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The nineteenth-century inversion of good and evil: its roots in the eighteenth century, and its continuation in the twentieth century

Frank M. Morgan

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THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY INVERSION OF GOOD
AND EVIL, ITS ROOTS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY,
AND ITS CONTINUATION IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Frank M. Morgan

English M391

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### OUTLINE

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Early in the Nineteenth Century there occurred a change in the literary artist's perception of what conditions and what actions constitute good and evil. This changed perception was a great factor in the development of literature and thinking of that century, and the effects can be traced into our own century. The change accompanied and was an integral part of a general change in the perception of the role of man in the universe. The emphasis on man's role in society was overshadowed by a growing belief in man's value as an individual and a concern with individual needs and freedom. This concern with individual liberty, born and fostered in the Nineteenth Century, was no doubt the child engendered in the Eighteenth Century by Jean Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau crusaded the cause of human rights and advocated that the individual escape the influence of corrupting society to the freedom of nature where the inherent goodness of the individual could flourish. After overcoming the inertia caused by the necessary displacement of accepted ideas, Rousseau’s belief in the individual became a trend which had tangible results in the French Revolution beginning in 1792, and was evident in the Romantic Revolt in England. It is indicative that Lord Byron, who took up the crusade for individual liberty, was born in 1788—exactly ten years after the death of Rousseau, when Rousseau's ideas had reached a degree of general popularity.

The English Romantics took much of Rousseau's philosophy whole fabric. Individual freedom, as I have pointed out, was
the common basis for the development of other elements. An aspect of freedom was sensuality and freedom to do as the passions dictated. Rousseau himself says:

I have very ardent passions... and when I am excited by them nothing equals my impetuosity. I no longer know either caution, respect, fear or propriety. I am shameless, violent, cynical, intrepid; there is no danger or shame which restrains me. In comparison with the only object which occupies me, the entire universe disappears before me.¹

He goes on to explain that passion is a spontaneously good reaction.² For there to be freedom there must be the spontaneous reaction of the individual instead of coded, learned social behavior. Like Rousseau, the English Romantic Rebels, Byron and Shelley, rejected social values in favor of personal values. Thus they rejected the establishment while professing an aristocratic conception of the individual and belief in individual virtue. However, the British Romantics injected their own style to their advocacy of individual liberty. In taking his stand for freedom the Romantic figure assumed a Promethian stance—saying in effect that the forces of the universe and of society were malign, and that he was in rebellion against society and the universe. Since it was accepted that the universe was in the control of a supposedly good power, and society in general claimed allegiance with

²Ibid., p. 29.
that power, called God, the Romantic Rebel declared his allegiance with the power which opposed both God and society--i.e., Satan. Hence, we can observe what can be called the descent into the demonic, or the formation of a satanic school of literature.

What heretofore had been considered evil was welcomed as good. The Romantic Rebels denied the existence of God or else shook their fists at Him. The interest in self became a regular antagonism toward society. Death became an escape from the tyranny of society and the universe and thus good. Overt rebellion became a virtue in romantic characters and satanic qualities became subject to exploration. One of the most obvious examples of satanic characters in Nineteenth Century novels is Heathcliff in Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff is the archetypal stormy, passionate, brooding hero in rebellion. The naturalistic novels of Hardy also employ heroes and heroines, such as Eustacia Vye, who challenge fate in a chaotic, possibly malign universe. However the values of good and evil were not tampered with by the early Romantic Rebels; it was the conditions which could be labeled good or evil that changed labels. Dungeons and racks could not be made desirable. On the other hand, sexual fulfillment outside of marriage, even though morally condemned by society may be seen as good.

The change in artistic awareness necessarily changes the
artist's use of symbols and archetypes:

The serpent, because of its role in the garden of Eden story, usually belongs on the sinister side of our catalogue in Western literature; the revolutionary sympathies of Shelley impel him to use an innocent serpent in The Revolt of Islam. Or a free and equal society may be symbolized by a band of robbers, pirates, or gypsies; or true love may be symbolized by the triumph of an adulterous liaison over marriage. . . . or an incestuous one, as in many Romantics.3

Because the artist identifies with the Satanic or side in rebellion he uses archetypes common to us in their reverse sense. If we come across a snake in a work we usually associate it with Satanic evil, because it is part of our symbolic, literary heritage. However, to use the serpent in a good sense, as does Shelley, changes the symbolic interpretation we give the serpent. Since we cannot link the serpent in The Revolt of Islam to evil, we must change our perception of good and evil. The serpent is eternally linked to Satan in the seduction of Eve in Genesis; the fact that the serpent may be a good symbol elevates Satan from a position of pure evil to one of possible good.

Certainly, man's fascination with evil goes back before recorded history and shows up periodically as it does in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century paintings of Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Brueghel. Both painters attempt to show the fascination of the occult and of evil; perhaps the best example is Bosch's depiction of hell in "Garden of Earthly Delights."

However, the synthesis of the ideal of human liberty and its expression in modes hitherto considered demonic was the contribution of the Nineteenth Century Romantic Rebels. Whereas Bosch depicted man's state of helplessness before demonic forces, the Romantic Rebels advocated the participation in taboo practices for the expression and fulfillment of the individual.

In his personal life Byron himself habitually violated social taboo but generally restricted his overt action to flaunting sexual convention. His numerous affairs, especially his incestuous liaison with his half-sister Augusta Leigh, ended finally in his expulsion from his social circle and in self-imposed exile from England. In his marriage to Annabella Milbanke he let himself be ruled by his passions, letting the smallest irritation drive him into fits of violence, leading his wife and her family to believe him insane, and resulting in their separation. In his work, though, Byron moulded his natural inclinations into an organic demonic philosophy. For Byron:

"... "Satanism" is not an element of evil in the Romantic Hero, but rather a beneficial ingredient. This occurs because to solve the problem which Byron, consciously or unconsciously, set out to solve during the spring and summer of 1816, that of finding a heroic character which would satisfy not only his own spiritual needs but those of his age, he had finally to merge poetically two different but analogous notions which by his time were thoroughly assimilated in Romantic mentality. The first was the principle of sublimity and its implications, the second, the principle of defiance. But this merger took place in the
context of an effort to redefine "good" by redefining "evil." What Byron conceived of as evil—in general, whatever drives men away from a totality of self—his hero, Manfred, resists successfully. 4

Manfred, a verse play by Byron, takes the fully assimilated mythological structure of Milton's Satan as the framework for its protagonist. That is, the character of Manfred is based on the character of Satan without transference of specific plot detail from Milton's to Byron's work. The plot revolves around Manfred's former incestuous relationship with his sister which ended in her death, and involves Manfred's attempts to either recall his sister from the dead or to join her in death. Here we see the Romantic inclination to death as a release from the afflictions of life. Although Manfred is punished in life, his majesty is derived from his defiance of the order of the universe as represented by various spirits. His power is demonstrated by his brief success in actually recalling his sister and persuading her to speak when the spirits failed. Even in his own death he sustains his integrity and defiance by the self-possession of his soul instead of giving it up to the evil spirit which confronts him. He is thus morally victorious. Manfred's sublimity lies in his defiance of the universal order; this defiance labels him as satanic and, therefore he is

satanically sublime.

