CHAPTER V

PHASE - III


Now, in order to be able to get a tentative entry into the poem, let us gather a little guidance from some of the literary critics. Lehmann (1965, 28) comments on the nature of her poetry written in the final phase: "Edith Sitwell used symbols of the widest range, from Christian and Classical history and legend, from the Old Testament, and even beyond - from the primitive pre-history and shadowy beliefs and customs on which our civilization was gradually built; and she married these with the more ancient and universal symbols of animal and flower and corn, gold and precious metal, sea and sun and stars. It is by such means that she managed to convey in these odes such an extraordinary sense of depth in Time and Space, of wisdom ripening in eternal contemplation from a mountain-top vantage point'. While reviewing *Street Songs*, the TLS reviewer (1942) says that Edith Sitwell 'expressed the deepest emotions of that time of darkness and endurance'.

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Most of the poems written during the period deal with broad and serious themes and show Edith Sitwell's grave concern for the age of atom bomb, religion, love, the problem of evil and sin, suffering humanity, death, time, spiritual another world and the like. For instance, a TLS reviewer (1962) while commenting on the themes of Edith Sitwell's poetry in The Outcasts says: 'Edith Sitwell's own effort in poetry has always been to transform everyday world. The theme of her new poems, like that of her poetry since the second world war is, first, the sense of grief, love, and disolation in our cruel time, and secondly, the need, inspite of that, to praise beauty, life and God'. Lehmann, again (1965, 31) comments on her poetry written from 1942 to 1949 thus: 'In her poems from 'Still Falls the Rain' to 'The Canticle of the Rose' they seem to find a resolution within a larger syntheses; the depth of tenderness and compassion, the understanding of human disolation'. In 'The Shadow of Cain' (1947), 'she gives the deepest and most passionate statement of her concern with original sin' (Lehmann:1965, 30). In 'Still Falls the Rain', she 'hammers home the tragic horror' (TLS, 1942) and 'calls upon the most powerful symbols of Christianity' (Lehmann, ibid, 30). 'Her use of words is as fastidious as before, but more economical and controlled' (TLS, 1942).

All her later poems, as Lehmann (1965, 32) says, can be considered as 'one long poem in a number of sections cr
movements'. In this sense I have chosen three of her poems - 'Still Falls the Rain', 'Bagetelle' and 'Street Song' - which, I believe, are quite significant and representative poems of the final phase.
Still Falls the Rain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Syllables</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>STILL falls the Rain -</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Dark as the world of man, black as our loss -</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Blind as the nineteen hundred and forty nails</td>
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<td>Upon the Cross</td>
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<td>Still falls the Rain</td>
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<td>With a sound like the pulse of the heart that is</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>In the Potter's Field, and the sound of the impious feet</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>On the Tomb:</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Still falls the Rain</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>In the Field of Blood where the small hopes bread and</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Nurtures its greed, that worm with the brow of Cain.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Still Falls the Rain</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>At the feet of the Starved Man hung upon the Cross.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Christ that each day, each night nails there,</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>On Dives and on Lezarus:</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Under the Rain the sore and the gold are as one.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Still Falls the Rain</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Still falls the Blood from the Starved Man's wounded Side:</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>He bears in His Heart all wounds, - those of the light that died,</td>
<td>13</td>
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</table>
The last faint spark

In the self-murdered heart, the wounds of the sad

The wounds of the baited bear,—
The blind and weeping bear whom the keepers beat

On his helpless flesh...the tears of the hunted hare.

Still Falls the Rain —

Then — O Ile leape up to my God: who pulles me doune —

See, see where Christ's blood streams in the firmament:

It flows from the Brow we nailed upon the tree

Deep to the dying, to the thirsting heart

That holds the fires of the world, — dark-smirched with pain

As Caesar's laurel crown.

Then sounds the voice of One who like the heart of man

Was once a child who among beasts has lain —

'Still do I love, still shed my innocent light,

Syllabic Structure
Still Falls the Rain

1 stil fəələz əərein -  
2 da:k əə wə:ld əv mən, blək əə awə las -  
3 blaind əə hənəinti:n həndri:d ənd fəti neiləz  
4 əpon əə krəs.  
5 stil fəələz əə rein  
6 wiəə saund laik əə pəls əv hə:t hət əz təj ənədyd təə, həxəmə-bi:t  
7 in əəpotəz fa:ld ənd əə saund əə həmpiəs fi:t  
8 əə hətəμ:  
9 stil fəələz əərein  
10 in əəfa:ld əv bləd wəə əəsəməl həups bri:d ənd əəhju:man brein  
11 nə:tjəz əts gri:t, əst wəim wiəəbrau əv kein  
12 stil fəələz əə rein  
13 et əəfi:t əv əəsta:vd mən həŋ əpon əə krəs.  
14 kraist əst in tət əi: həi, əi: nait, neiləz əə, həv mə:si ənas -  
15 ən daivəz ənd ən lezarəs  
16 ənədəhreinəsə: ənd əəgəuld aiə əə wən.  
17 stil fəələz əərein -  
18 stil fəələz əəbləd frəm əəsta:vd mənəz wənədidi said:  
19 hi: bəəz in hiz hə:t əə1 wəndəz, -əəuş əv əə laiət əst daid  
20 əə lai:st feint spəik  
21 in əə əlfə-mə:dəd hə:t, əə wəndəz əv əəsXdənəkəmprihendiy da:k,  
22 əə wəndəz əvə ənəs bətitəd bɪə.  
23 əə blaind ənd wi:piəg əəhju:msəəki:pe:z bı:t  
24 ən hiz helpləs flei... əə tias əv əə həutid həə.  
25 stil fəələz əə hrein -  
26 əənənu əil li:p əp tə mai əəd: həu: pulz mi daun -  
27 si: si: əəkərəsts bləd strı:məz in əə fə:me:mt:  
28 it fləuz frəm əəbrau wi neiləd əpon əəstrı:  
29 dı:p tə tədəuig tə əəθə:stıŋ hə:t  
30 hət həulədəz əəfaiaz əv əəwə:ld - da:k smərt t wiəə pein  
31 əə si:zəz lərləl kranən  
32 əən saundəz əəvəlis əv wən həu: laik əəhərt əv mən  
33 wəz wənəz təjəild həu: əəməj bı:sta həəz lein -  
34 stil du: ai ləv stil əed mai ənəsənt laiət, mai bləd fəəi:.

Phonetic Structure
Still Falls the Rain

1 Still falls the Rain —
2 Dark as the world of man, black as our loss —
3 Blind as the nineteen hundred and forty nails
4 Upon the cross.
5 Still falls the Rain
6 With a sound like the pulse of the heart that is changed to
7 In the Potter's Field, and the sound of the impious feet
8 On the Tomb:
9 Still Falls the Rain
10 In the Field of Blood where the small hopes breed, and the
     human brain
11 Nurtures its greed, that worm with the brow of Cain.
12 Still falls the Rain
13 At the feet of the Starved Man hung upon the Cross.
14 Christ that each day, each night, nails there, have mercy on us —
15 On Dives and on Lazarus:
16 Under the Rain, the sore and the gold are as one.
17 Still falls the Rain —
18 Still falls the Blood from the starved Man's wounded Side:
19 He bears in His Heart all wounds, — those of the light that died.
20 The last faint spark
21 In the self-murdered Heart, the wounds of the sad uncomprehending dark
22 The wounds of the baited bear, —
23 The blind and weeping bear whom the keepers beat
24 On his helpless flesh... the tears of the hunted hare.
25 Still falls the Rain
26 Then — O Jilie leape up to my God; who pulles me doune —
27 See, see where Christ's blood streams in the firmament;
28 It flows from the Brow we nailed upon the tree
29 Deep to the Dying, to the thirsting heart
30 That holds the fires of the world, — dark-smirched with pain
31 As Caesar's laurel crown.
32 Then sounds the voice of One who like the heart of man
33 Was once a child who among beasts has lain —
34 'Still do I love, still shed my innocent light, my Blood, for thee.'

