bohemianism and anti-authoritarianism"[9] will, in the course of the thesis be shown to be broadly applicable.

However, the Docker framework offers only a loose backdrop. Our concern is with the specific milieu of a group of intellectuals in search of cultural direction. The individuals in question existed as a group only loosely - they were not a singularly determined coterie. Rather they existed as an embodiment of a tendency - the need on both a personal and national scale for coherence and commitment. I have chosen to describe their respective quests as intellectual radicalism. By intellectual, it is here taken to mean those individuals engaged in the pursuit of ideas and aspiring to independent, creative thinking. Essentially literary and theoretical, the term refers to writers, poets and

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8. Docker, op.cit., p.157.
9. Ibid.

critical thinkers. The term radicalism is used to denote a critically questioning stance.

The quest that bestirred each individual had its roots in a commonly shared sense of cultural disorientation. Each reflected a quiet restlessness nourished into discontent by the need to refashion a viable cultural identity. On a primary level, this need was personal, the resolution idiosyncratic. From a larger perspective each respective quest reflected the need for stronger cultural guidelines.

Generally, it was a time of doubt and insecurity. Against a backdrop of Fascism in Europe, a civil war in Spain, the lure of Communism and the spectre of a world war, the climate of opinion within intellectual circles was one of confusion. Recollecting his student days in this period; John M. Ward wrote: "If we had common last thoughts as the nineteen-thirties receded into the distance it was on the necessity of reform. But in our thoughts on how to reform and on what needed reform we were in great conflict with one another".[10]

It was a time that called for clarification and purposiveness. Yet strangely enough, within the circle we are examining, discussion of the War and its issues did not figure as paramount in the process towards

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10. J.M. Ward, "Some Recollections of a Student's View of the 1930's" in Teaching History, March, 1975, p.28.

clarification. Any reference to the war was often very general and in a tone of weary cynicism. Their response was one of retreat into an over-contemplative self preoccupation. They went on with their philosophical musings and looked upon the war as an irritating obfuscation of a personal struggle to establish a position vis à vis their society. Most of them continued on as before, preoccupied with theories or with the process of disengaging themselves from Andersonianism, Anarchism and, in the manner of McAuley, generally trying to "cultivate a sensibility"[11] away from what he termed "the writers of war-blab".[12] An editorial in Honi Soit in 1939 prefigured this type of response by writing: "Did you know there was a war on? ... we mentioned it in our last issue but nobody seemed interested".[13]

The war, it seemed, only served to obscure the real dilemma experienced by Australian intellectuals of the period - the lack of a mainstream cultural identity upon which to base an on-going, creative contribution. In terms of an intellectual tradition it was an immature heritage. The "national psyche was a hotch-potch"[14] of derived sentiments and ideas held together by a "spineless timidity".[15] Altogether it was "too narrow in moral and social vision, too meagre in its possibilities of adaptation to provide a really vital source of values and

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11. J. McAuley to D. Horne, 17 May 1944 in Horne Private Papers (Woollahra, Sydney).
12. McAuley to Horne, undated, November 1943; in Horne Papers.
13. Editorial, Honi Soit, 21 September 1939, p.2.
14. B. Penton, Advance Australia - Where? (Sydney 1943) pp.8-11.
15. Ibid.

standards".[16]

The purpose of this study is to illuminate the tentative exploration in this direction. The conclusion suggested by the sum total of their searchings was that the social and cultural ambience of Australian society was too thin to nourish and sustain the visions encompassed by their individualism. By virtue of their restlessness they delineate the dimensions of their cultural framework as stolid and oppressive.

At first, for most of them, the ever-vigilant critical awareness of freethought as embodied in the social theories of Andersonianism appeared to offer a comprehensive solution. The strictures against authoritarianism and social myopia expressed through Andersonianism took on an inviolable strength. At Sydney University and in the thirties in particular, few students "remained untouched by Anderson's insistence on enquiry and investigation, his declaration that no subject was beyond examination".[17]

However, Andersonianism did not go far enough. As a method in critical awareness it was a ready tool, but for those questing after something akin to a faith with which to counter the "dull, monotonous, petty, bourgeoise atmosphere of the life around them",[18]

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16. S. Goldberg, "On Choosing Our Culture" in Melbourne Critical Review, Vol.3 (1960) p.3.
17. Ward, op.cit., p.26.
18. Penton, op.cit., p.15.

Andersonianism could not suffice. In those for whom the poetic or creative sensibility was paramount, the inner weight of dissatisfaction could not be easily resolved. Two of the individuals in question - James McAuley and Harold Stewart resolved their respective quests by a quiet and deep retreat into personalised realms of meaning. Their radicalism expressed itself as an emotional departure from a society that was seen as culturally and spiritually barren. For the others, the process towards an ultimate settling involved a brief flirtation with new alternatives. Where Andersonianism proved unsatisfying as it did for Oliver Somerville, Donald Horne and Douglas McCallum, and where escape through the poetic vision was not possible, Anarchism and a form of utopian romanticism were duly courted. This is where anarchist poet Harry Hooton proved an interesting diversion. The depth and duration of involvement with anarchism, loosely understood, varied according to the individual. The experience that united all however, was a commonly felt sense of ideological diffusion and a confused searching for solid values.

Essentially, this study is looking at processes rather than significant end results. It seeks merely to explore a rudimentary awakening on the part of young intellectuals self consciously looking for directions. As such it is not meant to suggest that the social criticisms implicit in their respective quests for

anchorage were in any way hardhitting analyses of social practices. They offered no blueprints for the realization of significant visions. Bearing this in mind and being critically aware of their limitations, this thesis looks at their collective disaffection as symptomatic of a growing awareness that the cultural and intellectual traditions of Australian society were due for reassessment.

CHAPTER 1

ANDERSONIANISM: THE TASTE OF DISCIPLESHIP

For the group of youthful iconoclasts with whom this study is concerned, radicalism was given its shape and direction by John Anderson, Professor of Philosophy at Sydney University from 1927 to 1959. During his thirty years as Challis Professor of Philosophy, Anderson influenced successive generations of students in a mode of thinking that had as its characteristic approach, an unmitigated critical awareness. Although he remained a significant figure during the whole of his time at the University, Anderson was perhaps most influential during the thirties and forties.

From the largest possible perspective, Anderson's philosophy was a "criticism of culture".[1] His was not a narrow, technical and purely academic philosophy, but rather, a "philosophically based social criticism".[2] As such, it was a comprehensive apparatus used to critically test accepted values and institutions. "From him one learned that the idols and orthodoxies of social life - the state, religion, patriotism, loyalty, the assumptions and conventions of accepted morality were legitimate subjects of philosophical argument".[3] His position was

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1. P. Partridge, "Anderson As Educator", in Australian Highway September 1958, p.50.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.51.

iconoclastic and rigorous in its insistence that the polemic approach was essential in any intellectual or cultural investigation.[4]

Anderson's social radicalism was anchored on the thoroughly empirical philosophical system of the New Radicalism championed by A.E. Moore. Setting itself against the monism of the older Idealism, the Realist position was pluralist and critical of any mystification of the real world.[5]

Idealism denies the independent existence of things outside of and separate from the mind's constitutive perception of them.[6] Andersonian realism retorts that "what exists because of me, nonetheless exist apart from or independently of me. Things remain when no-one perceives them".[7] The one reality is that of "observable things",[8] and knowledge is a matter of finding what is objectively the case, all knowledge depending on observation".[9] As such, Andersonianism was positivist and pluralist, acknowledging as real only the myriad number of facts and observable phenomena. Furthermore, within each fact there existed an irreducible complexity that precluded simplistic absolutes. This plurality of

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4. Ibid., p.52.
5. J. Anderson, "Realism and Some of its Critics" in Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy Vol.8, 1930, p.114.
6. Ibid., p.115.
7. Ibid., p.118.
8. Ibid.
9. J. Mackie, "The Philosophy of John Anderson", in The Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy Vol.40, No.2 Dec. (1962) p.265.

phenomena extended itself to minds and societies alike. Society, like everything else, was a complexity of movements and conflicts constantly clashing and interacting. To argue against this complexity was to veer towards "solidarism". Enquiry not based on a disinterested, objective and empiricist observation of plural facts, could only lead to an "illusionary" and self-interested distortion. Ultimately, this led to authoritarianism since all freedoms depended on a free play of the "plurality of movements which take their chance in the social struggle instead of having their place assigned to them from a supposedly all embracing view".[10] A constant flux of freeplay was the basis of freedom. To seek an ultimate direction was to seek homogeneity, revealing authoritarian aims. "To aim at a stable society is to attempt to do away with the conditions under which free activities are possible".[11] As a natural corollary, there was no place for a reformist or meliorist attitude of mind, since meliorism implied absolute ends and deluded itself with utilitarian motifs. Apart from this, a reformist approach was prone to a naive voluntarism. "The well intentioned reformer always produces results which he did not anticipate, helps on tendencies to which he is avowedly opposed".[12] Intellectual

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10. J. Anderson, "The Servile State", in AJPP (1943) Vol.21, p.125.
11. Ibid., p.121.
12. Ibid.

vigilance and especially as directed against "social unity", remained as the only plausible stance.

Within the University, there were two main groups that espoused and embodied Andersonian thought. These were the Literary Society and the Freethought Society. These two student bodies were closely associated, the one being the literary analogue of the other, both sharing Professor Anderson as President and inspiration. The Freethought Society was formed in 1930,[13] with Anderson as its first President. It was one of the key University societies competing for the involvement of critically minded students. The objects of the society were set forth in the University handbook as follows: "The society recognizes the primacy of science, holding that in every subject without exception, knowledge is to be gained only by observation and experiment, supports the widest possible extension of knowledge on all subjects and is opposed to every form of censorship and restriction of inquiry".[14] To this general statement of aims the society later added that their position was secularist and directed at "intellectual emancipation or the freeing of inquiry from the restraints of superstition and of government interference as essential to the establishment of political freedom".[15] The Freethought Society's

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13. D. McCallum, "Anderson and Freethought" in the Anderson and Andersonian Special Number of The Australian Highway, Journal of the Workers Educational Association, September 1958, p.72.
14. The Sydney University Handbook, 1934, p.87.
15. The Sydney University Handbook, 1935, p.98.

membership was constituted by successive waves of militant students entering the University. Anderson was the constant factor shaping its views according to his own position at a particular time. Despite changes in Anderson's political sympathies, certain doctrines remained constant in his outlook. Critical enquiry, objective realism, an emphasis on pluralism and an opposition to censorship and authoritarianism, remained at the core of his social philosophy at all times. As an Andersonian body, the Freethought Society espoused the notion that society was composed of free forces that clashed, opposed and interacted.[16] The Andersonian vision of a free society incorporated struggle as a creative process finding its own balance and constitution through plural interaction. The legitimate course for effecting change was not by a planned directive from above, but by the natural conflict of classes".[17] "The condition of society at any time is a resultant, the balance arrived at by different groups and institutions pursuing their own forms of activity, organizing and uniting to make their demands effective".[18] For this reason, Andersonians were opposed to social planning. Planning was based on a false, unscientific and ultimately "solidarist" premise - that there existed a general

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16. John Mackie, "The Freethought Society" in Candide Sydney University (1937) p.40.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.

social interest desired by all as good. To adopt such a view was to "assume national unity of interest and advocate national solidarity".[19] This was in effect, to support the class that was then in control.

As an extension of this position, Andersonianism looked on religion as a form of self imposed, internalized censorship. Apart from the fact that religion looked out to an external absolute, it was also "obscurantist", since it hindered free enquiry. With its emphasis on a life after death, religion was an anodyne of renunciation - "a turning away from the problems and conflicts of this society".[20] For the Andersonians, the religious person was the unthinking person; he was swayed by the sanctions of a dominant order that demanded abnegation, obedience and humility, whereas the only reality was in "enterprise and struggle".[21] In Andersonian terms, the only 'good' society was that in which men "freely work together, not driven on by the force of authority or swayed by dark feelings of duty".[22]

The mysterious, the dark and the emotional, were anathema to the Andersonian. He adhered to a realist aesthetic that held to a division between the "true and the false". All "true" literature, "true" art would reveal

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19. Ibid., p.42
20. J. Mackie, "Religion and Society" in Union Recorder, 28 July 1938, p.13.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.

itself for what it was, because it stood up well to the "usual methods of enquiry - logical analysis".[23] The one truth was that which pertained to logical fact. The art of "ordinary reality" was common sensical and coherent, while 'bad' art distinguished itself by a descent into mysticism and the intuitive. "Bad art is illusion, good art consists of true propositions, and creative wishes seek satisfaction in reality, not in illusion".[24] Andersonian aesthetic stringency demanded that the artistic and scientific modes be seen as synonymous expressions of a spirit of disinterested enquiry.[25] As Anderson saw it: "To take things artistically is to pursue them for their own sake ... no sentimental attachments, no higher meanings, no irrelevant antecedents or consequences are allowed to affect the positive treatment of things, their presentation as a balance of forces or sequence of phases".[26] As such, the real artist dealt with the theme in itself and not with expressionistic baubles of "personality and soul".[27] Anderson's realist and scientific aesthetic was directed primarily against romanticism. Anderson held that it was "the mark of the romantic to treat all works

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23. Margaret Mackie, "Mysticism", in Hermes, Vol.XLIII No.2 (1937) pp.11-14.
24. Ibid.
25. John Anderson, "Things To Come", in Hermes (1936) p.24.
26. John Anderson, quoted in Mackie, op.cit.
27. Frank Fowler, "The Literary Society" in, Union Recorder, 21 July 1938, p.160.

as having the single theme - Life - instead of recognizing the variety of themes and considering the working out of each in its own terms".[28] The realist had to remain a vigilant combatant against "sentimentalism, Puritanism and Bacchanalianism - the unaesthetic in all its forms".[29] Each was an expression of an illusionary self-absorption rooted to the clouding vision of excess. Andersonianism demanded a stringent, scientific approach that stood as the unaccomodating formula for excellence. For Anderson, "even if something of the nature of a dream is taken as the theme, it has to be worked out in logical order".[30] It was always a matter of some consternation when an element of sympathy of emotion, was allowed to obstruct aesthetic considerations.[31] The solution was always in a careful consideration of the aesthetic object itself, quite removed from any concern with its origins or purpose: "Solution is found in the presentation of things themselves, not in uplifting or romantic or progressive treatment of them".[32] For Anderson, the prime consideration was always the aesthetic science of aesthetic facts - "the direct consideration of beautiful things and not our attitudes to them".[33]

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28. John Anderson, "The Comic", in Hermes (1936) p.11.
29. Ibid.
30. John Anderson, "James Joyce" in Hermes (1933) p.13.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. John Anderson, Some Questions in Aesthetics, Pamphlet of the Sydney University Literary Society (1931) p.4.

Essentially a structuralist or formalist approach, Andersonianism denied significance to the integral expressionist impulse behind creative works, upholding instead, a spartan and austere reductionism. "We must refuse to take as the basis of judgement of a work the feelings or intentions or reactions of either producer or consumer ... an analysis of the subject, a presentation of its structure will be what we look for ... the realist aesthetician demands that a work should have a real theme properly worked out in its real stages".[34]

Anderson's realist, sceptical and critical style permeated the mood of the Literary Society. Reconstituted in 1931 with the object of furthering the study of nineteenth and twentieth century literature and of "aesthetic science" generally, the Literary Society faithfully echoed the Andersonian mode. In one of his presidential addresses to the society, Anderson spoke on "Literature and Life".[35] In this address Anderson reiterated his views on romanticism by decrying the romantic reliance on feeling or "spiritual exaltation".[36] To Anderson, literature embodied that same clash of human tendencies found on all levels - "the clash between man's illusions and reality".[37] For the Andersonian, the only literature worthy of the name, as with all good art,

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34. Ibid., pp.12-15.
35. Reported in the Union Recorder, 30 March 1939, p.53.
36. Ibid., p.53.
37. Ibid.

was that which exposed illusions and in this sense, acted as a tool for the "refinement of perception" in man.[38]

Anderson's presence and participation in student societies was enthusiastically received. In the Literary Society his role was, at times, something akin to that of the sagacious exemplar inspiring students to give papers on topics ranging from "Realist Aesthetics"[39] to the "Scientific Romance".[40] He himself was not loath to giving presidential addresses on "Art and Morals"[41] and to opening discussion on Australian culture. Anderson was often the focal attraction in group meetings. The minutes of the Literary Society Committee of 1931 recorded that: "it was in the smaller meetings that the Society may claim to have made a new and valuable contribution to literary study within the University, by achieving an active participation between group members and our President (Anderson) in the discussion of particular literary questions".[42]

As much a methodological approach as a philosophical system, Andersonianism was a tool of analysis seeking always to clarify confusions in a "clear-headed, cold

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38. Ibid.
39. This was the title of a paper read by McAuley to the Literary Society in 1936, now lost. Reference to it is to be found in the Literary Society Archives, Sydney University.
40. Paper given by Somerville, 1937, now lost. See Archives.
41. See above and Union Recorder, 16 April 1937.
42. Literary Society Archives, Minutes, 1931.

hearted, objective and scientific manner".[43]

Part of its attraction, was that it was exciting. It represented vitality and a dynamic, socially critical position. At its base, it exemplified a stringent radicalism. It appeared to be a positive force with which to attack social and cultural enfeeblement. It offered a definite, all pervading consistency, an unflagging logical incisiveness, a rigour and clarity of approach that amounted to a form of liberation.

In part, Andersonianism owed much of its appeal to the belief that it was the ideological mecca of the enlightened. It was the shrine at which aspiring intellectuals - the "isolated and few"[44] - could genuflect with honour. As a stance of noetic austerity purged of all romantic illusions, it dictated to its initiates strict adherence to the characteristic "mask of toughness and disenchantment".[45] As such, it represented an attractive niche for those anxious to affect an alliance with intellectually sophisticated radicalism. As the University's famous figure of rebellion, Anderson stood as a giant cognoscenti at the point of entry into an exclusive and all illuminating circle of knowledge. As an Andersonian, one shared in a "feeling of fearlessness, of pure truth untouched by human hands, of power, of being accepted".[46]

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43. D. Horne, The Education of Young Donald (Melbourne, 1967) p.213.
44. Ibid., p.222.
45. D. McCallum to author, 9 September 1975.
46. Donald Horne, "On the Fringe", in Observer 29 November 1958, p.652.

Because Anderson appeared to be the "most important person at the University", his presence on campus evoked yearnings for recognition and acceptance from those anxious to share his world view. As Donald Horne remembered it: "I began to feel a yearning when he walked by; even if I saw him only at the corner of my eye, my skin might stiffen and my hair prickle at the roots".[47] Such was his status that an unusual degree of recognition by him of one of his students was cause for "frenzied cheering and pauses for applause effects".[48]

Once admitted into the inner circle, the initiate in Andersonianism armed himself for the battle against orthodox bourgeois values by adopting an attitude of unflagging critical awareness. Sustained by Anderson's insistence that "many conflicting standards are operative in society" and that "culture is not something established by the leading interests but something that has to fight its way against them",[49] dissident or non conformist figures could find status and direction within the Andersonian fold. Andersonianism invited a proclamation of radicalism: "To someone who was rebellious but still craved to belong, Anderson and the Freethought Society were

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47. Donald Horne, The Education of Young Donald (Sydney 1967) p.205.

48. Bruce Miller to Donald Horne, 27 December 1943, in Horne Collection of Private Papers (Woollahra, Sydney).

49. John Anderson, "Freudians and Society" in Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy XVIII (1940) p.52.

Anarchy's own gift".[50] An association with Andersonianism, bestowed an automatic alliance with sophistication and intellect. It meant being part of an iconoclastic vanguard upholding freedom against the forces of oppression and the myopia of social orthodoxies.

On another level, Anderson fostered an image of radicalism attractive to the self conscious rebel. His interpretation of the "real theme" in Joyce's Ulysses for example, contributed to this. Anderson saw Joyce as an exponent of "mental struggle against the servitude imposed on him by the bourgeois world and of the well ordered universe".[51] He saw Ulysses as thematically concerned with the "escape from exile, the return from the shades, the waking up from the nightmare of history through artistic affirmation".[52] The association suggested by this was an alliance with the creative crusader, breaking out from the bonds of an internalized conformity. For the would-be Andersonian radical, the idea that he would be in league with the mature deliberations of a Joyce against the "hell" of a propitious and protected life, struggling against the "servitude of bourgeois existence"[53] added fuel to the attraction. The appeal of Andersonianism may have been

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50. Donald Horne, "On the Fringe" in Observer 29 November 1958, p.652.
51. John Anderson, "Art and Morality" in AJPP Vol.XIX (1941) p.259.
52. John Anderson, "James Joyce" in Hermes (1933) p.13.
53. John Anderson, "Art and Morality" in AJPP Vol.XIX (1941) p.259.

heightened, in this way, by its association with productive and creative values. Anderson's essay on "Art and Morality" is interesting in this context.

In the essay, Anderson contrasted art with utility: "art is not concerned with what things are for, but with what they are ... the artist is supremely productive or creative in fundamental opposition to the "consumer views".[54] Art was productive because it broke all rules, because it transgressed boundaries. In this way it stimulated new perceptions and pointed to possible resolutions.[55] As such, art was a bulwark against moralism, against a form of internalized servility. As Anderson expressed it: "the struggle between art and morality is the struggle between innovation and conservation in society ... art seeks to discover and to push its discoveries against the inertia of custom and the protection of privilege".[56] In this sense, art was a synonym for Andersonian radicalism at large.

An editorial in the Arts Journal of Sydney University (later renamed Arna) in 1934, although merely suggestive, offers another explanation for the appeal of Andersonianism to some sections of the student body. The editorial opened by drawing a picture of disillusionment and disorientation among the contemporary generation of

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54. Ibid., p.265.
55. Ibid., p.266.
56. Ibid., p.266.

students: "Our fathers plunged into the 'Great War for Civilization', and the war years and the years that followed them have had a marked effect on the emotional and intellectual trend of the generation now growing up".[57] This trend was one of dissatisfaction and loss. The editorial continued: "To many have come vague questionings and aspirations ... we have as yet nothing very happy to substitute for the discarded dogma of conventional gods".[58] Although not quite a new 'god', Anderson and Andersonianism, in this context, may well have seemed the only positive and dynamic creed. Representing a confident, coherent and comprehensive approach, Andersonianism was an ideal path for those seeking direction. It provided students with "something to be zestful about".[59] Anderson himself, and the Philosophy school in which he taught, were the exceptions in an otherwise dull and uninspiring intellectual climate. For some, Anderson was the "master with disciples fostering a spirit of enquiry in young men of unsettled judgement who looked eagerly for a leader devoted to a cause".[60]

Anderson appeared as a charismatic giant in an atmosphere of grey conformity. The University in the late thirties and early forties was a conservative institution.

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57. The Arts Journal Editorial, Vol.XIV (1934) No.2.
58. Ibid.
59. Hermes (1934) Editorial for Michaelmas edition.
60. Ibid.

Most of the Professors in the Arts Faculty were of the generation born around 1880 and were appointed as Professors in the twenties.[61]

The subjects offered within the Arts Faculty were generally limited to the traditional English, Latin and Greek, French, German, Ancient and Modern History and Mental Philosophy. For the B.A. degree, students had to take ten qualifying courses over three years. The subjects were studied primarily through a series of lectures, at which a class roll showing the numbers and names of the students present was noted. The 1935 course in English consisted of a study of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Pope, Swift, Dryden and eighteenth century literature, together with exercises in composition and grammar.[62] The History courses were restricted to British History (I) which covered the period 1485-1658 and British History (II) from 1688. The European History offered covered the period 1492 to the present. In comparison, the Philosophy course appeared to offer greater variety and a potentially more stimulating option. The choice included Logic, Greek Philosophy, Science and Scepticism, rationalism, utilitarianism, empiricism, realism and idealism as well as a study of ethics in relation to human nature and practice.[63]

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61. See Who's Who, 1940.
62. Calendar of the University of Sydney, 1935.
63. Ibid.

Despite this, the proportion of students studying Philosophy was smaller than that of other subjects. In 1937 with a total University student population of 3,378, the Arts Faculty comprised a total of 683 students. Of these, only 89 were enrolled in Philosophy. Similarly, in the examinations of 1940, 76 students finished Latin I, 164 completed English I, 134 passed Ancient History and 73 passed Philosophy I.[64] Students were generally vocationally oriented. The Faculty of Medicine consistently outnumbered Arts in the years 1937-1940 inclusive, while the Faculty of Economics and Science were also comparatively high.[65]

Within an atmosphere of earnest application to traditional courses, the freethinking and critically creative elements within intellectual circles was understandably small. Anderson and Andersonianism stood out as consistently vital and socially stimulating. Andersonianism could be made immediately applicable to the life styles of the individuals who chose to adopt it as a tool for social analysis.

The appeal of Andersonianism to the youthful radical was perhaps further heightened by its romanticized view of the role of the student. Anderson described the "student spirit" in noble terms: "Where is the student spirit to be found? It is to be found in criticism, the

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64. Calendar of the University of Sydney, 1938.
65. Ibid.

calling in question of received opinions and recognized standards. It is noteworthy that, in countries involved in revolutionary crisis students are found largely supporting the revolutionary cause, they are generally in revolt against orthodoxy".[66] Calling undergraduates to the vanguard in a "recrudescence of criticism", Anderson furthered the ideal of romantic rebelliousness. Directing the student spirit towards "contacts with the anti-commercial (artistic or proletarian) movements outside the University", he promoted a picture of dissidence as a superior consciousness rising above common and pedestrian conformity. Anderson's directive made it imperative that the student spirit be awakened in order to foil an otherwise inevitable "triumph of commercialism, of middle-class ideals, in a word, of mediocrity".[67] From the perspective of the young and impassioned radical, Andersonianism was inspiring.

There were however, limiting and conservative elements in the Andersonian position even during its most dynamic and overtly radical phase in the thirties. The strain of conservatism was mostly connected with Anderson's views on education. Himself educated at the Hamilton Academy in Lanarkshire Scotland, Anderson remained a strong advocate of the classical tradition in education with its emphasis on Greek and Latin studies. His espousal

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66. John Anderson, "Student Interests" in Candide (1937) p.23.

67. Ibid.

of the classical spirit was based on a belief in its corrective properties against commercialism and parochialism.[68] Anderson's attitude on education was that of the scholarly purist, a position that he defined as classical. By classicism, Anderson meant the preservation of a critical method applied objectively and independently to every facet of life. His concept of education was as a "conversion, a turning round of the mind",[69] or in Matthew Arnold's definition of culture, "a turning of a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits".[70] Classicism was an Hellenic ideal of seeing things as they really were.[71] Against this, Anderson contrasted the modernist adulteration of education which insisted on utilitarian ends. Modern preoccupations with the practical, resulted in a "steady fall in educational standards, the slighter literacy of the supposedly educated and a growing industrialization of educational institutions".[72] The cultivation of a critical tradition was, in this way, lost in favour of the training of social technicians. Anderson felt that modern concentration on the merely pragmatic or "good enough to get there" approach resulted in "shoddy thinking and slipshod language"[73] a situation

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68. Donald Horne, "John Anderson: University's stubborn no-man", in Daily Telegraph 14 September 1946, pp.14-15.
69. John Anderson, "Classicism" in Hermes, 1934.
70. Ibid., p.20.
71. Ibid., p.21.
72. Ibid., p.20.
73. Ibid., p.21.

that encouraged philistinism and a general level of mediocrity.

Anderson also firmly believed in the special role of the University and the Academic life. The University was a "special kind of social institution for higher learning",[74] and within it, Anderson was committed to the pedagogic life much concerned with precision. In Anderson's view, the teacher had to be part Socratic coach, part sage,[75] but above all, he had to be stimulating and capable of nurturing critical awareness in his students. The struggle against philistinism and conformity was to be upheld by the University, the one bastion of an intellectual tradition developed by an "independent interest in investigation not brought about by successive decisions of society".[76] Anderson was convinced of the need to reinforce the academic character of University life, in order to maintain a standard of excellence. Within the larger social struggle against authoritarianism and "obscurantism", the University was of paramount importance: "Clearly, what is needed, first and foremost in the way of University reform, is something that will stiffen the backs of academic

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74. J. Anderson, "University Reform" in Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy, 1935, p.214.

75. J. Mackie, "Anderson's Theory of Education" in Australian Highway, September 1958, p.64.

76. Anderson, op.cit.

workers, that will strengthen the academic forces within the University and make it function more actively in an academic way".[77] By way of academic stringency, Anderson was defending the institutional status quo of the University: "For the reinforcing of the academic character of the University it is, of course, essential that the entrance standard be maintained. The insistence on entrance qualifications will be a guarantee of genuine cultural attainment".[78]

Anderson's formal approach to education, further revealed itself in his attitude to methods of teaching and learning. Opposed to any criticism of the lecture system, Anderson wrote: "There is nothing to show that tutorials and seminars are bound to stimulate the student to more active thinking. Indeed, one might suggest that the demand for tutorials springs rather from the desire for an extended "spoonfeeding".[79] Instead of tutorials, Anderson favoured the structured lecture system that induced the student to the "practice of note taking".[80] For Anderson, lectures would always remain, "the central feature of any course of higher study"[81] because they encapsulated his notion of learning as an ordered and sequential process. Anderson's theories on education reflected an aspect of his purist approach. There was

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77. Ibid.
78. Ibid., p.217.
79. Ibid., p.219.
80. Ibid.
81. Ibid., p.220.

another side to Andersonianism as equally stringent.

The characteristic tone of an uncompromising realism tended towards the humourless and severe; it left no room for sensibility, but pushed everything into a tight, intellectual, order. There was something thin and spartan about the Andersonian line. It didn't allow for artificiality and contrivance. It denied the indulgent, the poetic and the spiritually expansive. Andersonianism was stark. It demanded order and coherence. It was a sober, logical and emotionally frugal stance - a kind of atavistic puritanism that condemned the "fanciful and fabricated".[82] Potentially, it was prone to a premature ossification of its creative character to that of a formulistic, critical negativism.

The limitations within Andersonianism were intrinsic to it as a creed. Anderson himself was responsible for its vunerability primarily because he took his role so seriously. Such was the severity of his integrity that it led to a form of intellectual sanctification that bred an exaggerated and unhealthy fear of exposure and heresy. Andersonianism bred "harshness in social relations, artificiality and restraint" amongst its adherents housing within its structure an "impossibly brittle intellectual community".[83] The remorseless purity of Anderson's position fostered a form of

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82. J. Anderson, Some Questions In Aesthetics, Sydney, 1931, p.17.

83. D. Horne, "On the Fringe" in Observer 29 November 1958, p.652.

intellectual aridity that reduced his followers to negative images of himself. Although writing of a slightly later period, Peter Coleman's recollections of his undergraduate years in the late forties reinforces the image of a clique-like exclusiveness centered around John Anderson. Such was the idolization of Anderson by his disciples, that direct mimicking of his idiosyncratic speech patterns and habits was almost de rigueur. About Andersonianism, Coleman wrote: "It had its own rules and rituals, building on all adherents a stammer, a stoop, pipe sucking, reading detective stories singing bawdy anti-clerical songs, contemptuous irreverence for everybody except someone called John. Occasionally, one of them, (Andersonians) would remark, 'of course John is the only man in the world completely without illusions'."[84] With Anderson at the head of a fount of wisdom, Andersonianism bred its own hierarchy and its own brand of authoritarianism. As one contemporary remembered him: "he was like an atomic explosion creating around him a desert in which nothing could grow but his own ideas".[85] Anderson demanded loyal adherence and allegiance from his followers. He fostered disciples - a relationship ultimately

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84. P. Coleman, "John Anderson: Recovering From a Stammer" in Bulletin 30 July 1962, pp.27-30.

85. W.M. O'Neil, "Anderson, the Man and his Influence" presented at Andersonian Symposium, Sydney University, 23 March 1977.

constrictive and stultifying to those anxious to assert their own independence as adults. The teacher-pupil relationship was, because of the stature of the teacher involved, a particularly heavy one to carry for any great length of time. Sooner or later Andersonians rebelled.

CHAPTER 2

HARRY HOOTON: A FIRST LOOK

When the disenchantment with Andersonianism set in, the temptation was to stray into what seemed more exotic pastures. Harry Hooton and his philosophy of anarcho-technocracy proved one such outlet.

Completely outside the disciplined ambience of the University, Hooton stood at the opposite end to Anderson and Andersonianism. A self educated 'philosopher' and poet, Hooton was born in London in 1908 and came to Australia in 1927.[1] His passion was for argument and theorizing. Having a propensity for ideological involvement, Hooton's tendency was to absorb whatever radicalism was in the air.