In Byron's *Cain* we can most readily perceive the reversal of good and evil in the conception of the artist. The evil son of Adam and Eve in Genesis becomes the hero of this verse play. From the beginning *Cain* is in rebellion against God and God's order imposed upon him. Even as the play opens he stands in sullen defiance while his parents, brother and wife/sister pray. He laments his birth that leads only to death, the necessity of toiling in the fields, and his exclusion from Eden though he had no part in the original sin. He feels that he has more to be angry with God for than to be grateful for. When Satan appears to tempt him, he readily follows in order to learn intellectually what is not granted by God. R. W. Babcock says of Satan that:

Scott has well pointed out the magnificence and subtlety of Lucifer. As in Stevenson's *Markheim* he represents "the Visitor"—this time of purely negative sort—battling with the other side of Cain's mind: evil versus good. And here the champion of evil wins. But how much of this victory, I should ask, is due, not to the specious arguments of the metaphysician, but to the grandeur of his concluding paean of revolt:

"No! by Heaven, which He
Holds, and the abyss, and the immensity
Of worlds and life, which I hold with him—No!
I have a victor—true; but no superior.
Homage he has from all—but none from me. . . ."5

We see in Satan's speech the Romantic stance of defiance against God's authority. However, Babcock misinterprets

Satan's role in the drama. By his own words Satan, though he tempts, tempts with truths. "hus, as bringer of truth, he becomes a figure of good in the romantic view. God takes on the aspect of a tyrant and Satan takes the aspect of a deliverer:

Lucifer prefers torment to "the smooth agonies of adulation, in hymns and harpings, and self-seeking prayers." This Lucifer is no devil. He says of himself: "Who covets evil for its own sake?—None—[sic]nothing! tis the leaven of all life, and lifelessness." Nor is he a Mephistopheles. Except for one faint jest, he is severely earnest. No! This Lucifer is really the bringer of light... the proud and defiant spirit of criticism, the best friend of man, overthrown because he would not cringe or lie, but inflexible, because, like his enemy, he is eternal. He is the spirit of freedom. But it is significant that what he represents is not the frank, open struggle for liberty, but the feeling which inspires gloomy conspirators, who seek their aim by forbidden ways... 

Also, Satan does not convert Cain—Cain is already in rebellion—Satan only gives Cain the proof for what Cain already felt to be true. Thus Byron does not negate or confuse the qualities of good and evil, as seen in Lucifer's speech, but rather attaches the two labels to circumstances unaccustomed to receive them in the manner in which they do. Satan, though he retains his aura of defiance, is anything but an evil character. His powers of persuasion are based on truth and logic; when Cain asks the obvious question of whether Satan and his

host are happy in hell, Satan replies by asking Cain if he is happy even though not in hell—a reply which can only support Satan's case.

In Cain we again see the desirability of death as a release. Although Byron did not add the speech to the play he wrote in one of his notebooks:

Thought for a speech of Lucifer, in the tragedy of Cain:
"Were death an evil, would I let thee live? Fool! Live as I live—as thy father lives, And thy son's sons shall live for evermore."

Previous to this declaration, Cain had feared death. Yet Satan relates that life does not end in death except in a physical sense; and in his superior wisdom he realizes that death is a state more to be desired than that of a life of torment. He is criticizing Cain here for his narrow view of life and death, saying that death, if it existed, would not be evil but good. Satan, taking the role of the wise teacher, expresses the Romantic view to Cain, his student. It is strange that this speech is not included in the drama since it expresses the Romantic idealization of death so forthrightly. In any case, we see here, and throughout the play itself, the Romantic desire to escape the misfortunes of this world through death.

When Cain, in his desire to have eternal life in a physical sense, complains that nothing was gained from picking the apple from the Tree of Knowledge and regrets that his parents did not choose the fruit of eternal life first,

7 Babcock, p. 178.
Satan says:

One good gift has the fatal apple given,--
Your reason--let it not be overswayed
by tyrannous threats to force you into faith
'Gainst all external sense and inward feeling. . . .

Byron, then, linked man's will and reason with his senses and
his feelings, i.e. his passionate nature. In doing so, he
was advocating the willful acceptance of, and action in ac-
cordance with the passions, and thus the willful participa-
tion in what had been labeled a satanic area.

The Nineteenth Century Byron owed much to the Eighteenth
Century. He was:

... born opportunely. The Eighteenth Century
left the weight of its metaphysical negations,
the sarcasm of Voltaire, the scepticism of the
Encyclopedists, the lyricism of Rousseau, the
sadness of Young, and the philosophical anxiety
of Goethe for the Nineteenth Century to bear. It
was Byron who gathered this heritage. . . .

To Rousseau he also owes the concern with the passions, con-
cern with the importance of the individual ego, and the love
of self rather than love proper. Almost needless to say,
he owes to Rousseau the most important element of desire for
personal liberty. Nevertheless, it was Byron's contribution
to synthesize all these elements into an organic philosophy
centered by the concept of the virtue of willful action ac-
cording to the dictates of passion linked with reason--even
though that action should transgress into the accepted con-

8George Gordon, Lord Byron, Cain, in The Works of Lord
Byron, Vol. V, ed. by Ernest Hartley Coleridge (New York,
Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. 256.

9Ajami, p. 32.

10Ibid., p. 28.
cepts of the demonic and involve rebellion against the dogma of existing institutions. "During his life, Byron, the champion of liberty, declared a blood war on political, social, religious.\"11 Byron exhibited and helped to crystalize the romantic beliefs in death as release; defiance and rebellion; the search for truth and fulfilment through the passions, senses, reason and will rather than through faith—even in the face of torment or the destruction of formerly accepted values. He states that:

The great object of life is sensation: to feel that we exist even though in pain.12

The implication is that to live in rebellion and pursue the demonic does not bring happiness necessarily. On the contrary, it often causes the individual to live in pain. However, the individual, though he might live in pain (which was part of the romantic pose) would have the consolation of intellectual knowledge and especially fulfilment of his total being.

Percy Bysshe Shelley, Byron's peer, paralleled much of Byron's concern with rebellion and the existence of good in ideas and actions previously considered satanic. This is not to say that there was any plagiarism of thought, but rather that the ideas were in the literary consciousness of the time to be assimilated and organized by anyone aware of

11Ibid., p. 28.
the prevailing currents. Early in his boyhood, Shelley demonstrated an inclination for rebellion:

His first works were long, melodious, but, unfortunately, foralless poems, which are in their essence protests against kings and priests, against the religions which "people the earth with fiends, hell with men, and heaven with slaves," against the injustice of governments and the servility of the administrators of the law, against compulsory marriages, against the exclusion of women from free competition in bread-winning occupations. . . .13

Both Shelley and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, his second wife, believed in and practiced free love. The fact that they became married was due, as is usual, to practical considerations. Their belief was mainly an idealistic precept that true love should be so binding as to make the form of civil or religious ceremony superfluous. The actual performance of a free love union was to be the accomplishment of a later more perfect age. Curiously, it is Shelley who receives the title of the founder of a satanic school.14 Perhaps it is because he is more literal in his affirmation of Satan:

Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God, as one who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent, in spite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy,—not from any mistaken notion of bringing him to repent of a perseverance in enmity, but with the open and alleged design of exasperating him to deserve new torments.15

13Brandes, p. 214.
14Ibid., p. 212.
In "The Revolt of Islam" Satan is portrayed as "... Majestic yet most mild, calm yet compassionate." These two views of Satan comment adequately on Shelley's unconventional view of what is to be labeled good and what evil. The value of our archetypal symbol for all evil—the embodiment of evil—is reversed, thus changing our perception of the values of good and evil, and signaling Shelley's intent to designate good and evil values in unconventional ways. Like Byron's Lucifer in *Cain*, Shelley did not seek evil for evil's sake, but hoped to gain from participation in "evil" which had merely been mislabeled and was really good. In fact, Shelley was a moralist before anything else. It was his purpose to reform the world. His belief in the power of the human will as opposed to the virtue of faith in God lead him to believe that mankind had only to will that there be no evil and there would be none. However, the belief in the will as opposed to faith is often held by the religious establishment as a condition of evil in itself. Shelley's concern is not only with the conditions for good and evil per se, but also with their relationship to the romantic hero. This relationship is best observed in his verse play

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Prometheus Unbound.