Metrical Structure
Still Falls the Rain
(The Rain, 1940, Night and Dawn)

1. **Still** falls the Rain
2. Dark as the world of man, black as our loss—
3. Blind as the man, hundred and forty nails
4. Upon the Cross
5. **Still** falls the Rain
6. With a sound like the pulse of the heart that is changed to the hammer-beat
7. In the potter's field and the sound of the impious feet
8. On the tomb
9. **Still** falls the Rain
10. In the field of blood where the small hopes breed and the human brain
11. Nurtures its greed, that worm with the brow of Cain.
12. **Still** falls the Rain
13. At the deep of the Starved Man hung upon the Cross,
14. Christ that each day, each night, nails there, have mercy on us—
15. On Dives and on Lazarus: Christ
16. Under the rain the sore and the gold are as one.
17. **Still** falls the Rain
18. **Still** falls the blood from the Starved Man's wounded Side;
19. He bears in his heart all wounds, those of the light that died,
20. The last faint spark
21. In the self-murdered heart—the wounds of the sad uncomprehending dark
22. The wounds of the battle, the war
23. The blind anti-hunting gods when the keepers best
24. In his helpless flesh, the tears of the hunted hare.
25. **Still** falls the Rain
26. Then blest up to my God, who pulls me down—
27. See, see where Christ's blood streamed in the firmament.
28. It flows from the brow as nailed upon the tree
29. Deep to the dying, to the Christening spear
30. That holds the fires of the world, dark-smirched with pain
31. As Caesar's laurel crown.
32. Then sounds the voice of one who like the heart of man
33. Was once a child who among beasts has lain—
34. **Still** do I love, still shed my innocent light, my blood for thee.
STILL FALLS THE RAIN

The poem has obviously two semantic strata, the surface and the deep, or the horizontal and the vertical, and the poet's emotional enactment of ideas is to be located on the deep level. Her implicit faith in Christianity is to be made explicit not by making subjective and highly impressionistic statement, but by decomposing the linguistic elements of the poem and then building the paradigmatic structures of meaning on the basis of the syntagmatic analysis. Edith Sitwell's perception of experience is Gestaltian and unless the reader perceives it, the way she perceives it, the real meaning escapes his attention.

The poem is written in 34 long-flowing lines which are uneven in length. The number of syllables varies from line to line and the 8 stanzas of the poem are again irregular both in the number of lines and in the number of syllables in them. In other words, the formal structure of the poem appears to be asymmetrical. The end-rhyme also is irregular. However, the structure of meaning is organized through the rhymes like

- loss cross (2, 4)
- beat feat (6, 7)
- breed greed (10, 11)
- spark dark (20, 21)

The syllabic structure is as follows:

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The semantic and phonetic links are bound by alliteration as in the following examples:

- Heart — Hammer-beat (6)
- Blood — Bread — Brain (10)
- Hopes — Human (10)
- Night — Nails (14)
- Baited — Bear (22)
- Blind — Bear — Beat (23)
- Helpless — Hunted — Hare (24)
- Deep — Dying (29)

The poet's use of the sound quantity, particularly the vowel quantity in the poem is significantly foregrounded. She has foregrounded the long vowels and diphthongs profusely as follows:
Long vowels/Diphthongs | frequency of occurrence
---|---
/ɔː:/ | 10
/aː:/ | 12
/ɜː:/ | 10
/ʌː:/ | 5
/iː:/ | 21
/eɪ:/ | 18
/ai/ | 16
/ɔɪ/ | 1
/ɛə/ | 7
/au/ | 8
/oʊ/ | 4
/ɪə/ | 2

The cumulative effect of such a dense use of vowel quantity in a variety of phonetic structures is that of sonority. The poem thus acquires incantatory quality. It is like saying a prayer. This density of vowel quantity seems to be characteristic of her poetry of the third phase.

Edith Sitwell repeats the following words and phrases at several places in the poem. The frequency of their occurrence is given in the brackets:

Still (9), Rain (7), dark (3), blind (2), nails (3), sound (3), heart (5), feet (2), field (2), blood (4), Christ (2), wounds (3), Light (2), bear (2)

Still Falls the Rain (6), Upon the Cross (2), Starved Man (2).
This lexico-phonological repetition strikes the reader as having a deliberate rhetorical effect. It also suggests a suppressed intensity of feelings. The poet seems to say the same thing over and over again, but often in a different way. This helps build a structure of meaning in the poem. It intensifies the image of Christ and hammers home the content. Edith Sitwell returns to the image of the Rain again and again in the poem in the refrain

Still Falls the RAIN

and gradually weaves the structure of meaning which may be shown as in the following figure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rain</th>
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<th>Rain</th>
<th>Rain</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>of</td>
<td>of</td>
<td>Blood of</td>
<td>of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Blood of</td>
<td>Faustus of</td>
<td>War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cain</td>
<td>of Christ</td>
<td>of Christ</td>
<td>War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-History</td>
<td>Renaissance</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of capitalization of the following words and expressions in the poem gives rise to the deep meaning:

- Rain
- Bombs
- Blood of Christ
- Cross
- Christ
- Tomb
- Christ
In her metaphors and similes, Edith Sitwell uses the 'vehicle' in such a way that it becomes more important than the 'tenor'. In fact, the structure of meaning is built around the 'vehicle' in the following similes:

- Dark as the world of man (2)
- Rain black as our loss (2)
- Blind as the nineteen hundred and forty nails (3)
- Like the pulse of the heart (60)
- Sound like the hammer beat (6)

The cohesive use of the Biblical imagery in the poem is quite remarkable. For instance, the following expressions are used to build up the image of Christ in the poem:

- 1940 nails upon the Cross
- Potter's Field
- Starved Man
- Tomb
- The Field of Blood
- The Brow of Cain
The suffering of Christ is reinforced by the use of the image of a baited bear and suddenly the extended simile changes to the image of hunted hare. We notice a good lexical cohesion in these lines and the repeated use of the 'wounds' cohere with 'blood', 'died', 'self-murdered', 'sad', 'baited', 'weeping', 'flesh', 'tears', 'hunted' helps the underlying image of suffering humanity to come up.

The superficial title of the poem is 'Still Falls the Rain' and the parenthetical sub-title is 'The Raids, 1940 Night and Dawn'. It is clear from the capitalization of the letter 'R' in Rain that it does not seem to suggest the rain in the denotative sense of the word. It means the poet is using the Rain to mean The Raids of 1940. Edith Sitwell is obviously making a reference to the historical facts of the Second World War and the air raids on British Cities, particularly, on London. We can, then, say: 'In the raids of 1940 (a) Bombs 'rained' on British Cities (b) a rain of bombs descended on London (c) the enemy rained bombs down on London, and so on, and the meaning of the word 'Rain' in the immediate concrete historical context can be established. The second deeply implied meaning of the Rain may be built by intra-textually equating it with the blood of Christ, the tears of Christ, and at a more literal level, the blood and tears of the suffering population.

Let us consider the inferred context of utterance in
in the poem. It is a kind of monologue. The speaker seems to be addressing to herself thinking aloud or contemplating on what is happening and its concern with the humanity at large. Probably there are two situations involved: the actual, wider historical context of the War as a whole, with Edith Sitwell indirectly addressing British readers about the general amorality of War and about the brutality of the bombing in particular. She puts the War and the raids in a non-partisan Christian perspective. Then there is the inner situation: perhaps, just one person on one occasion commenting on one particular night's raid as it proceeds round about her. Surely, that is the interpretation of the words 'Night and Dawn' in the sub-title. Which night? Which dawn? It does not matter so long as we think about them as some particular (but typical) night of bombing followed by the cessation of the attack at dawn. Edith Sitwell 'speaks' to herself about it. The communicative function of such a literary 'utterance' in the given real situation is, presumably, to criticise the 'evil' in the world and make the people aware of it in order to improve upon the situation.

The use of the word 'still' in the title of the poem as well as at the beginning of the first line is quite meaningful. The tense used is the simple present and the adverb 'still' here conveys the meaning of an incomplete event or activity. The poem was written during the Second World War and the bombing was still continued and hence the initial emphasis on 'still' in the poem.
In the poem, there is an enactment of the same phenomenon through ages beginning with the beginning of the world with the original sin to the present age. The images used in the poem belong to the past and yet the poet has used the present tense form throughout the poem:

Still falls the Rain;
small hopes breed
human brain nurtures
Christ nai|es there
Still falls the blood
He bears in his heart
the blind and weeping bear whom the keepers beat
Then sounds the voice
Still do I love, still shed my innocent light

The universality of the theme of the poem is suggested through the use of the present tense form. The past is suggested without the use of the past tense form through the Biblical imagery. The poet has telescoped the entire history of mankind into the present moment by the strategy of the use of the present tense as illustrated above. The past is suggested also through the 'vehicle' of the similes used in the poem. For instance, the imagery used in the vehicle of the tenor Rain illustrates the point:

Rain black as our loss
blind as the nineteen hundred and forty
nails upon the cross
the blood from the Starved Man's wounded side.
like the pulse of the heart that is changed to the hammer-beat in the Potter's Field like the sound of the impious feet on the tomb.