Arriving in Australia as a youth, just before the onslaught of the Depression, Hooton evolved a philosophy of romantic introspectiveness. During the early thirties, when Hooton was "wandering around all over Australia"[2] experiencing poverty and undergoing what he later described as "a search for political understanding",[3] he found solace in a philosophy of freedom and

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1. H. Hooton to J. Hargrave, 7 August 1950, letter detailing biographical detail, in MS.2778, Australian National Library.
2. Ibid.
3. H. Hooton to M. Pitt, 16 July 1939 in H.H. Pearce Papers, MS.1657 (ANL).

irresponsibility. Hooton delighted in the emotionally indulgent. He rationalized his position in a philosophy of expansiveness, what he termed the "nomad's way" of youthful freedom.[4] In the same manner he flirted with the philosophy of Krishnamurti. Hooton recalled this period, in a letter to fellow poet - Marie Pitt: "It was a wet, cold day in Melbourne (1934) ... my boots let the wet in and I was thoroughly miserable. I came to Krishnamurti. I decided to apply a formula of his ... he says you must live without crutches. On my problem he would say - miserable? Well, god-given experience ... get into it, live intensely. Live in the now whether of joy or sorrow".[5] Hooton subsequently developed a world view pivoted on the intense self absorption evident in these early explorations.

In the late thirties, Hooton settled in Newcastle where he worked at odd jobs while he undertook what he saw as his main task of writing poetry. During this time, he was also evolving a philosophy embellished with working-class sentiments and a highly eclectic pot-pourri of anarchism, technocracy and utopianism. By no means a profound thinker and tending towards the solipsistic and eccentric, Hooton's ideas don't bear

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4. H. Hooton, transcript of taperecording No.1 in T.R.C. 95-1-11 (ANL).

5. Hooton to Pitt, undated letter, 1938. Also see letter dated 30 March 1937 in Pearce Papers.

well under the strain of logical analysis.

However, for those, who, like Oliver Somerville, found his ideas intriguing, the initial appeal was not based on empathy secured through reason. Rather, the appeal was on an emotional level generated by Hooton's zestful drive. Hooton's self-image was that of an artist - iconoclastic, poetic and prophetic. He was essentially a romantic; youthful in spirit, he was caught on the web of the Artist-As-God tangle. But he was also dynamic. He offered a philosophy full of fantasy and freedom. On the basis of this attraction, he acted as a catalyst for those still searching for a definition of their own position. Hooton's significance was as a backdrop against which others bounced their rudimentary views. For those who, like Oliver Somerville, had graduated from Andersonianism into a vacuum of critical negativism, Hooton provided an interesting diversion. Similarly as we shall see, Harold Stewart, James McAuley and Donald Horne each encountered and interacted with Hooton. Hooton was never for long an important figure in their respective quests for a cultural foothold. In fact, initial curiosity in Hooton as an anarchist poet, quickly dissipated upon closer analysis, into dismissive contempt. However, Hooton did serve as a brief milestone on their respective paths towards their eventual mature development.

Prior to Hooton's involvement with this circle of Sydney intellectuals, his efforts in Newcastle were directed at breaking down his sense of isolation and establishing a relationship with poets wherever he could find them. Driven by a need to establish connections with a literary and intellectual fraternity, Hooton wrote to poets and editors of literary journals. Ted Turner, editor of the journal Bohemia[6] and the poet Marie Pitt, were two of his main outlets.[7] The themes of his letters to Turner and Pitt revealed Hooton as a yearning romantic. Anxious to extricate himself from his state of literary obscurity, Hooton poured out his ideas on poetry, philosophy and politics. In this way he allowed himself release from his sense of exile, while simultaneously reinforcing the direction of his ideas. Thinking of himself as an intellectual anxious to "know what it is all about",[8] but stranded in Newcastle like "Robinson Crusoe would have been at the North Pole",[9] Hooton was acutely aware of "intellectual loneliness".[10] Seeing himself as a sensitive mind soaring "higher than (his) fellows, a little aloof from

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6. Bohemia (Journal of the Bread and Cheese Club) Melbourne, 1939-45.
7. Hooton-Turner correspondence, Pearce H.H. Papers, MS. No.1657 (NLA).
8. Hooton to Marie Pitt, 12 November 1936 in Pearce Papers.
9. Hooton to Pitt, 16 December 1936, in Pearce Papers.
10. Hooton to Pitt, ibid.

the herd",[11] Hooton bemoaned his isolation. Surrounded by philistinism, Hooton was frustrated and restless . "I foam and fret while people talk race horses, beer or small talk".[12]

The underlying theme in all of Hooton's letters in this period was an intense affirmation of freedom and creativity. Based on an extreme romanticism, Hooton's philosophy exalted the deep feeling, sensitive traits of the creative soul. Extolling the solitary introspection of the hypersensitive spirit, Hooton wrote to Marie Pitt in glowing melodramatic tones: "I love the sea, jealously, I want it rearing and smashing around the heads, when it is wet, miserable, leaden sky, when it is raining and I am crying, when I am alone with it".[13] Emotional and romantic - this was the spirit governing Hooton's outlook on life. Continuing in this vein, but injecting anguish and intensity into the flow, Hooton wrote: "I am eternally hoping that I'd find someone who would throw something out of their souls".[14] Hooton envisaged that this cathartic act would occur through poetry, the one medium of creativity capable of bringing "heaven to earth's sordid monotony".[15] Hooton's urge for creative

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11. Hooton to Pitt, 16 July 1939, Pearce Papers.
12. Hooton to Pitt, 16 December 1938, Pearce Papers.
13. Hooton to Pitt, 30 March 1937, Pearce Papers.
14. Hooton to Pitt, undated letter, Pearce Papers.
15. Hooton to Pitt, 15 February 1937, Pearce Papers.

expression was characteristically expansive: "I love everything intense. I'd love to write in lumps of earth or mud or babies cries".[16]

Hooton was prone to a form of poetic saturnalia richly self indulgent. "It is beautiful to respond to moods, to yield to everything".[17] Hooton prided himself in being somehow removed from the common sensibility. He identified with social disaffiliation and a non-conformist rejection of accepted social habits. This was the mood of a letter to Marie Pitt in which he recalled earlier jaunts around Australia. Referring to a book of poems that he took with him on his travels, Hooton wrote: "I kept it in my swag a dozen years ago and wept and wouldn't even wash and was blissfully oblivious to uplift or ambition".[18]

Convinced by his own heightened sense of historical significance, that he was in league with the future, Hooton was seeking an ideological springboard from which to launch his assault while still in Newcastle. He wrote to Marie Pitt of his efforts to muster like-minded visionaries: "My time has been divided between trying to form a political group here and trying to sell poems and stories. My chief needs now are to make contacts with young men who think something like I do on political

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16. Ibid.
17. Hooton to Pitt, 15 February 1937, Pearce Papers.
18. Ibid.

questions. The difficulties of course are finding any men young or old who think on politics in anyway, in fact, who think at all".[19]

Although nothing came of these attempts, the interesting point to note here is that Hooton's political consciousness carried with it the remnants of an anarchism at least 25 years old. The political group that he wanted to form had been sanctioned by an old I.W.W. personality - 'Ma' Westbrook.[20]

Annie Westbrook had been one of the original members of the Western Australian I.W.W. group formed in Fremantle in 1914.[21] It was characteristic of both the eclectic and romantic nature of Hooton's radicalism, that he echoed some of the ideals of the then defunct International Workers of the World. Continuing his letters to Marie Pitt, Hooton revealed the curiously old fashioned nature of his radicalism: "I sometimes suspect that the old unionism, solidarity and political honesty died with the first decade of this century. That the promise of Australia is dying, but only sometimes. I still think that this country, a young country with its face towards the future may yet win recognition in the fight for newer systems with more truth and less

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19. Hooton to Pitt, 14 February 1939, Pearce Papers.
20. Hooton to Pitt, 14 September 1939: "the group has been ok'd by Ma Westbrook from Sydney", in Pearce Papers.
21. I. Turner, Sydney's Burning (Adelaide 1967).

error in a new world here and now".[22] Given Hooton's romantic nature, his enthusiasm for the I.W.W. movement was hardly surprising. The radicalism of the "Wobbly" movement (as the I.W.W. was colloquially known) at the turn of the century, was based on an idealistic and naive escapism. Annie Westbrook, when fighting conscription into the "capitalist's war" of 1914, did so with a "passionate dream of happy children dancing in the sunlight of a glorious earth made new by the intelligent application of the One Big Union".[23] The anarchism of the I.W.W. movement was particularly well suited to the radical proclivities of a poet and visionary. It was a form of radicalism that offered something to everyone who found himself on the outside. It appeared a just and heroic, noble and dignified stance of opposition.

The appeal of the Wobbly cause has been succinctly expressed by Ian Turner in his study of Sydney anarchism: "The I.W.W. was an extraordinary movement. Its total rejection of the values of bourgeois society had won it the devotion of all kinds of people ... men who fought with their poems and men who fought with their fists".[24] Its appeal to Hooton, even in its diffused form some years after its demise as an active

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22. Hooton to Pitt, 14 September 1939, Pearce Papers.
23. Turner, op.cit.
24. Ibid.

movement, was as a tool for romantic mythmaking.

Hooton joined the Peace Pledge Union in 1939 as a substitute commitment to a form of I.W.W. anarchism. Writing to Marie Pitt, he enthused over his newly found cause: "War is not only the sole enemy, it is over and above that, the only thing which, by its threat, can unite in all, workers, thinkers and dreamers into the One Big Union of the Future. I used to deplore the absence in Aussie (sic) of a branch of the Industrial Workers of the World - I still do - but its very absence for so long makes its 'substitute' far and away better. Peace is the positive policy of the working class revolution".[25]

Hooton's dual preoccupations with poetry and political commitment during this period in Newcastle, reflected his self-image as a creative artist and intellectual. This constant component of his make-up sprang from an underlying visionary impulse that quested after significance and envisaged radical change. This impulse eventually crystallized into a philosophy that encompassed monumental, utopian dimensions. Hooton's philosophy was fired by a desire for absolute, illimitable freedom as a prerequisite for creativity. For this reason, anarchism or "pure absolute freedom for everyone, everything" was the "perfect philosophy".[26]

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25. Hooton to Pitt, 16 July 1939, Pearce Papers.
26. Hooton to Pitt, 7 April 1939, Pearce Papers.

Towards this end, Hooton became salvational in his drive to awaken others: "the thing that worries me is that the mass of my fellow strugglers are so lethargic. There is so much to do, to say, to laugh at".[27] Engrossed in the dream of an illimitable creative energy, Anarchism became for Hooton, the illuminating torch. In an undated letter to Marie Pitt in 1940, Hooton declared his position: "I am set finally and firmly on the course of anarchism. Pure absolute freedom for everyone. Nihilism. Not the conceit of youth since I am 32. I shall not change".[28] Anarchism remained the touchstone for Hooton's poetic effusions. It was also the basis of a homespun "philosophy" that evolved into a body of idees fixes. This was his philosophy of anarcho-technocracy about which more will be said in another chapter. Suffice it to state here that its basis was the romanticized poetic free-spirit. With this philosophy, Hooton attracted others who, if only for a short time, shared with him, a common desire to "confound the values of a rotten world".[29]

The conviction that he had something positive to say, was strong enough for Hooton to entertain notions of going into print. The literary journal, as a vehicle for "sane, social, criticism against existing abuses", was always an attractive proposition.

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27. Ibid.
28. Hooton to Pitt, undated, 1940, [illegible] Pearce Papers.
29. Hooton to Pitt, undated, 1938, [illegible] Pearce Papers.

Writing to Ted Turner editor of Bohemia in 1941, Hooton made vague references to a prospective journal to be called The Point, although he preferred the title Future.[30] Nothing came of this proposal, although it is interesting to note that at a later date and outside the scope of this study, Hooton did eventually publish a magazine which he called 21st Century.[31] Both titles - Future and 21st Century reflected the essential nature of his philosophy as a telelogically directed utopianism.

Hooton's earliest impulse towards a new world vision, as first proposed for The Point, was more specifically directed against the barbarities of war and the demise of civilized values therein implied. The magazine was going to try to rectify these crudities by seeking to "bring understanding to our corner of the hub bub".[32] It was to be the vehicle for those few individuals who saw "further or higher than this war", it was to "consolidate their grouping and to safeguard some cultural values from the wreck".[33] Although at this stage not actively propounding an anarchist cleansing of the muddled discolourations that emanated from political parties, Hooton was nonetheless seeking to arm

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30. Harry Hooton to Ted Turner 17 September 1941, in Pearce Papers.
31. 21st Century: The Magazine of a Creative Civilization, No.1 September (1955); No.2 August (1957).
32. Harry Hooton to Ted Turner, Pearce Papers.
33. Harry Hooton to Ted Turner, 20 June 1941, in Pearce Papers.

himself with the weapon of the creative word - the vehicle of letters.

In this task, as always, he sought fraternal allegiance. Constantly anxious to secure fellowship with kindred spirits, his letters to Ted Turner and Marie Pitt echoed with his needs for reassurance and acceptance: "I need responses to what I call my distinct value in art. I want to compare, to fit in. I hope to extend if only by letter, my fellowship with others".[34] Although halfway convinced of his significance, Hooton's isolation undercut his confidence and sent him in search of reassurance. "I don't know yet whether I am an illusion or self delusion as a poet. Do you think my deliberate crudity is a sop to my inability or incompetence?"[35] Or again: "I am tired of self criticism and self sufficiency. Your comments on my poems are worth more to me than anything. But I am not sure that anyone in Australia could be pleased by my poetic offerings".[36]

The nature of the poetic offerings that Hooton was then using as his key of entry into literary circles, was a collection of thirteen poems published under the title, These Poets.[37] The title poem of this collection, hinted at the creed that would later become Hooton's line.

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34. Hooton to Turner, 7 April 1941, Pearce Papers.
35. Hooton to Pitt, 31 March 1939, Pearce Papers.
36. Hooton to Pitt, 16 July 1939, Pearce Papers.
37. Harry Hooton, These Poets (Newcastle, 1940).

Decrying the useless and stale preoccupations of poets with the "outworn creeds and rusty truths of moping, maudlin, moonlit nights", Hooton advocated a forward quest for "innovations and the light of day". Impatient with the "backstreams of fancy where the surge of life is lost", Hooton was anxious to redirect man away from the known and into the future.[38] Constantly urging "a new birth" and a "fight for a new life for Man",[39] Hooton's message throughout the book was consistent with the tone and preoccupation of his letters. This preoccupation was with the affirmation of man's illimitable powers for growth.

> "And we shall be greater than these
> In the birth of the Super-man
> When we arise from our knees
> As only the strong Gods can.
> When humanity makes the ascent
> Of the arduous mountain side
> When we cease to crawl and repent
> But soar with pride".[40]

The central core underlying Hooton's later philosophic stance, was already evident in these early pieces. Hooton's position was based on an exuberant, romantic view of man's boundless powers for selftranscendence. It was a vitalist's position, ostensibly anxious to decry a maudlin and morbid anthropocentrism on one level, while actually affirming it on another. This affirmation hinged on his understanding of anarchism and the

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38. Ibid., p.2.
39. Ibid., p.8.
40. "Impertinence", in op.cit., p.11.

creative effusion. A more extensive exegesis of Hooton's position will be tackled later. Suffice it here to pinpoint the formulation of this line in its more overtly life affirming style.

> "I want life and not its purpose
> I want everything
> I am everything
> I am the ocean, its unceasing roar"[41]

Hooton's philosophy was infused with an avid faith in the future. In his poem "The Gods We Crucify", he expressed this in a particularly interesting manner. Section three begins with the lines: "Time stands still in Europe ... the red-hot God of dying day stands still". It continues with an intriguing implication -

> "But the Sun of our soul will arise
> In Australia hope is alive
> ...Dispel in your girders oh Sun,
> The Dust of the past from our eyes.
> ...Standing tip-toe, quivering,
> a nation looks eternally
> To where the sun of morning brings
> To new Gods a history".[42]

Echoing a letter to Marie Pitt, in which he expressed faith in Australia as a young country with its "face towards the future",[43] Hooton was here, once more, apparently expressing hope for Australia as the birth-place for a renaissance of the spirit. But Hooton was no nationalist. National rivalry and conflict, often

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41. "The Sea", in ibid., p.12.
42. "The Gods We Crucify" in ibid., pp.14-15.
43. Hooton to Pitt 14 March 1939, Pearce Papers.

resulting in war, was anathema to a man whose vision was riveted on a post-national, future brotherhood.[44] His reference to Australia was not an expression of overt nationalism. Rather, it reflected an attempt to legitimize an internationalist and supra-historical world ideal through the token of historicity. Hooton's real concern, was with the dimensions and delineations of "the new gods", and not with their mere historical context. Australia was incidental to Hooton's real focus of interest which was directed, at once, to the unleashing and harnessing of a transfiguring creative energy - to the formulation of hitherto unimaginable futures. On this note, it is fitting to quote the last poem in These Poets in which Hooton proclaimed: "the one success, the heedless extravagant leap in the dark. Life is an extravagant reckless, foolish leap in the dark".[45] The 'dark' referred to the tunnel through which man would pass and metamorphose to emerge into a new future where he would reign as almost immortal: "He will live ever, and only in new, ever new births into the future. He will die only in doing or saying the things he did or said yesterday".[46]

Here then, was a philsophy of romantic expansionism, an efflorescence of the self, supremely individualistic

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44. H. Hooton, Letter to Editor, Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners Advocate, 20 October 1938.
45. "Life is Ours" in These Poets, op.cit., p.22.
46. Ibid., p.24.

and visionary. A vitalist theatre of extravagant design, it embraced the god-like sovreignty of the creative individual. An inexorable activating vision, disdainful of the unimaginative, it was a philosophy of utopian grandeur, of the infinitely possible.

CHAPTER 3

HOOTON AND SOMERVILLE: AN ICONOGRAPHY OF DISSENT

Hooton's romanticism was the essential component in his interaction with Oliver Somerville. It drew Somerville from his disillusionment with the strict, intellectual, discipline of Andersonianism, towards the promise of a free flowing immersion in individualism. Of the questing radicals encompassed by the milieu of Andersonianism in the 1930's, Somerville was the most flamboyant. Galvanized by a critical perspective on the society around him, Somerville sought a creed that would help him define his position vis à vis that society. Highly romantic, idealistic and theatrical, Somerville revelled in the role of the radical outsider. His stance as a critical intellectual, coupled with his image as a poet, pushed his radicalism towards an outré and bohemian excess. Animated by alternate fits of effervescent radicalism and gloomy self abnegation, Somerville quested after intellectual and emotional anchorage. Initially this was expressed as a fervent Andersonianism.

Somerville enrolled as a first year undergraduate at Sydney University in 1934. He majored in Philosophy and English and graduated in 1938 with second class honours.[1] During his undergraduate years, Somerville

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1. Guide To The Records of the University of Sydney, 1938.

was an Andersonian. Unfortunately, there is very little documentation of his initial discipleship during these years, except for references to his involvement with the Literary Society and his presentation of Andersonian papers at group meetings.[2] In a letter that he wrote to Honi Soit in 1938, Somerville's Andersonian tinge was revealed by his vehement attacks on authoritarianism. The main thrust of the letter was a strong objection to the idea of compulsory military training and to the bureaucratisation of all political power. Arguing from a characteristically Andersonian viewpoint, Somerville railled against self interested institutions that suppressed opposition to Government policy.[3] On another occasion, supporting Anderson's criticisms of the Bolshevik revolution, Somerville outlined its failures and "illusionary" achievements. His main point was to draw a picture of Stalinist Russia as little removed from fascist totalitarianism. His Andersonianism revealed itself in his highly critical evaluation of Stalinist strictures on free enquiry.[4]

Reference to Somerville's Andersonianism was evident in Donald Horne's description of him as an "old

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2. Sydney University Literary Society Archives, 1937-40.
3. O. Somerville, "More Compulsory Training" in Honi Soit, 27 October 1938, p.3.
4. O. Somerville, "Progress and the USSR", in op.cit., 29 June 1939, p.3.

freethinker from the great days of several years before".[5] His resolute rejection of a bourgeois and commercial society elevated Somerville to the status of a 'martyr' to the cause.[6]

However, for martyrdom to be sustained, it needs to be fed and stoked by an on-going connection to the cause. For Somerville, Andersonianism failed to maintain its dramatic attraction and Anderson himself fell from grace. The disillusionment with Andersonianism was particularly strong in the early 1940's. By that time, Somerville had graduated and was teaching in the country, while simultaneously reassessing his previous beliefs. Anderson had impressed his students as a "tremendously courageous and original man",[7] but also as a "childish figure", constantly wanting "congratulations and affirmations in everything he did".[8] He was too demanding of discipleship, too much prone to a distancing paternalism. In part, Somerville's revolt was against a father figure who clung too persistently to a pedagogic role. Eventually, Somerville came to feel that he could not enjoy Anderson's company on a basis of equality, but that the pupil-teacher relationship would always intervene: "The relationship with Anderson still haunts and hampers me",[9] he wrote to Donald Horne.

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5. D. Horne, The Education of Young Donald (Melbourne 1967) p.217.
6. Ibid.
7. John Rybak in an interview with the author, Sydney University, 1976. Rybak was an Arts student and Co-editor of the Arts Journal, Arna in 1944.
8. Ibid.
9. O. Somerville to D. Horne, 20 June 1942 in Horne Papers (private collection) Sydney.

Somerville lamented that with Anderson, one could "never fight clear into companionship",[10] Anderson wouldn't allow it. On this level, both Anderson and Andersonianism stifled the emotional autonomy of individuals anxious to assert independence.

On another level, the controlled serenity of the logic and the clarity of its formulations, rendered Andersonianism ultimately unsatisfying to temperaments more emotionally and romantically inclined. Somerville was too much infused with the theatrical and melodramatic to ever feel completely at home with Andersonianism. Instead he veered towards a more emotionally sustaining creed.

Hooton's philosophy was attractive to those skinned to the bone by the arid, unpoetic and intellectual vigour of Andersonianism. Here was a mood and perspective on life, very different from the dictates of Andersonianism. Hooton's approach was expressionistic; it anchored itself on feelings. As such, it was naturally attuned to the vibrations of the romantic personality. Oliver Somerville's whole demeanour was deeply romantic and theatrical. Donald Horne's vignette of his friend, paints a very memorable impression: "Somerville looked as if he had just come from serving on the barricades in the Easter Rising in Dublin. His dark eyes flashed as he made the

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10. Ibid.

generous gestures of a street orator; he wore the clothes of an Irish rebel - no tie, collarless shirt fastened at the neck with a stud, and covered with a white scarf tucked into an overcoat. On some days he wore white sandshoes (often without socks). At the slightest opportunity he would sweep off his hat with such theatrical gallantry that he might also sweep away some of the bystanders. He was more likely to recite passages from fin de siecle poets than to set up an inquisition on the 'true' and the 'false' in literature".[11]

Somerville was ripe for an association with Hooton. Fundamentally, their association was based on the need to cater for a predisposition to an enclave-like separatism. Together, they shared an image of themselves as "fellow libertarians in the same oppressive society".[12]

Just precisely when the relationship between Hooton and Somerville first got under way, is not documented. The earliest letter to Hooton from Somerville, was in March 1942.[13] Somerville was then a young schoolteacher in his mid twenties. Hooton was thirty four years old, living in Newcastle and working for the Egg Board.[14]

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11. Donald Horne, The Education of Young Donald (Sydney 1967) pp.216-17.
12. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton 13 September 1942 in the Hooton-Somerville Papers, MSS 569 (Mitchell Library) Sydney.
13. Harry Hooton-Oliver Somerville Papers.
14. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 5 September 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

In his spare time, Hooton wrote poetry. Somerville first wrote to Hooton after the publication of the latter's book of poems, These Poets. Somerville read the slim volume of verse and subsequently showed it to his friend, Harold Stewart, who, at that time, was considered "a rising Sydney poet".[15] Stewart's initial interest in Hooton, was as a "Whitmanesque proletarian poet from provincial Newcastle".[16]

The relationship between Somerville and Hooton was cemented on a mutual interest in poetry. Differing in their respective styles,[17] their earliest exchanges on the subject were mildly querulous and at times defensive. With trepidation and prefacing the reception of his poetry with the observation that it would prove to be "anathema in matter and manner",[18] Somerville sent Hooton a manuscript of his verse for Hooton to evaluate. Somerville was initially uncomfortable with Hooton's style.[19] The free flowing, rhetorical and unstructured character of Hooton's poetry, coupled with its obviously didactic and proselytizing manner, sent Somerville scurrying to the defence of the traditional mode: "I am shamelessly sure that poetry doesn't have to be

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15. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton 11 July 1942.
16. Douglas McCallum in a letter to the author 9 September 1975.
17. See Appendix A and Appendix B.
18. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton 10 March 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
19. See Appendix B.

oratorical or message fraught to be good ... it doesn't have to look to the future".[20] For Somerville, good poetry was the result of "imagery used harmoniously within itself and in relation to the development of the poem's theme".[21]

Despite their differences, Somerville proceeded to solicit Hooton's candid criticism of his poetic offerings.[22] In this manner, Somerville established the initial character of the association as that of a service in mutual evaluation - a friendship in literary criticism and intellectual exchange. A favourable response from Hooton left Somerville elated: "your letter made me sit up and purr and purr, me pitiful in my vanity. You overrate my fugitive scribblings but it's good to hear it from one so qualified to judge".[23]

Hooton marvelled at Somerville's "discipline of form", while the latter dismissed it as merely a crutch: "... my guilty secret is that it's the only method possible to me. Having a mould makes it so much easier for me to find content".[24] On the other hand, Somerville lauded Hooton for his "rhythmic and riming freedom -

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20. O. Somerville to H. Hooton, 10 March 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Somerville to Hooton, 11 April 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
24. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 11 April 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

shackles which I marvel at your being able to bend to your purposes".[25]

Hooton's estimation of Somerville's worth as a poet was just as inflated. He saw Somerville as the measuring stick by which to gauge the worth of as yet unknown talents. Hooton thus wrote about James McAuley: "would it pay me to cultivate his acquaintance... should I go out of my way, without kidding, is he another Somerville?"[26] Hooton claimed to see in Somerville's work "the raillery and the perception of true artistic value".[27] He bestowed on Somerville a depth and complexity of purpose that infused his work with dignity and significance. Hooton persisted with Somerville's poetry, because he claimed to see in it the stirrings of a complex activity - the relating of libertarianism to a new aesthetic. "What you are trying to do", he wrote to Somerville, "unknown to you, doubtless, is giving your verses a value beyond the letter ... but of course that is the meaning of meeting each other, each other's work - that we can try to find each other's real selves".[28] The relationship spun off from a central axis of self-importance mutually

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25. Ibid.
26. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 8 August 1942, Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
27. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 2 November 1942, Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
28. Ibid.

promulgated. The understanding was that they were intellectuals and artists together. Supporting each other in a self conscious union as creative iconoclasts, they fostered an "us against them" atmosphere, in which they sheltered secure in the belief that they at least "saw through the traditional reactionary futilities".[29] They saw themselves in the creative vanguard, anxious to disseminate the truly revolutionary aspects of creative effort. Unlike the "milk and water muddlers"[30] who dominated the orthodox literary circles, Hooton and Somerville saw themselves as exponents of a more revolutionary perspective - one that aimed at "throwing javelins, thunderbolts at something".[31] The aim was to be "fundamentally revolutionary and anti-bourgeois".[32]

The significance of their preoccupation with poetry, as expressed in their early correspondence, was that it qualified them in their own estimation as intellectuals. For Hooton, poetry was the expression of a unique sensibility. Poetry was something indefinable and its value eternal: "Poetry lives past its so called time ... the fabric of These Poets won't wear out for another couple of hundred years".[33]

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29. Somerville to Hooton, 24 August 1942, Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
30. Somerville to Hooton, 1 August 1942, the reference is to Clem Christensen of Meanjin Quarterly, Guy Howarth of Southerly and Rex Ingamells of the Jindyworobak group.
31. Hooton quoted in a letter by Somerville, 1 August 1942, in Hooton - Somerville Correspondence.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.

Hooton lent weight to the possible characterization of his association with Somerville as that of the "asylum of the starved egoist".[34] The association provided the opportunity to expound on himself and his poetry, and to inflate his achievements. Hooton looked upon his own work as "meticulously, exactly sculptured lines of grace that will live on because they are breaths of indefinable utterances".[35] Hooton's image of a monumental creativity in his own work was bolstered by Somerville's flattery. Very vaguely, Somerville claimed to see in Hooton's work "themes fundamentally permanent in humanity".[36]

The significance of all this talk on poetry and mutual self aggrandizement was that it prepared them for and cemented a belief in themselves as an iconoclastic vanguard. The underlying bond in their association was a shared feeling of disaffection and estrangement. As "fellow libertarians in the same oppressive society",[37] they shared a sense of critical awareness. The urge to iconoclasm and the resultant exclusiveness, fostered an element of bohemian posturing. In order to better understand this we need to look into the form and direction of their mood of disaffection.

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34. G. Snyderman and W. Josephs, "Bohemia The Underworld of Art" in Social Forces Vol.18 December 1939.
35. Hooton to Somerville, 8 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
36. Somerville to Hooton, 24 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
37. Somerville to Hooton, 13 September 1942, Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

The initial libertarian impulse in Hooton was fired by the desire to overthrow systems of repression and to denounce control by any political creed. Capitalism in particular was the object of his spleen: "If I were content with capitalism as the other slaves, I wouldn't be frustrated".[38] Seeing himself as one of the few "good revolutionary commentators in the country",[39] Hooton had, before his association with Somerville, established a mise en scène for his political theories in the Letters to the Editor columns of the Newcastle Morning Herald and Miner's Advocate.[40] At that stage, still isolated in Newcastle, the Herald provided the only scenario on which he could wage a battle against Stalinism, Fascism and Capitalism.

Hooton saw himself as an intellectual for whom life held a multidimensional mystery and complexity beyond mere political creeds. The only reality was to question and never presume to know: "Every creed, code or formula, if obeyed in its entirety or accepted without reserve drives its slaves mad".[41] Hooton believed that he stood for a reasoned and critical awareness of the complexity of life. His enthusiasm was quickened by the belief that "life is too big to be bottled up in a

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38. Hooton to Somerville, 10 February 1943, Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
39. Hooton to Somerville, 19 December 1944
40. Newcastle Morning Herald and Miner's Advocate.
41. Harry Hooton in NMH and MA 5 February 1938, p.15.

formula. Principles kill development. Life moves. Life is not definite, so it may not be defined, still less may it be directed into the narrow channels prescribed for it by adherents of any past political system. We cannot control life".[42] Hooton was calling for the free interaction of all life forces, for a recognition of its fluidity.

More specifically, Hooton's libertarian impulse revealed itself in an anxious denunciation of Fascism. He was particularly riled by the adulterations perpetrated in Stalinist Russia. He opposed Stalinism as the "Russian brand of fascism".[43] Although no Trotskyite,[44] Hooton's sympathy was with the "left opposition" because it represented the only on-going quest for truly revolutionary visions.[45] In these early years, prior to his espousal of anarchism, Hooton mouthed a dedication to the ideal of socialism and in particular to the victory of the international working class: "I take my stand with the organized working class for socialism".[46] In the final analysis, however, the intricacies of Hooton's political position melted into a naive and simplistic belief in vague ideals. Essentially his political radicalism reduced to a

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42. Harry Hooton in ibid., 23 December 1937, p.13.
43. Harry Hooton in ibid., 21 June 1938, p.12.
44. Harry Hooton in ibid., 2 February 1938, p.11.
45. Hooton in the NMHMA, 26 January 1938, p.2.
46. Hooton in ibid., 8 June 1938, p.2.

confused aspiration towards unfettered freedom. His only resolution was recourse to platitudinous anodynes: "Ideals, no matter how quixotic are, in the last analysis, the only thing which make life worth while".[47] There was nothing sophisticated or critically tough minded about Hooton's political style. His line, at this stage, was to advocate a "higher philosophy",[48] guided only by the vague directive that "aspirations towards the truth of things remains our only motivation in progress".[49]

Despite the still diffuse and opaque nature of Hooton's urge to radicalism, the underlying impetus was strong. He believed in 'revolution' and had a strong faith in the intellectual as its main weapon: "... young intellectuals will appear to sweep away the obsolescent sway. They may revolt with guns or they may struggle on a higher plane. If they do the latter, humanity will be nearer its aim, a new age and a form of social organization besides which our democracy will be barbaric. Progressive steps into the future are not taken by defending our achieved steps but by embracing each innovation at its inception, hungrily".[50] Hooton saw the young intellectual as the saviour of mankind.

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47. Hooton in ibid., 5 May 1938, p.2.
48. Hooton in ibid., 5 February 1938, p.15.
49. Hooton in ibid., 23 December 1937, p.2.
50. Harry Hooton in ibid., 5 January 1938, p.13.

He would substitute the creative and constructive mind for the barbarities of lesser men. There was no fear for the demise of intellect - "there are millions of young gods to carry on the good work ... who will fulfil the evolution of humanity towards a brain".[51] The struggle was vague, the style rhetorical, but there was no denying its visionary and expansive nature. This was the basic tendency, later refurbished by a hazy embrace of anarchism, that lent weight to his association with Somerville.

At its core, Hooton's radicalism was founded on the poetic free-spirit - that is to say, as a yearning for freedom and creative expansion. The radicalism that cemented the relationship between Hooton and Somerville was centered on a common obsession with "art, revolution, intellect and ideals".[52] This was the basis from which everything else was defined. Their radical alliance was based on a belief that they were in league with the only values worth the struggle - "art, love, life".[53] The source of the libertarian impulse motivating both, was rooted to a strong individualistic need for self expression.