Like the Greek version of *Prometheus Bound* by Aeschylus, Shelley's version deals with the punishment of the Titan, Prometheus, who stole fire from the gods and gave it to man, incurring thus the wrath of the gods. The resulting punishment was in the form of imprisonment by being chained in the open to a rocky mountainside for a great length of time—ten thousand years in the play of Aeschylus and three thousand in Shelley's. The real difference between the two, though, is that the scheme of values is altered somewhat in Shelley's version, as could be expected:

The matter of haughtiness is so greatly developed in Athenian drama as to seem almost peculiar to it. Shelley... prefers to concentrate upon the theme of the stealing of the fire. 18

Haughtiness or pride, the major sin of Aeschylus' Prometheus, is certainly a part of the character of the romantic hero. Nevertheless, in concentrating on the actual stealing of the fire by Prometheus, Shelley made him a rebel not only in self-conception, but also in action—action which achieved a good result for man. Prometheus, then, is symbolic of the individual who flaunts authority and "sins" to bring about a good result, and thus is well chosen subject matter for Shelley. His action is also representative of the rebellious, satanic desire to know by the intellect what cannot be known by faith. Fire, once surround by superstition,

has become one of our symbols for intellectual knowledge, and further enriches and adds meaning to the drama, fitting well into the context of Shelley's interpretation of the story.

In *Prometheus Unbound*, we observe once again the romantic hero persecuted by an external and basically tyrannical order. Since the order is the order of the gods, then to cross or reject the values of the order is to commit a sin, and the individual is labeled therefore evil by the evil order. We know, though, that the order is basically evil while Prometheus is basically good, and this fact attests to Shelley's success in reversing the code of values. In Aeschylus' version of *Prometheus Bound*, Jupiter is portrayed in his justness overshadowing his vengefulness; we sympathize with Prometheus but we realize that he has sinned and must accept the verdict of the gods. In Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, we do not recognize that Prometheus has sinned, but that he has done good. His "sin" is founded only in his rebellion—not in his having done something intrinsically evil. Jupiter, in Shelley's drama, symbolizes the evil of imposed tyranny, especially that of God. He is identified by parallels with Milton's Satan (here used in the conventional sense to effect the inversion of Jupiter's character from good to evil).19 The viciousness of the

19 Baker, p. 98.
Furies, as agents of the order, further illustrate its evil. Bennett Weaver states that:

In a work by Shelley it may be expected that even so despicable a creature as Mercury should respond to the goodness of the Titan, but how little he really understands Prometheus is suggested by the leering line:
"If thou might' st dwell among the Gods the while Lapped in voluptuous joy?"20

In the excerpt, Mercury is metamorphosed into the character of Satan and Prometheus takes on the character of Christ in the biblical episode of the temptations. The accepted roles of gods and men are shown again in a reversed sense; the gods take an evil satanic aspect and the man, in his satanic or sinful, rebellious role, takes the aspect of Christ or God in the good sense of the words.

The reason for Prometheus' temptation by Mercury is that Jupiter wants to know which of his sons is going to usurp his rule. Prometheus is the possessor of this desired information. In refusing to yield the information in order to escape his misery, Prometheus demonstrates another rebellious trait—the attitude of defiance. He will in no way compromise himself in order to attain freedom in subjection. His is the stolidity of one who accepts his own innocence as he accepts his fate, and will not give in to his oppressors. And Shelley vindicates Prometheus in his rebellion:

... he presents the torture of the Furies, the destruction of Jupiter, and the release of Pro-

20Weaver, p. 130.
metheus, which things were impossible to his predecessor.21

—that is, Aeschylus. Thus Prometheus, the individual in rebellion against the establishment and the subverter of metaphysical authority (the satanic role), is given victory in the end. In Prometheus Unbound, Shelley symbolically defends the rights of the individual against the tyranny of the metaphysical entity. His romantic hero successfully defies the limitations imposed upon him as Shelley would have all men do—live as freely as possible and reject the restricting regulations of society and God; i.e., to participate in the demonic if beneficial elements have been labeled thus.

Since the concern with individual liberty crossed the English Channel from Eighteenth Century France to Nineteenth Century England, it would be surprising for the British variation to remain a wholly British form. As it happened, the British synthesis of individual freedom and the attainment of it through participation in the demonic returned to France. True, Charles Baudelaire was more fatalistic than either Byron or Shelley, but it is not unusual for a literary movement like this one, with the theme of the inversion of good and evil, to have a reactive influence in which the original thesis is plastic rather than static. Baudelaire

21Weaver, p. 121.
was attracted by evil but at the same time was horrified by it. Just as he confused the senses in his poetry, speaking of smells that are heard and sounds that are seen, he confused attraction and repulsion by images that both attract in their sensuality and repulse the reader in horror:

And I will give thee, my dark one,
Kisses as icy as the moon,
Caresses as of snakes that crawl
In circles round a cistern's wall... 22

Though he was not as concerned with freedom through the demonic as were Byron, Shelley and his own follower in French Symbolism, Rimbaud, Baudelaire is important for his concern with the questionable nature of good and evil and his role as founder of the French Symbolist school of poetry.

Baudelaire's nature was a strangely dual one. He was continually committing himself to the demonic side of human nature and then recanting. In 'Prayer' from 'The Litany of Satan' he says:

Glory and praise to thee, Satan, in the most high,
Where thou didst reign; and in deep hell's obscurity,
Where, manacled, thou broadest long! O silent power,
Grant that my soul be near to thee in thy great hour,
When, like a living Temple, victorious bough on bough,
Shall rise the Tree of Knowledge, whose roots are in thy brow! 23

Here we see the fascination of evil linked with the idea that intellectual knowledge is related intricately to sin. On the other hand, in an excerpt from 'At Midnight,' he rever-

ses his position:

We have offended Jesus, most
Admirable of gods by far;
Even as sycophants approve
Anything to be popular
Or please some vile and powerful lust
(Creature of Satan that we are!)
We have insulted what we love,
Flattered what we have horror of--24

Notice that even in his repentance Baudelaire expresses the
attraction to evil. Both these excerpts are from The Flowers
of Evil, a collection whose name indicate duality of Baudelaire's thought. Flowers are usually thought of as good,
wholesome symbols; yet these flowers are:

... flowers of doubt, flowers of torture,
flowers of grief, flowers of blasphemy, flowers
of weakness, flowers of disgust; cemetery
flowers, fertilized by the ardent and well-
cared-for flesh; flowers forced on the sterile
bough of the mind's unblossoming decay.2

Baudelaire cannot divorce good from evil. It seems that he
desires good but the attraction of evil is too overpowering
to be resisted—and the result is an unhomogenous mixture
of the two that shows up in his poetry. In this sense, he
was more of a fatalist than Byron or Shelley. It was his
belief that no matter how much one wants good, evil has a
strength enabling it to pervade any good. And like the
existentialist he seeks to choose (accept) his fate, resigning himself to the inevitable: "My doom, henceforward, is

my sole desire. . . "26 In the final analysis:

His conscientious examinations now appeal to God, now to the Devil. So exacting, so perfect in playing his part is the latter, that he ceases to be the enemy and becomes the object of a desolate cult.27

That is to say, he is primarily the creator of a demonic cult.