The words of Doctor Faustus are also given in the present tense -

'See, see where Christ's blood streams in the Firmament. It flows from the Brow we nailed upon the tree..' (27-29)

These lines are taken from Scene II, Act V of Marlowe's Doctor Faustus (lines 115-56). At the last minute Faustus belatedly attempts repentance. He is finally able to envisage accepting God's forgiveness, and, therefore, God's right as well as his power to execute judgement. In the context, he is in need of just a drop of Christ's blood so that he could save his soul. But it is too late; he damned himself long before this moment, and now he has to go to hell. But in Edith Sitwell's poem, the end is still salvation, not damnation. Moreover, she may have used this image to suggest how sins are washed off with the blood of Christ. In other words, the concept of redemption is stressed in the poem. The poet seems to suggest that even now Christ is there. The existence of the world began with the Original Sin, later there was Repentance of Faustus and now there is a suggestion of Hope of Redemption as mentioned in the last line of the poem -

Still do I love, still shed my innocent light, my blood for thee..(34).
The connotations of words Dark (2), Black(2) and Blind (3), all adjectives, are quite important. Syntactically, the Rain is qualified by the following three phrases beginning with these words. The 'dark' in the context means 'unenlightened' (morally or intellectually); 'black' in the present context is used to intensify the meaning of the noun 'loss' and it would mean deep or dismal loss (of faith, of Christ); 'blind' in the context might mean 'without the power of judgement'. 'The nineteen...nails upon the Cross' are 'blind' in the sense they (the forces behind them) did not know what they were doing; in other words they did not have the power of judgement while crucifying Christ. The semantic parallelism in these three similes may be put as follows:

Dark (as the world of man) morally unenlightened world
black (as our loss) dismal loss of faith
blind (as the nineteen...) thoughtless act.

These three adjectives, at a deep level, are used as synonymous which define the nature of the Rain in the poem. This semantic parallelism which tends to suggest more or less similar concept, a negative value, presumably, intensifies the image of Rain. After describing the nature of the Rain, the poet, in the following lines (lines 5 to 13) further continues the image of the Rain and describes 'where' and 'how' the Rain falls. The adverbial phrases of the following type display syntactic parallelism which suggests the similarity in the place where Christ was crucified.
Preposition + Noun Phrase

In the potter's field (7)
On the Tomb (8)
In the Field of Blood (10).

It is necessary to look at the syntactic pattern of the line 14 -

'Christ that each day, each night, nails there,
have mercy oh us / On Dives and on Lazarous'

The relative clause 'that each day nails there' would normally be non-restrictive (non-defining). There was and is only one Christ, therefore, his identity is not in question. The normal function of a restrictive/defining relative clause is to identify someone or something introduced in a text for the first time, and commonly with the definite article. The effect Edith Sitwell produces in the above example is therefore a subtle one. She 'pretends' that Christ needs to be identified, defined. So instead of using an additioning (non-defining) relative clause e.g. 'Christ, whom each day nails there, have mercy on us', she uses a defining relative clause:

'Christ that each day, each night, nails there,
have mercy on us'

The effect is crudely translatable as: 'I am addressing that particular Christ that each day and each night nails to the Cross. Christ is thus a vocative here; 'have mercy on us' is an imperative form, so Christ is being addressed directly.

There is a feeling of spontenity and the poem gains the additional strength from its universal appeal. In 'Gold Coast Customs' and 'Metamorphosis', Edith Sitwell's efforts
are deliberate. Her 'overdoing' and 'elaboration' strategies have become her natural way of thinking. Her conscious and deliberate strategies have now become an organic part of her sensibility. What were artificial antenna to begin with, now, in the third phase, have become her living limbs. In 'Still Falls the Rain', the vision of the entire history which includes the present moment from a Christian point of view has been assimilated in her way of living, giving her language a total organic unity.

The poem demonstrates how a word gains in semantic dimensions. Her attempt is to transform a word in such a way that 'vyanjana' becomes more important. In fact, her old strategies of making extreme foregrounding her norm continue to operate in the third phase also, but on a different level now. Semantics finds a central place in her poems written in the third phase like her foregrounding of sound in the first phase.

If we consider the word 'Rain', we notice that Edith Sitwell's implied meaning of the word is not the usual 'rain' at all. The word does not have 'abhida' meaning, but it has a little 'laxana' meaning. It is, however, certainly used in the manner of 'vyanjana dhwani' in the poem. The refrain 'Still Falls the Rain' appears at six places in the beginning of stanzas 1-6 and the 'vyanjana' meaning of the word 'Rain' may be illustrated as follows:
In stanza I, the nature of the Rain is described; in II, its sound is described; in 3 and 4, the place where it falls is described; in 5, Edith Sitwell uses a metaphor and equates the Rain with the Blood:

Stanza I  Rain — Black (our loss)
          (manner) Blind (1940 nails upon the Cross)

Stanza II Rain — like the pulse of heart (in the Potter's Field)
            (sound) sound of the impious feet (on the Tomb)

III & IV Rain — In the Field of Blood (Place)
          at the feet of the Starved Man (Blood)

V Rain — from the starved Man's wounded Side.

VI Rain — Christ's Blood streams

The word 'blood' is used in different contexts in the following examples:

The Field of Blood (10)
Sin |
Still Falls the Blood from the starved Man's wounded Side (18)

See, see where Christ's Blood streams in Life Redem-
ptionStill shed my innocent light, my Blood for thee.

There is a remarkable fusion of the two aspects of 'Blood' — one from Christ's point of view — sacred sacrament and our 'sin' from man's point of view. These 'vyanjana' meanings of the words Rain and Blood are more effective because of the
reader's familiarity with the Biblical imagery. It is rather
difficult to get an entry into her poetry of the first two
phases, but now it seems to be easy to get into the poetry
of the third phase because of the reader's familiarity with
the imagery. Yet the reader finds it difficult to understand
the complexity of the poem as there are several semantic levels.
However, it is possible to build the structure of meaning by
locating and analysing the strategies employed by her. In
the image of Cain, the 'vyanjana' meaning 'Adam's original
Sin' is fused with the perpetuation of that Sin.

Now we could say that the imagery of 'rain' is developed
with enormous power in the poem. It was inspired by the air­
raids of 1940, but it has nothing transitory or merely
contemporary about it. It is an intense, highly imaginative
and tragic poem on the sufferings of man. This rain is horrible
and it has a great metaphysical and symbolic significance. It
is an example and a sign of the suffering which man inflicts
upon himself. The opening lines of the poem show that it is
a kind of crucifixion. The rain falls impartially both on the
rich and the poor, on the just and the unjust. All are equal
beneath it. It is like the blood which flows from the wounded
side of the 'Starved Man', of the Christ who is in every man,
and it comes from the wounds which mankind has dealt to itself.
Yet this suffering, so hideous and yet in some ways so in­
evitable and so deserved, is not helpless or irretrievable.
The falling blood is like the blood of Christ and brings redemption even to those who have inflicted the wounds.

In the last stanza the destruction wrought by the air-raids is transformed into an example of man's wickedness and punishment and redemption. He brings his own sufferings upon himself, but through them he may be redeemed. This is how Edith Sitwell passes beyond the horror of the present moment to a vision of its significance in the spiritual history of man and finds, through her compassion for him, a ray of hope for his future.

The strategies of the first phase and the second phase have become tellingly simple in the third phase. The stanzaic variations do not sound arbitrary as they do in 'Gold Coast Customs' but natural and spontaneous since the line lengths and stanzaic patterns seem to follow the movement of thought-emotion-complex. The alternation of short and long lines, with the long lines dominating the latter half of the poem, seem to blend intensity of emotion with quiet contemplation. Only a master craftsman can achieve this kind of remarkable success in creating a meaningful architecture of rhythms.