Somerville's view of himself as a libertarian must

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51. Ibid.
52. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 8 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
53. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 2 November 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

be looked at from two different levels. On the simplest level, his libertarianism was an uncompromising anti-authoritarianism: "I am bitterly opposed to the exercise of authority both by me and over me".[54] And again: "As a libertarian my fight is against government of any kind".[55] Politically, it was a social theory based on the ideal of free association. It championed free expression and an untrammelled existence. The imposition of any external discipline or regulatory impediment to freedom was tantamount to totalitarianism. As Somerville expressed it: "I repel any attempt to own or dominate me:.[56] Somerville's libertarianism was the heritage of his Andersonianism. That species of radicalism had instilled in him an attitude of critical questioning. Andersonianism had fostered an oppositionism basic to his emotional makeup. Hooton reinforced and further embellished it. Somerville believed that libertarian and totalitarian impulses co-existed in man and society, and, as a good pluralist, conceded them their right to struggle: "Rules and freedom exist and fight one another in the individual and in society".[57] On this issue, he was prone to lecture Hooton for his lapses into unconscious totalitarianism:

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54. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 1 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
55. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 7 November 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.

"We have all of us, in varying degrees, totalitarian trends in us and in our thinking and if we wish to progress in theorizing about liberty we must discriminate between our libertarian and our totalitarian trends".[58]

Politics aside, the wider framework for Somerville's libertarianism can be understood only in terms of his total response to life. In Somerville's case, libertarianism was an expression of a complex attitude of disaffiliation. He felt ill-fitted to cope with a society in which the most natural development was towards totalitarianism.[59] For Somerville, orthodox social structures were the vehicles of "repression and organization".[60] The strictures inherent in teaching school, left him despairing and desirous of release: "Probably the ultimate sack would be best for me. I might then escape sinking into that corrosive resignation to hypocrisy and paltry tyranny which is the only alternative to priggery ..."[61] On other occasions, he yearned to return to the freedom of his "long freelance poverty" preceding his first appointment. Somerville's sense of being one removed from the prevailing social norms led him, as social critic and libertarian, into "social investigation".[62] But this confrontation left him

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58. Ibid.
59. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 28 February 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
60. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 13 September 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
61. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 11 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
62. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 19 December 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

wearily disillusioned: "I have wallowed in present human problems till I feel like a dog returning to its vomit".[63] The sense of perpetual disillusion and frustration was an indication that his disaffiliation was not just from the society around him but from himself. A mood of disorientation constantly clouded his letters to Hooton. Proclaiming himself sour and exasperated with life, Somerville closed one letter with a tone of resigned dissolution: "... yours going steadily to hell in his own way because constitutionally unable to go to heaven".[64] His mood of despair and bitterness reflected his intense self absorption. But, even in his darkest moods, a sense of his own special awareness as one removed from the merely common, was implicitly present: "Even the most suburban bank clerk is more alive than I am and have been these last ten years".[65]

Given the double faceted disaffection of Somerville's position, his libertarianism served as a social and political label for what was an act of self assurance. It injected into the individual a power of self determination. To be radical and iconoclastic meant that one could reside in a sanctuary permeated by one's own

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63. Ibid.

64. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, June 1944 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

65. Ibid. (my emphasis) The implication being that normally he was far superior to the suburban bank clerk.

reflection. The individual and the will to freedom were, in this way, the pivotal points of reference. As a form of individualist anarchism, Somerville's libertarianism hinged on a romantic ideal of freedom.[66] His anarchism was an expression of "the free heart's purer clang ... the raw dimensions of a dream".[67] Somerville's anarchism was a filament of hope based on an emotional need for freedom. Much prone to self dramatization, Somerville was filled with an image of himself as a Bohemian radical, declassé and decadent. His letters to Hooton were regularly interspersed with references to himself as "convincedly decadent",[68] and as a rueful, if not actively recalcitrant habitué of Bohemia. He would write of "the Sydney life I know - Bohemia and its outskirts",[69] and talk in terms of an outsider's existence: "I've always been on the fringes of the University freethought ... of bohemia".[70]

The identification with bohemianism revealed the spirit of his radicalism as self conscious and theatrical. Somerville's bohemian self portrait, coupled with proclivities for the outré and dramatic, stamped his radicalism as youthful rebelliousness much

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66. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 23 October 1942, Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
67. Oliver Somerville, "Ballade of Penumbras of Revolution" in Number Two (Sydney, 1944).
68. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 10 March 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
69. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 11 July 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
70. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 1 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

in love with the notion of iconoclastic revolt. A fanciful bohemianism complemented a radicalism based on posturing and the urge for self dramatization.

His penchant for melodramatic excess occasionally led him into diatribes of despair: "I am passing through the darkest, possibly last days, of an incredibly stupid, worthless, weary, stale, unprofitable life".[71]

In the correspondence with Hooton, both men used one another as blackboards upon which to draw pictures of themselves. The temptation to form large and deeply coloured icons, was strong. Hooton's inclination was to cry the unappreciated genius. Somerville favoured a more self destructive, theatrically tragic face. Hooton would exclaim: "I am, I hate to cry, but still-misunderstood",[72] while Somerville would sink into the "quicksands of gloom and fear and hysteria" proclaiming to "never write verse again" while hourly contemplating suicide.[73] Somerville's bitter self criticisms however, were not above an honest recognition of his posturing. On one such occasion, he dismissed his efforts with poetry as "too much associated with my frantic preposterous posing ..."[74] In another equally virulent bout of despair,

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71. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, undated circa 1944, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

72. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 8 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

73. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, June 1944, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

74. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, undated letter in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

his critical self-denunciations echoed with the dramatic resonance so characteristic of his style: "So far do I react against this horrible, dreary waste that has been my life that I scarcely bear to read any verse at all. So with all the other, to-me-soiled, objects of my long drawn out blatherskite dilettantism. I am in hell".[75]

Bohemianism as an attitude of mind, given expression in "idealism, eccentricity and opera bouffé heroics",[76] complied well with the romantic excess of Somerville's radicalism. In Somerville, bohemianism was the external dramatization of an anarchist impulse, rooted to the romantic compulsion for unfettered personal expression. Bohemia as the "literary tradition of dreamland",[77] is perpetuated by the self styled rebel anxious to gain an audience and to win for himself a sense of dignity and significance. By supporting one another in the creation of an image poetic and intellectual, Somerville and Hooton launched themselves onto a plateau of significance which neither possessed.

In this light, a passage in the correspondence between Somerville and Hooton warrants close attention. Writing to Hooton from the country town of Harden where Somerville had been posted as a teacher, he wrote: "Yes

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75. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 4 June 1944, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

76. Geo. Snyderman and William Josephs, "Bohemia, the Underworld of Art" in Social Forces (December 1939) Vol.18, p.187.

77. Ibid., p.187.

we must meet again for the strength that's in both of us, and on my side to enlarge that strength at the expense of the great weakness in me. I am very much a thing of taboos, fears, pseudo-artistic priggeries... I've always been on the fringes of bohemia and such work as I have done always required immediate stimulus of encouragement. Here in Harden I tend to sink into yokeldom. Letters like yours help to prevent it becoming permanent, also occasional weekend plunges back into bohemia ... your exhortations and your resilience in your own struggle encourages me to believe that I have still something to do for literature and the world revolution".[78] Here then was the basis of the association. Faith in a mutual exchange and fortification of their determination for action; hope for uplift and the injection of purpose, clarification and strength. Hooton acted as the luminary inspiration directing Somerville's loose and mis-spent potential, and everything based on the existence of a rejuvenating and creative strength yet to be released and allowed to fructify. Theirs was a tight, isolated, dominion of a shared faith in their own capacity for revolutionary awareness. As marginal men directing their views to those few select individuals equally unsure of their own position vis à vis society, they helped form an enclave. As an enclave, the temptation to proselytize their world view was strong. Hooton's

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78. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 1 August 1942, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

predisposition for the little magazine has already been noted. This urge manifested itself again during his association with Somerville: "How I wish we could muster enough strength to print a magazine. This has always been an attractive proposition to me. A solid magazine. I got so far as a definite form about two years ago. I was going to call it Future. Just now I relish the idea, but I suppose it's a dream".[79] Although no magazine was produced, its presence as an idea in Hooton's mind, further testified to the importance of the association as a special alliance driven by a definite ideal.

To reinforce further our image and understanding of the nature of this relationship, it should be noted that during the course of their association Somerville and Hooton formed a group, or circle of like minded individuals, who met on a regular basis in order to discuss ideas and to formulate theories. Precisely when the group was first formed, who comprised it and why, are all very poorly documented. The only references to the group are to be found in the Hooton-Somerville Correspondence. The first reference to a group is cited in a letter to Somerville from Hooton in which he writes: "the group numbers about ten different people each night. I collect an attendance regularly which as regularly fail to come again almost".[80] This, however, seems to have been the

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79. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 11 January 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

80. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 10 February 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

precursor of a more stable group of which Somerville was a regular member. The details can only be ascertained negatively, but there is enough reference to the group to clarify further the central preoccupations and separate predispositions of the two main protagonists. Apart from Somerville and Hooton, the other members of the group were John Sillett, Noel Renouf and Max Le Petit.[81] These men were friends of Somerville's and were sympathetic to a libertarian and radical viewpoint. Sillett was also part-owner of a printing press that he and Somerville operated. In this venture, they saw themselves as the "printing trustees for other libertarians - providers of opportunities from us to would be libertarian publicists".[82] At one stage, there were vague suggestions that he and Sillett were planning to bring out a "magazine with definite ideas"[83] and certainly this idea appealed to Somerville. The "printing of a militant magazine" was a suggestion that he made to Hooton.[84] Somerville's association with Sillett was based, perhaps, on a mutual delight with the unorthodox. Sillett, it seems, complemented Somerville's urge of iconoclasm. An indication of the nature

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81. See letters to Oliver Somerville and Harry Hooton in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence, 18 October 1943 and 30 September 1944.

82. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton,June 1944 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

83. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 30 September 1944 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

84. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 3 December 1944 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

of Sillett's particular brand of eccentric radicalism was revealed by Somerville's reference to Sillett as having "written a letter on sanitary paper containing proposals for a Toilet Edition of Tennyson".[85] The only other reference to Sillett placed him as a school-teacher anxious to put into practice innovative neo-educational methods and as a libertarian courageously countering the "petty tyrannies of his boss".[86]

For Hooton the group was an opportunity to strengthen his predisposition towards a coterie of like-minded "thinkers" and to engage in what he considered to be a socially and historically significant enterprise. Hooton's historical self consciousness meant that he saw the group as a "deliberate social experiment, an enclosed isolate".[87] The disagreements that he and Somerville had over the precise nature of the group were based on differing interpretations of its role. Hooton was disturbed by what he considered to be an indifferent and laconic attitude to an enterprise that he took very seriously. For Hooton, the group had to have a name denoting its nature, it had to seek to formulate theories, to make decisions, to aim at having a social effect, in short to be in some way socially

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85. Oliver Somerville to Donald Horne, 23 October 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

86. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 8 October 1944 and 3 December 1944 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

87. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 18 October 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

significant.[88] Somerville more modestly, simply sought in the group "an amplification of opportunities for free discussions".[89] Although Somerville was primarily concerned that there should be an avenue for free, open and unregulated discussion, he was not above admitting that he too was interested in the aims and deliberations of the group: "I did want to make decisions, formulate theories, have a social effect, but I disagreed with your views of how these things happen. I at no time opposed having a social effect. I thought that social effects cannot be legislated about in advance".[90] Hooton's more demanding involvement and his anxiety over the implementation of these ends, only served to make Somerville cautious and defensive: "All that insistence on aims struck me as pretty rich from one who had talked about things not having to have meanings and the purpose of life being life".[91]

Somerville continued to rail against Hooton's regulative and in his view, totalitarian proclivities, repudiating proprietorship in the group and repelling any attempt to control or discipline him.[92] For Somerville, the libertarian group was to exist solely

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88. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 9 December 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

89. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 31 October 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

90. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 19 October 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

91. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton quoting Hooton 19 December 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

92. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 7 November 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

on the basis of a free association of minds.[93] His prime concern was with freedom, "freedom to engage in whatever activities intellectual or otherwise interest me without regulation of any sort".[94] Any attempt to impose rules, even rules of debate, were an expression of tyranny since they necessarily implied the existence of human framers.[95] Hooton on the other hand, was infused by a self important determination to direct and control the group as a vehicle for the dissemination of something significant. He argued that the group existed as a vehicle for personal growth: "we build a group for the conditions it affords us of self realization, getting what we want".[96] Hooton's conception of the group was that it had to be built, shaped and directed at something. For Hooton, the group provided an opportunity to indulge his fierce individualism while championing his understanding of anarchism as self realization. As Hooton saw it, man, as an individual was sacrosanct and free, but, as part of a group, a mass, however, he was a 'contemptible' body, an insentient thing, that could be used legitimately by one individual to assert his own autonomy: "Don't you see Oliver, each of us uses the other, rules the other. But each of us is potentially subject as we

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93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
96. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 18 October 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

participate in the mass".[97] Hooton's conception of anarchism in this context was that each man was free in his turn to use the others as the means towards a personal, unfettered, self-realization. "The difference between anarchism and communism is precisely that in the latter, Joe Stalin presides forever; in anarchism, each is militant representative, theorist, leader as occasion warrants".[98] In Hooton's view, every man was a king, a unique force, but within the microcosm of a group, the others forfeited their autonomy and became a body to be used and ruled according to the needs of the individual. "In the world I do not propose to direct any HUMAN BEING. But in the little group, I do. I am going to Use, Rule, the group as an insentient thing".[99] In effect, this amounted to a confused rationalization of an impulse to dominate, an impulse eventually diffused by Somerville's persistence that it was illogical and totalitarian.[100] Ultimately, Hooton accepted Somerville's opposition, admitting that the group continued to function without rules: "Your line was and is vindicated. The more you pour in the boot when I desert the straight and narrow, wild and wide course of anarchism the better".[101]

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97. Ibid.
98. Ibid.
99. Ibid.
100. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 7 November 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
101. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 9 December 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

The significance of this small group of radically inclined theorists, dominated as it was by Somerville and Hooton, was that, although its identity remained nebulous, its existence, however loose and short lived, (there is no mention of the group in 1944) reinforces the Somerville-Hooton association as that of a self conscious coterie. It allowed each individual the chance to clarify his ideas and to indulge an image of themselves as kindred libertarians. Fired by a belief in "literature and the world revolution", Somerville and Hooton were following a romantic rainbow attractive to both because of its invitation to a free and rich self expression. Together they saw themselves as 'enclosed isolates' fighting for a "workers and artists' world".

The frequent references to the "workers" and the "revolution", interspersed in the Hooton-Somerville correspondence,[102] were indications of the romantic nature of their radicalism. Hooton in particular, was prone to an idealized and heroic view of the proletariat. In his eyes, the workers were the rich heroes of the future - the propertyless who "have nothing yet everything, who have nothing to give in material goods but give their poems, songs, their light, their lives even for the revolution".[103] The worker was, in this way,

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102. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 1 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

103. Harry Hooton to Ted Turner, 17 September 1941, in H.H. Pearce Papers, MS No.1657, (NLA)

glorified as a warrior armed with the creative impetus of a poetic soul forging a new world. However, the real picture of Hooton's proletariat, was somewhat blurred by his fundamental ambivalence towards him. Hooton was torn between an image of himself as a worker,[104] and another as an artist and intellectual superior to the large majority of workers. Hooton was too much aware of himself as innovator,[105] as champion of "art, revolution, intellect and ideals",[106] to ever feel entirely at one with the working class culture that he idealized. The 'proletariat', as an abstraction, was a ready object for symbolic myth spinning. In real terms, the worker was seen as too stolid and too utilitarian to be thought capable of real innovation: "I don't think the workers can understand art".[107] Despite his claims to the contrary, Hooton was an elitist. He made this quite clear in a letter to Somerville, in which he discussed the possibility of a journal directed at working class readership. He wrote: "I am not concerned with translating my theories into a popular form which can only adulterate and emasculate them ... the wide base necessary for any activist revolutionary journal must dilute the truth and force of new ideas... it must serve an ultimate breaking down of my ideas into

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104. Harry Hooton to Ted Turner, 7 April 1941, in Pearce Papers.
105. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 16 December 1944 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
106. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 8 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
107. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 16 December 1944 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

popular mush".[108] Intellectually phlegmatic, the worker was ultimately pictured as incapable of heroic exertions on behalf of abstract revolt.

This ambivalence in attitude towards the worker was shared by Somerville. Nominally, his sympathy was with the "common people".[109] He credited the "resurgence of the comic and adventurous spirit" in himself to his association with the working classes,[110] and a corresponding "de-intellectualization". The suggestion was that an association with the workers meant a basic revitalization, so that the simple man became the noble man.[111] However, the other side of this romantic picture revealed that at close range, the common man was a mere 'yokel'.[112] The perspective on the working classes favoured by both Somerville and Hooton was distant and removed. Somerville revealed this attitude in the closing lines of a letter to Hooton. He wrote: "yours equally for a worker's and artist's world (and the waking up most workers and artists").[113] In order to better grasp the substance of the worker's and artist's world that these men envisaged, it is

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108. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 19 December 1944 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

109. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 28 February 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

110. Ibid.

111. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 24 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

112. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 1 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

113. Ibid.

necessary to delve even further into their respective philosophies. In Hooton's case this will involve a detailed exposition on his philosophy of Anarcho-Technocracy. Someville's philosophy was a broad libertarianism. He never entirely understood or shared the exact details of Hooton's creed. Rather, he shared with him, the spirit of revolt and poetic release that permeated Hooton's position.

Overall, the Hooton-Somerville association reflected a loosely perceived dissatisfaction with the prevailing cultural climate, emotionally underpinned by a need to accommodate the melodramatic and hypersensitive dispositions of both men. Together, they shared a vague emotional bond, based on a love for freedom and creativity only loosely understood. Hence the tendency to dissolve into a rhetorical fanfaronade. Somerville's untimely death in a car accident in 1946, cut short the possibility that they may have reached a clarification of ideas. The significance of the relationship that they did establish, however unfruitful, was that they at least believed that they were both moving towards an exploration of a new social critique, encompassed by their understanding of anarchism and the creative spirit. As a disillusioned Andersonian, spiritually adrift, Somerville was in need of cultural redirection. Hooton appeared to be the fellow traveller with whom to explore a mutual mood of disaffection. The exact details of the path they chose to traverse will subsequently be examined.

It is sufficient to note here that Andersonianism as a social critique and vantage point, had lost its meaning and that Hooton's world view appeared as an attractive alternative from which to seek a clarification of one's vision. The underlying significance of their association was that although it lacked strong grounding and direction, it was symptomatic of the social disorientation experienced by intellectuals. An exploration of libertarianism reflected the need for social anchorage.

CHAPTER 4

ANARCHO-TECHNOCRACY

The world view that generated Hooton's drive and accounted for his appeal to other iconoclasts and dreamers, was variously described by him as either "Anarcho-Technocracy", "Power Over Things" or "The Dictatorship of Art". Ostensibly, his philosophy was the aesthetic of the machine age, an apparent denial of anthropocentric humanism and the affirmation instead of technocracy.[1] Hooton explained his philosophy in these terms: "Anarcho-technocracy is the theory of Direct Action on Things. It is anarchist in as much as it states that all government over men must be replaced by the administration of things, it is technocratic in that it contends that this administration can be encompassed in this era of increasing technological complexity only by the technicians".[2] A philosophy geared to the needs of the twentieth century, it proclaimed the advent of the purely technical society. The ideals of freedom implicit in anarchism were translated to mean an application of power over "inanimate, mechanical objects".[3]

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1. H. Hooton, "O.M. Somerville", (Obituary) in Arna October 1947, pp.4-8. Somerville was killed in a car crash in July 1946.
2. Hooton, Anarcho-Technocracy. Four page pamphlet in Hooton Papers MS No.2778 (NLA).
3. Arna, op.cit.

The earliest germination of Hooton's ideas can best be traced in the letters he wrote to Somerville, Donald Horne, and in the one letter that he wrote to Nettie Palmer. In his letter to Palmer in 1942 Hooton wrote of his faith in a future-directed philosophy: "I contend that our mechanized industrial civilization demands a complete re-orientation. The suns poetry looks to the stimuli to which we must respond have altered".[4] Although as yet unsure of the exact direction that art would have to take, Hooton was determined that it should not go backwards: "where is art going? It is not clear, but it is going away from man ... anything other than man is the aim of worthwhile present day art".[5] Hooton was anxious to see an outward bound progression towards new horizons of self expression: "art reaches out to the unknown. The most illuminating fact is the search for the new. Art is an endeavour to meet new situations".[6] The direction pointed to a harnessing of the dynamic, technical society. Art was to mirror the machine age. As Hooton expressed it: "my thesis is that the focal point of modern art is the inhuman world. I point to machines".[7] The static and repressive preoccupation of art with the humanist introspection was anathema to Hooton's vision: "the soul-

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4. Hooton to Nettie Palmer, 18 October 1942 in Hooton Papers, MS No.1174/1/6248-50 (NLA).
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.

searching of this century from psychoanalysis to existentialism bears no relation to art".[8] The true direction of the artist lay in the industrial aesthetic of technocracy in which the only positive object was the machine.[9] Hooton maintained that "if the artist really wants to be revolutionary he will ... not buy a camel hair brush and a bit of canvas. Arts future lies in seizing the machine".[10]

It would appear, on first acquaintance, that Hooton's whole philosophy was concerned with machines and matter, with the "concrete edible earth", and the "lustful, ruthless exploitation of inanimate matter".[11] As a corollary of this, it would seem that his invective was directed at man, hence the statements: "the only important things are things and I do not love man".[12] In actual fact however, Hooton loved man too much. His whole philosophy was really a visionary and extended humanism. Where previously, man was seen to exist in a delimiting past, he was now being directed to move forward in order to attain the stature of a God, or arch-creator. Hooton's anarcho-technocracy was another name for urbanized utopia. In this world, man would roam free and Lord-like, no longer a creature but a creator.[13] When

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8. Hooton in Number Three, (Sydney 1948) p.15.
9. Hooton to Somerville, 2 November 1942 and 16 December 1944 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence (Mitchell Library MSS No.569).
10. Hooton to Somerville, 16 December 1944, in Hooton-Somerville Papers.
11. H. Hooton to D. Horne, 20 September 1942 in Horne Papers (Woollahra, N.S.W.).
12. H. Hooton, It's Great To Be Alive (Sydney 1961) pp.45 and 48.
13. Ibid.

reduced to its core, the rhetorical, highflying, cascade of Hooton's thought, amounted to a visionary and aesthetic demand for, and an affirmation of, man's unlimited scope as a creator. Hooton was really calling for a masterful expansion of man's horizons, his dimensions of expectation. By shaking off the "slavish hoarding of habitual systems",[14] man would go forward, encountering a new plane of awareness wherein he could "spend lavishly on the future".[15] As Hooton saw it, there were two stages of history - the merely "human" (the past and limited present) and the "sublime" (what is and what is to be).[16] In his future capacity as something sublime and godly, man would exercise his power to create new worlds: "Man is God... God does not study himself - he is himself. He creates, he rules. We must rule, not man, but man's Kingdom: machines, architectures the world outside. This is the new politics - technics, power over things".[17] In all this, the central focus was on creativity. Just as "the river must forget its source to reach the Sea",[18] so too, did man need to forget his present status as man. In this way, he would attain the "unselfconsciousness which lies at the source

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14. H. Hooton, It's Great To Be Alive (Sydney 1961), pp.45 and 48.
15. Ibid.
16. H. Hooton in "The Dictatorship of Art", in The Australian Quarterly (March 1949) p.9.
17. Ibid., p.10.
18. Ibid.

of all creativity" and go forward as a god, a ruler. For Hooton, the machine was symbolic of a presentist awareness, its significance lay in the fact that it was current, modern and an appropriate paradigm for an idea that transcended mere objects - the ideal was freedom.

To obtain godly stature, man had to first recognize the importance of the anarchist position. By anarchism, Hooton meant something rather idiosyncratic. His understanding of anarchism was as a freedom expressed through power. Anarchism as pure absolute freedom was meaningless because it remained static, negative and incapable of creativity. Anarchism as true freedom had to imply the existence of power - not power over men, but power by men over things. Anarchy in Hooton's terms, was freedom for man through his rule over things.[19]

By this definition, orthodox anarchists were a sham: "Anarchists do not understand anarchism any more than marxists understand marxism or the christians understand christianity. They hate things. They pine for "natural man".[20] In Hooton's estimation, these conventional freedom yearners were blind to social realities; they were retreating, "insulated from everything which is vital, significant in the 20th century world ... there

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19. H. Hooton, "Politics of Things", in 21st Century (Sydney 1955), p.19.

20. H. Hooton in Number Three, op.cit., p.14.

is no advance forward".[21] Orthodox anarchists were thus consigned to the backwaters, left to yearn after the pastoral idylls of a preindustrialized purity. Where they sought to escape back into the freedoms of an idealized golden age, Hooton's anarcho-technocracy was an escape into the future.

On this point, it is interesting to note an aspect of the thought of Herbert Read - enfant terrible of the English Apocalyptic Movement. Read's effusive espousal of anarchism, especially as defined in his Poetry and Anarchism,[22] bore superficial resemblance to Hooton's vision. Read wrote: "I am no yearning medievalist. I have embraced industrialism, tried to give it its true aesthetic principles, all because I want to be through with it, want to get to the other side of it into a world of electric power and mechanical plenty when man can once more return to the land not as a peasant but as a lord. There will be no need to enslave a single human soul".[23] The superficial resemblance with Hooton's position is obvious, and, certainly, there is some evidence to suggest that Hooton had read Read and had to some extent, approved: "the only thing that has happened to poetry in this century is

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21. Ibid.
22. Herbert Read, Poetry and Anarchism (London 1938).
23. Herbert Read, "No Programme" in Anarchy and Order, Essays In Politics (London 1954), p.59.

Herbert Read's statement - the poet is an anarchist".[24] On the whole however, Read's position was too close to traditional anarchism. As such, Hooton judged it as little more than merely "encouraging" and ultimately as a "piddling afterglow".[25] Read's anarchism, in the final analysis, was founded on an orthodox identification with the simple and idealized past. Despite his claims to having embraced industrialism, Read really despised the "foul industrial epoch" as something to be "endured" and not loved.[26] For Hooton, on the other hand, the only focus was on the "ten thousand year machine age just starting", the age in which man would be "King - the Lord of the Universe".[27] Hooton's philosophy was aimed at a new creative civilization. By extending his powers over the material environment, man would liberate himself to new heights. "We are only at the beginning of a world culture, a straight line into the future".[28] As a free and creative source of power, man would unveil for himself a "breathless infinity of worlds".[29]

On the road to his creative civilization, Hooton

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24. Hooton, Number Three, p.13.
25. Hooton to Horne, 29 August 1942 and 20 September 1942 in Horne Papers.
26. Read, op.cit., pp.58-59.
27. Hooton, 'Leave Yourself Alone', It's Great To Be Alive (Sydney 1961), p.17.
28. H. Hooton, 'Creative Civilization', in MS (1950), p.18. Literary magazine published in conjunction with James McGuire and D.E. Everingham.
29. Ibid.

discerned a duologue in his pantheon of heroes, between Nietzsche and Wilde. Hooton's understanding of the work of either man, was loose and eclectic. On the whole, any reference by Hooton to the thought of philosophers or reputable thinkers, was made with one purpose in mind - to bolster the presentation of what he earnestly considered to be his own original contribution. Nietzsche was seen as one of the first modern thinkers to realize the need for an active refashioning of the world.[30] His was an expression of a trend first discernable in the 19th Century, towards an active creativity rather than passive observation. That is to say, Nietzsche recognized the role of the artist.[31] It was Nietzsche who "gave expression to the power underlying all 19th Century activity - a power inseparable from and identical with art".[32] It was to Nietzsche's honour that he discovered power in man, saw that man was a "glorious, noble, aristocratic animal, born to rule".[33] For Hooton however, Nietzsche did not go far enough. His failing was that he did not see that man was born to rule not over other men, but over things, inanimate objects. Hooton believed that Nietzsche's will to power was better

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30. H. Hooton, "Wilde and Nietzsche" in Inferno Press (San Francisco 1955) pp.6-11.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.

understood by Oscar Wilde. Wilde's Soul of Man Under Socialism,[34] was seen as giving the only real insight into the potential of the future. As Hooton expressed it: "He gave us the machine as the distinctly modern work of art, and mechanized slavery as our social objective".[35]

A cursory glance at Wilde's Soul of Man Under Socialiam, helps place its importance for Hooton. Wilde's approbation of intense individualism as best represented by the poet, philosopher and man of science, complied well with the undercurrents of Hooton's quest. Wilde's concept of socialism was as a pure individualism in which the notion of government and authority were anathema.[36] His declaration that "on mechanical slavery, on the slavery of the machine the future of the world depends",[37] was perfectly attuned to the directions that Hooton was seeking. Having been won, Hooton's delight with Wilde was heightened by the realization that here was a thinker equally enamoured with the ideal of Utopia: "A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which humanity is always landing. Progress is the realization of Utopias".[38]

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34. Oscar Wilde, The Soul of Man Under Socialism (London, 1891).
35. H. Hooton, "Creative Civilization", in op.cit., p.29.
36. Wilde, op.cit., p.255.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., p.269.

For Hooton, "the visions of new worlds, anarchies, utopias" were the only horizons of scope.[39] A modern utopia was the ideal end for which he was striving.[40]

Hooton's enthusiastic reception of Wilde's Soul of Man Under Socialism, was based on his interpretation of it as a "scientific aesthetic".[41] By this, he understood a philosophical connection of art and the future, with modern machinery: "The subject of art is modern machinery ... any writer who does not focus his attention on the machinery in industry isn't worth a cup full of cold water".[42] In Hooton's estimation, Wilde had left a "gigantic philosophy" behind him, a philosophy that was aimed squarely at the 20th Century.[43] "Anywhere in Wilde one must strike not merely a great man but the pulse, guts of an age. Our age".[44] For this reason, to approach an understanding of Wilde's position was "something like touching divinity".[45]

However, Hooton quickly qualified his eulogy over Wilde because of his own predilections for significance. Despite his enthusiasm for Wilde, Hooton maintained what he believed was his own independent and creative position. Wilde's Soul of Man was for this reason, seen

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39. Hooton to Horne, 20 September 1942, Horne Papers.
40. Hooton, "Anarcho Technocracy", in Hooton Papers, MSS No.2778 (NLA).
41. Hooton to Horne, 20 September 1942, Horne Papers.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.

only as a sound introduction, the first recognition of a position that would reach its fruition only through Hooton's direction: "If I could find in Wilde what I wanted I would be a happy disciple. But he is an approximation only. We will take from Wilde what we want".[46] Wilde was really the mirror in which any number of features would recognize themselves. In Hooton's case, Wilde reflected the freedom of the anarchists position, releasing man from bondage and pointing to the artist as the creative force of the future: "we take from him what we want - the future is what artists are".[47] As an artist, Hooton believed that he had the philosophy upon which to carry man into the future - "I am the poet who has found his aesthetic raw material in machinery".[48]

Staggered by the size of what he conceived to be his own philosophy,[49] Hooton was not loathe to place himself alongside Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. As he expressed it: "Schopenhauer gave us the will; Nietzsche gave us the Will to Power, I give you the Will to Power Over Things".[50] His was a 'philosophy' so singularly dominating that it blinded Hooton, by his own admission,

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46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 10 February 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence, MSS 569 (Mitchell).
50. H. Hooton, 'Directions' in It's Great To Be Alive (Sydney 1961), p.45.

to good work in other fields.[51] Hooton was convinced that his task lay in the dissemination of the "new industrial aesthetic".[52]

To what, specifically, did this new aesthetic direct itself? What kind of society did Hooton envisage? In his essay on Creative Civilization,[53] Hooton mapped out a picture of this upotia in more specific terms. In the first place, machinery would replace all unskilled human operatives. Any resultant unemployment would be dealt with by the humane process of simply allowing the surplus of workers to wither away. Subsequent strict birth control would militate against any further accretion of surplus labour.[54] In this way, "only effective people will remain; people fully occupied in creating, ruling. The new society will be relatively small".[55] This elite of creative individuals would be engaged in the one creative task of importance - "the planning and regulation of the universe".[56]

Here, then, was a utopianism on a huge scale. Hooton's anarcho-technocracy was really a guise for hitherto undreamed of expansions. His was a poetic dream world, a realm of magic and the infinite. Through

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51. H. Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 2 November 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
52. Ibid.
53. H. Hooton, "Creative Civilization: An Essay in History" in MS, January 1950 (NLA).
54. Ibid., p.33.
55. Ibid., p.34.
56. Ibid., p.35.

the vehicle of the machine, Hooton was lauding man. Power over things was a symbolic catchcry for the ascent of man to the proportions of a superman. It was the means through which Hooton could model man to the mould of a creative god. The mood of his philosophy is best expressed in his poetry:

> Look down, creators, on the stars!
> On suns, cities, atoms in our hands;
> Stand over, as supermen...
> Let us see and stand as the Sun
> In secure extravangance
> Let us move as monarchs move,
> Secure in arrogance.
> Let us love as gods love,
> To the lure of new romance.[57]

Hooton's philosophy was an attempt to spin out an ever widening, illimitable, source of creative expansion. He spun out and fabricated a wish. His anarchism was a romantic filament, a free soaring poetic hope, as much the expression of an emotional need as it was a philosophical position. His poetry, his anarchism, his utopian vision, all reflected a need for the unhindered expression of rampant romanticism. It knew no bounds but wished to glide free in an expanse of "beauty, strength, eloquence and truth".[58] Hooton's preoccupation was with nothing short of infinity - "the straight line of art on to infinity".[59] Hooton's anarcho-technocracy was the

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57. H. Hooton, "Love and Disorder" in It's Great To Be Alive, (Sydney 1961), p.18.
58. H. Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 18 October 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
59. H. Hooton, "Geometry For Beginners" in It's Great To Be Alive (Sydney 1961), p.27.

framework for an extravagant impulse that yearned for the dynamic and frenetic growth of each individual towards something monumental. Hooton's anarcho-technocracy spelt utopia, and, in the tradition of utopianism, was directed at a new definition of man. Ernst Cassirer, in his Essay on Man,[60] wrote of the utopian vision in these terms: "The great mission of the Utopia is to make room for the possible as opposed to a passive acquiescence in the present actual state of affairs. It is symbolic thought which overcomes the natural inertia of man and endows him with a new ability, the ability to constantly reshape his human universe".[61]

Hooton's machine aesthetic, for all its emphasis on things and inanimate matter, was not to be mistaken for a crude reliance on the industrial tool. "Puffing billy locomotives, grease and grinding gears",[62] were not the stuff of his philosophy. Machines were symbolic references to "electronic devices as the more aesthetically appealing slaves of the future".[63] They were convenient vehicles through which to exercise power. Hooton's conception of the mechanic in this new world was as the "man of taste", the creative

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60. E. Cassirer, An Essay On Man (Yale 1944).
61. Ibid., p.62.
62. H. Hooton, "The Politics of Things", in 21st Century, No.1 September (1955), p.22.
63. Ibid.

individual who expressed his superior sensibility through the "techniques of verse, word structure or the architectonics of world construction".[64] Hooton's new man, his "technician" was any individual who shared his dream in a new cosmos. "We are the technicians; we creators of the new world".[65]

In the tradition of utopian thinking as described by H.G. Wells, Hooton's vision was of a human society; kinetic, dynamic and shaped as a "hopeful stage leading to a long ascent of stages".[66] In this tradition, it is interesting to note some of the characteristic aspects of the utopian imagination. Gerber, in his Utopian Fantasy,[67] described this tradition in these terms: "it takes its start in the realm of ideas, then it creates a concrete world of its own, ever extending its view until it is lost in infinity where man, godlike and immortal, jumps from stellar system to stellar system".[68] The mood described, conformed with that espoused by Hooton. It was a characteristic approach of the utopian, again exemplified by the effervescent spirit of Winwood Reade's classic, The Martyrdom of Man.[69] Although there is nothing to suggest that Hooton was familiar with this work, there is a superficial resemblance to Hooton's vision in parts of Reade's novel.