Baudelaire's creation of a demonic system, in many ways relates to the development of his British precursors. Like Byron, in his personal life he delved into the forbidden, living loosely and experimenting with drugs. His attraction/repulsion awareness was perhaps the result of his use of drugs. His poems resemble DeQuincy's "Confessions of an English Opium Eater," in which DeQuincy describes this same attraction/repulsion experience. His whole outlook reflected his rejection of external values for the inner world of dreams and visions. In his concern with the inner world he demonstrates his affirmation of self and selfishness instead of concern for others, which is a trait we find in the satanic philosophy of Byron. His contempt for man's law is shown in a passage from "Lesbos":

What are men's laws to us, injurious or benign? Proud virgins, glory of the Aegaean! We know well Love, be it most foredoomed, most desperate, is divine, And love will always laugh at heaven and at hell! What are men's laws to us, injurious or benign? 28

26 "Letho," p. 5.
This excerpt reflects not only the rejection of man's laws and the affirmation of the individual's passion and will, but also explores another aspect of romantic rebellion. To be sweetest love must be doomed and desperate. In this attitude, rebellion itself against the laws of men or gods becomes a thing of pleasure and the object of rebellious activity becomes sweeter than if it were attained by non-rebellious action: the forbidden fruit is the sweetest.

Notice, too, Baudelaire's fatalism—rebellion will cause doubtlessly desperation—a condition logically to be avoided in most situations. Yet here desperation adds to the joy of attainment of the object and thus assumes a dual nature exhibiting Baudelaire's confusion of what constitutes good and evil.

Baudelaire's abhorrence of the authority wielded by God is another trait which links him to the romantic demonic school. His vision of God is that of an unreasonable agent who enforces rigorous and unnatural laws upon man:

Falling abruptly like a kind of prey from the sky, A furious angel seizes the sinner by his hair And says, "I will teach you to behave, do you hear me? I Am your good spirit!" And shakes him angrily in the air. I will teach you to be kind—to love, without making a face,

The poor, the deformed, the depraved, the uncivil, the dirty, the dumb, That you may help with your charity to prepare a place Here upon earth for Jesus when he is ready to come.

"Such is true love—the only virtue that exists, The only happiness that endures, Take heed, before Your heart is completely petrified and your senses rot."
And pounding upon his victim with his colossal fists
In love and in fury, the angel cannot cease to implore—
Or the accursed one to answer: "I will not!"29

This poem, "The Rebel," approximates the attitude of American naturalist, Stephen Crane,'s "A God in Wrath."30 Ironically, the "good spirit" treats the individual in a vicious way in the name of charity, peace and Jesus Christ. The agent of God, then, is portrayed with the qualities of evil, while the individual persecuted for his natural abhorrence of deformity and depravity is vindicated and retains his dignity in his Promethean refusal to submit to the tyranny of God. Like Shelley's Prometheus and Byron's Cain, the "sinner" is apotheosized by his defiance and rebellion in the face of unsurmountable persecution. His horror of deformity is portrayed as natural and the insistence of the angel that he love it is portrayed as unreasonable. Here, as in the works of Byron and Shelley, the labels of good and evil have changed position. The agent of God, conventionally shown with the characteristics of goodness, takes the form of an evil oppressor, and the sinner is shown in the light of a defender of his personal integrity.


30American naturalism is related to the Romantic Rebellion and to French Symbolism in its negation of or rebellion against God. Thus Stephen Crane deserves mention as did English Naturalist, Thomas Hardy, earlier in the paper. However, a discussion of naturalism is beyond the scope of this paper because the inversion of good and evil was not a primary concern with the naturalists as much as it was an influence on them.
Baudelaire's main contribution to the Satanic School was his conscious recognition of external and internal elements which were labeled evil not only by society and religion, but also by himself, but which still presented an attractive aura to him. He recognised evil within himself but accepted it as an integral part of himself:

"L'Irrémédiable" shows another voluptuous aspect of evil, another pride: no longer that of independence, but of lucidity. Yes, I have seen myself, I have gazed clear-sightedly at all the evil that is in me, and here I am, God of myself, fully aware of my good and of my evil... But the Devil appears, and in the poet's admiration for that character who always does well all that he does" gives a clearer outline to despair.31

The demonic elements of voluptuousness (sensuality), independence, and pride are mentioned, but the main drift of the statement is Baudelaire's conscious acceptance of evil within himself and his resulting godhood. The statement should recall to us that the fruit that Eve ate was the knowledge of good and evil, and that the temptation was that this knowledge would make man like God. The original sin was the choice to know good and evil. We also observe here evidence supporting Baudelaire's genuine attraction to evil itself. For Baudelaire the attraction of evil was the stronger of the two forces, and knowledge of it becomes a virtue in itself, for, "The Socratic 'Know thyself,' basis of all virtues, here becomes awareness of and consent to evil..."32

31 Prévost, p.174.
32 Ibid., p. 174.
Finally, like Byron and Shelley, Baudelaire accepted that participation in evil practices does not necessarily bring happiness but is perhaps the only means of fulfilling his individuality. He says; "... I want to choose what appeals to me, to prefer myself to my happiness." The reveling in the self and ego thus become more important than happiness. Baudelaire differs from Byron and Shelley in his confused perception of good and evil. Whereas Byron and Shelley knew that good was good and evil, evil, and though they attached these labels in unusual ways, Baudelaire had difficulty in distinguishing between the two. He could recognise something as being intrinsically evil but still be attracted to it in the same way that he would be attracted to good. For this reason he constantly vacillated between seeking the desired evil and rejection of the satanic to seek good. His desperation is caused in part by his inability to pin down good and evil conclusively. The fact that he could see something as evil and at the same time see it as good by the merit of its desirablity accounts for the attraction/repulsion feeling we observe throughout his poetry. His confusion had the good effect of adding tension and mystery to his poetic style.

Although Baudelaire was the founder of the French Symbolist school of poets, the movement gained momentum even after his death. The movement did retain, though, its con-33

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33 Ibd., 174.
cern with the theme of the inversion of good and evil. Arthur
Rimbaud's poetry and personality are representative of French
Symbolism in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century. He
was concerned with violent rebellion as expression of his
choice of evil over good. His poetry is filled with
"funereal beauty" and peopled by dancing skeletons. 34 In his
personal nature:

Rimbaud appears as the unsatisfied sensualist,
the boy who stalks girls along the paths of the
public garden, who lusts after their cool flesh
and reconstructs in his mind's eye all the con-
tours of their bodies.35

Rimbaud demonstrated in his work and his action practically
all the traits of a romantic rebel. As seen in the quote
he revealed in the sensual. He also hated the unassailable
position of God, the contentment of the obese bourgeois es-
tablishment, and the institution of war.