There are no strained compound formations in this poem, nor a plethora of striking collocative clashes. The only compoundings noticed in the poem are 'hammer-beat', 'self-murdered' and 'dark-smirched'. Since she works in the world of accepted symbols, those of Christ, the Cross, Cain, Caesar and Dr. Faustus, the principle of cohesion works in a
natural manner, which also indicates the clarity and simplicity of her vision. Her vision has attained such simplicity (compared to the extreme complexity of perception in the first and the second phases) that the air-raids are to her but a confirmation of the evil in the world which tries to destroy the divine principle from time to time. But whatever happens, the divine principle will triumph. Edith Sitwell's poetic world in the third phase easily subsumes the socio-political complexities of the world by equating them with the evil in man. Prophecy cannot tolerate mundane earth-bound details of actuality. In the first phase Edith Sitwell revelled in the multiplicity of sensations and complexity of perceptions which involved unexpected connections. But in this poem, the Second World War becomes symbol of all the wars in the world from time immemorial. So the movement in the third phase is towards simplification and universalization.

In the first phase, her poems, to use Barthes's terminology, were 'writerly texts' (Hawkes: 1977, 114) where the linguistic construct was the thing, a complete self-contained entity. But in the third phase, as 'Still Falls the Rain' indicates, the text has become more 'readerly' (Hawkes, 114) than 'writerly'. The reader with his experience of the air-raids of 1940 responds to this poem in a far more complex manner than the linguistic construct of the actual poem demands. The shattered consciousness of the reader on account of the
actual experience of the Second World War gets a temporary consolation and achieves a shadowy wholeness in its response to the poem which grandly simplifies all suffering as inevitable (even Christ, the Son of God suffered) and equally grandly pitches its faith in the future kingdom of God (Still Falls the Rain, but Christ still loves man). The point is, it is the reader who lends significance to the poem and the rhetoric of the poem makes it extremely easy to do so.

By simplifying all her strategies and by working within an accepted framework of beliefs and by confining herself to the so-called universal aspects of life and history, Edith Sitwell becomes more easily available to the ordinary reader of modern poetry, hence the great adulation showered on her later poetry.
Street Song

1 'LOVE my heart for an hour but my bone for a day -
cvc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
2 At least the skeleton smiles, for it has a morrow:
vc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
3 But the hearts of the young are now the dark treasure of Death,
cvc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
4 And summer is lonely.
vcc cv cv cv cv
5 Comfort the lonely light and the sun in its sorrow.
cvc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
6 Come like the night, for terrible is the sun
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
7 As truth, and the dying light shows only the skeleton's hunger
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
8 For peace, under the flesh like the summer rose.
v cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
9 Come through the darkness of death, as once through the branches
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
10 Of youth you came, through the shade like the flowering door
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
11 That leads into Paradise, far from the street, - you, the unborn
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
12 City seen by the homeless, the night of the poor.
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
13 You walk in the city ways, where Man's threatening shadow
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
14 Red-edged by the sun like Cain, has a changing shape -
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
15 Elegant like the Skeleton, crouched like the Tiger,
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
16 With the age-old wisdom and aptness of the Ape.
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
17 The pulse that beats in the heart is changed to the hammer
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
18 That sounds in the Potter's Field where they build a new world,
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
19 From our Bone, and the Carrion-bird days' foul droppings and clamour -
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
20 But you are my night, and my peace, -
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
21 The holy night of conception, of rest, the consoling
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
22 Darkness when all men are equal, - the wrong and the right,
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
23 And the rich and the poor are no longer separate nations,
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
24 They are brothers in night'.
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv
25 This was the song I heard; but the Bone is silent!
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
26 Who knows if the sound was that of the dead light calling,
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
27 Of Caesar rolling onward his heart, that stone,
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv
28 Or the burden of Atlas falling?
vcc cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv cv

Syllabic Structure
Street Song

1 lav mai hait faran au: bet mai baun fara dei -
2 at li:st ñë skelatan smallz for it haz ampeu:
3 bat ñë haites ow ñajg a: nau ñë daik trej: av de:th,
4 and same iz launli.
5 kamfet ñë launli lait and ñesan in its sorau,
6 kam laik ñë nait, fy: terobal iz ñesan
7 óx true: and ñë daig lait jauz ñunli ñë skelatan hau:
8 fo pis ñënd ñë fle] laik ñësam ñauz.
9 kam ~oru ñë darknis ov de: òx wau: ~oru: ñë brainty'iz
10 òx juö: ju: keim ñoru: ñë /eid laik ñë flaurig ño:
13 ju: wo:k in ñë siti weiz wë: ñëna ñët:ñinì ñx:au
14 red-edizid bai ñë san laik keim, hazé t:j eindzìg jeip -
15 elega:t laik ñë skelatan krautj t laik ñëtaiga,
16 ñtr ñë eindz-auld wisdom and xptnis ñë ñëeip.
17 ño pals ñët bi:ts in ña hait iz t:j eindzìg ña:nha:am
19 frem au: baun and ñë kxrian-ba:ar deiz faul dropingz and kIam-
20 bat ju: a: mai nait and mai pis,-
21 ñë hau:li nait ñv konsep:an ñv rest ñë konsol:inig
22 darknis wen ñ:men a: ñkwal, - ñë ro: ñ: end:è:ra:it,
23 ñd ñë ri:js ñd ñ:pu:na a: ñu ñg sing sepereit nei:jonz, -
24 fei a: brá:lez in nait.'
25 ñis wëz ñø ñg ai hë: ñat ñb:baun iz saïlant !
26 hu: ñauz if ñë saund waz ñet ñv ñ:ded lait kolor, -
27 ñu si:za raulig ñnwa:d hiz hait ñat stmaun,
28 ç: ñë ba:dan ñv xtles fo:ling?

Phonetic Structure
Street Song

1 'LOVE my heart for an hour but my bone for a day -
2 At least the skeleton smiles, for it has a morrow;
3 But the hearts of the young are now the dark treasure of Death,
4 And summer is lonely.
5 Comfort the lonely light and the sun in its sorrow.
6 Come like the night, for terrible is the sun
7 As truth, and the dying light shows only the skeleton's hunger
8 For peace, under the flesh like the summer rose.
9 Come through the darkness of death, as once through the branches
10 Of youth you came, through the shade like the flowering door
11 That leads into Paradise, far from the street, - you, the unborn
12 City seen by the homeless, the night of the poor.
13 You walk in the city ways, where Man's threatening shadow
14 Red-edged by the sun like Cain, has a changing shape -
15 Elegant like the Skeleton, crouched like the Tiger,
16 With the age-old wisdom and aptness of the Ape.
17 The pulse that beats in the heart is changed to the hammer
18 That sounds in the Potter's Field where they build a new world.
19 From our Bone, and the Carcass-bird days' foul droppings and clamour -
20 But you are my night, and my peace, -
21 The holy night of conception, of rest, the consoling
22 Dark when all men are equal, - the wrong and the right,
23 And the rich and the poor are no longer separate nations,
24 They are brothers in night.'
25 This was the song I heard; but the Bone is silent!
26 Who knows if the sound was that of the dead light calling -
27 Of Caesar rolling onward his heart, that stone,
28 Or the burden of Atlas falling?

Metrical Structure
Street Song

1. 'Love my heart for an hour, but my bone for a day-
2. At least the skeleton smiles, for its has a morrow-
3. But the hearts of the young are now the dark treasure of death-
4. And if the sun is lonely-
5. Comfort the lonely light, and the sun in its sorrow.
6. Come like the light—terrible in its sun—
7. As truth, and the dying light shows only the skeleton's hunger
8. For peace under the flesh like the summer rose,
9. Come through the darkness of death as once through the branches
10. Of youth you came, through the shade like the flowering door
11. That leads into Paradise, far from the street, -you, the unborn
12. City seen by the homeless, the sight of the poor.
13. You walk in the city ways, where man's threatening shadow
14. Red-judged by the sun-like Cain: a changing shape-
15. Elegant like the skeleton crouched like the Tiger,
16. With the age-old wisdom and spirit of the Ape,
17. The pulse that beats in the heart is changed to the hammer
18. That sounds in the Potter's Field where they build a new world.
19. From our bone and the Carrion-bird days fell droppings and clamour-
20. But you are my light and my peace-
21. The holy night of conception, of rest, the consoling
22. Darkness when all men are equal, -the wrong and the right,
23. And the rich and the poor are no longer separate nations,
24. They are brothers in night-
25. This was the song I heard; but the bone is silent!
26. Who knows if the sound was of the dead-light, calling,-
27. Of Caesar, rolling onward his heart-
28. Or the burden of Atlas falling?