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64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid.
67. H.G. Wells, A Modern Utopia (London 1905).
68. R. Gerber, Utopian Fantasy (London 1955).
69. Ibid., p.82.

The future world that Reade envisaged traced a divinity in man similar to the godlike stature of Hooton's new man: "All men cannot be poets, but all men can join in that gigantic and godlike work - the progress of creations".[70] Reade's vision was a world of power: "men will master the forces of Nature; they will become themselves architects of systems, manufacturers of worlds. Man then will be perfect, he will then be a creator. He will be as a god".[72] The mood and tone of an illimitable growth, strongly suggests Hooton. Hooton's world was the symbol of an ardent invincibility where "a million infinities of life (were) waiting to be said and done over the sun".[73]

As a further description of his utopia, it should be noted that Hooton's vision complied with Northrop Fry's observation that modern utopias are often conceived as cities.[74] Fry states that, as a city, utopia expresses "the human ascendency over nature, the domination of the environment by abstract and conceptual mental patterns".[75] As such, it is an image of utopia particularly appropriate to our understanding of Hooton's ideal. For Hooton, the highest expression of civilized

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70. Winwood Reade, The Martyrdom of Man (London 1872).
71. Ibid., p.433.
72. Ibid., p.413.
73. H. Hooton, "I'll Tell You Something" in It's Great To Be Alive (Sydney 1961) p.78.
74. Northrop Fry, "Varieties of Literary Utopias" in Daedulus Vol.94, No.2, Spring 1965, p.339.
75. Ibid.

man was symbolized most tangibly in the city. His poems were filled with references to the majestic expression of man's creative prowess as exemplified in his construction of cities. To Hooton, a city was a beautiful construct built by "artists, scientists, workers handling steel and wood".[76] Furthermore, it was a city alight in imagination: "my poems are revolutions of the builders, the living great, searching with godlike hunger new matter to animate - and of cities steeled in silence now growing articulate".[77] Hooton's city was on epic proportions - a monumental edifice and symbol to man's creative powers. His enthusiastic dissemination of this ideal often ran into a turgid grandiloquence of style, gushing with fanciful and baroque exuberance. He would extemporize thus: "we must not rest until we have transformed our material environment, our city into a work of art, into a great, an epic, an heroic work, into a new world fit for heroes to live in".[78] Unashamedly utopian, Hooton firmly anchored himself and his anarchist visions to the romantic desire for an idealized future society - to the belief that anything is possible. The anarchists' ideal of freedom, when wedded to the cult of creativity,

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76. H. Hooton, "Golden Cities" in op.cit.,p.34
77. H. Hooton, title poem, "It's Great To Be Alive" in op.cit., p.14.
78. H. Hooton in Inferno, No.VIII (San Francisco 1952).

cannot but give birth to a rampant utopianism. The end was utopia, but it was the anticipation and movement towards it, which was at the heart of Hooton's philosophy. His was a drive of the imagination, a world of infinite beauty illuminated by a "million devices, diffuse rainbows to light the fountains within", a world in which man would "escape the spectrum of man and fly".[79] As the "dreamers of dreams", men would transcend themselves, they would halt the static, stultifying preoccupations with the known, shaking off introspection and moving outwards away from himself to something other than himself, to himself as god: "if human beings are concerned only with being human beings, they will never become gods".[80]

The way of the gods was through creativity, through art. Hooton's understanding of the artistic process however, was not as a limp and tender aestheticism. Anything effete was anathema. "What we have to realize is that men and women are exhausted as subject matters of art. The most notable symptom of decay in the world of art is the persistent use of human relationships as the subject matter of the artist. Humanity is dated".[81]

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79. H. Hooton, "Golden City" in It's Great To Be Alive (Sydney 1961) p.33.

80. H. Hooton, "Directions" in op.cit., p.44.

81. H. Hooton, "Problems Are Flowers and Fade" in Things You See When You Haven't Got A Gun (Sydney 1943), p.26.

Hooton believed in the unselfconscious use of creativity, for an art that expressed itself by the subjection of its materials to the task of creating something greater than man.[82] In this way, creativity was to be harnessed for the use of building "cities, architecture, the machines of our young industrial civilization".[83] The artist as an actor introspecting on man, "continually turning the subject over and over, mouthing it, painting it, dwelling on it", was seen as a retrogressive force.[84] True creativity, on the other hand, felt towards "new mysteries, fresh delights in the future".[85] Hooton conceived the artistic effort as "sheer action of man upon matter".[86] But although Hooton ostensibly decried contemporary man's preoccupation with himself, in reality he was calling for an even greater investment in the self. Through an exertion of power as envisaged in the state of anarcho-technocracy, man would be freed from the crippling stasis of his known diameters and released into a realm of freedom hitherto unimaginable: "The object of man's existence is not man. Art does not mirror man but the FUTURE for man. Not humanity but its aim. Symbols, words directed by poets are valid only if they transcend

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82. H. Hooton, "Oh God, Oh Montreal" in It's Great To Be Alive (Sydney 1961), p.70.
83. Hooton, "Problems are Flowers", op.cit., p.27.
84. Ibid., pp.28-29.
85. Ibid., p.28.
86. Ibid., p.30.

Man and invest the Things man has to do. Art drives to the future. Life and art are only one way movements, up, out, forward. Consider anything but man".[87] More accurately, what Hooton meant was consider anything but man as he now exists in order to consider man as god in the future. In this, his views complied with the traditional anarchist's philosophy of self realization through self-transcendence.

The anarchist, as an "egalitarian elitist",[88] rests his faith in the individual and is dedicated to the ideal that "all men can be made superior".[89] Barber, in his study Superman and Common Men,[90] described it in these terms: "Like the artist, he (the anarchist) perceives a larger world, like the prophet a more enriching plane of experience, like the utopian a more humane form of community. But unlike these visionaries, he is an impatient social activist who would embody his perceptions in the real world now. He is the Übermensch of the underdog".[91] Hooton's position complied with this view and stressed in particular, the role of the poet. As the one artist fully susceptible to the "stimuli from the space time outside the understood",[92] Hooton discerned in the poet a momentum for change. The poet

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87. H. Hooton, "The Object of Man's Existence" in Number Two (1944). Cyclostyled pamphlet of 10 pages, printed by O. Somerville.
88. Benjamin Barber, Superman And Common Man (New York 1971).
89. Ibid.
90. Ibid.
91. Ibid.
92. H. Hooton to Donald Horne, 20 September 1942 in Horne Papers.

was the truly innovative and vital force, his words moved out towards those elements which were "without human preoccupation, free and alive".[93] Poetry was deemed alive because it came from the life of the people in contact with their environment.[94] As an expression of a legitimate creative effort, poetry would "search for what is NEW".[95] Over and above anything else, Hooton's quest was for a futurity, a growth into something new, revolutionary and big. His veneration of men like Wilde and Walt Whitman was based on their orientation as artists towards the future. Whitman in particular was deemed "the voice of the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first and all the centuries to come".[96] This high praise for Whitman was based on the belief that his art was attuned to the needs of his time, to the modern world of "western civilization, modern scientific technique, to the industrial revolution and to every revolution man must accomplish".[97] The directive from Hooton was always to go forward.

Hooton's expansive dream was irrepressible, his hunger for creative exuberance apparently insatiable and indefatigable. His impassioned imagination poured

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93. H. Hooton, Number Two, op.cit.
94. H. Hooton in Odyssey Vol.1 No.2 (1958), p.18.
95. H. Hooton, "Leslie Hedley and American Poetry" in Hooton Papers, MS 2778 (NLA).
96. Ibid., p.25.
97. Ibid.

forth with overwhelming images of an exhilarating power. He expressed his enthusiasm with an exuberant excess: "resolve that artists, scientists, workers, lovers, explorers, pioneers, gods would take possession of the machinery of the world and have new life, lust, art, freedom, nobility, power, clarity, creativity and divine ecstasy forever".[98]

Hooton discerned the makings of a god-like stature in each individual. The way to godliness was by way of the creative effort. Although at times it appeared as if Hooton was self ensconced on the throne to the royal road, ("I am an atheist - God does not need a religion"[99]) he in fact proclaimed the grandeur of all men - "I am infallible but so are you".[100] Hooton claimed he could discern "the god in the kingdom of heaven within each of us, which makes each of us a secret megalomaniac."[101] All men were potentially superior, all of them capable of transcending limitations.[102] Each individual, in his creativity would be ultimately responsible for the liberation of man for an "eternity of infinite power and joy".[103]

Stripped to the core, Hooton's philosophy was an unrestrained efflorescence of hope. His dissidence was the product of an overflowing vitalism, saturated by

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98. Harry Hooton, "James Joyce" in Coastlines No.6 (San Francisco 1956-1957) also in It's Great To Be Alive (Sydney 1961).
99. H. Hooton, "Directions" in It's Great To Be Alive (Sydney 1961), p.50.
100. Ibid.
101. H. Hooton to O. Somerville, 8 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
102. "Directions", op.cit., p.51.
103. H. Hooton, Transcription of Tape No.9, 1961, TRC:95 1-11. (NLA).

the lavish promise of creativity. As such, it was an antidote to a grey and oppressive societal lethargy. Hooton's anarchism was a celebration of youth and an alliance with life. Writing to Somerville on one occasion, Hooton bubbled with an enthusiastic identification with all things vital: "Vive ... to all the youngsters in the Sydney University who are tending to anarchism. I know all this bunk the ageing deadheads come out with - 'yes, I was the same at their age - young rebels, wild youths ... they grow out of it like Whitmania and measles'. Youth will do me. I hope I'll be the same at sixty. I hope I'll never progress to a trite and empty balance".[104] Hooton's enthusiastic espousal of youthful radicalism was not due to any juvenile excess. Hooton was thirty four and presumably removed from the floundering conceits of the immature. Instead, his vitalism can be attributed to a lingering youthfulness of mind, permanently at home in an ambience of romance and idealism. Furthermore, Hooton was prone to rhetorical exhortations of the self to shine forth in proclamatory pride - "to hell with modesty! Let ourselves shine or blur or destroy or BE!"[105] The tone was vitalist, the mood expressionist and the significance - an expression of the subjective

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104. H. Hooton to O. Somerville, 2 November 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

105. Ibid.

and individualistic strain of his radicalism. Hooton was propelled by a dramatic image of fervent iconoclasm inflated by a poetic joie de vivre. His prescriptions to Somerville testified to the flamboyant nature of his romantic perspective on life: "I have a recipe for the making of artists - throw yourself away, live riotously, spend, as Tolstoy did, as Wilde".[106] In Hooton's estimation, these men were gods because "they valued their art or soul above all else".[107]

Hooton was convinced that he had a philosophy to disseminate, that he had a responsibility to society to do so.[108] He believed that he had a perspective so novel that it only reluctantly accommodated itself to known structures of expression: "I want to remind you that the nature of what I am trying to say is that degree of expression which demands some other form than prose - that need not be called poetry. Give it a name. It is different ... the positive work is wordless, non-verbal, unnamed, the negative is words".[109] The implication was that Hooton was hovering on the peripheries of a novel consciousness of which he was the pioneer. In fact, Hooton was trying to give expression to what was essentially a psychological impulse,

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106. Ibid.
107. Ibid.
108. Hooton to Somerville, 10 February 1943, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
109. Ibid.

a restless, striving energy. Hooton was "drunk on life" and romantically attuned to "freedom, irresponsibility and youth".[110] His predisposition was to a form of radicalism based on an intense individualism. His philosophy embraced a poetic anarchism encapsulating within its scope, a visionary yearning. "What is the end of philosophy? It is that we attain to supreme, complete power over everything, absolute joy, freedom to live self indulgent lives and satisfy ourselves".[111] Hooton's anarcho-technocracy, as a species of romantic revolt, acted as a socially appropriate means of self realization. By exerting power over things, man's autonomy remained pure. By wielding power, man became an artist refashioning the world and in the press, expanding his own horizons. Whether he worked in "silk, stone, steel, words, colours or sounds", the end result would be a spectacular reconstruction.[112] Hooton's philosophy of anarcho-technocracy acted as a catalyst capable of transforming all known structures into some inconceivable fluidity of power - a power capable of breaking the walls barring the future" and thus "liberate man for an eternity of infinite power and joy".[113] The past was known, man had now to move to the future.

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110. H. Hooton, Transcription of Tape No.1, Manuscript Section, TRC:95:1-11 (NLA).
111. H. Hooton, Transcription of Tape No.2.
112. Ibid.
113. Ibid.

CHAPTER 5

AN ANARCHIST'S VISION

Hooton's radicalism was an expression of an inner need for emotional release best resolved by resorting to visionary anarchism. It had no need for social or historical grounding. The temptation to dismiss his radicalism as eccentricity - self indulgent and obscure - is tempting if it were not for the fact that it operated as a folie à deux against a background of social disruption. The depression, the Spanish front, the bleak realization of possibly another war, all worked together to create an intellectual and spiritual disruption within some segments of Australian society, in the thirties and early forties. The social climate induced critical reassessments. For some, Andersonianism offered itself as a species of cultural criticism and social redirection at a time of fermentation.

Equally attractive for others, was Hooton's romantic individualism. Although Hooton did not entirely convert any of his would be disciples to his utopian creed, he did attract fellow travellers in disaffection. What he and Oliver Somerville had in common was the mood of revolt, the wish to rebuild the world a little closer to the heart's desire.

Somerville's understanding of Hooton's line was

incomplete - "of course I don't fully understand your work",[1] "I can't pretend to have mastered your outlook anything like systematically".[2] Even so, Somerville's association with Hooton was based on a strong mutual need. Each saw in the other, an emotional confrère equally involved in the pursuit of an artistic raillery of orthodox mores. Fortifying one another in the development of social theory and in the writing of poetry, they constructed an aesthetic highway of release leading each towards his own personal resolution. For Somerville, this was encompassed in an individualist anarchism expressed as an uncompromising rejection of all authority. For Hooton, it was the realization of man as god-creator in a utopia of limitless scope. They met as fellow-travellers on a precious romanticism.

Somerville revealed an aspect of his radicalism in a letter to Donald Horne in which he wrote: "I believe in the Ivory Tower with windows - a maker of art and science and in Individualist Anarchism - its only political offspring - the Good way of life".[3] By this, he was expressing faith in an elite consciousness capable of a new creativity and endowed with a special awareness of the need for expansive productivity. As

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1. O. Somerville to H. Hooton, 24 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence (Mitchell) Mss. No.569.
2. Somerville to Hooton, 13 September 1942, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
3. Oliver Somerville to Donald Horne, 23 October 1942 in Horne Papers (Woollahra, N.S.W.).

such, it was very close to Hooton's faith in the artist who moves worlds. Somerville's Individualist Anarchism was an embrace of Max Stirner. His concept of Stirnerian anarchism was as something ebullient and vital: "Individualist Anarchism ... conceived by Max Stirner and practised by many exuberant and sensible men in the 19th century...".[4]

Hooton and Somerville had both read and sympathized with the extreme individualism of Stirner's world view. Hooton extracted from Stirner's The Ego And His Own what he understood to be a legitimate lauding of the ego above all external accretions of power.[5] Echoing Stirner, Hooton expressed a faith in the individual as something unique and majestic: "Each of us is a unique personality. Each one has a MIGHT to be heard".[6] In this way, Hooton was sanctioning Stirner's position of supreme egoism expressed as might makes right."What makes you have the power to be you have the right to."[7] Stirner's turgid egoism presented itself as an attractive model for those anxious to establish the fluency of libertarianism as a positive freedom from all obstacles: "I am the kernel that is to be delivered from all wrappings and freed from all cramping shells".[8]

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4. Ibid.
5. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 18 October 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
6. Ibid.
7. Max Stirner, quoted in John P. Clark, Max Stirner's Egoism (London 1976), p.52.
8. Stirner, "Owness" in J. Carroll (ed.), The Ego And His Own (London 1971).

Somerville expressed his admiration of Stirnerian anarchism by calling for a revival of pure individualism. Lamenting the fact that the impulse for freedom had been "submerged" in a syndicalist and socialist Hell of Slavery, to a unionist or statist cosmism", Somerville continued to entertain the hope that it would revive.[9] Freedom would "rise again from the breadline and rid us of God the Father almighty in his various social and political impersonations and of his followers, the slick and mentally dead. I believe in Stirner".[10] This was Somerville's effusive espousal of joyful individualism - as an affirmative proclamation of vitality and freedom.

Much prone to melancholic self dramatizations, Somerville saw himself as either ebullient or overwhelmingly tragic. Either he was giving unhindered expression to a boisterous unconventionality in the secure ranks of bohemia - "spent a convivial day chez Hope (A.D.) on Saturday ... held a highly successful farewell party in screamingly bohemian surroundings; much jazz, bare floors, no chairs, cushions - very poets-atticey (sic) all went very Bohemianly".[11] Or he was overwhelmed by the "screaming horrors", hating and

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9. Somerville to Horne, 23 October 1942 in Horne Papers.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

shrinking from everything, constricted by despair.[12] His sadness often smacked of a world weariness, an asphyxiation of the soul. His chagrin was directed at himself as a "paradox besotted who's far too little had, who's overripe and rotted but still cannot go bad".[13] When sunk in despair, Somerville was prone to a self belittling indifference to Hooton's urgings and encouragement: "appeals for literature's sake, anarchy's sake leave me bitterly amused, what are my trivialities to have all this effect, and what are literature and anarchy - words, words, words full of sound and fury signifying nothing - 'the main thing is to live!' Hooton to O.M.S. (sic)".[14] When he wasn't despairing in this manner, Somerville was being melodramatic. In his poem, "After Ingleburn", Somerville decried his creative efforts as "elaborate facades for wormy mansions of the child in pain, pent in amber of an adult brain".[15] Aware of a burden induced by his acute and uncommon sensibility, Somerville suffused himself with a poetic soulfulness. In this vein, he concluded "After Ingleburn" with the lines:

> "screaming horrors
> I cannot rend you, cannot rend myself,

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12. Somerville to Horne, 24 May 1942 and 4 June 1944 in Horne Papers.
13. Somerville, "Poem-1940" in Number Two (Sydney 1944).
14. Somerville to Hooton, June 1944 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
15. Somerville, "After Ingleburn" in Number Three (Sydney 1948).

I stand so still, my horror cannot scream
my tongue hangs heavy, my lips scarcely move,
mumbling slightly in gigantic sloth".[16]

Somerville's perspective on life was permeated by the passionate extravagance of the romantic idealist. In a frank letter to Donald Horne, Somerville characterized his romanticism as sour and misdirected: "I am slowly dying, living on my initial momentum while the machine slows down. Learning cannot save me, liquor cannot save me, love cannot save me. For all these are additions, are but mere expressions of an unsublimated and hence largely disillusioned romanticism".[17] Somerville's total position - his anarchism, his poetry, his association with Hooton were all expressions of a romanticism duly expended. As much an artistic and literary affectation as it is a state of mind, romanticism demands a milieu that rewards the subjective, individual and imaginative states. Romanticism craves intensity, emotional release, an opulent revelry in creative dilation. It is a state of mind particularly prone to passionate excess.

In Somerville, it found expression on a number of levels. Initially, it was given vent in the precise radicalism of Andersonianism. Lured by the glamour of a heroic mantle in social criticism, Somerville found

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16. Ibid.
17. Oliver Somerville to Donald Horne, 1 November 1942 in Horne Papers.

in Andersonianism a symbolic selfhood. The ferment associated with Anderson and his philosophy of critical scepticism, was a congenial climate in which to grow an initial image. A stringent Andersonian realism, upheld and refined by the dignity of an intellectual discipline, inadvertently served as the apprenticeship to Somerville's growth into romantic rebelliousness.

The severe purity of reason, however, was far too cold an order to sustain for long a disposition more comfortably at home in the warmer air of romantic effulgence. Poetry helped to absorb some of this elan, but its true point of saturation and release was found in anarchist radicalism. Hooton was both catalyst and reinforcement in this process. The radicalism that ensued was as much an emotional quest as it was a self-conscious revolt against accepted social and political orthodoxies. In effect, it was a kind of wilful iconoclasm accommodating a theatrical anxiety.

Under the banner of a theoretical anarchism, Somerville could indulge a propensity for unconventional and exuberant acts. His gestures were always in the name of boundless freedom and unmitigated expansion. Remembered as a sad, excitable and over-sensitive man,[18] Somerville was much prone to exaggerated stereotypes of thought and action. He was capable of "suddenly lying

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18. Hooton, "Obituary On Somerville", in Number Three, op.cit.

down with his head across the tram lines", in a characteristic act of eccentricity. As a "droll and neurotic" individual,[19] Somerville was a "dedicated drinker fond of suggesting and organizing bohemian parties".[20] He played the part of the gay and melancholic martyr for the cause of critical creativity.[21] Given his penchant for the melodramatic, it was ironic that, while he was teaching in the country town of Junee, Somerville was appointed Honorary Secretary to the Junee Dramatic Society and "expected to play a melodramatic English Johnny"[22] in one of the local productions.

Pictured as a "cafe wit and conversationalist",[23] Somerville was at home in the role of impecunious poet, contemptuous of the vile and sordid commercialism of a philistine society.[24] As a bohemian bon vivant, Somerville indulged in excess. Whether he was aimlessly exploring the city all through the early hours of the morning drinking gin,[25] or sipping a creme de menthe in Ushers,[26] or whether he was strolling around sockless in sandshoes bewailing his poverty in "high pitched

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19. D. Horne, The Education of Young Donald (Sydney 1967), p.246.
20. Douglas McCallum, letter to Author, 9 September 1975 (Melbourne).
21. Somerville to Hooton, 19 December 1943 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
22. Somerville to Hooton, 13 February 1945, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
23. Hooton, Number Three, op.cit.
24. Horne, op.cit., p.217.
25. Somerville to Horne, 24 May 1942, in Horne Papers.
26. McCallum to Author, 9 September 1975.

cultured tones",[27] Somerville did his best to comply with the bohemian tenets of the penniless and carefree artist. He complied with the stereotype of the intellectual proletariat flitting through the "witty circles of theoretical rebels and improvident drinkers in the name of arts and conquered hearts".[28]

Despite a tendency towards the tenebrous and melodramatic,[29] Somerville was capable of light hearted self satire. The prelude to the First Boke of Fowle Ayres[30] compiled jointly by Somerville, Harold Stewart and McAuley, satirically set the milieu within which he moved

> Opposite Sydney School of Arts,
> Assemble diverse men of parts
> Within a cafe where they sit
> baking by half the pie of wit
>
> From time to time they cracka jest
> but find its contents have gone west
> occasionally they make a pun
> merely to show it is not done.
>
> For parodies they have no penchant
> their social satire is not trenchant
> their nine month's muse is up the pole
> those literati on the dole".[31]

Generally however, Somerville was earnest in his role as social critic. The "unvarnished bold vulgarity of the

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27. D. Horne, The Education of Young Donald (Sydney 1967) p.246.
28. A. Parry, Garrets And Pretenders: A History of Bohemianism in America (New York 1933).
29. "...my brain is moonbound, parched and marred, a mirror by death's impact starred", in 'Poem', No. 2 (1944).
30. First Boke Of Fowle Ayres (Sydney 1944) A 16 page cyclostyled booklet. Copy consulted in the possession of Bill Lindburg (Glebe, N.S.W.).
31. First Boke of Fowle Ayres, Prelude (Sydney 1944).

rowdy bourgeoisie,"[32] presented itself as an awesome spectacle to the anarchist poet. His way of abominating this world of drab, grey conformity was to advocate a revolution of the soul. Radicalism, of whatever hue, was a declaration of freedom against a prosaic uniformity. Somerville's radicalism was never just a declaration of war against totalitarianism and centralized stratism, it was also a proclamation of an inner anarchism heralding new vistas of freedom. It was an attempt at affirmation.

Hooton's view of Somerville was as a libertarian poet of social criticism, "struggling for something beyond art".[33] This because Hooton himself was looking to something extraordinary, expansive and visionary. Although Somerville never quite reached a full realization of the desired end as conceived by Hooton - "the concept of the purely technical society",[34] he was seen as being potentially on the way because he was "big, big with our common destiny".[35] For Hooton, this destiny was the "disturbing, fundamental and powerful drive to anarchism".[36] Anarchism for Hooton was, as we have seen,

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32. Oliver Somerville, "In Memoriam Cosmopolis Sydneiusus" in Number Two (Sydney 1944).
33. Harry Hooton in "Somerville Obituary" in Number Three (Sydney 1948), p.13.
34. Ibid., p.15.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid., p.13.

the symbolic expression of some larger quest. He and Somerville did not share the exact details of its resolution, but at the point where they did meet, they did so on the basis of a shared impulse towards freedom, poetic afflorescence and self realization.

The Hooton-Somerville association in radicalism was sustained by a shared quest for significance fired by the ideal of social transformation. With Hooton, this had taken the form of utopian fantasy loosely termed Anarcho-Technocracy. Somerville's development was more complex. His willingness to adopt a radical position in relation to his society was evident in his ready espousal of Andersonianism at the University. When disenchantment set in, Somerville lost no time in his search for an alternative critique of his society. With Hooton, Somerville was given the opportunity to explore a vital and assertive creed. Together they shaped an iconography of dissent the lines of which described a romantic, visionary and idealistic quest.

The larger significance of this quest was that it reflected a need for a fresh and positive reevaluation of the cultural climate. The appeal of Andersonianism and Hooton's visionary anarchism, is better understood if placed against the thin and prosaic cultural background of the period. Andersonianism offered a critique based on intellectual vigour; Hooton's appeal was akin to an emotional seduction. In both cases, the effect was to encourage social reassessment.

With Anderson and Hooton as our two points of reference, we have thus far only examined Somerville as our gauge of disaffection. Of the others comprising the loose group of soi-dissant radicals, commit ment to either or both Anderson and Hooton varied with each individual. As we shall see, Donald Horne and Douglas McCallum were more consistently Andersonian in their alignments, whereas James McAuley and Harold Stewart were more fiercely independent. McAuley was briefly influenced by Andersonianism, quickly skirted around Hooton and then moved on. Stewart showed no evidence of having been influenced by Andersonianism even though he was closely associated with ex-Andersonians like Somerville. His interest in Hooton however, though brief, was more pronounced. Stewart's response to the cultural dilemma, as experienced by the others, was more idiosyncratic and will be discussed at length at a later point. The differing strengths of their respective commitment either way, will subsequently be examined. Suffice it to state here that, although their future development was strictly individual, in the late thirties and early forties they came together as a loose group of friends sharing a common milieu and an interest in intellectual and creative pursuits. Somerville, Stewart, McAuley, Horne and McCallum represented a fluid group of young intellectuals in search of a cause.

Bearing in mind the definition of intellectual as that individual aspiring to independent creative thinking and more specifically to writers and critical thinkers,

it should be noted that James McAuley and Harold Stewart were both poets of considerable promise. We have already noted Somerville's interest in poetry. Of the others, Horne and McCallum were equally attuned to a form of radicalism infused with notions of creativity. Poetry was one of the connecting strains of their association. Although a few years younger, Horne and McCallum saw themselves as "of the same circle"[37] as that formed by McAuley and Stewart. Donald Horne's qualifications for entry into this circle, rested in part, in his interest in poetry. Somerville's introductory reference to him in his letters to Hooton, described Horne as a "called up student beginning to grow into better things in poetry among other spheres".[38] As for Douglas McCallum, his rite de passage was through a combined interest in literature and anarchism. Having sloughed off on adolescent flirtation with Stalinism,[39] his more mature deliberations were with anarchism and the production of "meaningful modernistic verse".[40] Radicalism and creativity wedded together were the common threads linking this group in its quest for a positive cultural identity.

As individuals, each was seeking a personal

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37. Somerville to Hooton, 24 August 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.

resolution to a separately felt dissatisfaction. The object of this thesis is to capture them as a group on the transient base upon which they met and interacted. In this process, Hooton served as an inadvertent catalyst helping to crystallize and separate the differing forms of a disposition to radicalism - a disposition initially nurtured within the commonly experienced climate of Andersonianism.

Andersonianism and Hooton's anarchism represented alternate modes of action. They stood as divergent visions, divergent methods set forth contemporaneously. Each approach offered itself as a process through which social malcontents could explore their confrontation with society as they perceived it. Underlying this confrontation and inherent in both Andersonianism and Hooton's position, was the assumption that prevailing social norms were characterized by a general myopia and a tendency towards authoritarianism, philistinism and stolidity.

Each individual sought after and arrived at his own resolution, but in the process, they were, for a time, connected by a commonly experienced sense of disorientation and quest. The ideas and social attitudes embraced by each individual in his own way support a picture of this period as one of flux, suggesting redirection and a search for new principles of finality. Somerville's path towards resolution was through anarchism and bohemian excess. Harold Stewart

experienced his confrontation with the society around him more quietly.

CHAPTER 6

HAROLD STEWART: THE RETREAT

Of the same University generation as Somerville and James McAuley, Harold Frederick Stewart was born in Sydney (1916), educated first at Fort Street High School, and then the State Conservatorium of Music and Sydney University.[1] As a friend and associate of both Somerville and McAuley, and as one passionately involved in poetry, Stewart was part of the radical circle. Of this group, Stewart was the most peripheral and esoteric. His characteristic approach was to eschew the more blatant expressions of political radicalism, espousing instead an acutely personalized sensibility. Stewart's ultimate response to the niggling doubts and vague explorations that so motivated and absorbed the energies of the others, was to withdraw entirely from the sordid and prosaic nature of his Australian environment and to seek refuge instead in the quiet realms of a self contained mysticism. During the brief period in which he did interact with the others - with Somerville, Hooton and McAuley - he did so on the iconoclastic basis that characterized the mood of the period as one of flux and quest.

Stewart's association with Somerville was based on

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1. See H.M. Green, A History of Australian Literature (Sydney 1961).

a mutual delight in poetry. Together they collaborated in the writing of outrageous lampoons against the sacrosanct and inviolable. In this way, their friendship was built upon a shared desire to assail and deride the orthodox: "Last Saturday, we (Oliver and myself) went to Alec's and there in a state of inebriation produced our latest epistle".[2] Their combined efforts in satirical verse helped along by the odd contribution by McAuley and others, produced the First Boke of Fowle Ayres.[3] In this collection of jeux d'esprit they quite venemously debunked the Christian myths. An example of the style and mood of this collection is well served by the Virgin Mary Blues. Set to the beat of a negro blues ballade, the tone was heavily sardonic.