However, his dislike for war was not caused by abhorrence
of violence, but rather its quality of enslaving the indi-
vidual to the will of the establishment. Actually, violence
and its release in destructive action were part of Rimbaud's
need for self-expression:

For certain men it is necessary first to act, to
explode and to vituperate, before they can dis-
cover the reasons which prompted their deeds and
explosions and vituperations. Rimbaud destroyed
and thereby obeyed the law of his nature. He was

34 Alma C. Condor, A Treasury of French Poetry (New York, Harp
another Saint Julian, as described by Flaubert, whose violences were in reality revolutions of love, all preparing the ultimate love.\textsuperscript{36}

Rimbaud's violence, though natural and spontaneous, has several meanings beyond its existential occurrence. The word "saint" recalls the theme of inversion of good and evil, where the follower of evil is apotheosized. The saints office is the destruction of evil; likewise, Rimbaud, as poet and saint, employed violence to destroy the appearance of good which was in truth evil. This result was to be attained through the confusion of good and evil in poetry and action until the opposite appearances destroyed themselves and only true good and true evil could prevail. Rimbaud hoped to regain the purity of his childhood—the purity where normative judgements had no more sophistication than "good equals good" and "evil equals evil." His violence is primarily directed toward overturning knowledge to gain true knowledge—to seek truth through destroying.

Like the English Romantic Rebels much of Rimbaud's violence was directed at God:

The violence in him is the need to spend his energy and exploit his power. And Christ he apostrophizes as eternal thief of energy.\textsuperscript{37}

The reason, then, for Rimbaud's violence was his fear of losing his individual power or will. God or Christ, as dictators of external law, become the suppressors of will. Therefore, the exercise of Rimbaud's will in violence was

\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., p. 106.
\textsuperscript{37}Ibid., p. 109.
precipitated by the desire to revolt against the power capable of negating his will. Again God has taken the aspect of a tyrant in the perception of the poet. Identifying himself with the negative side of the slate of good and evil, Rimbaud justifiably called his work "hell," for he conceived of it as the kingdom forbidden to the living. 38

Hell, though, is given connotations not usually associated with it. Wallace Fowlie says of "Bateau Ivre" or "Drunken Boat" that:

> If the voyage is the myth of man's desire and first impulse, hell represents the place when he stops from time to time during his voyage.

> "Hell is therefore the arrest during which man may learn who he is." 39

Hell then takes on the characteristics of a highway rest area of the soul where one ceases to look at the horizon and looks inward to the heart. Idealizing hell as a resting place, Rimbaud seemingly has rejected the world of desire and spontaneous, impulsive action. Remember though that life and death, as symbols for action and rest, occur at two different times; the aspect of passion and its expression in violence and spontaneous action can be the proper reaction at one time and introspection and discovery of the reason for action can be the proper action of a later date. Nevertheless, the general effect is the feeling that

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38 Ibid., p. 134.
39 Ibid., p. 131.
Rimbaud confused good and evil. When we have finished reading Rimbaud's poetry we are still unsure of what is good and what he considers evil. What we can say is that Rimbaud is in rebellion against God and he advocates the rule of the passions.

The form of Rimbaud's poetry is much like that of his predecessor, Baudelaire. We see the same reaction of attraction/repulsion in "The Drunken Boat!"

... Dawns make me suffer,
All moons are vile, all suns are gall to me.
Harsh love has bloated me with drunken torpors.

Here images usually used to convey wholesome ideas are rejected as vile. Still, Rimbaud's confusion of attraction/repulsion differs from Baudelaire's in that the reaction is Rimbaud's singular experience. Rimbaud does not seek to make the reader feel attraction/repulsion or to involve the reader in the poem; he merely states his own reactions. Whereas Baudelaire sought to involve the reader, Rimbaud lets the reader remain an aloof observer of his own reactions. His confusion of good and evil is even greater than that of Baudelaire. However, in his purpose of confusing good and evil appearances so that only the realities could remain, he only succeeded in confusing the two more. One of his stumbling blocks was his conflicting desires—he believed in absolute good and evil, yet; in his passion, re-

belled against the necessary framework for their existence—God, the maker of law. Like Baudelaire he confused good and evil; like Byron and Shelley he believed in the existence of absolute good and evil and attached the labels in unconventional ways. His failure to extract empirical good and evil can be blamed to a great extent on the very impossibility of achieving that goal—that is, the relative nature of good and evil from situation to situation and from society to society.

Rimbaud, nevertheless, did achieve a personal morality necessary to save the individual from chaos of personality. His:

... obvious violence. ... His revolt against the Church, against politics, against bourgeoisism, against love. ... were not his profoundest. They were masks for his real ferocity which was his vision.41

This vision of himself as an amoral, primitive, pre-Christian, seen throughout Une Saison en Enfer (A Season in Hell), gave Rimbaud a starting point from which to view himself—a self-image. With this self-image Rimbaud was capable of devising after-the-fact rules of conduct. He could not isolate good and evil, but he did recognise standards (such as participation in spontaneous violent action) which he considered good for himself. And this discovery of personal values is much of what the Romantic Rebels, Byron and Shelley, were advocating. The common belief in absolute good and evil, the emphasis on personal interpretation of them, the

41Fowlie, p. 114.
common inversion of the two, and the rebellion against imposed order are strikingly similar in Byron, Shelley and Rimbaud.

The trend of confusion and/or inversion of good and evil does not end with Rimbaud's death in 1891 but continues into the Twentieth Century. Its manifestation in France's Jean Genet takes a turn that was foreseeable but somewhat out of harmony with the original propositions of Byron and Shelley. Though Genet's ideas parallel those of his precursors, the tone is much different. Shelley and Byron recognised that good was good and evil, evil. Baudelaire and Rimbaud held the same view though they were confused about what was good and what evil, and though they exhibited a tendency to be attracted to what they thought to be evil. Genet deliniates good and evil but thinks that it is the right, the correct thing for him to do what he believes to be evil. Even Rimbaud did not choose to do evil—even in his acceptance of its fatal attraction. Genet truly seeks to do evil while accepting the order which designates good and evil. In doing so he seeks to achieve a sort of sainthood of superb evil; he recognises that his antisocial behavior is evil and does not attempt to call it good. It may seem paradoxical but Genet can be viewed as the most religious of the figures discussed previously. His evil actions are, in this view, a direct attempt
to get closer to God, as opposed to his predecessors rejection of God as a force of evil. To Genet evil action provides God's mercy with a reason for absolving him—enabling God to demonstrate the Christian belief in forgiveness. In this sense, sin is performed not just for itself but for a good result, and thus it becomes both sin and good at the same time. This perception of sin as good relates Genet to the English Romantic Rebels; but the reason it is good is not its intrinsic goodness but rather its final result.