STRUCTURE OF LANGUAGE

1-4. Skeleton-smile; dark-death **hearts-
P + dark@bone,
L x skeleton-smiles summer is lovely
II heart' (**life + animals + abstract + animal) SM hearts are treasure of death,

5-6. lovely-light; sun-sorrow; ** like night-
P + come-sun: comfort-light, terrible-truth
[under-sun, sun]
L x comfort the lovely, Sun in its sorrow; dying light skeleton's hunger
II light', Sun, SS come like night ES

9-12. door-poor, *darkness-death, far, from,
P + city-seen ** branches-darkness; youth,
you, through leads-street & leads-paradise
L x darkness-deaths branches of youth
(visual-v) (+concrete + abstract) ES

13-16. shape-ape; walk-ways-where* Cain-shape,
P + age-ape (red-edged) Sun-Cain
L x SS threatening shadow-Cain; elegant-skeleton crouched-Tiger ES

17-20. hammer-clamour, *heart-hammer; bone-bird
P + days-droppings; carrion-clamour @ that heart sounds-potters; field-build-world:
days-droppings

21-24. right-light; *conception-consoling; wrong-
P + right-trick ** when: men; night; rest
II night
L x consoling - darkness + animal + dark-abstract

25-28. falling-calling; *song-silent this heart-
P + sound-dead; calling-rolling heart-
that; stone-burden
L x bone-silent; deadlight calling.
(animals) (+ abstract + animals) ES

PROPOSITION-MEANING

The singer expects love from the world and says that the young people have given up hopes.

He expects help to escape from the terrible agony of life.

He addresses the unborn city to come into existence to give happiness to all.

He wants him to walk elegantly in the city with an age-old wisdom

A new world has arisen from your sacrifice.
You are my life. (Christ)

Every one is equal at night-night levels down all.

The poet says:
I heard such a song
I cannot guess if that was of Christ or of Caesar.

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FORMAL AND PHONOLOGICAL STRUCTURE

REPETITION
The following analysis of 'Street Song' will show how phonetic motivation, dominant in the first phase, still continues to be there in the organization of the poem. However, it does not seem to be her primary concern during this phase. Another significant motivation appears to be lexical foregrounding in terms of collocative clashes. I am going to analyse the poem, beginning as usual, with the analysis of the phonetic level.

'Street Song' is a short twenty-eight-line poem of seven stanzas of four lines each. The syllabic count reveals an irregular pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stanza</th>
<th>Number of syllables in each line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>12 12 14 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>13 11 16 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>13 12 15 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>14 13 13 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>13 13 15 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>14 13 15 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>12 13 11 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rhyme scheme, however, is one of Edith Sitwell's most irregular, for it follows no pattern. In the third stanza there is an instance of an eye-rhyme: door poor. Four stanzas have one instance each of full rhyme: in stanza 4, 'shape' and 'ape'; in stanza 5, 'hammer' and clamour'; in stanza 6, 'right' and 'night'; and in stanza 7, 'calling' 'falling'.
Disyllabic and polysyllabic words are foregrounded in the poem (34 out of 321).

The use of metre varies kaleidoscopically in the poem. Let us consider stanza I: It opens with a pentametre; two trochees followed by an iamb and two anapaests. The rhythm of the line 2 is rising as it contains 2 iambms and 3 anapaests. Line 3 opens with 2 anapaests followed by 2 iambms and 2 2 trochees and an iamb in the end. Line 4 is completely irregular. It is trimeter and the foot-pattern is iamb-pyrrhic and trochee. In the 28 lines of the poem, there are 12 hexameters, 11 pentameters, 3 trimeters and 2 heptameters and the basic rhythm seems to be rising one as the iambic and anapaestic foot dominate the metrical pattern of the poem. In fact, Edith Sitwell plays one metre against another and the mixed anapaests and iambms are used for a solemn purpose which heightens emotions in the poem. For instance the line

\[
\text{At least the skeleton smiles, for it has a morrow}
\]

contains both iambic and anapaestic foot which conveys gravity and seriousness of the theme. Stanzas 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 contain instances of one pyrrhic each and the stanza 4 has two pyrrhic foot in it. Its use in stanza 2

\[
\text{Come like the night, for terrible is the sun}
\]

creates the sense of urgency. Moreover, the opening spondee gives the effect of gravity of the theme.

The syntactic frame in which 'run-on'/end-stop' lines
are used is worth considering. For example, lines 6,7,9,10, 11,13,15,17,18,21,22,26 and 27 are 'run-on' lines. Its extensive use gives the poem the appearance of being closer to everyday speech. Moreover, the stanzas appear rapid and fluid in their movement since they are seldom end-stopped.

The most obvious sound patterns that characterize the phonic texture of the poem are repetitions of individual phonemes. These, as we have already seen, form categories such as rhyme, alliteration, assonance, dissonance, consonance etc. Formal and phonological repetition of the following words is quite striking. They repeat at an irregular interval in the poem:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{heart}^4 \quad \text{bone}^2 \quad \text{skeleton}^3 \quad \text{dark}^3 \\
&\text{death}^2 \quad \text{summer}^2 \quad \text{lonely}^2 \quad \text{light}^3 \\
&\text{sun}^3 \quad \text{night}^5 \quad \text{peace}^2 \quad \text{city}^2 \quad \text{Sound}^2
\end{align*}
\]

Such free verbal repetition is, of course, characteristic of Edith Sitwell's poetry in general. The function of the device of this kind is (a) to bind the lines more directly than does the rhyme and (b) to intensify the poet's thought and emotion.

Edith Sitwell uses alliteration in the following examples and connects them by similarity of sounds. Such phonological connections establish semantic links between these lexical items and build the structure of meaning:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{skeleton} \quad \text{miles} \quad (2) \\
&\text{dark} \quad \text{death} \quad (3) \\
&\text{lonely} \quad \text{light} \quad (5)
\end{align*}
\]
Assonance and consonance form an important part of the lyricism of the poem. For instance assonance occurs in:

- hearts dark (3) like night
  /a:/ /a:/ /ai/ /ai/
- come sun (6) under summer (8)
  /ʌ/ /ʌ/ /ʌ ʌ/ /ʌ ʌ/
- branches darkness (9) youth you through (10)
  /a: i/ /a: i/ /u:/ /u:/ /u:/
- leads street (11) Cain shape (14)
  /i:/ /i:/ /ei/ /ei/
- age ape (15) when men (22)
  /ei/ /ei/ /e/ /e/

Word-final consonance occurs in the following examples:

- leads paradise (11) comfort light (5)
  /z /z /z /z
- red edged (14) sun cain (14)
  /z /z /z /z
- that heart (17) sounds potters (18)
  /z /z /z /z
- field build world (18) days croppings (19)
  /z /z /z /z
- height rest sound died (26) calling rolling (26-27)
  /z /z /z /z
- heart mat (27) stone burden (27-28)
The following line is tightly organized in its cross alliteration:

At least the skeleton smiles

The examples illustrated above show the poet's greater freedom and fluidity indicating, probably, her freedom from self-consciousness and deliberateness of motives that we see in poems of her first phase. She builds the semantic structure with such an orchestration of sound patterns.

The poet has used parataxis as her syntactic style to relate two or more propositions in the poem (lines 9 to 12). The syntactic pattern of the poem is rather normal. Frequently it overrides the stanzaic form. The first six stanzas are 'direct' speech. The last stanza is a commentary on the 'song' which the poet seems to have heard. She concludes the poem with a rhetorical question with an option which does not expect any answer since it is implied in it.

Syntactic parallelism is used for rhetorical emphasis in the poem. She sets up the relationship of equivalence between the following phrases:

1. Love my heart for an hour (but) bone for a day

   could be represented on the level of phrase structure as NP + Prep-P.

2. Elegant like the skeleton

   crouched like the tiger (15).
In these two examples, the semantic connection is that of contrast. The phrase structure of the example at (2) above is Adjective + NP and the semantic connection of the following example is that of similarity:

(3) Come through the darkness Prep + NP
through the branches
through the shade (9-10)

The poet in the following examples goes beyond the normal range of collocations:
We have already seen how Sitwell in her poetry written during the first phase, extensively uses the devices of extreme defamiliarization with reference to her imagery. In the third phase, she uses wide-ranging imagery which is universal in nature. We also see that the ideational level becomes more important than the sensation level. Her grave concern for the larger themes like human suffering is quite obvious when she uses images such as

- Paradise (11), Cain (14), Skeleton (15),
- hammer (17), Potter's field (18), holy night(21),
- Caesar (27) and Atlas (28).

These images tend to cohere culturally and the cohesion ultimately leads to the concept of Christ.

She uses the device of capitalization more freely and more naturally in the third phase than in the second phase. Words like Death, Skeleton, Bone, for example, gain in significance when they are capitalized in the poem.