> You Virgin Mary, way down in Galilee,
> Done your man wrong, commit adultery,
> Cause you can't lose
> Dose mean ole Virgin Mary Blues.
>
> Went to your man Joseph, told him Holy Ghost.
> Joseph says, "Mary that don' happen to most
> Dhey shore don' choose
> Dose mean ole Virgin Mary Blues."
>
> Joseph went to de lawyer - Jehovah was his name -
> Says to dat lawyer "Angel Gabriel much to blame.
> Ah jes can't use
> Dose mean ole Virgin Mary Blues.
>
> Joseph went for his shot gun, says "Ah'll
> shore take his life,
> Whale ah been workin', he don work on my wife:
> She shore done lose
> Dose mean ole Virgin Mary Blues.

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2. Harold Stewart to Donald Horne, Undated, possibly 1944. In Horne Papers (Woollahra N.S.W.). The reference here is to the First Boke of Fowle Ayres (Sydney 1944).

3. First Boke of Fowle Ayres (Sydney 1944) Cyclostyled booklet of verse. Copy consulted in the possession of Bill Lindburg (Glebe, N.S.W.).

> Joseph went gunnin' for Gabriel, put him on
> de spot
> Found him in de speakeasy, mighty high an' hot.
> Drowning in booze
> Dose mean ole Virgin Mary Blues....[4]

One side of the Stewart-Somerville association was thus based on "freakish, frivolous, scurrilous lampoons."[5] On a more serious plane, Stewart's poetic distillations verged towards a highly concentrated aestheticism. His poetic style was often a strange combination of sedulous simplicity and a rich, heavily embroidered, fusion of mood with colour. A small portion from one of his early poems exemplifies this.

> "... at night, when rain falls
> leaves, tree leaves; black heart-shapes sighing
> finger-shapes point down the night
> upon the hushed wind.
> Oblique day, when the single drawn
> and distorted shadows
> Of a wine leaf
> and a maple leaf
> and a lily leaf
> fall
> on to the white wall
> with ladder laminas of yellow white
> sunlight
> coming through venetian blinds..."[6]

In his role as a "rising Sydney poet" contemporary with Somerville,[7] and as one particularly devoted to the poetic craft, Stewart was very receptive to the appearance of any new poetic voice on the Australian

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4. "Virgin Mary Blues" in ibid., p.13.
5. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 1 August 1942 in Somerville-Hooton Correspondence, MSS No.569 (Mitchell N.S.W.).
6. Harold Stewart, "Atmosphere" in Hermes, Lent, 1936, p.9.
7. Somerville to Hooton, 11 July 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

cultural horizon. His initial response to the discovery of a new poet in Hooton, was quite ardent. Having first read Hooton's work in a small anthology of poetry called Dawnfire[8] Stewart went on to read These Poets.[9] From this he arrived at an ambivalent attitude towards Hooton's style - he deemed it "Raggedly but Right".[10] The positive response to Hooton's work was based on Stewart's interpretation of its spirit as exuberant and vital. For Stewart, the important quality in Hooton's poetry was its underlying surge towards a resurrection of life-affirming principles. He expressed it in these terms: "No intellectual corpse could read them without sitting up in his academic grave and thinking that this was the resurrection".[11] Hooton was lauded as a poet of euphoric joie de vivre. His was a poetry of exaltation and triumph - a mood jubilant and joyous. Stewart had nothing but praise for Hooton's "energy and terrific gestures of power".[12] The adulation was thick and heavy. Stewart extolled Hooton for being "magnificently alive"; for his "bold, titanic striving".[13]

By virtue of the intensity of his approbation of Hooton's poetry, it would seem that Stewart considered the spiritual and cultural landscape then prevalent as

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8. Dawnfire (ed.) J. Cremin (Sydney 1942).
9. H. Hooton, These Poets (Sydney 1940).
10. H. Stewart, "Dionysius Ad Lib: Extracts from the Olympian Correspondence of the Apollonian Stewart to Harry Hooton the Dionysiac" in ARNA 1942, p.30.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.

prosaic, academic and dull. Moreover, it suggested that his own poetic quest was geared towards a vitalist and affirmatory direction, that he would seek his resolution in an anarchy of the spirit. Certainly the Dionysian impulse to "unbridled licentious and lawless energy" was something close to his heart.[14] Hooton's appeal was in his anarchic energy charged with emotional urgency. Stewart was not beyond urging an alliance "with those who uphold the anarchist poet's way of life".[15]

However, whatever the implications of his initial raw impulse to an anarchism of the spirit, Stewart's ultimate settling was more subdued. Stewart's true inclination was to embrace a philosophy that had its dictates in self knowledge. He finally espoused a position heavily tinged with a mysticism culled from Taoism and Zen Buddhism.[16] In a letter to H.M. Green in 1943, Stewart revealed the direction of his thinking. He wrote: "Western Renaissance and medieval Christian traditions are alien to me. The philosophy and art of the East coincides exactly with my way of life. It is nonsense to say to me; be yourself alone. I learned to do that over a year ago. Now I realize exactly what I can and want to do and so I am doing it".[17] Stewart's

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14. Ibid., p.32.
15. Harold Stewart, in Honi Soit, 22 May 1942.
16. Harold Stewart to Donald Horne, 29 October 1943. Stewart wrote: "Taoist anarchism, Zennist anti-religious iconoclasm are the philosophies that interest me". In Horne Papers.
17. Harold Stewart to H.M. Green, 14 April 1943, in H.M. Green Correspondence MS.No.3925 (NLA).

initial enthusiasm for the vital and intense aspects of Hooton's work is best understood if seen in the context of his later development. From this perspective, Hooton's individualistic and exclamatory mood awakened an embryonic recognition in Stewart of a faith in self expression and self affirmation. Stewart believed in the directive - "be alive!"[18] Hooton's aura of strength and self determination drew towards him others who, like Stewart, were looking for the ingredients with which to forge their own philosophy.

Stewart's involvement with Hooton proved brief and mild. It expressed itself initially as an investigation of a provincial poet by the more sophisticated dissident intellectuals of the big city. Hooton's reaction to Stewart's interest in his work was a predictable eagerness to establish a connection with what he hoped would be a like minded poet. Somerville acted as a go-between in this process, relaying to Stewart Hooton's request for more information about him and transferring to Stewart the responsibility of selecting representative poems to send to Hooton.[19] For his part, Hooton was ready to repeat and reinforce with Stewart the type of association he already had with Somerville. However, his hopes for a kindred association proved premature and misplaced.

Disillusionment with Hooton was quick. Disenchantment

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18. Harold Stewart to H.M. Green, 29 April 1943, in H.M. Green Correspondence.
19. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 1 August 1942, in Somerville-Hooton Correspondence.

and estrangement followed in quick succession. On a stylistic level, Hooton fell from grace because of his dionysian lawlessness. Although Stewart had professed enthusiasm for the exuberance and vitality of the dionysian impulse, he did so with the qualification that it be recognised as nothing more than the initial propellant to creativity. As a self styled Apollonian,[20] Stewart's primary values were "clarity and ease of form".[21] The ultimate criterion was the beauty of form and structure in good verse craftmanship. As he saw it, the truly superior piece of poetry was the product of conflict - the conflict arising out of the struggle between free feeling and intellectual discipline. Stewart expressed this in these terms: "out of the conflict comes a living rhythm, an ordered change, a vital struggle in which pattern tries to impose itself on emotionally charged prose so that both sides have to concede something - if feeling wins, the verse collapses".[22] Hooton was discredited in this type of analysis because his most natural impulse was to write poetry "as a bird sings".[23] As an "instinctive" poet,[24] Hooton was incapable of moulding his dynamism

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20. Harold Stewart, "Dionysius Ad Lib", op.cit.
21. Harold Stewart to Donald Horne, 29 October 1943, in Horne Papers.
22. Harold Stewart to H.M. Green, 14 April 1943, in H.M. Green Correspondence.
23. Harold Stewart, "Dionysius Ad Lib", op.cit.
24. Ibid.

into the succinct, precise forms demanded by Stewart. Hooton's fiery indignation, his honest scorn and his argumentative enthusiasm were at once, the force of his strength and the tyranny of his undoing. Without a stringent and polished "perfection of formal structure", poetry would diffuse to a mere "chaotic clot of words".[25]

Hooton's obviously didactic style served to further alienate Stewart. Being "first and foremost a poet",[26] Stewart had no time for theoretical disseminations within poetry. Hooton was far too anxious to make statements, to push a philosophy - this against Stewart's preoccupation with the perfectibility of art and the creation of a precise and pure piece of work. Stewart maintained that art could not be used as a vehicle for emotional catharsis. From this perspective, Hooton's anarchy of form appeared as an anarchy of the soul: "You wish merely to satisfy your life desires, thus you upset the balance on which art depends - the ratio between stimulus and inhibition which produces that widening consciousness which is poetry".[27]

The differences between Hooton and Stewart widened to encompass an even more fundamental estrangement. Stewart came to identify Hooton's whole position with

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25. Ibid., p.34.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.

that of the surrealist, modernist movement in Australian letters. Hooton's loose, undisciplined and expressionistic verse, free flowing with visions of an anarchic revitalization, was categorized as analogous to, if not actually in league with, the indulgences of the surrealist - apocalyptic movement. Stewart indicated his suspicions over this when he remarked to Hooton that, "Creation breeds creation and free association is the first law for starting poetic creation going. But let it have its head and presently you will be bumbling surrealist nonsense of no particular literary quality".[28]

Hooton's fall into disfavour was accelerated by the belief that he was tinged with the decadence of Herbert Read. Stewart looked upon Read as the culpable defiler of the pure stream of creative effort. He expressed his disapproval of this tendency in a letter to Donald Horne: "it is high time that someone did something to explode the Hooton Myth, which is growing as rapidly as a snowball in Sydney. Herbert Read, the doyen of all budding young anarchists has written him a letter saying keep up the good work my boy. He is rapidly becoming the leader of a religious revival in Sydney, with Hooton of course as High Priest, Chief Dissenter and Treasurer of the Cult".[29] Ironically

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28. Ibid., p.32.
29. Harold Stewart to Donald Horne, undated, 1943, Horne Papers.

however, Hooton himself was as equally critical of the surrealist fashion in literature as those who wrongly associated him with it. Herbert Read had asked him what he thought of the Ern Malley affair. Hooton's response was to laud McAuley and Stewart while rejecting Max Harris and the Surrealist school as "worthless".[30] Despite his disassociation from the modernist movement of Angry Penguins - "the surreal, romantic and utterly worthless poetry issuing from Adelaide"[31] - Hooton remained a target for disaffection from those standing apart from the current streams of literary experimentation. Consequently, Hooton proved a convenient catalyst through which dissident poets and intellectuals could better define the exact contours of their own position. Hooton inspired and accelerated separatist tendencies.

In Stewart's case, this was a position of disaffection at once removed from both the internationalism of the Angry Penguins and the overt nationalism of the Jindyworobak movement in literature. Stewart stood independently apart. The Angry Penguins movement was ridiculed as "Apocalypse Incorporated" and deemed a "silly, stiffling of anything of value".[32]

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30. Harry Hooton to Oliver Somerville , 16 December 1944, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence. See also Number Three (Sydney 1948).

31. Harry Hooton, "O.M. Somerville" Obituary in Number Three, op.cit., p.11.

32. Harold Stewart to Donald Horne, 8 March 1944, in Horne Papers.

Max Harris was contemptuously dismissed as a man suffering from an over-exposure to the "Indian summer of adolescence".[33] Stewart's critical evaluation of the Angry Penguins closely resembled the criticism directed at Hooton: "The theory of pure surrealism is that Absolute Good lies in the Romantic Effusion carried to its extreme, in the completely undisciplined outpourings of the unconscious. Strange and meaningless juxtapositions for their own sake have no special virtue".[34]

Stewart's distaste for the Angry Penguins[35] was matched by his discomfort with maudlin nationalism. In a letter to H.M. Green, Stewart expressed his disdain colourfully: "This short epistle is from Australia's premier Anti-Australian poet. I have graduated from being merely non-Australian to Anti-Australian. Once, if writers mentioned dilly-bags or sick stockriders I merely groaned - now I go beserk and commit mayhem".[36] A simplistic and naive dependence on stock Australian images was anathema to Stewart. His spleen was particularly directed at what he considered to be a limited and mindlessly sequacious attitude. With sardonic gleefulness

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33. Harold Stewart, "Harris Harrassed" in Honi Soit 21 May 1942, p.2.
34. Ibid.
35. In a letter to Donald Horne, 29 October 1943, Stewart referred to them as "Irrate Pelicans" in Horne Papers.
36. Harold Stewart to H.M. Green, 10 August 1949, in H.M. Green Papers (N.L.A.).

he ridiculed a prevailing preoccupation with predictable motifs. "Hans Heysen painted a gumtree on the left side of his canvass and six sheep on the right, or perhaps a gum-tree on the right and six sheep on the left. Sometimes for variety he put the gumtree in the middle and three sheep on either side".[37] A self conscious nationalism of this order was prone to an absurd reductionism. The Jindyworobaks were thus dismissed as deluded "prophets of confusion, reactionaries to the bush ballade aesthetic, concocting pseudo-national effusions out of wattle pollen and dilly-bags".[38]

Stewart's dismissive and detached position extended itself to the poetry of overt political clamour. The social realist school of thought, represented by Auden, Spender and Day Lewis, was just as equally alien to Stewart's approach. The political line in poetry was dismissed as facile "embroidering".[39] For Stewart it was a frippery devoid of "intellectual integrity and individualism".[40] Vainglorious radical trumpeting, so much the style of the "man with a cause" left Stewart coldly unimpressed.[41] The crusader, breathless with an agitating zeal, was as a poet unconvincing. Consequently,

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37. Harold Stewart, "Modern Australian Art" in Arna (1941).
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Harold Stewart as 'Skald', (pseudoname) in Honi Soit 16 July 1942, p.2.

Hooton's salvational, proselytizing and anarchic style was increasingly distasteful. As an egregious seer towering above the masses and waving a philosophy of illumination, Hooton alienated those seeking purity and order. Stewart disliked the man with a message - "a poet with something to say - but no one has ever been able to find out in plain English just what".[42] Thus his whole position was an elaborate exercise in self indulgence: "Hooton, Hooton, Hooton analyzing the 'mind' of Hooton".[43]

In a manner similar to McAuley's stance, Stewart's quest for a cultural identity led him away from an overtly vigorous radicalism. He chose instead, to extricate himself from contemporary conflicts, to elevate himself above the terrain of orthodoxy, and in the process, deny the legitimacy of the very values upon which the cultural conflict was based. In effect, Stewart chose to abscond from the cultural melée (embryonic and confused though it was) in order to be free to meander in more personalized realms. He conveniently by-passed and by implication, rejected the modernist internationalism of the Angry Penguins, the nationalistic sentimentalism of the Jindyworobaks, the jejune commitment of the socialists and the egocentric indulgence of the anarchists. Stewart's final settling

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42. Harold Stewart to Donald Horne 1943, no date in Horne Papers.

43. Harold Stewart to Donald Horne, 11 November 1943, in Horne Papers.

outside this milieu was in the rarefied domain of his own making. Characteristically his response was to withdraw into a "Cezanne-like secession from the federation of man".[44] Stewarts inclination was to lose himself in the mists of a "zennist iconoclasm"[45] swathed with a fine aestheticism. His tendency was to maunder within the landscapes of his imagination, safely detached from the banal and quotidian. An early poem, written by Stewart in 1938, serves to illustrate the mood of delicacy and the tendency towards ethereal retreat that characterized Stewart's style.

> A full-white moon floats low, its globe
> in fainting day's cerulean pale sky,
> with the lambent delicate disc of air
> to halo vaguely the pallor there
> of its smooth opaque balloon,
> like a frail alabaster camellia laid
> on a heavenly azure plate
> its milk-lily marbles dulled with a shade
> of wedgewood gradual blue
> while lovely values of cool ivory
> and wan dim china soon unite
> finely to blow those blooms of breaking light.[46]

Stewart's response to the cultural flux was idiosyncratic. Nonetheless, his en passant involvement with and dismissal of Hooton, his denial of the solutions offered by the Jindyworobaks and Angry Penguins, suggested an ambience that was culturally uncertain, self-conscious and immature. The variant

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44. James McAuley referring to Stewart in a letter to Donald Horne, 17 May 1944, in Horne Papers.

45. Harold Stewart to Donald Horne, 24 October 1943, in Horne Papers.

46. Harold Stewart as 'Skald', "Poem" in Hermes, Michaelmas 1938, p.36.

responses reflected an anxious need to secure a confluent point of reference on which to anchor a tradition, a cultural identity.

Despite general critical observations of the period that adumbrate a drab and unexciting scene, from our perspective, the late thirties and early forties were years of intense self questioning and search. It was a period of discontent within which there stirred the ripples of a cultural quest. Melbourne poet and critic Chris Wallace-Crabbe commenting generally on the Australian creative artist, may as easily have been referring to the thirties and forties when he wrote: "Under an empty sky, Australian writers have had to find their idiom and give shape to their word. Individually, one at a time, sceptical as to the likelihood of continuity, they work out their personal versions of the cultural perspective and the creative endeavour".[47]

In Stewart's case, this perspective stretched itself so far above the cultural features of the Australian idiom, that it snapped entirely, cutting itself off from the labours of an on-going reflective and critical evaluation of its needs. Prior to this stage of his spiritual expatriation however, Stewart did experience the entanglements, the disorientations, the tentative experimental offerings of other intellectuals

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47. C. Wallace-Crabbe, Melbourne Or The Bush (Sydney 1974), p.12.

of the period - intellectuals equally anxious to define and secure an all encompassing cultural perspective. It is from this angle that his interaction with Hooton, Somerville and McAuley attains significance. Each in his own way, was engaged in a quest that sought cultural definitions vis à vis a personal identity.

CHAPTER 7

JAMES McAULEY: QUIET CULTIVATION

James McAuley's quest for cultural anchorage took him along a different path. A year younger than Stewart, McAuley was born in 1917. He was brought up in the Sydney suburb of Homebush and like Stewart attended Fort St. High School from which he entered Sydney University in 1935.[1]

As one of Sydney University's "roystering young men"[2] of the thirties, McAuley's badge of revolt was coloured by the vogue of social consciousness that directed its efforts to the proletariat. The "roaring thirties" demanded allegiance to the People's party.[3] Self abnegation and a zealous devotion to the Worker's cause was the only tenable position of the radical. Certainly, the ideology of the thirties was an all pervasive obtrusion and more especially on the development of a young and anxious critical thinker. In McAuley's case, "the thirties got in the way of (my) thinking".[4]

A disposition to radicalism was, in this sense,

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1. "James McAuley on Commitment", in Spectrum, ½ hour interview by Tony Morphett for the Australian Broadcasting Commission, 1966. Transcript, Mitchell Lib.
2. Anon. "A Critical Examination of James McAuley" in Australian Letters 1959-1960, p.49.
3. J. McAuley to D. Horne, undated letter, 1943 in Horne Papers (Woollahra N.S.W.).
4. Ibid.

rehearsed in an ambience particularly suited to its growth. However, the thirties ideology soon proved to be an inadequate, if not entirely alien philosophy. McAuley could not long stay within the confines of an ideology that denied the autonomy of the artist. His disillusionment, expressed retrospectively was heavily sardonic: "The roaring thirties - when if you weren't a member of the Party, what were you - a Fascist you rat". The thirties are over for me and I feel a certain relief that they never got as far as my written work, even if they got in the way of my thinking. I can read by Herrick without a guilty feeling that I should be reading about the wrongs of the workers, which means that I can take an interest in the wrongs of the workers with less silliness if I want to. The blackmailing of artists to damage their art in "good causes" is finished".[5] McAuley's disenchantment with the allure of the red flag was perhaps best expressed in his Ballade of Lost Phrases published in the First Boke Of Fowle Ayres.[6] Expressing detachment from a naive and youthful leftism, the ballade lamented the past:

> "In what museums now abide
> The pamphlets that we read of yore
> Where are the orators that cried
> 'We will not fight a bosses war'

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5. Ibid.
6. First Boke Of Fowle Ayres (Sydney 1944).

No longer can it be denied
The Left Book Club's become a bore
The Party line from side to side
Zig-zagged till our eyes were sore
Can it be the Marxists lied?
Peace to the shades of the Imprecorr!
The Left wing's moulting on our shore
It will not fly again, I fear,
Freedom has become a whore.
Where are the phrases of yesteryear?[7]

McAuley quickly concluded that for him the Marxist line was ill-fitting. While still unsure of his ideological commitment he took up Andersonianism as the most comfortable ideological mode in transit. This was perhaps because Andersonianism could accommodate within its bounds a radicalism that was only mildly oppositionist. One could unobtrusively man the fringes, mouth the appropriate patois and one was in. However, there is nothing to show that McAuley was ever a fervent Andersonian. Instead, his initiation was by way of an inevitable immersion in the most prevalent and inescapable mode of thought: "most of us acquired the thirties Leftist uniform with the characteristic Sydney stripe that John Anderson gave. John Anderson taught so many of us to think his position was of the Left, it was radically critical, it was anti Stalinist. I can think of many that had their initial training in this way".[8] The mode of thought within which he was nurtured was Andersonian Realism.

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7. Ibid., p.2.
8. A.B.C. Interview op.cit.

Anderson in the thirties stringently maintained his critical opposition to all manifestations of social interest that sought to suppress a free thinking philosophy. No body of thought, no ideology was deemed sacrosanct. Marxism came in for its fair share of criticism. The concept of a "dialectic" for example was criticized as just "another theory postulating an ultimate reality" and hence, necessarily authoritarian. Anderson came to see Marxism as uncomfortably teleological - prone to idealism and an inadvertent voluntarism: "the Marxists can never get away from their talk of wills, ends, needs".[9] Increasingly, Anderson saw Marxism as a "doctrine of guiding principles", idealistically caught in a progressionist frame of mind and postulating a necessary "advance of things to a higher and higher level".[10] More than this, Marxism was declining into a rigidification of socialist doctrine as exemplified in the "cult of Stalin, the fetishism of socialism in one country, the neglect of real historical processes in the blind belief that history is on our side",[11] - all of which were tantamount to creative sclerosis. In Anderson's opinion, Bolshevism had failed. The true path of socialism had been obstructed by the imposition of an "arbitrary and tyrannical procedure".[12]

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9. John Anderson, "Marxist Ethics" (1937) in Studies in Empirical Philosophy (Syd. 1962) p.312.
10. Ibid., p.314.
11. Ibid., p.312.
12. John Anderson, "Leninism" in Honi Soit, 29 September 1937, p.1.

Under Stalinism, Russia was deemed a "police regime in which people live in an atmosphere of informing and denunciation". The working classes were miserable and degraded.[13] It was anathema to Anderson that socialist principles had been reduced to "sheer gansterism ... a fanatical belief in the Party" as the sole and inviolable source of power.[14] This then was the particular character of Andersonianism in the thirties - a position increasingly critical, anti-Stalinist and anti-solidarist.

Apart from a statement that he "naturally adopted Andersonian views",[15] McAuley's active involvement is largely unrecorded. We can but glean snippets of an early Andersonianism in his position by catching glimpses of McAuley weaving his way through the University experience during the late thirties. From this precarious vantage point we see McAuley, the under-graduate, much concerned with the Andersonian prescript - "realist aesthetics".[16] Although the contents have since been lost, McAuley gave a paper on the above subject to the literary society in 1936. In 1941, as a graduate, McAuley participated in a University debate on academic freedoms in which he mouthed the magic Andersonian terms

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13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. A.B.C. Interview, op.cit.
16. McAuley gave a paper on 'Realist Aesthetics' to the Sydney University Literary Society in 1936. See Sydney University Archives.

"scientific knowledge", "enquiry" and "truth".[17]

Evidence of an Andersonian tone in McAuley's style during this period, is revealed in his M.A. Thesis on Symbolism which he wrote in 1940. The thesis was subtitled An Essay in Poetics and concerned itself with an analysis of literary styles. Although not essentially Andersonian in its application, the thesis did, in parts, echo the Andersonian realist aesthetic. In it McAuley wrote: "One of the fundamental laws of creative writing is that each subject must develop along the lines of its own unique structure (Anderson would have said 'theme') and not be forced into an alien mould. If objective reality is the subject, then the artist must attend to the form and structure of objective reality and not distort it by 'romanticizing' it".[18]

Equally Andersonian were McAuley's strictures against expressionism. In Anderson's estimation, expressionism or the "interpretation of works in terms of the soul states of the artist" was something akin to a dissolute romanticism.[19] Expressionism as "the treatment of art as what it means to its creator, to his soul, with some reference to what it arouses in other souls",

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17. Union Recorder, 19 June 1941, p.100.

18. J. McAuley, Symbolism: An Essay in Poetics, M.A. Sydney University 1940, Chapter 1, p.37.

19. John Anderson, "Romanticism and Classicism" in Hermes, 1934. Michaelmas number.

was an absurd mysticism that confused aesthetics (or the "goodness in a work because of its structure") with feelings.[20] McAuley's view on the subject mimicked the Andersonian position. The Andersonian influence was resonant in his style: "For the expressionist, the subject of the poem is not the words at all. He goes behind the words and speaks of the emotion of the writer as the real subject. The poem fades into the flux of emotion that gave rise to it. But the writer's emotions and the same applies to the reader's emotions are not the works of art and have no aesthetic relevance - the only thing that is of aesthetic importance is the subject as actually presented".[21] Apart from an early mimicry of style, McAuley's discipleship to Andersonianism hinged more on an admiration of Anderson as a man of conviction. Recollecting his Andersonian experience, McAuley stressed the importance of that creed as a positive doctrine against which younger minds could find direction: "Anderson was a good teacher. Anderson's teaching was good because he fulfilled the first requirement of a teacher which is that he must have a 'doctrine' and come clean with it. For the student will come to have a mind of his own all the better for first experiencing

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20. John Anderson, Some Questions in Aesthetics (Sydney 1931), pp.7-11.

21. James McAuley, M.A. Thesis op.cit., chap.3, p.39.

through his teachers views what it is to have a mind at all".[22]

McAuley's Andersonianism, however, was never wholehearted. Rather, it was a passive and passing acquaintanceship, a characteristic mode of thought that he acquired simply by being at the University at a time when it was heavily infused with the Andersonian style. For this reason, McAuley was quickly sceptical and questioning. For someone questing after something "more positive than the critical spirit",[23] the Andersonian stress on critical opposition readily lent itself to a stale reductionism. The Andersonian style was open to the criticism that it was "merely negative and destructive".[24] One of the inherent vunerabilities in any critical approach, is its tendency to dissolve into an empty methodology sustained only by a predictable style. This tendency was defined by McAuley when he wrote: "I don't think Anderson meant his position to be negative and destructive although I ended up thinking it was ... the stress upon the critical spirit as almost the sole value was very strong ... one wasn't so conscious of the positive ingredients when it came to the general questions of social policy and even

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22. J. McAuley, "Some Andersonians on John Anderson", Bulletin 30 June, 1962 pp.29-30.
23. A.B.C. Interview, op.cit.
24. Ibid.

personal views".[25] With hindsight on his side, McAuley could see the limitations of Anderson's philosophy: "Anderson came near to identifying intellectual activity with 'the critical spirit'. The position could, in the end, be summed up in the formula: The answer to every conceivable question is No".[26]

McAuley's initial dissatisfaction with Andersonism hinged on a growing difference in attitude to art and literature. Although at first, McAuley appeared to adhere to Anderson's views on aesthetics, he was too much a poet to accept wholeheartedly an aesthetic that veered towards a detached reductionism. Anderson was not an artist; he viewed the world from the heights of a pure logic ensconced within the prosaic dictates of a realist philosophy. The intricacies, the subtleties, the multidimensional interplay of emotion with image - so much the essence of poetic construction - could not be subjected to the rigours of a philosophy aimed at extracting the "true" from the "false". McAuley's criticisms were inevitably directed at what he termed "Professor Anderson's naively realist position".[27] The basis of his divergence from Anderson's position was expressed in these terms: "If we limit the function of

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25. Ibid.
26. James McAuley, "Some Andersonians on John Anderson" in Bulletin 30 June 1962, pp.29-30.
27. James McAuley, M.A. Thesis, op.cit., chap.3, p.9.

words to indication then it is comparatively easy to raise the question of "coherence". The subject can be viewed as a series of propositions and the questions of truth or falsity of those propositions appears at once. Coherence is thus a relation between true propositions and to say that a poem is coherent is simply to say that what the words indicate actually exist. But if we say that indication does not deliver the whole subject then the simple logical issue tends to disappear".[28] In other words, poetry was not simply an exercise in logic; it was not concerned with the making of propositions that were to be affirmed or denied in the normal manner. Anderson's approach sought to impose an artificial order, to divide and neatly categorize the components of a creative work and to seek to extract from it general theories on aesthetic realities. It was this particular approach that characterized his analysis of James Joyce's "Pomes Pennyeach". Anderson concluded his analysis with these observations: "We find in this poem, illustration and confirmation of the main points made - the independence of the work as an aesthetic object; the need for a real theme, a recognisable compilation whose working out has an objective order if there is to be any appreciation of structure, any recognition of the goodness and badness of works".[29] This was

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28. Ibid.
29. John Anderson, Some Questions in Aesthetics (Sydney 1931), pp.24-5.

altogether too constricting, too far removed from the intensities and irrationalities that are often so much a part of the creative effort. For McAuley, Anderson's aesthetic theories were too naively pat. His criticism of Anderson's position was in these terms: "The presented subject of Joyce's Golden hair which Anderson quotes is not simply a lady with golden hair being asked to lean out of a window. It is a passionate 'cri-de-coeur' that surrounds itself with these images in order to achieve form. Neither the emotion nor the images voiced from the emotion are the subject. What is presented is the integral situation of the emotion in contact with its image, and since emotion has a habit of distorting the structure of reality, of disturbing the logical connections between its images, to question the logic of the image is to raise the issue of coherence prematurely".[30] For McAuley, a poem was not to be assessed solely in terms of the objective situation which it purported to represent. The essence of a poem could not be found simply through a logical analysis of the meaning intended in its words. Rather, the subject of a poem would also include "the subjective attitude to the situation which is conveyed by the a-logical function of words. It is always the mind in contact with its images that we find and not merely those images themselves".[31] McAuley felt drawn towards an aesthetic that was more congenial to the

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30. James McAuley, M.A. op.cit., Chapter 3, p.10 (McAuley's emphasis).

31. Ibid., Last section, p.20.

a-logical and intuitive. His doubts about Andersonian notions on art and literature, were founded on a poet's faith in the "expressive function of words" over and above their mere logicality.[32] In the concluding chapter of his thesis, McAuley clearly revealed the divergence of his own aesthetic direction when he wrote: "The peculiar quality of poetry lies in its ability to present things as they appear in moments of intuitive awareness ... a poem is a kind of emotional algebra, a set of symbolic functions that evolve along the lines of their own peculiar logic. And perhaps it is the surdic element in experience that gives to our algebra its peculiar vitality and power".[33] Clearly, from this perspective, Andersonianism was inadequate and unsatisfying. Within the Andersonian domain of values, the contemplative, the intuitive, the a-logical and the surdic were alien. Retrospectively, McAuley expressed his divergence from Andersonianism as a fundamental difference in perception. "My own first resistance centered on one of the outlying parts of Anderson's work - the field of aesthetics. One could not even begin to apply Anderson's view to art ... and when applied to literature it had the effect of a bath of acid,

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32. Ibid., p.29.

33. Ibid., pp.31-34.

dissolving the corpus".[34]

McAuley had to go elsewhere in his search for a philosophy of coherent purposiveness. He had to seek an ideological legitimacy within a more personally satisfying creed. Andersonianism, as an "initial training" in radicalism, had left him fundamentally unsatisfied. McAuley's Andersonianism had always been lukewarm and phlegmatic. His cool and dispassionate involvement with Anderson was never more than a critical apparatus, acting as a transient perspective from which he temporarily viewed the world while engaged in an internal dialogue about more fundamental directions - directions which involved the poetry of Mallarme and Rilke and the ideals of philosophical anarchism.[35]

Graduating from an Andersonian incubation, McAuley tentatively explored alternative ideologies. During this process, McAuley lightly touched upon anarchism and in this connection - Harry Hooton. The interaction was not long lived; McAuley went on to seek his own personal resolution to the quest that bestirred him. However, although brief and negative, the association with Hooton was significant because it reinforced the picture of this period as a time of disorientation and quest.

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34. James McAuley, "Some Andersonians on John Anderson" in Bulletin, 30 June 1962, pp.29-30.