As a saint, Genet reaches into the demonic not just to find personal fulfilment—though that might be a final result. Rather he makes the enactment of evil a religious ritual. One of his saintly attributes is asceticism. Genet knows that if he were to give up his pursuit of evil, he could be accepted and gain benefit of the society that rejects him. However, he has decided to accept what he believes himself to be, a thief, etc., in the face of opposition from the social order. According to Jean-Paul, Genet's conception of himself as a thief was the result of his childhood experiences. As an orphan Genet stole to possess and be like others who possessed and were good and honest. To take only when his foster-family gave was to acknowledge indebtedness and thus difference. When he was confronted by them with his steal-

43Ibid., p. 15.
ing, it was borne upon him that in the eyes of society he was a thief. In his acceptance of society he had to accept his nature as that of a thief. Thus he came to regard himself as intimately dishonest. "As for the social order which excludes him, he will do anything to perpetuate it. Its rigor must be perfect so that Genet can attain perfection in Evil."\textsuperscript{44} In choosing to accept his role of a thief in society Genet, like a saint takes on all the hardships of rejection from society in order to act in accordance with what he believes. Although Sartre might be assuming too much in looking back to Genet's childhood for the beginnings of Genet's self-conception, he is probably right about Genet's present attitude which was his starting point.

Genet's desire to live up to his self-image in full is totally involving. When applying for a job as a prostitute as related in \textit{Thief's Journal}, he finds:

\begin{quote}
Alas, the boss of the Criolla demanded that I appear as a young lady.
As a young lady!
Myself a young lady
I alight on my hip...
I then realized how hard it is to reach the light by puncturing the abscess of shame.\textsuperscript{45}
\end{quote}

The fact that he should appear as a woman does not bother him, for homosexuality is an accepted part of his participation in evil. Rather what bothers him is the difficulty of perfection in his evil. It disturbs him that he cannot successfully put on the appearance of a young girl.

\textsuperscript{44}Ibid., p. 55.
Genet's intent to achieve salvation through participation in evil links him to the Romantic Rebels. The difference is that the Romantic Rebels were attempting to fulfill themselves with sources outside of God, i.e., demonic sources—and achieve a personal salvation. Genet, on the other hand, participates in the demonic not because he thinks the demonic is a good or creative area, not because he hopes to achieve personal fulfillment, but because he hopes, thereby, to attract God's attention and evoke God's forgiveness and achieve salvation from outside himself and his evil acts. Because of his concern with the relation between self-deprivation of dignity and salvation he is related also to Rimbaud who:

In order to become worthy of his virginal soul. . . had to touch and know and traverse all manner of filth and degradation. For Rimbaud, innocence lay beyond experience. . . .

Actually this passage applies as much to Genet as Rimbaud, because it is Genet who wants to puncture the abscess of shame in order to reach the light.

Genet then does not really invert good and evil or even confuse them—rather he has a classical conception of the values where the demonic is evil, and the God-and-society-imposed order is good. His participation in evil practices does not negate his belief in the natural order of good and evil. It is merely his assumption that he is a thief (homosexual, etc.) that leads him to try to live up to his role.

46Fowlie, p. 107.
whether it is good or bad. As it happens, the self-conception that he tries to live up to is that of an evil man who recognises his own evil. His rejection of the social order is integrally linked with his acceptance of the social order. He cannot be a part of the social order because of the evil self-conception—derived, so says Sartre, from the social order. He loathes because in his confusion loathing is closer to love than indifference. He is forced to seek acceptance, or at least notice from the society, even if only through its rejection. As a thief he holds the place of a thief in society whereas, if he did not live up to his role he would be nothing. Though he does evil he does it so that good can exist as an opposite. At the same time, he would defend society from annihilation so that his evil acts would reflect as evil off of its moral façade. Byron sought good in the demonic; Rimbaud participated in what he knew to be evil because it held irresistible attraction for him; Genet accepts the moral order which Byron inverted and goes a step further by willfully choosing what he knows is true evil in his action. I mention Byron as a parallel here because even in his inversion of the order he had to accept its precept of the existence of real good and evil as did Rimbaud and as does Genet. Genet may end up doing many of the antisocial things that Byron, Shelley, Baudelaire and Rimbaud advocated, but it is for an entirely different reason and because of a different ethical outlook.
Within the last several years the motif of inversion of good and evil has manifested itself in a somewhat different area of the arts. The figures I have previously discussed have been mostly literary figures—some of whom directed their efforts toward drama. The artistic area I shall now explore is that of popular music—specifically that of rock groups. Many groups, such as Britain's Cream and Procol Harum, have shown awareness of the trend of the inversion motif. However, an American group, The Doors, is the best example of the trend, because the inversion motif is a constantly re-occurring theme in their music, and because they verbalize about it outside of the discipline of music. In a sense, their music is literary because the lyrics tend to have meaning that transcends the "bop-sh-bops" and "schoo-ba-does" of early rock's sound-as-content music. This does not mean that the lyrics would hold up as good poetry outside of the context of the music:

... they use their electrified instruments to invoke, with the chill of cold steel, weird, eerie twangs and rumblings that echo the dooms-day lyrics of their. sensual, primordial songs.47

The music and the lyrics are joined into a cohesive unit in which both elements depend integrally on each other. Actually, The Doors are closely related to the dramatic arts for they "ultimately envision music with 'the structure of poetic

In stage performance they employ masks and props to further demonstrate the subject matter of the song. Although the existence of a rock group is based on financial success, as is true in most areas of the arts, certain groups have shown a tendency to regard themselves seriously as artists and regard their music as serious art. It is in this context that we view The Doors as followers and propounders of the demonic school in the inversion of good and evil.

The Doors consist of John Densmore (drums), Robby Krieger (guitar), Ray Manzarek (keyboards) and Jim Morrison (vocals). However, the ideology of the group is the brainchild of Manzarek, the spokesman for the group, and Morrison, who writes most of the lyrics. The name The Doors comes from a line by William Blake: "the doors of perception." Manzarek says:

There are things you know about and things you don't, the known and the unknown, and in between are the doors—that's us. We're saying that you're not only spirit, you're also this very sensuous being. That's not evil, that's a really beautiful thing. Hell appears so much more fascinating than heaven. You have to "break on through to the other side" to become the whole being.

They combine the role of musician with the role of advocate for the demonic—urging the individual to search deep within himself for sources of self-fulfilment. As advocates for the

50Newsweek, p. 101.
demon: they take on a dual aspect—first that of priests or preachers:

They come out on stage not to entertain but to preach, with all the distain and cold fury of a revivelist preacher confronting an audience wallowing in sin. . . . Jim Morrison... grinds out his songs with gyrating hips and a flat full-bodied anguished voice that substitutes orgasmic cries for hallelujahs.51

Morrison reinforces this interpretation of their role in saying, "I feel spiritual up there."52 The second aspect is, as in Shelley, that of political agitators. We can observe this aspect clearly in "Five to One" from their third album, Waiting for the Sun. The song urges open revolution of the young against the old and against the established order.

Morrison again condenses the concept into the smallest possible space: "Think of us as erotic politicians."53 Their subject matter then is passion on a physical and metaphysical plane. Their message is to be directed by the passions and by the deepest, demonic inner being.