The poem, looked at in isolation might offer a number of difficulties with regard to the underlying structure of meaning. But if you approach it after getting fully acquainted with the first two phases and some of the earlier poems of the third phase like 'Still Falls the Rain'(1942), 'The Song of the Cold'(1946), and 'The Shadow of Cain'(1947), it offers very little resistance. It fits into the world of the third phase - the world made up of a few large symbols like
Christ, Cain, Caesar, Adam, Man, Sun, Paradise, Gold, Death, Worm, Sin and so on, of large themes like destruction, annihilation, suffering, salvation, and of rebirth, large historical and human processes of change. In the 'Street Song', the protagonist hears a song which he associates with 'the dead light calling', with 'Caesar rolling onward his heart that stone', with 'the burden of Atlas (the universe itself) falling'. The song is perhaps the song of humanity on the eve of its annihilation.

The 'I' of the song says, 'Love my heart for an hour, but my bone for a day', because death is coming and the skeleton is the only thing that will live in the days to come. The light is lonely and dying, the Sun is full of sorrow and the skeleton is hungry for peace. The dark night is coming, but the principle of creation, 'the Christ principle' is bound to remain and transform the night into the holy night of conception. A new world might be born out of darkness, a world of equality and fraternity. The main theme of the poem is the same as that of 'Still Falls the Rain'.

If we study the poem from the point of view of metre, we see that there are many deviations of rhythm, the basic rhythm being the rising one, more anapaestic than iambic, occasional rhymes binding the poem rather loosely, allowing the sound movement of the lines to take a natural course according to the force of the prophetic utterance. The consecutive repetition of words is one of the strategies that Edith Sitwell uses to bind the lines in a loop fashion.
The predominance of long vowels is a characteristic feature of prophetic poetry of her last phase as the study of the vowel pattern shows. The predominance of nasals over plosives and fricatives also lends a sonority to the prophetic tone. The general disappearance of the rhymes transforms the lines of the poem into those of Biblical prose. The simplicity of her rhythmic prose and the lack of syntactic deviations is balanced by extreme foregrounding in semantic structures. Hence her poetry retains the first-phase ratio between the propositional sense and the 'dhwani' of the poem. The propositional sense yields very little meaning, but the patterns of suggested meanings and responses create a highly charged thought-emotion complex with reference to destruction-rebirth principle which is the central nucleus of most of the poems of the last phase. Since she has attained a crystallization of her vision, she feels free in poems like 'Street Song' to use some deviational dramatic techniques and extreme semantic foregrounding; with the result the propositional sense is more than lost in the apparent slipperiness of suggested meanings. The strategy of reading a Sitwellian poem of the third phase lies, therefore, in holding on to her crystallized Christian vision of life and allowing the mind to respond to the surrounding images and statements in a manner suitable to the central theme.
Bagetelle

UPON the soil - (crushed rubies? Or the pomegranate's garnet seeds?)

And ridged with mounds like graves

Of giants and earth-worms, two Noachian survivors contemplate

Their glories of the past, their future state.

The small red Worm, rubbed with dews of Death, declared:

Is not more universal in its love, And I have brothers

Who live in the flesh of Negroes, and are thick

As lute-strings, and as powerful, I have others

Who sing the praise of Death with a sweet tongue -

Great venomous serpents in the unknown Africa; they carry

A gold bell on their tails, which ever ringeth

As they proceed, and like an angel singeth.'

Then said her enemy the Hen - the musty, dusty density,

The entity of primal, flightless, winged Stupidity:

'See how the Eagle falls like thunder from his height

And tears that continent of raging fire.

The heart from the Tiger roaring like the sea,

And bears it to his nest

Wherein the huge eggs rest

From whence will break the young, the unfledged Murders:

(So, young ambitions lie in the heart of Man

O you into whose maw

The heart of Man will fall

As you will fall to mine:
28 I am more powerful than the father of those Murders.

29 It was no Eagle, but a fusty Hen

30 That pecked the fire-seeds from Prometheus' heart, a crazy chilling

31 Hen-coop Laughter, the first Criticism, killing

32 The fire he brought to men,

33 As Age kills young desire.

34 The Worm said, 'I am small, my redness is from Adam.

35 But conquerors tall

36 Come to my embrace as I were Venus. I

37 Am the paramour in the last bed of love, and mine, the kiss

38 That gives Eternity.

39 I am Princess of Darkness. Yet the huge gold world,

40 With all plantations, powers of gold growth that shall be the bread

41 Arise from the toil of the small, the mighty Worm beneath the earth

42 The blind, all-seeing Power at her great work of death and

Syllabic Structure
Bagetelle

1 əpən əx əsəl-(krəʃt rubiz? ə: əpəməgərenets əənit si:dz?)
2 and ridʒd wət maundz laik greivz
3 αv dzaιənts and ə:əθərə:k, tu: nəutʃən əəviəz kəntəmpleit
4 ələ əlsuriz əv əə paːst, əə fjuːtə stəit
5 əə səul red wə:mx rubid wət djuːz əv deə dikledəd:
6 'məi rednis iz frəm eidəm, aɪ, əə kəurl-plainənt
7 bilt baɪə miljən laivz, endəvərəz, toilz, layz, glauriz
8 əm əfəst ənd la:st dəməkrəsi. əə sən
9 iz nət mo: ju:nəvə:səl in its lav. ənd aɪ hav brədə:z
10 huː liv in əsiːflə əv nigrəus ənd a: θək
11 əz ljuːt-strinz ənd əz pawəfəl. aɪ hav əvəz
12 huː sɪg əə prəiz əv deə wət ə swiːt təŋ-
13 grei t ənəməs səpənts in sənənəm əfrikə:əi əkri
14 ə gəuld bel on əstəiəs wətj evə riŋəθ
15 əz əei prəusiːd ənd laik on eindʒəl sīŋəθ.'
16 əən sed hoː enimə dəθən ə əmətə dəstə densiti,
17 əi əntəti əv prəiməl, fləitlis, wət ədʒi stjupidiːt:
18 'siː: hau əiːgəl ələz laik ənədə frəm hiz hait
19 ənd tiːz hət kəntinənt əv reidə iz fəiːd
20 əə hət frəm ətəiəz rəriŋ laik əə siː:
21 ənd bəzəz it tə hiz nest
22 wəxən əhjuːdəg egz ərest
23 frəm wəns wil brek əə jəŋ əə ənflədəd məːpəːz
24 (səu, jəŋ əmbiːjənəz lai in əə hət əv mən).
25 əu juː intu huːz moː
26 ʻə ha:t ə v mən wil fə:l
27 əz ju: wil fə:l tə main :
28 ai am mə pauəfəl ʃən ə fə:jəvən ʃəuz mə:pə:z.
29 it waz nau i:gel, bat ə fəsti hen
30 ʃat pekt ə faio - si:dz frəm prəmeθəsəz həıt, ə krezi tjilŋ
31 hen-kurp la:ftsə, ə fə:st kritisizəm kiliŋ
32 ʃə faio hi bryit tə men.
33 əz eidʒ kilz jəŋ disaiŋ .'
34 ʃəwə:m sed, ʻai xəm smpəl, mai rednis iz frəm eidoŋ.
35 bat kəŋkərə:z tə:l
36 kəm tamai embreis əz ai wə: vi:nəs. ai
37 xə ʃəpə rxə:muər in ʃəla:st bed ə v ləv, ənd main, tə kis
38 ʃət givz itə:niti.
39 ai am prinsəs əv da:knsi jet ə hju:dʒ əuld winəld,
40 wiə zə:1 pləntəinjənz, pauəz ə v gəuld grawə ʃat əl biə brədzəv mən,
41 craiz frəm ˈətə:zil əv ə smə:1, əmətəi wə:m biniə ə əəsə-
42 ʃə blaind, ə:1-si:in pauə ət hə: greit wə:k əv dəə end əv ribəθ:'