35. James McAuley, "On Being An Intellectual" in The Grammar of the Real (Sydney 1975), p.147.

McAuley's efforts were motivated by a fundamental need for personal self knowledge. The need was to "find out who you are and where you live".[36] He was striving to establish an identity, to delineate a direction. As a young poet suffused with the "sad emptiness of metropolitan youth lost between beliefs",[37] McAuley was lost and searching. The predominant mood of his early poetry was one of alienation, solitude and quiet despair. One of those early poems - "Communion" - ended with these lines:

> And as I like an alien stood
> from mysteries apart,
> a silver surge rose in my blood
> and drowned my quiet heart.38

The feeling of dissatisfaction and disorientation extended back to his youth. As an adolescent McAuley underwent what he termed "a crisis of faith".[39] Even at this time, as an Anglican choirboy, McAuley was engaged in the task of constructing a set of values. As he put it: "I read quite a lot of books purporting to defend the christian faith. They didn't seem to be prepared to come out with a clear position on a lot of

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36. A.B.C. Interview, op.cit.
37. D. Horne, The Education of Young Donald (Melbourne 1967), p.224.
38. J. McAuley, "Communion" in The Arts Journal, 1935, p.26.
39. Interview, op.cit.

issues".[40] His search for explication and satisfaction on issues of faith were not forthcoming.

As a child, McAuley's perception of the world was saturated by a state of deep reverie and self searching. His poem, 'Childhood Morning-Homebush' drew an image of an inner world at once externally observant and self absorbed:

> ... I hear the slow trains puffing stamps
> Gathering speed. A bulbul sings,
> Raiding persimmon and fig
> The rooster is fully glossy rig
> Crows triumph as the state of things.
> I make no comment: I don't know
> I don't know what there is to know
> I hear that every answer's No
> But believe it can't be so.[41]

The poem echoes a reoccuring theme - the search for a faith, for something positive on which to anchor awareness. Again and again, McAuley's mood was one of youthful yearning - "the soul must feed on something for its dreams".[42] This was the basis of his struggle to grasp out and take hold of a personal line of meaning. It is important to bear this in mind when we next encounter McAuley as a young teacher at the Junior High School in Newcastle in 1942.

Exiled in Newcastle, McAuley's refuge was in poetry

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40. Ibid.
41. J. McAuley, Suns And Surprises (Sydney 1974), p.225.
42. McAuley, 'Wisteria' in op.cit.

and in the writing of letters to his friends in Sydney. Oliver Somerville was one of these friends. During his stay in Newcastle, McAuley became involved with Hooton. It was from McAuley that Somerville first heard references to Harry Hooton, who was also living in Newcastle. This early acquaintanceship warranted a lonely mention in a letter Somerville wrote to Hooton in 1942: "I heard of you from another poet contemporary with me, exiled in Newcastle as a teacher - Jim McAuley, but could not ascertain whether you had actually met him or whether he had merely read you".[43] In fact, they had not as yet met. McAuley and Hooton did not encounter each other until the weekend of August 29 - 30th 1942.[44] We can safely surmise that McAuley's first introduction to Hooton was through the latter's book of poems - These Poets.[45] Hooton's interest in McAuley was initially piqued by the latter's interest in him. As had been the case with Harold Stewart, Hooton was anxious to gather confreres and to win admiration. His response to Somerville's reference regarding McAuley was that of cautious curiosity. He was flattered and pleased, but not entirely sure: "As to McAuley, all I have to go on is an epigram of a poem of McAuley's,

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43. O. Somerville to H. Hooton, 11 July 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence, MS.No.569. (Mitchell Library, N.S.W.).
44. H. Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 9 September 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
45. H. Hooton, These Poets (Sydney 1940).

From this I gather that he wants to curl up and die, that he is dead already. But this is complicated by your mentioning his name as being in Newcastle and referring to me".[46] Pleased by the prospect of recognition and an ever widening reputation, Hooton was drawn towards McAuley. But, apart from the latter's recognition of him, Hooton was still unsure of McAuley's qualifications and worth. He expressed his doubts and hinted at his criteria of acceptance when he wrote: "Is McAuley in the know - does he share the honour of seeing through the traditional reactionary academic futilities? Where does he fit into the scheme of things that matter out of the University? Would it pay me to cultivate his acquaintance?"[47] Yet, despite his doubts, he was drawn towards the prospect of an association with McAuley if for no other reason than that he represented another creative sensibility with whom Hooton could identify. "I should meet him", he continued in his letter to Somerville, "poets are too far and few between in Newcastle to ignore each other".[48] Somerville's estimation of McAuley was that although he was prone to writing "sentimentally bad poems", he was still worth knowing,[49] because McAuley was deemed to be one of the illuminati (along with

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46. H. Hooton to O. Somerville, 8 August 1942, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Oliver Somerville to Harry Hooton, 24 August 1942, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.

Hooton and Somerville) possessing a generally critical and progressive outlook.

Along with Somerville, Harold Stewart and Douglas McCallum, McAuley was present at the gathering aimed at meeting Harry Hooton in Newcastle during a long weekend in late August 1942. The weekend was spent talking about poetry, literature and anarchism.[50] Hooton's description of this meeting in a letter to Donald Horne, who was an associate and friend of those who attended, but who was not able to make the trip to Newcastle himself, was in these terms: "we had a hectic weekend, an orgy of poetry, politics, argument and discussion. McCallum came up on Saturday (along with Somerville) and Sunday, McAuley and his wife came out".[51] Hooton's reaction was an excited enthusiasm. To all intents and purposes, it appeared as if the kindred spirits in creative awareness, so long wished for, had finally materialized. Sophisticated poets and young intellectuals were visiting him, showering him with recognition and bestowing him significance. His natural response was to wish for a continuation of the association. For Hooton, the events of that long weekend were cardinal. Much enthused by the association, he wrote to Somerville

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50. Douglas McCallum, Letters to author, 22 August 1975.

51. Hooton to Horne, 29 August 1942 with inclusion of an extension to this letter dated 31 August 1942. In Horne Papers.

in glowing haste: "Our hectic weekend was quite momentous. What a pity I weren't in Sydney - somewhere near you all. In spite of the hurry to get too much off my chest, I had an orgy of your companies - a lot of poetry and anarchism".[52] To strengthen our picture of this weekend gathering of poets and intellectuals, it is worth noting Douglas McCallum's description of it, particularly because of the richness of its detail. McCallum and Somerville decided to go up to Newcastle together. They arrived on the Friday night, stayed overnight at the George Hotel and then went in search of McAuley on the Saturday morning. Finding McAuley at the "Cricketer's Arms", together they spent an interesting morning "yarning and imbibing".[53] At three in the afternoon, Somerville and McCallum left McAuley (who by this time was 'laughing, singing, dancing and gesticulating")[54] to go to Hooton's. Saturday afternoon and evening was thus spent in a state of "jubilant yawp and yatter",[55] as Somerville, McCallum and Hooton talked and debated right through to the early hours of the morning. On the following Sunday, McAuley arrived. The initial encounter between McAuley and Hooton was somewhat cool and guarded. McCallum described in these

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52. Hooton to Somerville, 9 September 1942 in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
53. D. McCallum to Horne, 15 September 1942 in Horne Papers.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.

terms: "Hooton and McAuley sparring with McAuley aloof; then Harry Hooton begins inimitable firing of questions, pays homage, McAuley unbuttons, holds forth and all is well".[56]

So began a short lived association during which time, McAuley visited Hooton and exchanged views on poetry with him. It was Hooton who was most forthcoming with the invitation to further their friendship. McAuley responded to the extent that he visited Hooton and on one occasion, left him copies of his completed poems for Hooton to read and assess.[57] Hooton's response was one of hesitant admiration: "I am not competent to declare where McAuley's poems stand but they stand somewhere high up I feel sure".[58] The real basis of their brief association and certainly as far as Hooton was concerned was that it afforded Hooton recognition. Hooton was prepared to accept those who accepted him. He expressed it thus: "and of course any one who accords me respect incurs my strong respect".[59]

It was during this period while he was living in Newcastle and casually associating with Hooton, that McAuley came closest to an identification (however loose

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56. Ibid.
57. H. Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 27 September 1942, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
58. H. Hooton to Oliver Somerville, 2 November 1942, in Hooton-Somerville Correspondence.
59. Ibid.

and mild) with an impulse to radicalism expressed as anarchism. Anarchism as a loose and easy ideal, offered itself to McAuley as a "libertarian ... opium", pleasantly idyllic because of its essentially amorphous, romantic scope.[60] Insight into the mood of this period is given in McAuley's poem "Self Portrait: Newcastle 1942".[61] With his characteristic tone of sad introspection McAuley wrote:

> First day, by the window,
> He sits at a table to write
> And watches the coal dust settle
> Black on the paper's white.
>
> ... He, like that sullied paper
> Has acquired no meaning yet
> He goes for long walks at night
> or drinks with people he's met
>
> ... With friends he talks anarchism
> the philosophical kind ...

There is nothing very substantial upon which to base this early interest in anarchism. Snippets in letters made passing reference to an anarchist inclined McAuley: "Tess is firmly convinced that Jimmy is the founder of the anarchist revival..."[62] That which is culled from McAuley is equally vague and insubstantial: "Those who did not make the transition (to the Communist Party) floated around as a fellow traveller or a philosophical anarchist (as at a certain stage I described myself.)

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60. J. McAuley, "Counter Culture", in Quadrant September 1976, p.15.
61. J. McAuley in Collected Poems 1936-1970 (Sydney 1971).
62. D. McCallum to D. Horne, 15 September 1942 in Horne Papers.

The eccentrics, the dissenters even from the orthodoxy of dissent might re-explore Stirner or the anarchism lighted up by the Spanish Civil War as I did..."[63] All of which points to an anarchism largely nominal, representing nothing so much as another avenue tentatively explored by McAuley in his search for a coherent faith. McAuley's Andersonianism, his philosophical radicalism were expressions of his quest to "acquire meaning". His radicalism, expressed diffusely first, at the University and then in Newcastle, was nothing if not a yearning for purposiveness. McAuley was seeking the intellectual tools with which to shape an image. As with his Andersonianism, his philosophical anarchism was a peripheral absorption. Radical affiliations were external expressions of a more central preoccupation with internal directions. Even while he was speaking anarchism with his friends, McAuley was elsewhere engaged. The concluding stanza to the Self Portrait hinted at these other directions:

> With friends he talks anarchism
> the philosophical kind
> But Briefe an einen jurgen
> Dichter speaks close to his mind".[64]

McAuley's preoccupation was with poetry. Briefe an

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63. J. McAuley, "On Being An Intellectual", in The Grammar of the Real, (Sydney 1975), p.147.

64. McAuley, Collected Poems, op.cit.

einen jurgen dichter, translates as "Letters to a Young Poet", a collection of letters written by the poet Rainer Maria Rilke to an aspiring younger poet during the years 1903-1908. McAuley's state of mind and the directions that he was then exploring complied with Rilke's preoccupations.

The overwhelming leit-motif in Rilke's letters was a veneration of solitude as an intrinsic component to creativity. Rilke reiterated the theme of an inward looking silence, a contemplative stance that built a picture of the creative artist as a world in himself. He urged the young poet to go inside himself, to dig in the deepest places of his heart.[65] The young poet was told to "love your solitude, be self possessed and quiet ... your solitude will be your home and haven from there you will discover all your paths".[66] Speaking thus to young poets, Rilke created an aura of majesty and mystery, associating the creative act with a deeply self-conscious individualism. The mood that he evoked was that of sacrosanct purity - poetry as a deep dwelling extraction of feeling. The world he created was infused with silence and the "quietest hour". Deeply romantic and introspective, Rilke suggested images rich with sorrow

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65. R.M. Rilke, Letters To a Young Poet (Translation by R. Snell) (London, 1945), p.13.

66. Ibid., p.23.

and quietude.[67] Through his letters he was directing all young poets to seek self-understanding, to search for the roots of the compulsion to write: "Ask yourself in the quietest hour, must I write? If you should be in the affirmative, then build your line according to this necessity".[68]

Upon reflection on his life and his poetry, McAuley echoed a Rilke-like thought when he spoke of the poetic world as the product of "a lot of silence".[69] Given McAuley's emotional receptivity during this early period of his search, his response to Rilke's inner-directed and self contained mood may well have been a positive influence shaping his direction. Rilke offered a refuge from which McAuley could gather the forms from which to build his own world.

McAuley's whole disposition to radicalism was really an off-shoot of a fundamental need to maintain a separate line. His brief encounter with Hooton and with philosophical radicalism ultimately proved to have been peripheral irritants that had served to spur him on to a clarification of his own position. This was essentially a detached retreat into a precious isolation fed only by perfection and the mature deliberations of quiet self-

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67. Ibid., p.36.
68. Ibid., p.12.
69. A.B.C. Interview, op.cit.

realization. McAuley's disposition was the expression of a refined arrogance, a faith in the self as exclusively enlightened. He was infused with a belief in his own significance. Pivoted on a self absorbed sensibility, McAuley was sustained by a strong belief in his own potential - a potential perceived as being at odds with its environment: "one began to be conscious of one's own ambition and of a certain thinness in the environment".[70]

McAuley went on to cultivate a perspective that was contemptuous and at best indifferent towards those that differed from his own. Donald Horne's vignette of McAuley as a young graduate well captured this mood of exclusive detachment. Horne wrote: "Among McAuley and his friends there was a contempt for anything that was now happening. There was a particular distaste for shoddiness of practically everything at that time being written in English. For the world outside there were shrugs of self assuredness."[71]

McAuley's separatist position, evolving slowly, expressed itself in his acrid disdain for overt commitment. The sacrosanct purity of the creative act and the inviolable status of the artist as a sacred isolate - so much a part of McAuley's values - were threatened by

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70. Ibid.

71. D. Horne, The Education of Young Donald (Melbourne 1967), pp.237-8.

any attempt to infuse or juxtapose upon this purity an artificial and self conscious literary face. Specifically, expressions of overt literary nationalism left him coldly unimpressed. McAuley's distaste for "literary hot-gospelling" was forcefully expressed in an editorial of Hermes. He wrote: "Literary nationalism, the theory that the artist should sit and write on his own dunghill is being hawked about Sydney once more ... it is one of the least charming theories of art, in this instance it has been yoked to that horrid bed fellow, political nationalism ..."[72] McAuley's primary concern was with "fine literature" and creativity unspoilt and undisturbed by the "confused quacking noises that issue from the local backyard".[73] He objected to dictates of Australianisms and the "duty to have Australian decor in your verse".[74] McAuley's attitude in this instance expressed itself in his parody of the Jindyworobak movement. His poem, Jindyworobaksheesh is a good example.

> By the waters of Babylon
> I heard a Public works official say:
> 'A culture that is truly Babylonian
> Has been ordered for delivery today'.

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72. J. McAuley, Editorial, Hermes Lent Term (1937) p.37.

73. Ibid., p.38.

74. Interview by J. Thompson, "J. McAuley, Poetry In Australia" in Southerly No.2 (1967), p.26.

By the waters of Babylon
A quiet noise of subsidies in motion
Is a bald or mangy surface we apply
Our sovreign art-provoking lotion.
By the waters of Babylon I heard
That art should sweeten to the people's mouth
The droppings from the perch of government.[75]

Given McAuley's dislike of overtly zealous literature as well as his concern for lucidity, it was not surprising that he soon tired of work that was self conscious and didactic. For this reason it was not just the Jindyworobaks who came under fire of attack from McAuley, but Harry Hooton as well. As a man "notable for vast icy wastes of reserve when confronted by a big drum",[76] McAuley was quick to withdraw from the theatrical commotion of Hooton's message - fraught poetic effusions. Reviewing Hooton's poems almost a year after having made his acquaintance in Newcastle, McAuley wrote: "A Hooton poem is a one man wrestling match, Hooton versus Hooton refereed by Hooton. There is some real rasslin and the rest is just grand standing. When Harry rises smiling to his feet, we all shout 'who won Harry?' and he says, 'I did, the proceeds will go to the international working class".[77] By this stage, McAuley's attitude to Hooton's

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75. J. McAuley, Collected Poems, 1936-1970 (Sydney 1971).

76. D. Horne, "Unca Donald on Hooton" in Honi Soit, 23 September 1943.

77. J. McAuley, "Hooton Slaps The Mat" in Honi Soit, 5 August 1943, p.2.

work was light hearted and dismissive. Hooton just wasn't worth serious consideration; an estimation of his work was, for McAuley, something akin to entertainment. His disdain for and detachment from Hooton expressed itself in these terms: "There is nothing serious in my applause of Harry ... Harry is at least a joke".[78] Hooton's loose and chaotic style was anathema to someone convinced of the need for precision. Hooton sinned against McAuley's standards of stringency by his habit of drowning any incisive statement within a "litter of words".[79] McAuley believed that contemporary poetry was in a state of moribund decay; its two worst faults were, "(a) the lack of a meditated and integral theme, and (b) a pretensious idiom which sought to hide the incoherence of theme".[80] Although Hooton was seen to exemplify these tendencies, they were nowhere better revealed than in the extremist style of the Angry Penguins. McAuley was at no time more vehemently aroused from his self absorption than he was over the pretentious onslaught into profundity exercised by the Angry Penguins school. As in his initial interaction with Hooton, the Angry Penguins' episode allowed McAuley the opportunity to further articulate and clarify his own position.

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78. J. McAuley to D.Horne, 1943 letter undated in Horne Papers.

79. Honi Soit, op.cit.

80. Ibid.

Writing to Donald Horne in 1943, McAuley expressed his distaste for the earnest tone of commitment and ardent insight characteristic of the Angry Penguins: "I've just been looking at Angry Penguins.
"Even Harry (Hooton) is not such a bad joke as these people. There is some really wunner fell (sic) stuff about how art and the workers must get right in pitching for the anti-fascist war. There is an article which lets us know that 'our art must be armed with the most advanced and humanitarian ideas'. Whaddya know, Whaddya know'."[81] The tone echoed an earlier tirade against literary nationalism - dismissive contempt. Again and again, McAuley's censure was directed against the exploitation of art as a vehicle for a zealous dissemination of any creed. He had been opposed to an earlier Stalinist adulteration of art - "the blackmailing of artists to damage their art in good causes".[82] His consequent response to the Angry Penguin approach was to see it as a newer form of blackmail - a form of coercion that demanded of the artist that he "stop all this nonsense of talking sense and be surreal or apocalyptic".[83] McAuley demanded purity. Extrapolations of depth and insight - so much the style of the Angry Penguins school - only served to leave McAuley dismissive and impatient:

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81. J. McAuley to D. Horne, undated letter, 1943, in Horne Papers.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid.

"To hell with art and the unconscious. To hell in fact with art and anything".[84] For McAuley, the modernistic effusions of Angry Penguins were symptomatic of a general decline in artistic standards.

Enough has been said of the Ern Malley hoax to render unnecessary another detailed exposition. Suffice it to observe here that McAuley and Harold Stewart acted from an impulse for preservation, but inadvertently did so from what appeared to be olympian heights of purity - a bastion against a more generally felt "soft slide towards chaos and defeat".[85] It was a characteristic act seeking to preserve the real mainstream of creative effort from the curious abberrations of what was seen as an adolescent, puerile fringe.

Traditionally,[85(i)] the Ern Malley hoax and McAuley's general attitude to modernism, have been used as evidence to instance what has been termed a classicist reaction against romanticism - the modern counterparts of which were surrealism and expressionism. However, it is perhaps closer to the complexity of things to see this episode in McAuley's development as something akin to an exorcism - as an act in his constant effort to extract, delineate and maintain an individual position. Labels like

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84. Ibid.

85. J. McAuley, review of H. Read, The Tenth Muse in Observer, 22 March 1958, p.88.

85(i) A.B.C. Interview, op.cit.; also Vivian Smith, James McAuley (Melbourne 1965).

classicist or alternatively, augustan, are blanket terms that merely serve to reduce and neatly categorize acts and impulses essentially multi-dimensional. It is not enough simply to dress McAuley as an Apollonian staunchly thrusting against the anarchic flow of the Dionysian spirit. The more accurate observation would depict McAuley as in some sense infused with the Dionysian spirit even while he was fighting against it. McAuley revealed this essential duality in an interview with John Thompson: "Yes it was a reaction (against the Angry Penguins). It's a debate inside yourself ... and I like so many others, experienced the sort of choice that I think lies before the modern poet. Will he accept the siren voices that tell him he can write gorgeous poetry just by dropping the logical controls, by regurgitating from the unconscious or should he adopt a more traditional method? Now there is an excitement possible along that first path. The temptation - and I felt it in those terms - was quite a real one, leading to a debate within me".[86] For McAuley then, the Ern Malley affair was an attempt to expel by vehement denial an impulse felt in himself. Furthermore, it could be argued that the temptation lingered and that McAuley's perspective on poetry remained double faceted; that he sought, in the end, to obtain a balance between a cerebral order of form and a more jubilant

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86. McAuley in Southerly, op.cit.

expressionism. Certainly this is what one is led to believe when comparing two different poems of McAuley's. The first, 'An Art of Poetry', directs the poet to:

> Scorn then to darken and contract
> The landscape of the heart
> By individual arbitrary
> And self expressive art
> Let your speech be ordered wholly
> By an intellectual love
> Elucidate the carnal maze
> With clear ideas from above.87

This expresses one side of McAuley's approach, it "stands for one part of my feeling about what is needed. There is another poem which is a sort of cousin to this which I call 'To Any Poet'. It says something else".[88] This latter poem exhalts life and the poet's experience of it. It demands more of poetry than a detached and cool ratiocination. Rather, it demands vitality.

> Living is thirst for joy
> that is what art rehearses
> Let sober drunkeness
> give splendour to your verses.89

The key words in this poem, and, for our understanding of McAuley generally during this period, are the words 'sober drunkeness'. Within the duality of this perspective can be found the balance of McAuley's position. From it we can trace McAuley's initial youthful radicalism, to see reflected within its balance the two elements that counteracted into an ultimate conflation

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87. Ibid. (my emphasis).
88. Ibid.
89. Ibid., p.26.

of mellow sobriety. If we interpret 'drunkenness' to mean a thirst for life, a joie de vivre yearning after saturation and a positive suffusion of the spirit with something solid, definite and emotionally sustaining, then we can see the young McAuley - the "roystering" radical manquè in better perspective. From this angle, the undergraduate McAuley, the Andersonian McAuley, the Hooton-tinged philosophical anarchist, coelesce to form a picture of an individual questing after positive drunkenness, after definition. The triggering impulse behind this thirst, behind the tentative flirtations with radicalism can be traced to McAuley's search for "new principles of finality".[90] The quest remained the same, it was only the specific resolution of it at a given time that altered. After 1942 and his meeting with Hooton, the youthful forms of his search reached a turning point and saw the beginnings of a subtle re-direction. After this period, what had once been an embryonic leftism nominally expressed along the way as Stalinism, Andersonianism and philosophical anarchism, rigidified into a radicalism of retreat. By 1943-44, McAuley's characteristic response to the demands of a radical consciousness, was to build a separate line based on an attitude of individualism and sequestered purity. By the time of his middle to late twenties, McAuley's radical bandwagon was beginning to

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90. J. McAuley, "On Being An Intellectual", in The Grammar Of the Real (Sydney 1974), p.147.

sag heavily with the world weariness and déjà-vu of sagacity. Detached from the radicalism of theatrical display, McAuley took on the visage of the bemused olympian. Far removed from the "war-blab" and the "flatulent puffs for freedom" so much the style of the immature "good-thumping radical thinker",[91] McAuley's approach was to detach himself from the mainstream of fashionable causes. His response to the prevailing fashion in literature as manifested in the modernism of Angry Penguins, was similarly bemused and contemptuous. He vented his spleen in a heavily sardonic style in a letter to Donald Horne in 1943. He wrote: "I've been looking at a collection called Wartime Harvest which purports to show what the Young Idea is doing in literature nowadays. It shows it only too clearly. After the smart aleck smattering mouths of the thirties, we now have the arty-farty forties. Wherever English is spoken scores of verdant squashy Max-Harrises wave in the breeze".[92] McAuley had no time for the then current yearning after the apocalyptic and profound. He abominated the shallow and pretentious. When confronted with artiface and the self conscious display of the avant-garde, McAuley's position was that of ridicule: "... isn't it fun to be forward looking and a progressive, a vital new poet - alert, sensitive,

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91. J. McAuley to Donald Horne, November 1943 in Horne Papers.

92. Ibid.

aware, a really vibrant mind confronted with the terrific complexities of the modern world feeling deeply all its horror and violence but responding to all the nice things like creativeness and knowing so much, having culture ...".[93]

Within this atmosphere of denial and demolition, the only positive construct was the erection of a citadel by McAuley to the honour of his own dignity; a dignity securely based on his exclusive positioning within a category uniquely his own: "Me, I shall cultivate the vegetables in my victory garden and go on being a little bit anarchy in my own way".[94] In this way, he ensconced himself within a rarefied and precious frame removed from the contaminations of the shoddy. His most characteristic response was to shy away from the "outrageous, violent lurid uproar of action".[95] Instead, as he put it: "my natural posture in affairs being dilettante, pessimistic, auxillary and conversational, I do not propose to strain my muscles more than I can help to maintain a different stance".[96]

Slowly, McAuley was moving towards an aloof isolationism sustained by a faith in the inviolability of his private world. Within this niche of individualism,

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93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid.

McAuley proposed to devote himself to the cultivation of his own unique style: "To speak boldly, I have a business in life, it is the cultivation of a certain sensibility. I do not judge my activity by reference to the good causes which surround me. I judge the good causes by my own obsession and participate in them or ignore them as they help or hinder my private, selfish and tenacious desire".[97] Shunning the boisterous and grandiloquent, McAuley's concession to radicalism was to maintain its integrity by salvaging its purity. From McAuley's perspective, radicalism was akin to preservation. This was best expressed in a letter McAuley wrote to Donald Horne; in it he wrote: "I found an epigram by Robert Frost which expressed a thought I've had: he says he does not want to be too radical in youth so that he won't be too reactionary in old age".[98] Sobriety was being imposed, purposefully juxtaposed upon a radical impulse as an ingredient necessary for its preservation. In fact, however, this was a rationalization seeking to justify the emergence of a perspective mellower than a hitherto more youthful motely of radical impulses. Where previously the dominant side of that sphere of "sober drunkenness" had been that which invited emotional inebriation, now the balance was being imposed by the predominance of sobriety

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97. J. McAuley to D. Horne, 17 May 1944 in Horne Papers.
98. J. McAuley to D. Horne, November 1943 in Horne Papers.

and order. The loose, romantic excess of youth so much prone to fanatical zeal in the name of good causes was now eschewed as something foreign and immature: "Somehow, we never quite got around (you and me) to the more luscious visions for which youth is justly famous".[99] McAuley implied instead that he had somehow side stepped a stage in the evolution towards a more mature deliberation on life. A deliberation which from McAuley's estimation demanded a perspective elevated away from the obstreperous theatricality of the engagé. The direction that he preferred to take involved a separate absorption with his own values. Although not quite the complete "secession from the federation of man",[100] it involved nonetheless a retreat into a private world of "ruthless opportunism and a bland readiness to ignore the argument of all activists".[101] Donald Horne captured this side to McAuley's development when he wrote of him in these terms: "to be a certain kind of recognizable person in external behaviour - to maintain a certain purity of style mattered more than any other particular achievement. Nothing could be sacrificed to the pride in being themselves".[102] Such then was the direction in

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99. Ibid.

100. J. McAuley to D. Horne referring to Harold Stewart, 17 May 1944 in Horne Papers.

101. Ibid.

102. D. Horne, The Education of Young Donald (Melbourne 1967), p.240.

which McAuley was moving. It remains for us to ask ourselves more general questions about the nature and significance of this movement, of this intellectual quest. From whence did it spring, what was it looking for?

Geoffrey Serle in his panoramic study of the 'Creative Spirit in Australia',[103] wrote of the 1930's as a coming of age. He argues that "for the first time in Australia's history an intellectual cultured class arose which was predominantly dissident".[104] His attempt to account for the emergence of such a class lightly touches upon the Depression and a growing disillusionment with the ideals of a capitalist society.[105] He argues thus: "It was the generation born roughly between 1915-1925 which grew up in the depression and was then faced with the shock of war which rose in total revolt against cultural orthodoxy".[106] The suggestion is that there arose a solid, coherent, unified and confident oppositionist element forcefully decrying orthodoxy. From our perspective this was not the case. Certainly, the individuals concerned - Somerville, Stewart, McAuley - were of the generation Serle speaks of and, undoubtedly, the depression coupled with a general disillusionment

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103. G. Serle, From Deserts The Prophets Come (Melbourne 1973).
104. Ibid., p.154.
105. Ibid., p.148.
106. Ibid., p.173.

with capitalism did play a part in nurturing revolt.[107] However, the radicalism that ensued was by no means a confident and mature "total revolt".[108] Rather, it expressed itself as a confused, disorientated and loosely diffused questing. It was a quest which sought meaning and purpose but which remained essentially negative. In McAuley's case, the radical mask was etched with the features of a blurred anarchism - an anarchism loosely absorbed from the romantic visions of Blake and sustained by the soporific laxity of youthful ideals.[109] It could be argued that McAuley's anarchism was no more than an indulgence - the bright new light of philosophical disenchantment bestowing upon those who touched it an aura of sophistication. For McAuley, "anarchism had its idyllic libertarian side", attracting him and other young intellectuals in a "reverie without commit ment".[110] McAuley's most recent reflection on this early period presented anarchist radicalism as an illusionary interlude on the path towards maturity. He expressed it thus: "anarchism in those years had a brief post-humous ghost life as an opium for a minority of middle-class idealists".[111] Lost in a vacuum created by an alienation from the capitalist system with its corollary of the Great

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107. See J. McAuley, "Culture and Counter Culture", in Quadrant September (1976), p.15.
108. Serle, op.cit., p.154.
109. McAuley, op.cit., pp.12-20.
110. Ibid., p.15.
111. Ibid.

Depression and an unwillingness to embrace Stalinist socialism, McAuley was happy to drift for a time, within the anarchist mist.[112] It was a convenient outlet momentarily satisfying an emotional need. With the crisp perspective of distance on his side, McAuley acknowledged this aspect of the essential character of his and other intellectual quests, when he wrote: "The fact is that a great number of intellectuals are engaged in a predominantly emotional activity even though it is ideas that are manipulated in the process".[113] With a refreshingly frank aside, he concluded by adding in parenthesis: "(How does one know this? There are things one knows first in oneself and recognized in others)".[114] The emotional activity that McAuley refers to denotes the intellectual's attempt to build a viable self image supported structurally by faith in an ideology. The manner in which this was attempted however, remained negative and ultimately unfulfilling. This was because they tried to define themselves not so much by the positive tenets of their position but by their distance from and opposition to the orthodox. McAuley expressed this sarcastically when he wrote: "Never mind, we were all 'enlightened', we all belonged somehow to the order of the illuminati. Even our confessions of not knowing and uncertainty were somehow superior to the mere

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112. Ibid.

113. J. McAuley, 'On Being An Intellectual', op.cit., p.148.

114. Ibid.

ignorance and confusion of those who were not intellectuals".[115] Here then was a radicalism desperately seeking significance, anxious to be crowned as the royalty of insight. What mattered was that one was different, in the know, separate. A radicalism essentially negative because it was "compulsively oppositional", committed to saying "no" to the constitutive propositions of the community".[116] As such, it was juvenile, romantic and raw.

Despite the essentially still born nature of this intellectual parturition, it still provides an insight into one aspect of the cultural climate of the late thirties and early forties as experienced by a segment of Australian society. The glimpse that we are afforded reveals a period unsettled and searching, a time of quiet ferment expressed as disorientation and trial. By tracing the tribulations of the young creative thinker during this period, we build a picture, or at least one quiet corner of a picture, that reveals not so much truculent radicalism as quiet self questioning. As with Hooton, Somerville and Stewart, the young McAuley represented an embodiment of a larger, confused sense of identity struggling to emerge and assert itself as strong, coherent and distinctive. The struggle was perhaps as much symptomatic of a national need as it was personal.

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115. Ibid., p.147.
116. Ibid., p.149.

CHAPTER 8

"What rebelled was best:" Douglas McCallum and Donald Horne

We have already noted Somerville, Stewart and McAuley in their respective approaches to the problem of direction in this period. For those others engaged in the mêlée - Donald Horne and to a lesser extent, Douglas McCallum - the solutions were less clearly defined. By following their intellectual scurryings in the early forties, both within and outside the confines of Sydney University, we conclude that they shared the hunger for solid cultural grounding experienced by the others in the late 1930's.

Of the two, Horne was the more substantial figure. His search for new and satisfying directives evolved first, as oppositionism expressing itself as a cool crusade of the ego. McCallum, perhaps because he was the youngest of the group, was more the radical ingenue, shifting from ideological bandwagons according to fashion and confusion.