The Doors are very much like Byron in their advocacy of demonic sensuality as a means of self-realization:

Our music has to do with operating in the dark areas within yourself. A lot of people are operating on the love trip, and that's nice, but there are two sides to this thing. There's a black, evil side as well as a white, love side. What we're trying to do is come to grips with that and realize it. Sensual is the word that best fits it.54

54Life, p. 90.
In "The Crystal Ship," a song which romanticises drugs, sex and other standards of rebellion, there is a line which sums up much of the thinking behind the demonic inversion of good and evil: "In sin we'll meet again—we'll meet again." Notice first that the emphasis lies on the line "we'll meet again" which is repeated. Through sin the individual comes to a place of meeting—yet there is only one part sin to two parts meeting—showing that the important element is not the sin itself, but rather the good effect that is achieved which is important. Sin is only the necessary means to the good end. Second, but just as important, is the dual meaning of the word "meeting." On one level it is the meeting of man and woman in a sexual encounter; on another level it is the meeting of the self with the inner psychological being that one achieves by participation in sin.

The awareness of a psychological area identified by The Doors with the demonic areas is a somewhat recent development. Surely Byron and Shelley had some awareness of an inner source for their rebellious, demonic actions. However, they stressed the overt demonic action of the consciousness. Cain is aware of his evil rebellion but he does not delinate two areas of personality of which one (the subconscious mind) directs the other (the conscious mind) to perform its demonic will. His rebellion is always viewed in terms of his conscious mind.

Baudelaire, born too early to have been affected by Sigmund Freud, explored the areas of the mind but still drew no boundaries. Rimbaud, who lived in the same period as Freud, came closest to establishing the demonic area within the recesses of the mind; but in his confused perception of evil pervading all things failed to establish a focal point or source for demonic behavior. It is The Doors, with the availability of the work of Freud and Carl Jung, who are first to locate consciously the source of demonic inclination within the area called the subconscious mind. The Doors say they are trying to open the doors to the inner recesses of the mind. Northrup Frye states that:

... a deficiency in contemporary education often complained of, the disappearance of a common cultural ground which makes a modern poet's allusions to the Bible or Classical mythology fall with less weight than they should, has much to do with the decline in the explicit use of archetypes.55

Although people are no longer as much aware of Biblical and Classical archetypes, they have a greater common knowledge of psychological theory. Though The Doors include Classical archetypes such as serpents (made good or at least attractive), the framework of their music is psychologically based. Thus they use psychological archetypes, which are better known today than Classical archetypes. "The End" 56 is a series of psychological images apparently based around a Freudian Oedipal situation. In "Yes, the River Knows" The Doors say:

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Free-fall flow river flow
On and on it goes.
Breath under water til the end. . . .

Please believe me.
The river told me,
Wants you to hold me. . . .57

In this case the river represents the subconscious—even a sort of Jungian collective unconscious which flows through the individual and affects his conduct. Notice that the river advocates physical sensuality. The Doors then regard the demonic as a part of the subconscious mind and a natural part of the personality which needs expression. When Morrison says, "We're trying to break through to a cleaner, purer realm,"58 he means "purer" in the sense of more real and more honest. Thus, like Byron and Shelley, he regards the demonic areas as a source of good rather than the evil that is conventionally assigned to it.

Like Rimbaud and Baudelaire, The Doors confuse attractive and repulsive images:

Some outlaws lived by the side of a lake
The minister's daughter's in love with the snake
Who lives in a well by the side of the road
Wake up, girl! We're almost home.59

The lake, or water—a symbol for creativity and rebirth and fertility—-is joined with the anti-social element of outlaws, as might Byron link the two. More Baudelairean is the minister's daughter's attraction for the snake. Conventionally, the minister's daughter would be seen in the light of virtue and purity; here, she is attracted to both the symbol of

57 The Doors, "Yes, the River Knows," in Waiting for the Sun (New York, Electra Records, EKS--74024).
58 Newsweek, p. 101.
59 "Not to Touch the Earth," in Waiting for the Sun.
worldly temptation and a graphic phallic symbol. Like Baudelaire and Rimbaud, The Doors express the fatal attraction of evil. But they go the step further which brings them back into the domain of Byron and Shelley. The snake lives in a well, which, as a source of water, links the snake with creativity and fertility. Thus, the daughter by her attraction for "evil" will attain the good end of personal fulfilment. Still, the song as a whole is Baudelairean, for it deals with the attraction of demonic power and the anguish of its intensity— even in its purifying aspect.

The quote as given is copied from the album sleeve. In the song itself Morrison sings, "We're almost stoned," instead of, "We're almost home." "Stoned," of course, is a term indicating an advanced degree of involvement in a drug experience. If The Doors had written "stoned" on the album cover, the song would have been banned by many radio stations. A similar reference is found in "Twentieth Century Fox" where the "Fox" or girl is said to have "the world locked up inside a plastic box."60 A plastic box is often used to hold marijuana and is referred to as a "pot-holder." This concern with drugs is evidence of The Doors' advocacy of participation in the internal, psychological (demonic) world of the individual's mind. There is a world to be found internally that is just as

60 "Twentieth Century Fox," in The Doors.
valuable as the external world. Like the Classical allusions we find in much of literature, the references to current cultural trends also serve the purpose of enriching the work with a previously encountered point of reference. They serve the purpose in the same way that psychological archetypes function in replacing Classical archetypes.

Perhaps I have overemphasized the lack of Classical archetypes in the music of The Doors though; they do use the more obvious ones. In "My Wild Love" the devil is wiser than his lover.61 In "When the Music's Over," Morrison sings, "Cancel my subscription to the resurrection."62 They use caricatures of angels to show their disrespect for the forces of good.63 The images, the archetypes are inverted, of course, as Byron or Shelley would have made them. I have already discussed the inversion of the serpent archetype. The Doors' emphasis is still on the use of psychological archetypes rather than Classical archetypes; this emphasis perhaps relates to the location of the demonic area in the psychological area of the subconscious mind.

The Doors demonstrate other demonic, rebellious traits such as the desire for individual freedom. Freedom, though, must be paid for (as Byron's and Shelley's heroes paid) by a sort of Baudelairean desperation:

63"We Could be so Good Together," in Waiting for the Sun.
Can you picture what will be?
So limitless and free,
Desperately in need of some stranger's hand
In a desperate land.64

The freedom is, naturally, freedom from the restraining forces, such as that of society. In "The Unknown Soldier," a recording which depicts the tyranny of society which forces the individual to be a soldier and even give up his life for it.65 The song is a good example of the conception of music as a poetic drama. There is the audial performance of a firing squad inserted into the context of the song. The inference is that a soldier killed in battle is a person who was put before a firing squad as certainly as anyone who was convicted by a military court--yet the person has not been convicted and is innocent of the crime. The song ends with the line, "It's all over--the war is over," repeated again and again to the sound of crowds (society) cheering. We are to compare the jubilation with the fact that it does not cancel the death of the soldier. Anti-social freedom is shown again in more apolitical circumstances in "Back Door Man."66 Here, the socially accepted convention of marriage is held in contempt, while the back door lover is romanticized in his sexuality, in his contempt and in his power over the wives of other men.