Phonetic Structure
Bagetelle

1 UPON the soil (crushed rubies? Or the pomegranate's garnet seeds?)
2 And ridged with sounds like graves
3 Of giants and earth-worms, two Noachian survivors contemplate
4 Their glories of the past, their future state.
5 The small red Worm, rubbed with dews of Death, declared;
6 'My redness is from Adam, I, the coral-plant,
7 Built by a million lives, endeavours, toils, loves, glories,
8 Am the first and the last; Democracy. The sun
9 Is not more universal in its love. And I have brothers
10 Who live in the flesh of Negroes, and are thick
11 As lute-strings, and as powerful. I have others
12 Who sing the praise of Death with a sweet tongue -
13 Great venomous serpents in the unknown Africa; they carry
14 A gold bell on their tails, which ever ringeth
15 As they proceed, and like an angel singeth.'
16 Then said her enemy the Hen - the musty, dusty density,
17 The entity of primal, flightless, winged Stupidity:
18 'See how the Eagle falls like thunder from his height
19 And tears that continent of raging fire.
20 The heart, from the Tiger roaring like the sea,
21 And bears it to his nest
22 Wherein the huge eggs rest
23 From whence will break the young, the unfledged Murders;
24 (So, young ambitions lie in the heart of Man
25 O you into whose maw
26 The heart of Man will fall
27 As you will fall to mine:

28 I am more powerful than the father of those Murders.

29 It was no Eagle, but a fusty Hen

30 That pecked the fire-seeds from Prometheus' heart, a crazy chilling

31 Hen-coop Laughter, the first Criticism, killing

32 The fire he brought to men,

33 As Age kills young Desire.

34 The Worm said, 'I am small, my redness is from Adam.

35 But conquerors tall

36 Come to my embrace as I were Venus. I

37 Am the paramour in the last bed of love, and mine, the kiss

38 That gives Eternity.

39 I am Princess of Darkness. Yet the huge gold world,

40 With all plantations, powers of gold growth that shall be the bread of man,

41 Arise from the toil of the small, the mighty Worm beneath the earth -

42 The blind, all seeing Power at her great work of death and of rebirth.'

Metrical Structure
The worm once again maintains that its redness is from Adam. He is the coral plant and the first and the last Democracy and that his brothers are negroes.

His other friends are venomous serpents of Africa.

He says: "I am the small red worm. That is my redness. It is from Adam. I am the coral plant and the first and the last Democracy. And that my brothers are negroes."

The small worm says: "I am skald, my redness is from Adam. I am the coral plant and the first and the last Democracy."

Two Noachian survivors contemplate their glorious past and future state.
'Bagatelle' is written in the year 1953 and it shares its apparent looseness of verse and symbolic treatment of the theme with 'Street Song'. 'Bagatelle' which means 'a kind of game like billiards, played on a board with holes instead of pockets' (Hornby:1971) is a poem (dedicated to John Gilegud) which appears to create a myth about the predicament of man in the universe. Let us look at the poem as a linguistic construct. It is a longish forty-two-line poem about a symbolic 'bagatelle' of arguments between the Worm and the Hen. The Worm and the Hen are symbolic embodiments of certain values of humanity at large. In structure the poem is looser than any of the poems so far considered for stylistic analysis. The poem consists of seven paragraphs of uneven number of lines which also vary in length. The syllabic structure is irregular:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>stanza</th>
<th>Number of syllables in each line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>16 7 14 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>12 12 13 11 15 11 11 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>16 11 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>16 13 12 10 11 6 6 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>11 6 6 6 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>10 15 12 6 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>13 5 11 15 6 12 16 16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The line-end words form no pattern although a few full rhymes and half rhymes link the lines as follows:

**Half-rhymes:**
- contemplate - state (3-4)
- brothers - others (9,11) FR
- density - stupidity (16-17) FR
- earth - rebirth (41,42)

**Full rhymes:**
- ringeth - singeth (14,15)
- nest - rest (21-22)
- chilling - killing (30-31)

Such rhyming words partly help in building semantic structures in the poem. Two instances of initial consonance occur as follows:

\[ \text{man} \rightarrow \text{maw} \ (24,25) \]
\[ \text{mine} \rightarrow \text{murders} \ (27-28) \]

Out of 465 syllables, 80 are disyllabic/polysyllabic words. The proportion of foregrounded polysyllabic words in the third phase is significant. It indicates Edith Sitwell's growing interest in the thematic concerns which are now broader and more universal in nature.

Lines vary from 3-foot to 8-foot metre, but 5-foot/6-foot line is predominant. The basic rhythm is iambic, but lines vary with anapaestic, trochaic, spondaic and pyrrhic substitutions. The meaning of the poem includes "the meanings its rhythmic structures communicate to the nerves and brain" (Gross:1974).
There is a considerable amount of phonological structuring in the poem. The auditory repetitions within the lines form a means of increased emphasis. For instance, the use of alliteration in the following examples is remarkable:

- oil / seeds (1)
- dews / death / declared
- red / rubbies (5)
- dusty / density (16)
- mere / murders (28)
- pecked / prometheus (30)
- coop / criticism / killing (31)
- last / love (37) / gold / growth.

Closely juxtaposed words like earth - worms (3) are related through assonance. Some more examples of assonance are as follows:

- said - hen (16) / musty / dusty / density (16)
- ai / ai / like / height (18) / that / shall (40)

Word final consonance forms an important part of the lyricism of the poem as in the following examples:

- rubbies / seeds / (1) / mounds / graves / (2)
- worms / survivors / (3)
There are two instances of cross alliteration in the following examples:

gold hell on their tails (14)

Eagle falls like (18)

As in many other poems, Edith Sitwell repeats the following lexical items at an irregular interval in the poem:

rubbies² seeds² earth² worm²  
grories² Adam² red³ death³  
first² love³ powerful² sing²  
Hen³ Eagle² heart³ young²  
Murders² man⁴ fall² kill²  
power² gold³

This free verbal repetition reinforces the theme of the poem. Edith Sitwell says the same thing over and over again but very often in a different way.
The use of capitalization of the following words transfer the referential meaning of these words to the symbolic one:

Worm  Death  Eagle  Hen  Murders
Man  Power  Democracy  Age  Laughter
Desire  Eternity  Darkness

As we have noticed earlier, the 'vehicle' in Edith Sitwell's metaphors and similes is more important than the 'tenor'. In fact the 'vehicle' widens the semantic dimensions in the poem as in the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenor</th>
<th>Vehicle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(What seem)soil (is)—— crushed rubbies</td>
<td>prowegrante's seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red worm (is) ——— coral plant</td>
<td>first and the last Democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hen (is) ——— the density</td>
<td>the entity of..stupidity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mounds (are) like ——— graves of giants and earth worms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(My brothers) are thick— as lute strings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a gold bell sings like ——— an angel (sings)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagle falls like ——— thunder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following examples the poet juxtaposes words/phrases in such a way that the result is violent collocative clashes:

red worms rubbied with dews of death
+concrete  -concrete
Eagle that tears that continent of raging fire

Young ambitions lie in the heart of man

Eagle pecked the fire seeds from Prometheus's heart

A crazy chilling hen-cooped laughter

An age killing young desire

Out of 42 lines only 8 are end-stopped ones. All the remaining 34 lines are instances of 'run-on' type where there is a smooth syntactic flow from one line to another. The syntax is quite normal except the opening sentence which begins with an adverbial phrase indicating the place 'upon the soil'. The main clause 'Two Noachian Survivors contemplate' comes only after the elaboration of the Adverbial Phrase. This stylistic device of topicalization helps to lend a concrete basis for the structure of meaning in the poem. The topicalization technique is further strengthened by the dramatic technique of creating a concrete scene with concrete characters fashioned out of symbolised abstractions. In 'Bagatelle' the scene is the
universe after, probably, total or near-total annihilation of life with only two survivors contemplating the past and the future. The characters are 'the small red Worm' and 'her enemy the Hen' who talk about themselves. The Sitwellian landscape that they inhabit consists of Death, Darkness, Satan, Adam, Serpents, Sun, God, and so on. The Worm is associated right from the beginning with Death,

'The small red Worm, rubied with dews of Death',

the redness of the Worm being connected with the redness of the rubies which are the 'dews of Death'. In the initial speech of the Worm its redness is spoken of as from Adam. In the lines 'The sun is not more universal in its love', there is a suggestion that the Worm is associated with love. The Worm says that it has brothers who sing the praise of Death with a sweet tongue. Its brothers are associated with negroes and venomous serpents of Africa. The brothers have tails (like Satan and his followers). They are opposed to the Angels though they sing like angels.

The Hen is the enemy of the Worm, but the Hen is associated with stupidity. It also stands for a universal principle that of primal flightless (though winged) entity of stupidity.