McCallum's position at the University was as a Philosophy and History student. Although he enrolled at the University as a first year undergraduate in 1940, the advent of the war interrupted his full time studies, which were not resumed until 1945. In the meantime, as a friend and associate of the group comprising Horne, Somerville, Stewart and McAuley,

McCallum entertained a variety of left wing or dissident ideologies, so that during the period 1941-2, he was a member of the Sydney University Labor Club and of the Freethought Society.[1] Concurrent to this, he also served in the army. As he put it: "... it was, comically enough, as a pacifist and so-called anarchist that I went back into the Army in mid-1942 (in a pretty confused state but with the rationalisation that anti-Fascism was more important than pacifism)".[2]

McCallum's romp through radical ideologies remained, for the most part, wide-eyed and naive. As a "lesser mortal" within the pantheon of "greats" crowned by McAuley and Somerville, McCallum accepted his position as a novice "still sitting at the feet of the masters learning".[3] Flirting briefly with Stalinism, Trotskyism, Anarchism, 'Gandhism' and Hooton, McCallum finally came to rest on Andersonianism.[4] As a young undergraduate, McCallum enjoyed a transient relationship with the Sydney University Communist cell, "seduced by the notion of illegal glamour and knowing little or nothing of Marxism".[5] Vague notions of a "progressive working class movement" and a faith in "proletarianization"

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1. D. McCallum to Author, 13 January 1978.
2. Ibid.
3. D. McCallum to D. Horne, 15 September 1942 in Horne private collection of Correspondence (Woollahra) (NSW).
4. McCallum to Author, 13 January 1978.
5. McCallum to Author, 9 September 1975.

testified to a diffuse understanding of socialist theory.[6] Writing an article on "Poetry and Politics" in 1941, McCallum vacillated between an urge to accept Mayakovsky's dictate that the poet should 'turn his pen into the arsenal of weapons of the proletariat' and a cautious reluctance to accept didacticism and propaganda: "The poet should rightly resist the encroachment of such things as party slogans in his sphere and yet he cannot remain the detached observer".[7] The tone of the total argument was confused and inconclusive. On the one hand, McCallum was arguing that the class struggle should not be allowed to encroach too forceably on the purity of one's creative effort, but on the other hand no creative act could retain its legitimacy unless firmly attached to the life from which it sprang. To a devoted Marxist firmly entrenched in the belief in an inevitable advance to socialism, the class struggle would in itself constitute the life force leading to creativity. How was one to determine what was a 'sincere' expression of pure creativity and what was mere propaganda? McCallum was not sure. The tone of the article suggested a dilettantish, hesitant and apologetic understanding. The true dimensions of McCallum's Marxism were nebulous and light. Common to

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6. McCallum, "Two Points of View" in Honi Soit, 24 July 1941, p.2.

7. McCallum, "Poetry and Politics" in Arna, 1941.

youthful radicalism, McCallum's leftism was a rainbow myth - a philosophy of futurity salvational and vague. His subsequent involvement with anarchism was in the same vein of loose idealism. As an attractive label for anyone anxious to define himself as critically aware, anarchism was the mask of adolescence. Apart from the usually vague "abstract notion of rejecting the State and authority generally",[8] McCallum's anarchism was in the final analysis merely a romantic indulgence. His own recollection of the period admits just this: "What did I understand by the term anarchism? ... the truth is that I was very confused ... my 'anarchism' was partly a reaction to doctrines like the 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat' though I had read scarcely anything of Bakunin".[9] Nevertheless, McCallum was happy to accept an anarchist labelling as testimony to his "chronic oppositionism".[10] McCallum's brief and mild anarchism reflected a romantic rebelliousness favouring an ideal of individual freedom. This was a notion particularly attractive to one disillusioned with orthodox marxism and its tendency towards authoritarianism.[11] McCallum's abhorrence of authoritarianism was so strong that it ultimately led to a criticism of

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8. McCallum to Author, 9 September 1975.
9. Ibid.
10. D. McCallum to D. Horne, 15 September 1942, in Horne Papers.
11. Ibid.

anarchism as well. Anarchism expressed as "individual terrorism" or"propaganda by the deed" was potentially totalitarian.[12] Writing to Donald Horne he expressed his doubts thus: "... it is precisely atrocitarianism and violence which lead to internal militarization and eventually bureaucracy, leadership and party organization".[13] From his position of confused commitment to anarchism, McCallum was slowly shifting towards a transitory alliance with "Gandhism" or a philosophy of "non-violent non-cooperation", based on the notion of permanent militancy. He explained his position of passive resistance to Donald Horne: "The essence of permanent militancy is that you don't hope to get a state of society, you don't work for anything at all, in particular you don't give your allegiance or loyalty to parties or leaders, your movement is the coming together, the coincidence of the creative impulses of individuals and the experiencing of life and the struggle for the sake thereof, not for any humanitarian ideals".[14] The end result was a kind of negative oppositionism, seeking preservation and not reform - "the essence is in the being not the becoming ... not what you hope to get (nothing in this desert.)"[15]

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12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.

Essentially mild mannered and romantic, the concepts incorporated in McCallum's position at this stage (the early forties) comprised a pot-pourri of Andersonian anti-censorship, anti-solidarism and anti-meliorism, plus loose individualist anarchism embroidered with something of Gandhi's 'Satya graha'. Recalling this youthful foray into philosophical radicalism, McCallum wrote: "Oliver (Somerville) and I developed a special interest in 'non-violent, non-resistance' and in Gandhi. We had a slogan against the Stalinists and Trotskyites (though we mostly chanted it to each other): 'Non-violent non resistance (satya graha) is very practical politics".[16] The desire to construct a personal philosophy led to a hectic eclecticism. Because McCallum could not decide absolutely, the end result was a confused, amorphous, amalgamation of a myriad number of radical positions. To illustrate the point it is worth quoting at large a letter he wrote to Donald Horne in 1942:

> I see material from the English anarchist people fairly regularly and they of course are somewhat utopian. I've been studying Gandhi's 'Satya graha' and although he is somewhat solidarist and Christian, he has done some very practical work. I would differentiate my non violent non cooperation from his and combine it with anarcho syndicalism - sit down strikes etc. I've also been reading some Malatesta and as for Bakunin ... he was an authoritarian himself and in the last analysis only a Bolshevik. In this connection, Oscar Wilde's 'Soul of Man Under Socialism' is better ... you will recall the excellent

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16. McCallum to Author, 9 September 1975.

> critique of authoritarian socialism and the defence of Individual Socialism.[17]

Evident in all this was the underlying Andersonian critique of solidarism and authoritarianism and the willingness to indulge in the heady aura of anarchism albeit defensively. The significance of this is that it reveals McCallum in a similar search for ideological anchorage while trying in the process to fortify an image of himself as a radical intellectual. As the youngest of the circle comprising Somerville, Horne, McAuley and Stewart, McCallum was the wide-eyed neophyte. Within this circle, radicalism attained its true dimensions only when wedded to creativity. On the receiving end of a push from Horne demanding assertion, McCallum revealed his deference to a level of greater radicalism: "why me, why not some of the truly great ... an idol must have some creativeness, some spark of the immortal light, some of the divine attributes of the great rebels whereas these effusions of mine make me essentially a frustrated creator compensating for it by this sort of ebullient outspurge. Until I have made some verse I am a myth ...".[18] Devoid of the poetic gift, the next best thing was to cultivate cynicism and an aura of sophistication. It was in this capacity that Anderson-ianism served its adherents well. During the long weekend

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17. McCallum to Horne, 15 September 1942, in Horne Papers.
18. Ibid.

sojourn at Hooton's in Newcastle, McCallum defined his presence in terms of his Andersonianism. Recalling the period, McCallum wrote: "we spent most of the time talking endlessly on Harry's big verandah. I was younger than anyone else there and perhaps trying to conceal my rather wide-eyed and enthralled listening response under the characteristic Andersonian mask of toughness and disenchantment".[19] McCallum briefly ventured out towards Stalinism, Trotsyism, Anarchism and in this connection Hooton, before returning and reaffirming his position as a disciple of Anderson. McCallum was initially intrigued with Hooton because he appeared to be well versed in Anarchist theory. Suffering from a tendency towards "chronic oppositionism",[20] McCallum was attracted to radical positions of almost any description. Through Hooton, McCallum further explored his interest in anarchism. Recalling this youthful interlude McCallum wrote: "Harry put us (referring to Oliver Somerville) in touch with an old I.W.W. identity in Sydney (Annie (Ma) Westbrook) and Oliver and I visited her occasionally and learned that Harry was expected to carry the torch and that I could help him do so and take over if and when he failed. But I was moving fairly rapidly through Trotskyism, Anarchism

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19. McCallum to Author, 9 September 1975.
20. McCallum to Horne, 15 September 1942, in Horne Papers.

and what not to straight Andersonianism so my torchcarrying days didn't last long".[21]

Upholding freethought, McCallum attacked the authoritarian, moralistic and fascist demands for "coordination, homogeneity, a common moral base and loyalty to existing conditions".[22] Championing the idea of freethought as necessarily "unsettling and subversive", his main diatribe was against prescriptions of actions against the imperative "ought" - "'Ought'" then is to ensure that you do not think freely and that in endeavouring to do what you should, you give your allegiance and loyalty to sanctioned orthodox causes. To hell with oughts".[23]

Unlike Somerville, McCallum did not succumb to the lure of a more visionary, ultimately more utopian philosphical stance. Rather, he remained content with the dictates of critical thought ' "I admit intolerance to fascism, moralism and philistinism on the intellectual level. What I attack is the refusal to face opposition on the intellectual plane and the descending to suppression".[24]

Upholding a stance of anti-authoritarianism coupled with a positive belief in productive and creative activity against philistinism and obscurantism, McCallum

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21. McCallum to Author, 22 August 1975.
22. D. McCallum letter in Honi Soit, 9 July 1942.
23. Ibid.
24. D. McCallum letter to Honi Soit, 3 September 1942.

anchored himself as a disciple of Andersoniamism. McCallum's recollection of this period summed it up in these terms: "After a brief flirtation with Hootonism, I returned completely to Andersonianism and stayed there. There was certainly a good deal of 'love me or leave me' about John Anderson but as it happened I was not one of the many who finally came to the decision to leave him, once converted I was always faithful, even servile".[25]

Anderson's impact on his followers was something more than intellectual. The tone of discipleship was in some instances almost filial. An encounter with Anderson was an event of some import. Relaying one such encounter to Donald Horne, McCallum wrote: "John said - disciple receiving encouragement from great father - that I was improving and beams upon me vaguely".[26] In recollecting this period, McCallum once again made references to Anderson in terms of a father image: "I think Harry Hooton was attractive as a rival father (or uncle) figure to people who either were not taken up by John Anderson or were rebelling against him as almost all Andersonians did at one time or another".[27]

For those who, like McCallum, chose to stay with

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25. McCallum to Author, 9 September 1975.
26. McCallum to Horne, 15 September 1942, in Horne Papers.
27. McCallum to Author, 22 August 1975.

Andersonianism, critical awareness was taken up as the vigilant watchdog against creeping authoritarianism. This was particularly important at a time when "incipient fascism" was rearing its ugly head: "our country in this most crucial epoch is governed by a corrupt pack of venal knaves, yet the least sign of a critical approach is labelled unpatriotic and subversive".[28] Without constant critical awareness, the end result would be "tyranny, exploitation and war".[29] For McCallum, Andersonian freethought had won out. Where the others were disenchanted, restless and anxious for a more personalized vision, McCallum adhered to a radicalism essentially level headed and intellectually sober. His particular "leaven for the cake of Australian custom and convention"[30] did not temper and ferment on the same extravagant scale as that stirred by Donald Horne.

Donald Horne's autobiography, The Education of Young Donald,[31] presents us with a rich point of entry into the mind and milieu of a young intellectual during the late 1930's and early 1940's. Although there are limitations inherent in autobiographical accounts, Horne's appraisal of his early development is reinforced

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28. D. McCallum, "Two Points of View" in Honi Soit, 24 July 1941.

29. D. McCallum, "Immoral Lectures Upheld" in Honi Soit, 15 October 1942.

30. D. McCallum, "The State of Liberty", in Australian Civilization (ed.) P. Coleman (Melbourne 1962).

31. D. Horne, The Education of Young Donald (Melbourne 1967), p.43.

as a realistic and legitimate self portrait when viewed in conjunction with contemporary evidence.

Coming up to the University in 1939, the young Donald Horne brought with him a rich interplay of ideals. As an adolescent, self conscious and questioning, he took refuge in introspection, building an inner platform of reality from which he stood as the champion of "Intelligence against Stupidity".[32]

His embryonic foray into a social and historical consciousness, expressed itself at first in a "lonely and fumbling search for my own sense of reality".[33] This took form slowly, emerging as an idealistic optimism pivoted to a faith in reform and revolution: "I was concerned that everything in society should be made better at once ... I developed a very private public spirited concern with the fate of the world so that I now played the role of the courageous Reformer shedding light in Dark places".[34] The task in hand was akin to a crusade of reason - "I saw reform mainly as a matter of words, of a scathing denunciation of existing evil and a lively expression of sublime aspiration".[35] The figure of heroic rebellion appealed to the extravagant and theatrical side of his nature: "When I identified myself with the lonely or Misunderstood,

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32. Ibid., pp.132-3.
33. Ibid., p.136.
34. Ibid., p.167.
35. Ibid.

I did so flamboyantly. Figures of rebellion appealed to me if they made enough fuss about it".[36]

Thus, even before he got to the University, Horne was steeped in a positive belief in revolutionary ideals. His youthful world order, carried with it the seeds for a dramatic reconstruction. Extravagant hope and determination were all that were needed to ensure its emergence: "What I came to believe was that the absurdities of history might be dissolved by World Revolution. The nation was new. It was a very shadowy idea - something to do with some general vague liberation of the working class".[37] This was the tone and colour of the ideological baggage that Horne carried with him to the University. Essentially, it was a revolutionary ardour diffusely imbued with the soft romanticism of youth.

At the University, Horne wasted no time in quickly entangling himself in the intellectual ferment of Andersonianism. Overwhelmed by the rich variety of choice, and anxious to sate himself in everything, Horne nibbled simultaneously at all the ideological alternatives being offered. As a consequence, he simultaneously immersed himself in Andersonian critiques of the realist aesthetic, dipping into the debates on Stalinist Russia and the fate of the 'Revolution', while playing

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36. Ibid., p.182.
37. Ibid., p.192.

with notions of Anarcho-Syndicalism.[38] Like an excited school boy rummaging through a whole set of newly discovered games, he whirled himself freely in an overlapping succession of new ideas.

Horne opted to join the Andersonians, the men "taken up by the spirit of Inquiry".[39] From this vantage point of "glorious isolation", remote in the secure possession of "Truth", Horne proceeded to nurture an intellectual position. At first, this was a straightforward and uncritical Andersonianism. In his capacity as speaker to the Literary Society of which Anderson was President, Horne was given ample opportunity to expound the extent of his discipleship. Faithfully, Horne echoed the familiar dictates on the realist aesthetic, on the necessary conflict of social forces, on the spirit of enquiry and the search for truth. Delivering a paper on Osbert Sitwell to the Literary Society in 1940, Horne stressed the need for a critical estimation of the "intellectual value of its themes".[40] 'Real' literature as assessed by the criterion of thematic development represented the only true advance between "the two dangers of moralist sentimentalism and escapist romance".[41] Similarly, in his capacity as poet, Horne attacked works deemed unsatisfactory because their "themes were of no importance not satisfying to an

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38. Ibid., pp.204-220.
39. Ibid., p.222.
40. D. Horne, "Putrefying the Soul", in Honi Soit, 11 July 1940, p.2.
41. Ibid.

intellectual".[42] Admitting his debt to John Anderson, Horne stressed that "theme bore the same relation to the poem as the logical form to the rhetorical sentence".[43] Again and again, Horne spoke in the appropriate patois reinforcing his alliance with Andersonianism. In his presidential address to the Literary Society in 1941, Horne spoke out on art and morality: "Art is only "immoral" in the sense that it has a morality of its own which must offer conflict with an accepted state morality".[44] Art was seen to act as a revolutionary force agitating against the tendency towards societal stagnation, it helped maintain the ongoing conflict of social forces.[45] The Andersonian view on artistic responsibility, was that art should attack convention and eliminate sentimental associations.

On the question of poetry and party politics, Horne reiterated the Andersonian style: "The artist should function in such a way as to make a discovery, to reveal a situation ... despite the possible conflict with the demands of party programmes".[46] In this context, the works of Auden, Spender and Day Lewis were assailed as ineffective and false: "They have adopted a system of beliefs without growing into them ... projecting themselves into society, they do not appreciate social

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42. D. Horne, in the Union Recorder, July 1940, pp. 184-5.
43. Ibid.
44. D. Horne, "Should Art Be Moral", Honi Soit, 18 April 1941, p.1.
45. Ibid.
46. D. Horne, "Poets and the Party Demands", in Honi Soit, 1 May 1941, p.3.

problems ... but just make a lurid splash of social symbols".[47] Furthermore, it was argued, their Marxism was emasculated, reduced to a Rousseauistic "romantic naturalism", sustained by the "idealistic flummery of the Romantics".[48] In this way, what once may have been a potentially dynamic social theory had now declined to "sheer social utopianism".[49] In Horne's estimation, their revolution was a "schoolboy affair, embracing the notion of sudden transformation and Shelleyan social catharisis"[50] concepts anathema to Andersonianism. This type of social commitment, from an Andersonian perspective, was no commitment at all, because it denied an on-going analysis of social conflict in favour of a solidarist stagnation and servility.

Horne maintained a critical stance, railling against what he conceived to be "obscurantist" tactics used against the Andersonian struggle to sustain a critical social stance: "Every period of history will be found to provide example of conflict between social forces, between groups urging the solution of pressing current problems and those fighting for the preservation of the status quo".[51] As an Andersonian, Horne took his role seriously. Through the pages of Honi Soit he seized every opportunity to make known his views and emphasize his presence

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47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. D. Horne, Editorial in Honi Soit, 11 September 1941, p.2.

on campus. Championing Anderson's cause in the fight against censorship, his plea was characteristically dramatic: "it will not be inopportune for me who is still deeply desirous of freedom and who is still attached to the intellect and the search for truth to say that the loss of "Ulysses" is more important to him (Anderson) than say the Harbour Bridge. Great works of literature are irreplacable. My life without the right to read what I like is rubbish".[52]

The Andersonian connection afforded Horne an intellectual method. By being an Andersonian, he could bask in the glory of exclusiveness - "in being a Freethinker, I shared with a small group of people the exclusive revelation of a thoroughly worked out philosophical position", a position which cast the only true light on all fields of enquiry.[53] It was the belief in this system, which gave him the confidence to attack the University for its apparent alliance with "falsehood, inferiority and safety", a criticism provoked by its decision over the Henry Lawson Prize for poetry in 1941. The poem chosen for this honour was, in Horne's opinion, distinguished only by its weakness - "it typified the neurosis of that group of male and female schoolgirls who stalk abroad in our

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52. D. Horne, "Ulysses Ban Must Go", in op.cit., 16 April 1942.

53. D. Horne, The Education of Yount Donald (Melbourne 1967), p.238.

educational institutions as Florence Nightingales to bourgeois culture".[54] The University was pandering to convention and shirking its responsibility to "truth, initiative and enterprise".[55]

It was deemed an honour to belong to the Andersonian troupe. Recalling his undergraduate days, Horne reflected on the Andersonian mystique: "Some people have recurrent examination nightmares. I have a recurrent John Anderson nightmare. I am an undergraduate again addressing the Sydney University Literary Society. The paper is finished; Anderson attacks with full blast; he detects idealist confusion in every second line of what I have said. I am routed. Oliver Somerville attacks me with a knife. The violence wakes me up. But it is not fear but the immense sadness of exclusion, expulsion from the group and the resulting derision that stays with me".[56]

In the eyes of his followers, Anderson was an awe inspiring example of integrity. Horne noted in his autobiography, that even as a newly installed undergraduate, he had been quickly made aware of Anderson's reputation within the University: "On the first day I arrived at the University, I saw Anderson walking along the cloisters in the Quad, someone pointed him out as the Scottish radical who was the University's main rebel,

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54. D. Horne, letter to Editor, in Honi Soit, 30 April 1942.

55. Ibid.

56. D. Horne, "The Andersonians", in Observer, 29 November 1958, p.652.

a renowned atheist not long ago a Communist censured in the NSW Parliament and by the University Senate. Anderson seemed the most important person at the University".[57] Anderson himself stood as a symbol of sanity and sobriety. There was nothing frivolous or shallow about the man. Anderson stood as an "embodiment of what was grave and constant in human suffering".[58]

Andersonianism was an attractive creed because it was positive, supremely confident and consistent - there was no room for compromise or vacillation: "To all questions, one learned that the intellectual approach was to override every consideration ... there was a feeling of fearlessness, of pure truth untouched by human hands, of power, of being accepted".[59] From this perspective, Andersonianism was a self sustaining, all pervading system. It provided those who were seeking it, a specific "language of rebellion".[60] In Horne's case, an initial involvement with Andersonianism was simultaneously intertwined with the theatrical radicalism of Oliver Somerville. At first, Horne was overawed by the flamboyant presence of Somerville, falling easily into a wide eyed admiration for the latter's greater investment in the cause of freedom. Somerville stood as a shining example of pure devotion to an ideal. Unsullied

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57. Horne, Young Donald, op.cit., pp.204-5.
58. Ibid., p.205.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid., p.214.

by bourgeois illusions, Somerville represented the Freethinking Martyr, the heroic paradigm of an earnest Andersonianism: "Already graduated, he had served Anderson so well that he was still resolutely detached from the guiles of the Commercialist society around him".[61] By filtering a natural proclivity towards radicalism through the more dramatic channels of Somerville's vision, Horne fostered a brand of rebelliousness that added passion and theatricality to Andersonianism. Believing in the "probability of world revolution",[62] young Donald was naturally drawn to Somerville. Under his influence, Horne unleashed an adolescent need to saturate the self in a cause. Somerville injected zest into Horne's crusade: "it was more through his imagination than anyone else's that I tried to cling to the consolation that there was assuredly still to come a world Revolution, a great turning of everything upside down which would destroy the bad, cleanse the good and rid us of the injustices and absurdities of human existence".[63] Despite the fact that Somerville was confused and vague about the essentials of this revolution, Horne was lured willingly into his honey pot of dreams. When Somerville hurled abominations at Stalin as the "Betrayer" of the revolution, Horne felt

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61. Ibid., p.217.
62. Ibid., p.216.
63. Ibid., p.218.

inclined to follow: "When Somerville talked about Trotsky and the Trotsky Party in Sydney, I felt myself a Trotskyist - Somerville's Trotsky wanted to make my revolution".[64] Alternatively, when Somerville despaired of any solution, embracing Anarchism instead, Horne felt himself an anarchist: "I bought a second hand book on Anarcho-Syndicalism. The guerilla warfare of sabotage and the ultimate revelation of the general strike stirred me. I began to call myself an anarcho-Syndicalist; we would do away with the State altogether".[65]

Horne was keen to pin his faith to the heroic struggle for enlightenment. Despite niggling doubts about the quality of the troops involved in the struggle for enlightenment (could the workers as producers freely organize themselves in stateless harmony?) Horne was determined to make a resolute stand: "I decided to believe that the workers were like warriors and artists, that they were heroes in their dispossession, showing initiative, disinterest and a craftsman's exactitude".[66] The gauze of a glorious romanticism was willingly placed before his eyes, effecting in the process, an effusive rosiness on all. The brightest hue was bestowed upon the heroic producer - the creative and anti-commercialist element in society. Removed from the sordid and crass preoccupations of a bourgeois

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64. Ibid., p.220.
65. Ibid., p.220.
66. Ibid., p.221.

society, the select band of imminently pure crusaders would wage a redoubtable war against servility: "I took up a hero's code in which the heroes were the producers - the Scientists, Artists and Workers. It was most important to this sense of heroism that we should not be concerned with meeting the "demands of society", we had to maintain eternal vigilance. The reward was an awareness of elite status: "we were isolated and few ... glorious isolation".[67]

From his sphere of radical awareness, Horne explored the paths that radiated outwards in an attempt to intensify a basic impulse to oppositionism. Sometimes the path was a pulsating Andersonianism in the name of Inquiry, at other times, a heaving anarchism seeking a complete bouleversement of societal mores. The one was accommodated within the other as an extreme manifestation of an underlying impulse to radicalism. Andersonianism was a legitimate, sober and rational critique, Anarchism an emotional release.

While wearing the anarchist mantle, Horne attacked the communists' concept of Revolution: "There are many bitter testimonies to the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat "as manifested in the Soviet Union is bound by law and government as much as any other state tyranny".[68] His inclination was to sympathize with the

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67. Ibid., p.222.

68. D. Horne, "Blood or Bulsh" in Honi Soit, 6 August 1942.

views of Bakunin: "In my opinion, Communism's history has merely substantiated a speech made by Bakunin to the Geneva Congress when he said: "States cannot be made to change their nature since it is in virtue of their nature that they are States and if they renounce it they cease to exist".[69] Bakunin's notion that States be destroyed and replaced by a "world federation of free productive associations" appealed to Horne's concept of the Hero Producers. Because his anarchism was largely nominal, the temptation to indulge in rhetorical flourishes was strong. He was prone to making expansive declamatory stands allowing himself to be swept along in the process. Explaining the difference between communism and anarchism, he sailed into the anarchist philosophy with dramatic enthusiasm: "Open the windows and tremble at these passages from anarchist script - 'the brigand in Russia is the true and only revolutionary - the irreconcilable, unwearying, untrammeable revolutionary in deed we recognize no other activity but the work of extermination. In this struggle revolution sanctifies everything".[70]

No matter what the radical philosophy in hand, the main thing was to make a declaration of dedication, a gesture of conviction: "Mr. Editor, I oppose philanthropy and being a misanthrope have no objection to the

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69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.

spilling of blood in the interests of a cause".[71] Horne was constantly tempted by magniloquence. As an anarchist he dreamed of swift bloody action - "a couple of tons of dynamite distributed under appropriate desks throughout the world would achieve more in two hours than 2000 years of evolutionary socialism".[72] Within Horne's hagiarchy of the "True Left" there presided, "Saint Anderson, Saint Marx and Saint Bakunin",[73] each pulling in different directions in a general melange of radicalism. In Horne, radicalism was as much a state of being as it was a process. Iconoclasm for its own sake was the one positive and consistent element in his makeup. He was the University's "resident enfant terrible". As a soi-dissant radical, Horne cultivated a public face shaped from one part panache, one part theatricality and a not insubstantial dollop of conceit. He was anxious to saturate himself, to know and to see through everything. His curiosity, tempered by an apparent disdain for that which aroused his interest, left him as an ideological butterfly flurrying from one promising intellectual stance to another. He initially found the most comfortable niche in Andersonianism and freethought. The sweet taste of its uncompromising vigour lingered with him as he made his way through Anarchism, flirting briefly with Harry Hooton in the process.

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71. Ibid.
72. D. Horne, Young Donald, op.cit., p.277.
73. Ibid.

As an associate of both Somerville and McCallum, and as an admirer of McAuley, Horne came to know of Hooton through their interest in him as an anarchist poet of Newcastle. His curiosity was aroused because of his professed interest in anarchism and because he himself dabbled in poetry. Horne was interested enough to read Hooton's slim book of verse, These Poets.[74] This triggered their initial association, characterized by an argumentative correspondence. Horne wrote to Hooton and introduced himself by sailing into a criticism of Hooton's poetic style, if not substance.[75] Hooton's response was predictable. As he had done with Somerville and Stewart, and to a lesser extent with McAuley, Hooton extended friendship in an attempt to establish literacy and intellectual connections. Isolated in Newcastle, Hooton welcomed recognition from Sydney. His response was to proffer an enthusiastic invitation. "Your introduction of yourself was very welcome. Anyone who reads "These Poets" is a friend of mine even if he doesn't like them - I love my enemies. You are hereby invited to come to Mark's Point bringing with you any arguments, ideas, friends with you".[76] Horne was curious but distant. He was intrigued by Hooton primarily because Hooton was an unknown element - the proletarian poet from Newcastle who seemed to espouse

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74. H. Hooton, These Poets (Sydney 1940).
75. H. Hooton to D. Horne, 29 August 1942, in Horne Papers.
76. H. Hooton to D. Horne, 29 August 1942, in Horne Papers.

anarchism. Horne's letters to Hooton have been lost, therefore it can only be ascertained negatively through Hooton's passing remarks, the general tone and content of Horne's interest in him: "I think I follow your remarks on science, literature, religion etc. But I feel I could clear the ground. They are objective criticisms of each other. The nihilist is objective to them all, they merge, are one".[77] But Hooton was too preoccupied with his own position to allow for much analysis of Horne's remarks. Anxious to define his own position, Hooton poured out a rather loose collection of ideas: "I am a mystic in mystical moods, scientist in scientific moods. I have no prevailing mood".[78] Although his aim was to reinforce an image of himself as a deepthinking intellectual, the end result was vague and meaningless abstraction - "and then nothing is as vital as something else. All this urgency is an illusion".[79] Through the medium of their brief correspondence, Hooton took the opportunity to harangue Horne with his theories on art and on his personal philosophy: "I am a materialist. I accept what has weight. Give me what I can cut with a knife and fork or put through a prism".[80] Projecting his anarchist image of himself, Hooton exhorted: "there can be no rules

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77. Ibid.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid.
80. H. Hooton to D. Horne, 20 September 1942, in Horne Papers.

for art. No rules for poetry. All authority is bad for progress, it dwells in the known".[81]

When they were not discussing 'philosophy', their correspondence centered on a discussion of Hooton's poetry. Horne was interested in the content of Hooton's poetry but, like Harold Stewart, found his style anathema. For someone versed in Andersonian stringency, Hooton's chaotic and emotionally rendered outbursts surged far too fast and free.[82] Horne looked upon Hooton's work as garrulous and effusive - "using half a dozen words in the place of one".[83] Hooton defended his style: "you are quite right in saying my poems were quite right, but quite wrong in blaming my waste of words ... the idea is you select the word you like out of the alternative I give. I am so enabled to write half a dozen poems at once widen appeal and lessen the chance of them being disliked. A really pertinent statement is necessarily incomplete".[84] According to Hooton, the poetry he was writing offered a multiplicity of worlds, an efflux of expression and not a redundancy of words.[85] In Hooton's opinion, Horne's critical appraisal reflected an academic rigidity - orthodox and tense. Hooton and Horne had fundamentally different conception of the poetic mode.

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81. Ibid.
82. See Appendix B.
83. D. Horne quoted by Hooton in Horne Papers.
84. Ibid.
85. Ibid.

Horne venerated the sparse and concise understatement; Hooton was immersed in expressionist fluency - indulgent and free. Hooton expressed the difference in these terms: "I am concerned to defend their carelessness against the logical mathematics of your formula for six poems in one. You are quite right formally and as the world views a poem. But as I view a poem and as I write one - accomplishments, parallel themes, variations issue together. The result may be orchestral, discordant confusion. My poems cannot be appraised on the formal pattern of your ABCDEF theorem. Form and content to me are one".[86] During his brief interaction with Horne, Hooton was constantly on the defensive: "I am a materialist because Russel, Whitehead, Freud, to say nothing of Professor Anderson and you and the Hegelian idealist marxists are NOT. The Penguin Pelican Left Book thinkers series of fashionable sneers don't go over with me. I am not an academic big-wig intellectual snob. I am one of the workers".[87] There is nothing to suggest that Hooton was well versed in the ideas of any of the thinkers listed. His was a proud and expansive declaration that reflected his eclecticism rather than a studied understanding. Hooton was determined to carve out his own intellectual niche even while in the process of denouncing intellectualism. He

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86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.

did this by an enthusiastic dissemination of his own particular philosophical stance of anarcho-technocracy. Horne was regaled with images of a future destiny whence man would subject the "concrete intelligible earth" to his powers, attaining a glorious metamorphosis in the process.[88] Hooton's enthusiasm was overwhelming, it flowed freely in the declamatory style of the demiurge, inebriated by his own rhetoric: "There can be no rules for the future, all authority is bad for progress ... the future in my terminology is material ... our responses to stimuli outside the understood, visions of new worlds, anarchies, utopias are not the philosophical subjective idealisms the marxists mouth. They are concrete valid activities, scientific art, scientific socialism".[89] Horne looked upon Hooton's approach as wildly romantic, idealistic and illusionary. As an Andersonian he was committed to the realist aesthetic that dealt with the known, the logical, the thematically stringent. From this perspective, Hooton was beyond serious consideration. However, the romantic elements in Horne's makeup yearned after revolution and dramatic action. This side of him was attracted to the idea of an anarchist poet. Horne oscillated between an allegiance to noetic radicalism, pure and controlled, as contained in Andersonianism, and the

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88. Ibid.
89. Ibid.

saturnalian radicalism of the romantic soul expressed in anarchism. On the surface, Andersonianism exerted the greatest strength, sustaining Horne in his rejection of Hooton. Below the surface he was torn in different directions, bubbling with an urgency for self expression but unsure of the form it should take. The road to self discovery involved a quick detour and reorientation through Hooton. Inadvertently, Hooton was once again a catalyst through which the diffuse and delitescent mind could find form. By pitting himself against Hooton, Horne was able to better define himself as an intellectual. Through negation and denial he extracted a positive self image. Writing to the then editor of Honi Soit, Bruce Miller, in 1943, Horne dismissed Hooton contemptuously: "I refuse to be tricked by this egregious (ho hum) myth. A great god of noisy bunk. Such an appalling waste of words for such triteness. Not even a clown. A clown must master his trade. Harry refuses to".[90] Horne was confident that he could see through the brouhaha clouding the insight of others: "In my opinion, despite his reception from the intellectuals, (varying admittedly from warm to frigid but nevertheless a reception) he is just a crank. They display lack of discrimination. I detach myself from their verdict".[91] Horne saw himself as an intellectual unsullied by a foolish descent into fadish admiration for

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90. D. Horne to B. Miller, 19 August 1943, in Horne Papers.