The desire for freedom includes the freedom to express

64 "The End," in The Doors.
66 "Back Door Man," in The Doors.
the passions. One of The Doors greatest concerns is society's inhibiting power in this area: "They're going to destroy our passions with joy." Not only is loathing for complex society's power over the individual's passions shown, but the very ideals of that society are questioned. A society which bases its ideals on the absolute good circumstances beyond the physical universe, is apt to idealize such concepts as passionless joy, which we might find in the heaven of our Puritan forefathers. The Doors, in the demonic tradition, negate the value of heavenly virtues and affirm the passions of the physical being, rejecting the values of society that would choose joy over passion. Freedom must be total for the Romantic Rebel, which The Doors are as much as Byron or Shelley.

The Doors exhibit all the traits of the Romantic Rebels who seek into the world of the demonic to achieve personal fulfilment:

. . . The Doors describe and subscribe to chaos, to a world of alienation where night is preferred to day, to a Halloween world where darkest human impulses are welcomed into consciousness. What they deplore . . . is anything that interferes with absolute personal freedom. And what they advise . . . is to break the rules, taste the forbidden fruit, usually in a frankly sexual encounter.

Yet, they have been affected by the French Demonic School for they recognise that their evil actions are truly evil in many senses. Still they are closer ideologically to the English Romantic Rebels for they hope to arrive ultimately at a basically good situation.

67 "Strange Days," in Strange Days
Northrup Frye tells us that:

... there is undisplaced myth, generally concerned with gods or demons, and which takes the form of two contrasting worlds of total metaphorical identification, one desirable and the other undesirable. These worlds are often identified with the existential heavens and hells of the religions contemporary with such literature. These two forms of metaphorical organization we call the apocalyptic and the demonic respectively.69

And this delimitation of heavens and hells is part of the cultural heritage common to all the figures here discussed. Frye adds, however, that:

Symbols of heaven... tend to become associated with the inaccessible sky, and the central idea of inscrutable fate or external necessity. The machinery of fate is administered by a set of remote invisible gods, whose freedom and pleasure are ironic because they exclude man, and who intervene in human affairs chiefly to safeguard their own prerogatives. They demand sacrifices, punish presumption, and enforce obedience to natural and moral law as an end in itself. Here we are... trying to isolate the sense of human remoteness and futility in relation to the divine order which is only one element among others in most tragic visions of life, though an essential element in all. In later ages poets become much more outspoken about this view of divinity: Blake's Nobodaddy, Shelley's Jupiter, Swinburne's "supreme evil, God," Hardy's befuddled Will, and Hausman's brute and blackguard are examples.70

Here is suggested the reason why the Satanic School has chosen to invert the accepted order of heaven and hell. The gods, as invisible and remote figures who exclude man from their privileges, give man a feeling of hostility, which causes man to reject the whole order of the gods and all that stands for it. The rejection involves a swing of the pendulum to the
other extreme—embracing the demonic order as opposite of all the individual finds abhorrent in the heavenly order. Even to the person who intellectually rejects the existence of demonic and heavenly orders, the use of the two as metaphorical representatives of worldly states is valuable. If he objects to the power of society over the individual, then a tyrannical heavenly order persecuting an individual is a good representative for society. The man who rejects the heavenly power heroically to seek into the demonic is a good symbol for the individual who revolts against society. Usually rebellion against God and against society go hand in hand, and it is difficult to say when a character stops being truly in rebellion against God and becomes a symbol for the individual in rebellion against society. The heavenly order does not symbolize only society but symbolizes anything that has been generally accepted as good, but which the individual (artist) rejects as confining. It is characteristic though of the rebel to reject much of what society accepts. With the exception of Jean Genet, the artists represented here have done exactly this.

All lived their beliefs in their personal lives. Byron expressed his passions in his violent temper and in his sex life. Shelley, too, lived life as he proposed. Not as sensual as Byron, less passionate, Shelley was more a man of ideas than a man of action. His Prometheus is an intellect rather than a being of mortal passion and thus was Shelley,
who generally confined his overt actions to intellectual interplay with a small group of friends. Baudelaire, with his emphasis on the internal world, involved himself in the mind world of drugs. Rimbaud's violence expressed itself in spontaneous outbursts. Genet, though his classical conception of good and evil is a bit out of place, was most thorough (and un-Rousseauvian) in his search for self-degradation and genuinely evil actions to perform. The Doors take elements from all the representatives of the demonic school. They preach Byron's passion and Shelley's intellectual rebellion. They demonstrate Rimbaudian violence: Morrison spits at the audience, throws mike stands off the stage and is often carried off forcibly by the police. They also pursue Baudelaire's mind world of drug experience. All the searchers into the demonic express a common disrespect for form and desire to act according to the mood rather than out of rehearsed responses. There is also a general emphasis on the demonic areas as a source of creativity. The movement is characterized by the desire to depend on the self rather than on society or God, both of whom demand unreasonable payment for their services.

The fact that The Doors come closest to Byron's ideology is indicative that we are in another Byronic age. Both Byron and The Doors hope to reap personal benefit from their demonic activity: Byron to fulfill his most basic needs, and The Doors to achieve the same goal by creating an "electric wedding".

71 *Time*, 106.
of experience and self-expression. The current colloquialisms of "do your own thing" and "it's his bag" express the popular belief in the intrinsic value of the individual and his right to differ from society which can be traced back to Rousseau in the Eighteenth Century. The descent into the demonic, as a branch of this movement is just now coming into common public awareness. In the Twenties, an era which has been referred to as an age of "infant Byronism," and an era often compared to the Sixties, this century first saw the growth in the freedom allowed to the individual in his personal behavior. However, the Sixties have been a more serious era. Its slogans, such as "Make love, not war," approach the idealism of the pre-Twentieth war slogans, such as "the war to end war" and "to make the world safe for democracy." The Sixties have been years of introspection and serious questions about the nature and function of man as opposed to the frivolity of the Twenties. Into this atmosphere the school of the demonic has broken with its ready answers. Whereas in the early Sixties people were talking about individual freedom, today we see hundreds of people attempting to demonstrate their freedom and right to dissent in rebellious action, such as campus and city protest and riot. These actions by groups can be seen as reactions to the propositions set forth by the demonic school which suggest that the individual assert himself—to do the forbidden. However, though the groups are made up of individuals, the function of a large group of people in rebellion is governed most often by mob mentality. Therefore, today's protestors, while affected
by the ideas of the demonic school, are not following the precepts which should be speaking to the individual rather than to the group. It no doubt shall be interesting to see how literary trends affect and are affected by current events in the future.

The development of mass media, and the movement into these areas by serious artists who represent legitimate literary movements should result in the popularization of ideas only which were accessible before to limited groups—accessible now in the sense of popularized; not that the material was unavailable before, but that in its raw form it could not be digested by the average person. 72 As for the satanic school, it is probably destined to lose popularity in a reactive Victorian period. The chances of its disappearing altogether though are relatively small, because hell is always likely to "appear so much more fascinating than heaven." Thus it probably always will demand a following in both the literary world and in the world of man's interactions.

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72 We can observe this popularization of formerly inaccessible ideas in the advertising industry. Advertising is for the most part very "establishment." The use of "mind expanding" drugs is considered to be "anti-establishment." However, the trend in advertising today is to simulate the drug experience in the advertisement. The idea of the use of drugs which is unacceptable to a great many people has taken the form of an acceptable sublimation. Notice advertising's use of phrases like "it turns you on."


Prometheus Unbound, in The Complete Works of Shelley, Vol. II.