What is important to be noticed is, in her poetry of the third phase, Sitwell works with a code of her own which she has developed over the years during her second phase. The code consists of her peculiar set of images and symbols which get
organized towards the end of the second phase around her potential faith in Christianity. By the time she comes to write her poems of the third phase, both her faith and the code through which it expresses itself are crystallized into recognizable units which she uses with remarkable confidence and freedom. Unless we are familiar with this code, it is difficult to understand single poems. The poems of the first phase are, more or less, autonomous entities, each a complete linguistic structure in itself not demanding a larger context for its existence. But in the third phase the poems hang together as entities having there being an existence in a unique Sitwellian world of gradually evolved images and symbols. The pragmatics of her code demands the knowledge of the Christian ethos which the western reader is always familiar with. So if stylistics is enough to tackle the poetry of her first phase, it is semiotics that really helps our understanding of the poems of the third phase.

It is possible to work out the recognizable units of her poetic code by a close study of her major poems of the third phase. A study of the diction of poems like 'Invocation', 'An Old Woman', 'Eurydice', 'Still Falls the Rain', 'Lullaby', 'Serenade! Any Man to Any Woman', 'Street Song', 'Song: Once my Heart was a Summer Rose', 'The Song of the Cold', Heart and Mind', 'Song: We are the Darkness in the Heat of the Day', 'Mary. Stuart to James Bothwell', 'A Bird's Song', 'The Shadow of Cain' and 'Bagatelle' shows that the following terms are
repeated again and again. The following units have been worked on the basis of the principle of cohesion.

(a) Images and symbols related to Christianity:

(b) Greek Mythology: Venus, Prosperina, Adonis, Lethe, Hercules, Media, Golden fleece, Jason, Prometheus;

(c) Nature: summer, winter, dust, cold, fire, darkness, night, Sun, Moon, light, ears of corn, harvest, gold, honeycomb, earth primeval clay, rose, polar, spring, leaves;

(d) Animals: Bear, hare, tiger, carrion bird, ape, Hen, eagle, worm;

(e) Human Physique: heart, bone, blood, skeleton;

(f) abstractions: hunger, birth, rebirth, faith, wonder, coldness, death, darkness, eternity, eternal, thunder, murder, fate, zero, nothing;

(g) Phrases: the beat of the heart; the wheel/spool of fate, Abraham's son;

(h) Adjectives: Primeval clay, primeval disaster, primeval Law, ultimate darkness, holy disaster, the heat of the sun, primeval Tiger.

It is interesting to see how a particular word snowballs semantically during the course of Sitwell's poetic development.
Let us study the phenomenon with 'Sun':

Semantic progression of the 'Sun' and 'Worm' from the centre of language through ambiguity to the edges of language.

Semantic progression of the 'Sun' and 'Worm' from the centre of language through ambiguity to the edges of language.
In the first phase the use of the word 'Sun' is referential or denotative as in the following examples:

The Sun, a Chinese mandrin (Where Reynard-Haird Malinn); that gold-peruked conqueror the Sun (The Sleeping Beauty); Chasing that gaudy Satyr the Sun (Country Dance); The reynard coloured sun (Fox Trot).

The following examples indicate that 'the Sun' in the second phase gradually gathers other meanings:

The Sun is as black as a Nubian (The Higher Sensualism); Our Sun our love; Death is the Sun's heat making all men black, Death is our Sun; The panoply of Suns (Metamorphosis); Heavenly love, come, then my Sun to meet the eternal ice (Gold Coast Customs); transformed to gold five-petalled suns; huge as the great gold sun (Elegy on Dead Fashions); the sun hath left his tent; the sun hath golden feet to crush our grapes (The Madness of Soul);

The occurrence of 'the Sun' in the third phase is strikingly frequent, on an average three per poem, and the contexts in which it occurs are also very diverse. Consequently, the Sun attains great semantic multidimensionality: e.g.

The common fire that drops with seed like the Suns; like the laughing flames of the Sun; the solar ray in the reins; the Golden Ones in the high heaven; As the the Sun and plants rule the husbandman (Invocation); the sun is the first lover of the world...
Splendours within the heart of man the second Sun; my heart, 
the ripening sun; I am loved by the Sun; Sun's heart, that 
Sun; Abraham-bearded Sun (An Old Woman); As in the sun in 
the void firmament; O bright gold of the heart of the sun 
of love across dark fields; with the Sun-like singing (Eurydice);
Sun was another rose; Came another heart like a Sun (Song);
Huge is the Sun of amethysts and rubies; purple perfume of 
the polar suns (The Song of the Cold); The Sun will be her 
only kiss; said the sun to the moon; The Heart of the Sun 
(Heart and Mind); Before Death our sun; that Sun and its 
false light (Song); The seed of the sun is a bird mask (A Bird's 
Song); the purple perfume of the polar Sun; Mastodon-trumpeting 
of leprous Suns; The great voice of the Sun; Sun and Earth 
came together; the cataclysm of Sun; the great sun's kiss 
(The shadow of Cain); the Sun is not more universal (Bagatelle).

Some of the strategies she uses for impregnating a 
word with meaning are capitalization, animation and context-
ualization, sometimes direct definition. Edith Sitwell explores 
the meaning of the Sun in various contexts which lend their 
shades of resonant meanings to the word, until in one context 
the Sun which is generally the creative principle is talked 
of as Death. In a cursory study of even one term in the 
context of Edith Sitwell's poetry indicates how complex is the 
behaviour of the word and how creative language is. A good 
poet lends his own semantic dimensions to a host of words and
phrases and collocations and, consequently, no poem of his can be adequately studied in isolation. The problem becomes still more complex if the poet's poetic code involves symbols from the public cultural ethos. Since 'The Sun' is one such symbol, the readers' responses are always associated with the traditional meanings associated with it. Again, more additional meanings of the word 'Sun' arise out of the various terms with which it is associated in the context of Sitwell's poetry. For example, in Sitwell the Sun in various contexts is associated with fire, love, rose, music, singing, ripening and so on.

Now coming back to the poem: In 'Bagatelle', Sitwell appears to have arrived at a very subtle and complex conception about the universal process of existence which demands the dynamics of the Worm, that is, the Death principle, the Sun, the life principle, and the Hen, the earth principle. Because of lack of concreteness and recognizable elements, the poem has become abstract. Sitwell's vision appears to be prophetic and mythical. It is a synthesis of Greek Mythology and Christianity. It is an exploratory poem in which the elements are unresolved. At most we can tie up a few semantic elements and make some guess-work about the underlying meaning: The Hen in the poem threatens to eat the Worm but the Worm says 'no' since it creates the world of man. The poem suggests that Sitwell has moved toward allegory. But the form of allegory seems to be inadequate as the vision of the poet is quite complex.
CONCLUSIONS

The strategies of the first phase and the second phase have become simple in the third phase. Edith Sitwell works in the world of accepted symbols. The principle of cohesion works in a natural manner which also indicates the clarity and simplicity of her vision in this phase. Her vision has attained simplicity compared to the extreme complexity of perception in the first and the second phases.

Edith Sitwell's poetic world in the third phase easily subsumes the socio-political complexities of the world by equating them with the evil in man. In the first phase she revelled in the multiplicity of sensations and complexity of perception which involved unexpected connections. So the movement in the third phase is towards simplification and universalization. In the first phase her poems were 'writerly' texts, where the linguistic construct was the thing, a complete self-contained entity. But in the third phase, the text becomes more 'readerly' than 'writerly'.

By simplifying all her strategies and by working within an accepted framework of beliefs and by confining herself to the so called universal aspects of life and history, Sitwell becomes more easily available to the ordinary reader of modern poetry. In this phase ideational level becomes more important than the sensation level.
The predominance of long vowels is a characteristic feature of prophetic poetry of this phase. The general disappearance of rhymes transforms the lines of many poems into those of Biblical prose. The simplicity of her rhythmic prose and the lack of syntactic deviations is balanced by extreme foregrounding in semantic structures. The propositional sense yields very little meaning, but the patterns of suggested meanings and responses create a highly charged thought-emotion complex in her poetry.

In the poetry of this phase, Sitwell works with a code of her work which she has developed over the years during her second phase. The code consists of her peculiar set of images and symbols which get organized towards the end of the second phase around her potential faith in Christianity. By the time she comes to write the poetry of the third phase, both her faith and code through which it expresses itself are crystalized into recognizable units which she uses with remarkable confidence and freedom. The poems of the first phase are more or less autonomous entities, each a complete linguistic structure in itself not demanding a larger context for its existence. But in the third phase, the poems hang together as entities having a unique Sitwellian world of gradually evolved images and symbols.
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