91. Ibid.

superficiality. Hooton was unpolished. Horne preferred laboured sophistication. In this context, A.D. Hope's poetry was a good example: "Technically, he qualifies as exactly the type I have chosen to fit the term of "modern poet". He attains unity of thought and image".[92] By way of contrast, Hooton stood for "undigested, unintelligible tripe".[93]

In little over a year after his first acquaintance with Hooton, Horne was scathingly critical: "Harry Hooton is AWFUL. Harry is a merchant in birdline, a bag of wind, a crank. His verse is overdone, undermeant, careless, sensational and unintelligible".[94] Although conceding a one time friendship,[95] Horne was determined to disassociate himself: "It's time something was done about Harry. Since "These Poets, Harry has been belting out in all directions with the vocal tacit approval of all the boys ... it is too much when McAuley is polite".[96] The reference to McAuley revealed Horne's hierarchy of approbation - McAuley stood as a symbol of genius in a world of melancholic brilliance, subdued and subtle. The ideal was one of finely turned delicacy, against which, Hooton stood as a raucous and clumsy travesty of the poetic process: "What poetry needs is not all this careless tub-thumping

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92. Ibid.
93. Ibid.
94. D. Horne, "Unca Donald ON Hooton" in Honi Soit, 23 September 1943.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid.

and deification of empty vessels, but precision of thought and therefore of image, firmness of conception and therefore of language, cool careful craftsmanship and when concerned with human themes - an exposition of sceptical observations rather than a cloaking of mystical dream images".[97]

The attack on Hooton served as a catalyst that led to a bifurcation in attitudes. What was once a loose association of soi dissant radicals, connected by a love of poetry and a common experience of Andersonian freethought, was now distinctly characterized as two groupings - one, romantic, flamboyant and richly expressionist, the other cool, classical and subdued. Hooton was the centre piece of the first group, primarily sustained by Somerville. The magnet drawing them together was visionary idealism and a fecund imagination. The other grouping comprised McAuley, McCallum, Horne and Harold Stewart. For this group the binding was made of sobriety, control and introspective awareness. Where one was emotional and theatrical, the other was cerebral and restrained. In this latter group, there lingered the spectre of John Anderson, emanating intellectual precision and purity.

However, the distinct characteristics of each group were not always so clearly separate. At some stage, prior to any final settling, each individual flirted and

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97. Ibid.

overlapped with the ideals of the other. Somerville for example, had once been an Andersonian and McCallum had toyed with Anarchism. So it was with Donald Horne, because although his final placement was with the McAuley circle, expressed by his rejection of Hooton, his final resolution was by no means the quiet withdrawal into the contemplative mind as ennacted by Stewart and McAuley. Horne expressed his radicalism not as retreat, but as a noisy, theatrical disdain. In this, he overlapped with Somerville, sharing with him a self conscious radicalism of which the most necessary component was the compulsion to be the leading protagonist in any scenario.

Somerville's response to the attack on Hooton was to dismiss Horne's perspective as "pseudo-intellectual arty narrowness frequent in University literateurs".[98] The Hooton-Somerville troupe was vehemently anti-intellectual. They saw value in vitality. Hooton represented just this: "Hooton's work teems with rebellious theorizing arrestingly expressed".[99] For Somerville, Hooton stood "alone among Australian poets in attempting to think through an outlook - the realistic philosophy of anarchism".[100] Horne's failure to recognize and share in this philosophy was attributed to an obsession with "petty conventionalities".[101] Horne's criticisms

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98. O. Somerville, "Oliver's Angry" in Honi Soit, 30 September 1943, p.3.
99. Ibid.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid.

of Hooton were taken as proof of a creeping erosion of the creative spirit: "Those who elevate minor questions of stylistic and intellectual precision into major and totalitarian acid tests of excellence betray their own intellectual aridity and timidity".[102] The division over Hooton intensified. Horne reiterated his opposition: "I would still say that Harry Hooton puts no case, that he just talks".[103]

Horne's rejection of Hooton accelerated and widened to include a rejection of Somerville. Somerville's anarchism and his association with Hooton proved a perfect target. Horne wanted to extricate himself from what he considered to be the immaturities of a former phase: "their anarchism generally puts no case. Schoolboy stuff. Petit bourgeois youth clutching at substitute fanaticisms as the ediface collapses. The yawp and yatter of little empty souls. To what absurdities these sham Bohemians descend in their desire to put on a show. For once I speak from experience, silly bitter experience. One wearies of playboy 'thinkers' especially when their 'thoughts' have cluttered up one's life so long".[104] An earlier radical association with Somerville was disdainfully discarded. Horne was anxious to appear in a new mature light. The new sophistication

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102. Ibid.

103. D. Horne, "Silly Bitter Experience" in Honi Soit, 14 October 1943.

104. Ibid.

did not impress those at whose expense it was being formed. Somerville could only see a noisy and pretensious dilettantism in what was proffered as critical wisdom: "Horne's red herring tantrums won't side track the critical unless Horne substitutes argument for the spittle and venom of impotent envy, this correspondence is closed".[105]

In the split over Hooton, Somerville was supported by one Colin Le Tet, maligned by association as part of the deluded Somerville 'troupe'. Le Tet was an undergraduate who had once been an orthodox disciple of Andersonianism. Fond of disparaging the tenets of bourgeois morality as best formulated in religion and sexual puritanism, Le Tet had made his presence known on the fringes of radicalism within the University by writing letters to Honi Soit. During the wrangle with Horne over the Hooton issue, Le Tet was on Somerville's side. Spurred on by an idealistic belief in "man's dignity" and the "free way of life",[106] Le Tet was seduced by philosophical anarchism. Detecting a slow awakening of critical awareness within the University, Le Tet expressed his hopes for an anarchist revival: "There is a ripple upon the surface of the torpid University waters. Can it mean that there will soon be a passionate light in every student's eye which will

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105. O. Somerville, "Redherring Tantrums" in Honi Soit, 21 October 1943, p.3.

106. C. Le Tet, Letter to Editor, Honi Soit, 29 January 1943, p.4.

bode ill for anyone who would oppress the spirit of life in man ... will the ripple run to revolt?[107] Le Tet was moving towards the expansive and indulgent strain of radicalism espoused by Somerville. The temptation lay in the anarchist's dream of idyllic freedom. Expressing chagrin over the realization that social trends were moving towards totalitarianism, Le Tet ruefully bemoaned the social impotence of the anarchist. "The anarchist today is essentially a visionary, for the political and social trends throughout the world give alarming evidence that man is tired of being 'free'".[108] "The anarchist's refreshing cry" had been silenced. Man had acquiesced to collectivism, bureaucratic control and solidarism.[109] Confronted by what seemed to be an inevitable slide towards the annihilation of creativity and freedom, Le Tet lamented: "the anarchist today is a dreamer, nodding his revolutionary head and dreaming of the good old days when he could say: I wish men to be free as much from mobs and kings, from you and me, and know that men had spirit then. Then the anarchist wakes to see that men are merely numbers now, unbelievably he won't believe. He dreams again".[110] Le Tet's lamentation implied hope. He was expressing faith in a possible resurgence of man's spirit towards freedom. Hooton

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107. Ibid.
108. C. Le Tet, Letter to Editor, Honi Soit, 15 October 1942, p.2.
109. Ibid.
110. Ibid.

provided a positive focus for this faith. His anarchism reflected individualism and the right to iconoclastic self expression. Le Tet looked upon Hooton as "a young Hercules strangling rattle snakes in (his) cradle".[111] Hooton represented liberation; he was "attempting to build a highway along which each man may walk and see the world in his own way".[112] Le Tet's approbation expressed itself in an anxious embrace of Hooton's message as something dynamic. He wrote of Hooton: "This man will picture no delicacies for your mind but he will make himself heard because he is alive, because he is a thinker".[113] For Le Tet, Hooton was a creative force, satirizing, challenging and denying accepted values while seeking to "build a new world".[114] He was drawn to Hooton by the lure of a romantic philosophy. Hooton was valued for his ability to define the mode of action most appropriate to "the present day scientific industrialism".[115]

On the occasion of the Horne attack on Hooton, Le Tet allied himself with Somerville. Countering Horne in his own whimsical way, Le Tet referred to Horne as a "gust of wind racing willy nilly about the University",[116] conjuring an image of Horne as someone brash and immature. He wrote: "As is usual with phenomena of this

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111. C. Le Tet, Letter to Editor, in Honi Soit, 26 August 1943.
112. Ibid.
113. Ibid.
114. Ibid.
115. Ibid.
116. C. Le Tet, Letter to Editor, in Honi Soit, 30 September 1943, p.3.

type (whirlwinds) those mixed up with it were covered with a certain amount of dirt. Chief victim of this visitation was Harry Hooton whose measured and unconventional stride has several times this year echoed in the cloisters".[117] Continuing his sardonic dismissal of Horne, Le Tet painted a picture of him as intellectually bloated and confused: "I was passing by at the time and Hooton said - observe that gust of wind blustering about the University and annoying us from a distance. It visited me once at Mark's Point but it was only a Zephyr then ... Our conversation was interrupted here by the spectacle of a gust of wind racing blindly after a tired old man in academic dress".[118] Horne was thus depicted as an ideological gadfly essentially fickle in his associations and obsequious towards the intellectual propriety of Andersonianism.

Continuing to sling insult at one another, Somerville and Horne drew further apart. Each reproached the other for a continuing immaturity and misdirection of effort: "Somerville wishes you would grow up ... you have little to say about Hooton ... here is a man with something to say and you only ridicule him. Away with you. Grow up".[119] Horne for his part was convinced that Somerville was the puerile party - "as for 'anarchism' - jeez - the most

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117. Ibid.
118. Ibid.
119. Bruce Miller to D. Horne, letter, 26 September 1943 in Horne Papers.

fanatical thing that never came out of Arabia. Somerville should have been a desert messiah - a Bedouin mystic".[120]

The significance of the Horne-Somerville rift was that it marked a stage in the development of an independent style for Horne. Like McAuley, Horne was struggling to emerge from the confines of a former radicalism. Sloughing off Somerville, Hooton and Anarchism, Horne was casting the mould for a new, assertive and cynical visage. In the process, not even Anderson was deemed sacrosanct.

Increasingly, Horne's most characteristic attitude was disillusionment, deja vu and a world weary cynicism. His judgements were suffused with an attitude of disdainful superiority: "I find life very tedious ... don't you ever get bored with the utter inadequacies of things? Probably not - you are as silly as John Anderson".[121] The golden glow of Andersonianism, once so purposive and vital was now an inadequate flicker. From Horne's new perspective, Anderson was steeped in "boyhood dreams", hankering after something ill-defined but suspiciously immature.[122] Reflecting the ignonimity of his new status, Anderson was made the unwitting target in the game of realignment undertaken in turn by

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120. D. Horne to B. Miller, 4 October 1943 in Horne Papers.
121. D. Horne to B. Miller, 29 August 1943 in Horne Papers.
122. Ibid.

his former disciples. Delighting in a new found sense of maturity, one time devotees like Horne, defined their new image by discrediting the basis of the old. Somerville and McAuley each in his own way underwent a similar process of disillusionment and realignment. In Somerville it expressed itself as an espousal of anarchism, in McAuley a retreat into poetry. Horne took a different route. The process of disengagement took the form of a general debunking. Writing to Bruce Miller the editor of Honi Soit, during his stint in the army, Horne described Anderson's change in status in these terms: "Opposite my bed some previous tenant has splashed the wall with a horde of screen sirens. In a moment of whimsicality I pasted up a photo of John Anderson. He is now stuck up on the wall surrounded by super glamour looking very silly and somewhat amazed".[123] Reassessing the past with the same critical distance, his new evaluation of Anderson and Andersonianism was harsh: "... the local adoration of John Anderson seems to regard him as a gargantuan. What rot! ... a gigantic puffing up. This is very silly. I was reading Bertrand Russell the other day and I was struck by the fact that much of it was just Andersonianism minus that curiously twisted anxious and complex style that marks the ritual of the school. John has his place in history like anything else. To adore him is merely displaying one's ignorance

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123. D. Horne to B. Miller, 26 September 1943 in Horne Papers.

of other work".[124]

The disillusionment with Andersonianism ran deep. From his newly independent stance, Horne saw in it a certain vacuity only tenuously held together by formalized dogma: "Anderson's is merely the style and speech of the authoritative type - Real dogma wrapping its cloak around itself weaving the circle to prevent inconsistencies being discovered".[125] Reassessment involved a clear sighted acknowledgement of its weaknesses and limitations: "Andersonianism gasps, kicks spasmodically in one or two directions and then retreats to a prepared position. Everything is very tentative".[126] As for John Anderson himself, the cut was just as deep: "John is no logician - he is probably most significant as a kind of Critic Historian. It is as a controversialist that he is most important".[127]

As a member of the "tough generation",[128] Horne no longer felt able to sustain a faith in any creed. Vacuity prevailed; all faith was dead. Disillusion bred an attitude of indifference. Nothing could sustain a perfect image. Melodramatic retreat into third rate theatricality was, under these circumstances, particularly luring: "I have killed my God and planted

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124. D. Horne to B. Miller, 3 November 1943 in Horne Papers.
125. Ibid.
126. Ibid.
127. Ibid.
128. D. Horne to B. Miller, 29 August 1943 in Horne Papers.

his bones in the vacant lot ...".[129] The ideal attitude was one of straight scepticism encompassing a kind of emotional anaesthesia. Distrustful of both "ecstasies of joy or pain", Horne chose to remove himself from naive and foolish rabble rousing. Earnest "freedom yappers" were no longer seen as valid,[130] they merely served to obscure reality in stirring in dramatic excess. The Somervilles and Hootons of this world were from this perspective, the victims of their own illusions - "youthful cranks fond of substitute fanaticisms" like individualism.[131] From the vantage point of his newly found maturity, Horne looked down upon the puerile antics of discarded friends: "Oliver Somerville, Hooton, Le Tet - what Hope calls 'the sacred isolates' - as usual with people who set out to be anything, they are so busy being 'critical' that they just degenerate into loud mouthed absurdity".[132] The empty flounderings of the less enlightened were dramatically dismissed: "Their valley is uninhabitable except to the mad fanatic. A mad, hard, thirsty land. Isolated, wild and windy and its produce is its own wind".[133] Horne regarded the efforts of the ideologically engagé as crude and misguided. Communism was dismissed as a "religious cult ... a relic of a previous decade when it was fashionable for intellectuals to look for light

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129. D. Horne to B. Mioler, 1 January 1944 in Horne Papers.
130. Ibid.
131. D. Horne to B. Miller, 3 November 1943 in Horne Papers.
132. Ibid.
133. Ibid.

in the Soviet".[134]

Sad and sour over the observation that there existed very little creative, independent thought amongst the intellectuals of his generation, Horne implicitly placed himself in a special category separated by its unique awareness of the situation: "It is the tragedy/comedy of the generation to which I belong that too many of its intellectuals are capable of little else. Either an exclusive season of bandwaggoning with a full brass blare of Communism or some other fanaticism or a run down the street on a scooter playing 'Anarchism' on a tin whistle like Oliver Somerville of Harry Hooton fame".[135] Horne saw himself as the sober realist maintaining a perspective unsullied by youthful froth and folly: "I am the Cinderella of my Society of Friends. The man who spends his time mending the cistern while his friends sit in the parlour politely consuming the honey. There is a certain danger in the early consumption of honey".[136] Where his friends had prematurely plunged into romantic saturation, Horne believed that he was preserving the clarity of his vision from the lure of false resolutions. Eschewing the intellectual acrobatics of his undergraduate years, Horne had by 1943 stepped on to a plane almost

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134. D. Horne to B. Miller, 24 November 1943 in Horne Papers.
135. Ibid.
136. Horne to Miller, 3 November 1943 in Horne Papers.

as rarefied as that occupied by McAuley. Horne's retreat into mellow reflectiveness earned flattering interpretations from those who venerated him. Bruce Miller interpreted Horne's ideological lassitude as a phase of his superior intellectual vision. He expressed it thus: "with the lads who plunged right into the bath of enthusiasm and followed the Communist party, it (present stances) takes the form either of political cynicism or a violent denunciation of political action. And you, plus many others who may have desired release and relief feel that it's much better to step aside and watch the show passing. That is the epitome of our attitudes".[137]

As an intellectual, Horne was determined to disassociate himself from attitudes that he now considered jejune and puerile: "I don't want to go back to a world of Somervilles, McCallums and crackpots".[138] Aware of what he termed the "harshness and smallness of the lives of fellow Australians",[139] he was nonetheless resigned to the inevitability of their fate - "people dream themselves out of society into utopia, the promise of the future is the basis of all mythology. Actually, people are just drifting in the desert all the time and die there too. But they like to think it is all to some purpose".[140]

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137. B. Miller to D. Horne, 8 February 1944 in Horne Papers.
138. D. Horne to B. Miller, 12 September 1943 in Horne Papers.
139. Horne to Miller, 24 October 1943 in Horne Papers.
140. Ibid.

Horne was at a stage in his development where revaluation and rejection of a youthful past necessitated a sour disassociation from society as a whole: "really I don't care much what people think and doubt very much their ability to do anyway".[141]

However, an aloof, meditative and sedate scepsis from afar, was not the style to satisfy Horne for very long. He was far too fond of the grand gesture and its associated image of power to stay sequestered in the confines of remote sagacity. Although the role flattered his image, Horne craved action and the dramatic presence. The possibility of a contrived, artificial and dramatic stance had always held its appeal.[142] It was a presence he had cultivated as an undergraduate. The role of the protaganist - avant-garde, tough minded and enlightened - was very attractive. Along with McAuley and Stewart, Horne shared the need to extract and assert a separate style. He wanted to make a statement that was strong and dramatic; one that reflected firm anchorage, both of the self and the society: "I needed a persona, a mask, a character. I must appear to be some particular recognizable and predictable kind of man".[143] Although these were the words of a younger man recalled by an older reflection, they ring true of a larger quest for

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141. Horne to Miller, 1 February 1944 in Horne Papers.

142. D. Horne, The Education of Young Donald (Melbourne 1967), p.233.

143. Ibid.

self definition. Where he differed from McAuley and Stewart was in his refusal (or perhaps inability) to find refuge in the purely private world of poetry. Horne eschewed quiet withdrawal for a more dramatic expression of the self from centre stage. As a consequence, Horne's radicalism continued as something self conscious and flamboyant. Ego pulled him in different directions, conflicting urges led to an assortment of different roles. In one scenario, he was the uncompromising, sophisticated Andersonian, agile in his manoeuvres against illogicality; the "laconic analyst, clarifying discussion" [144] in a clear headed, objective and scientific manner. In another scene, he was the volatile anarchist decrying the established socialist models for transformation. Then, with a volte-face he railled against the saccharine romanticism of youthful idealism only to indulge in a form of romanticism that was angst-ridden and melodramatic: "true virtue lay only in the acceptance of Anarchy ... our minds and our societies were in chaos. To be an anarchist was to see this chaos and to welcome it, finding Freedom in the Anarchy of one's own soul. The soul must be explored and enlarged, brought to life by being pushed to unexpected extremes. Before it dies, the mayfly must try its wings".[145]

The scurrying and oscillation from one position to

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144. Ibid.

145. Ibid., pp.299-300.

another demanded ideological dexterity, rewarded only by superficiality and bewilderment. With honest perspicacity, Horne recognized this side to his youthful nature when he later wrote: "I wanted to be all things. I wanted to think everything and to do everything. I would pass from group to group and take on some of its colour, seeing the attractions of one side then of another. Always what moved, what rebelled was best".[146] This was to remain a factor in Horne's makeup. His radicalism was an offshoot of an inner ferment, an inner activism overly sensitive to all stimuli. Pushed along by a need for self assertion, he fell upon causes naturally. Irrepressible oppositionism, common to the others, was in Horne's case, nourished by a noisy flamboyance. Whatever his stand, Horne ensured that he be noticed: "I ran a dramatic company at school of which I was entrepeneur, author, producer and chief character actor. I was a bouncing enthusiast".[147] The Horne style was bossy, protuberant and egregious. He sought approbation; more often than not, however, it earned him sardonic acrimony. His role as enfant terrible and intellectual prophet at the University, invoked resentment and ridicule from those not of his circle: "we are doing our best to change our mundane mental outlook by imitating

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146. Ibid., p.243.

147. Ibid., p.83.

to our best ability the actions of the poetic messiah; (referring to Horne) we mean of course that we have become so ascetic that we are completely above anything that excites our appetites; we languish in the quad, we consider lectures above us, we adopt a pure accent but above all, we are tasting life in an abstract form".[148] The jibe was directed at Horne's preciousness. Horne's radicalism at the University was at times overly earnest, dogmatic and pretensious. As a consequence he was often the object of derision. An example of the form it sometimes took is a 'poem' that accompanied the above letter to Honi Soit: "we have evolved a little poem dedicated to the unintelligible ... 'through putrefying flesh and tortured ego crazed with self realization

I
crawl
Babywise
To the distant glimmer of intellect
I breathe! I
Live
O
Donald!'"[149]

But Horne was not to be subdued. Impelled by an overwhelming need to be noticed, Horne worked at portraying an image of himself as iconoclast and provocateur. An exaggerated self awareness propelled him into action

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148. D. Horne, Letter to The Editor, Honi Soit, 11 July 1940.

149. Ibid.

so that he always loomed large whatever the context. The key to the Horne image is contained in the phrase "anxious self definition". His radicalism rehearsed this need.

It could be argued that anxious self definition was the predominant preoccupation of all the young intellectuals of his circle. Horne's varied flirtations with radical alternatives complied with the actions of the others. In common with Somerville, McAuley, Stewart and McCallum, Horne experienced a sense of ideological dislocation. Aware of a diosynchronization with the society around them, they strove to re-establish harmony: "Around us was the hostile city surrounded by the great hungry wastes of the suburbs where we might yet be lost for ever ... we saw ourselves as alienated from all Australia.[150] The quest for cohesion and anchorage expressed itself as a criticism of the existing order. Andersonianism, Anarchism, Hootonism - they were all attempts at redirection within a cultural milieu experienced as diffuse and impoverished.

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150. Horne, Education of Young Donald (Melbourne 1967) p.270.

CONCLUSION

Against a background of cultural stasis in which a lacklustre predictability was the norm, most Australians in the 1930's and early forties lived within an atmosphere of social homogeneity that dictated a colourless and quotidienne existence.[1] Despite the challenge of world stirring events - the Depression, the Spanish Civil War and the gloomy imminence of a world war on the horizon, the tone of mainstream Australian life remained at a level of vacuity first noted critically by D.H. Lawrence in the twenties. Australia was still the "crude, raw and self satisfied" society,[2] it was still lacking a soul, an "inside life".[3]

Art critic Robert Hughes, writing of this period noted its prevailing mood of insularity: "It was an extraordinary complacency - a dream of comfort experienced on a couch outside history. Australia found it difficult to imagine that anything in the world outside could affect their content. For most of the population, Spain was only a squabble between generals in a comic opera republic while Hitler was a chaplinesque housepainter

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1. See B. Penton, Advance Australia - Where? (Sydney 1943) and D. Horne, The Australian People (Sydney 1972).
2. A. Huxley (ed.), The Letters of D.H. Lawrence (London 1932), pp.547-49.
3. Ibid.

with a moustache".[4] Australia lacked a strong cultural tradition with which to sustain the creative individual in any independent reappraisal of his society. This was the dilemma that had confronted Norman Lindsay in an earlier undertaking of cultural reassessment. Lindsay came to the realization that "Australian consciousness" needed to "arrive at a compact understanding of its aspiration and frustrations".[5] There were no guidelines; Australia lacked a deep and definite consciousness of itself. The American critic, Hartley Grattan echoed a similar observation when he depicted Australia as lacking a separate and positive identity: "The total result is that Australia drifts. She awaits a cue. And there is no-one to give it".[6] For the intellectual, the writer, the creative artist, the cultural ambience was thin. Novelist Dymphna Cusack reflecting on this period wrote in these terms: "Those of us who had grown to maturity in Australia between the two world wars did so in an atmosphere of spiritual colonialism ... only a few dared attempt the task of interpreting a people in the making with all the crudities of creation still upon them - an unfinished

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4. R. Hughes, The Art of Australia (Melbourne 1966), p.136.
5. N. Lidsay quoted in B. Kiernan, Criticism (Melbourne 1974), p.25.
6. C.H. Grattan, "Australia Awaits A Cue", in Current History, December 1937.

people in an unchartered country".[7] More damningly dramatic, literary critic, Brian Elliott noted that during the period between the wars, "we were all inclined to wonder with William Hay - 'How long, O Lord, shall this my country be a nation of the dead?'"[8]

It was symptomatic of the cultural vacuity of the thirties and forties that attempts were made to purposefully fashion a cultural tradition. The self-conscious efforts of the Jindyworobaks and the Angry Penguins were the result. The emergence of these two different literary movements reflected a growing awareness of the fact that earlier attempts at cultural self determination in the form of a blustering Bulletin bush tradition was ossified and irrelevant. However, for the loose group of intellectuals with whom this study has been concerned, neither the Jindyworobaks nor the Angry Penguins offered a viable cultural anchorage. Their dilemma continued as a quest for fresh, positive values.

Somerville, Stewart, McAuley, Horne and McCallum each experienced a personal dissatisfaction with the prevailing cultural mood of drift and stagnation. Australian society was stolid, pragmatic, conformist and dull. For the intellectual in search of strong

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7. D. Cusack in The Jindyworobak Review 1938-1948 (Melbourne 1948), pp.43-44.
8. B. Elliott, quoted in ibid., p.77.

cultural directions, Australian society offered itself as a provincial ghost. Amorphous and timid, Australia lacked cultural self determination.

As individuals still struggling to form a personal identity within their society, they were by no means confident of the direction that this cultural self determination should take. Their disaffection was embryonic, the resolution unknown. For all except Somerville, the search continued as a personal development outside the boundaries of this essay. For McAuley the anchorage from which to view and direct his society came with a conversion to Catholicism in the fifties and a dedication to art as a tool of faith and order. For Harold Stewart, the quest continued outside Australia and increasingly in the realm of a mythopoetic mysticism. For Donald Horne the path led to the role of the engagé social critic with a conscience. As for Douglas McCallum, youthful nibbles at the peripheries of political theories led to a more sustained if orthodox evaluation of the same within the groves of academe.

This study focuses on their uncertain grapplings with the ideological forms with which they would go on to construct a social visage. As such we catch them at an immature stage undergoing a process of growth. In this undertaking they were temporarily detained by two idiosyncratic approaches. One, as we have seen was freethinking Andersonianism - rationally iconoclastic. The other was utopian anarchism - irrationally iconoclastic

and romantic. John Anderson was the focal source of the first, Anarchist poet Harry Hooton the focus of the latter. Each represented a critical and divergent position vis à vis Australian society. As such, each served to inject a shot of vitality into the intellectual and cultural fabric of Australian society. For Oliver Somerville, Harold Stewart, James McAuley, Donald Horne and Douglas McCallum, the need was for a distinctive, supportive, cultural identity; one that could sustain and nurture a proclivity towards iconoclastic creativity. It was against a thin and prosaic background that an alternative perspective like Andersonian freethought or Hootonian anarchism found favour. Collectively, their respective quests underscored a tendency towards quiet revaluation.

APPENDIX A

Poem by O.M. Somerville, in Number Three, Sydney 1948

Ballade of Modern Painters

The educated mob exudes
its unepateable caprice;
the avant-garde its tongue protudes
in agonies of mock release;
orders for cubist works increase,
red artists fade to paler pinks,
art's Jasons find their golden fleece,
I wonder what Picasso thinks.

Modigliani's daring nudes
that shattered our neurotic peace
now publicise the patent foods
that mark us off from ancient Greece;
Manet no more suggests police,
Epstein adorns our skating rinks;
Derain is growing more obese
I wonder what Picasso thinks.

But I, abhorring prigs and prudes
alike to pack in mind's valise
a cold perception which excludes
the biasses which never cease,
although I've learned to play with ease
the psycho-analytic lynx,
before each frenzied masterpiece
I wonder what Picasso thinks

ENVOY

Prince, we have understood Matisse
your likeness done by Sargent stinks
High art is quacked by human geese
I wonder what Picasso thinks.

APPENDIX B

Poem by Harry Hooton, in These Poets, Sydney 1940

Confession

I have strung words together;
Felt the ecstacy of genius;
Been borne on Nature's wave;
I have been as exalted and artistic
As the man who sticks bricks together...

I have imagined; I have been free on the height
I have attained the sublime -
Even as thousands of drunkards have thrown
Artifice and sham and law
Aside, to stand, or stagger as free
And divine as God.
I have listened rapt to a Bach fugue,
To symphonies of sound,
Even as the drunken worker gapes,
Wide and teary-eyed
At Mother Machree;
I have thrilled to Wagner's spate
Of free soul ascending -
Much as cannon-fodder listen
To land of Hope and Glory.
Who has lived has done all there is to do;
He has lived ...

I have painted a picture -
I have been drunk;
I have written a poem -
I heard a recitation once ...
I have been everything
Even as every man alive has been everything.
Yes, I have been drunk on beer
Even as the poet and mystic are drunk
I have lived.

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Journals Edited by Hooton.

Number One, Sydney 1943. A small magazine of poetry, deliberately unnamed and edited in association with Gary Lyle, O. Somerville and A.D. Hope. Hooton contributed three long poems: "The Kingdom of Heaven Is Without You".

"Joyce and The Rest or Something to Say"

"Geometry For Beginners"
All three poems were written in Hooton's didactic style, proselytising his philosophy of Anarcho-Technocracy.

Number Two, Sydney 1944.

Number Three, Sydney 1948. The final number of the magazine included an article obituary by Hooton on Somerville, killed in a car crash.

Anarcho-Technocracy: A four page pamphlet published by Hooton. No date. The article is subtitled "The Politics of Things"

21st Century: The Magazine of a Creative Civilization. No.1 September 1955.
No.2 August 1957.
The articles and poems by Hooton published in these two numbers of the magazine reiterated the ideas he had formed in the thirties and forties. Often they were simply reprinted; for example, the "Politics of Things" included in the first number of 21st Century had previously appeared as "Anarcho-Technocracy" and "The Dictatorship of Art".

MS No.1 June 1950
No.2 February 1951
A literary magazine published in association with James McGuire and D.E. Everingham. These two small booklets of poetry and prose included the following contributions from Hooton:

"Poems In Repose"
"For the Last Time"
"I'll Tell You Something 1940-45"
"Poppy"
"The Cart"
"Clothes"

A review of the novel Summer Time Ends by John Hargrave (Constable 1935), entitled "Nembly mind warbly same boat, arrangement of a theme by John Hargrave".

Articles And Short Stories By Hooton

"The Sport of Kinks" in Flame: A Magazine of Fiction, Vol.1 No.44 November 1936.

"I Am A Fugitive From A Road Gang" in Australian Review, Vol.1 No.12, February 1939.

"Poetry or Not", in Australian Quarterly, September 1943.

"The Dictatorship of Art" in Australian Quarterly, March 1949.

"Creative Civilization" in MS Sydney 1950.

"Wilde and Nietsche" in Inferno Press, San Francisco, 1955.

Hooton sent poetry and articles to Inferno Press while he was living in Chippendale, Sydney in the 1950's. In No.8, of the 1952 Number of Inferno Press there is a letter by Hooton announcing the prospective arrival of a new journal to be edited by him and to be titled City: The Magazine of Creative Civilization. Nothing came of this, but in 1955, Hooton edited the magazine 21st Century.

A special number of Inferno Press, (1955) was entirely compiled of Hooton's work. Subtitled Power Over Things. A Selection, the number included a biographical introduction of Hooton and his poems "Direction"
"The Kingdom of Heaven"
"Whatever Man Touches Goes Gold"
This number also reprinted Hooton's essay "Creative Civilization".

"The School Teacher Mentality" in Odyssey: Explorations in Contemporary Poetry and The Arts, Vol.1 No.2 1958.

"The Direction of Language" in Language edited, Geoffrey Mill Vol.1 No.1 April 1952.

Dynamic Logic: The Will To Power Over Things, in Language, Vol.1 No.2 June 1952.

Letters to the Editor by Hooton.

Hooton wrote a number of letters to the Editor of the Newcastle Morning Herald And Miners Advocate during 1937 and 1938.

The dates when the letters appeared:

23	December	1937
29	"	1937
5	January	1938
21	"	1938
26	"	1938
2	February	1938
5	"	1938
9	"	1938
18	March	1938
21	April	1938
5	May	1938
8	June	1938
21	June	1938
20	October	1938

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"University Reform" in AJPP, 1935.

"Marxist Philosophy" in AJPP, 1935.

"Things To Come" in Hermes, 1936.

"The Comic" in Hermes, 1936.

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10 October 1975.

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