CHAPTER II

INFLUENCES

HIS LIFE AND READINGS

Jack's childhood was spent among those people where he could not think of having friends. This resulted in him to fall back on the only resource which he could think of as a friend and which brought him meaning and direction: the love of books. His early boyhood days were spent in reading books which also became a pastime occupation. These books spoke of poor boys such as President Garfield becoming famous, books giving details about the distant horizon as Paul du Chaillu's *African Travels* but the two books from which he derived the most pleasure were Washington Irving's *Alhambra* and Ouida's *Signa*. Jack found refuge in these books and his strongly developed drive to succeed was intensely influenced by them. He identified with fictional characters, especially those who had climbed the social ladder from "rags to riches." He testifies in his books and conversations to the lasting impression of Ouida's novel *Signa*. He so much liked the book that he read and re-read it for many times and always aspired to be a success like the little Italian peasant with whose life he compared himself. He strongly took the message of the book to his heart that life must have a central purpose for which one strives and that dreams must be cherished. He writes, "of all the innocent things that die the impossible dreams of the poet are the things
that die with the most pain, and perhaps with the most loss to humanity. Those who are happy die before their dreams". He talks about the effect of dime novels in his essay, "What life Means to Me" which helped him in making up his mind once for all to succeed in life by becoming rich. Circumstances at an early age instilled in him the habit of reading, a practice he carried till the end of his life.

Jack learned from his foster father that hardwork would eventually pay. His adolescence period was devoted to Alger's belief that honesty and enterprise would be rewarded in a society that was as virtuous as the civilized hero. Books allowed him to escape from the ordinary world into a realm of adventure and great deeds. He plunged into a self-directed programme of serious reading and writing and maintained it through a long period of hardship and discouragement until it paid off.

Jack realized that to turn into a successful writer he had to have clarity of thought and a deep knowledge of philosophy of life. He wrote in 1903 in an article, "On the Writer's Philosophy of life."

If you think clearly, you will write clearly; if your thoughts are worthy, so will your writings be worthy... If your knowledge is sparse or unsystematized, how can your words be broad or logical? And without the strong central thread of a working philosophy, how can you make order out of chaos? How can your foresight and insight be clear? How can you have a qualitative and quantitative perception of the relative importance of every scrap of knowledge you possess? And without all this how can you possibly be yourself? How can you have something fresh for the jaded care of the world?"
Thus he sat down to put his thinking in the right perspective, to deepen his knowledge and to broaden his working philosophy of life. He gobbled up whatever he could lay his hand on. He read Boas and Frazer in anthropology, Darwin, Huxley and Wallace in biology, Adam Smith, Malthus, Ricardo, Bastiat, John Stuart Mill in economics; Aristotle, Gibbon, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Haged, Kant, Berkeley, Leibniz, Nietzsche, Spencer, Haeckel and Kidd in history and philosophy. He re-read Marx and Engels and devoured everything he could find on employment, the causes and cures of poverty, criminology and trade unionism.

The period in which Jack lived and wrote had a tremendous effect on him as it had on other writers of that age like Frank Norris, Upton Sinclair, Theodore Dreiser. It was a period of ferment, of change from frontier to "civilization", a period torn by contradictory views of man and his society, a time in which traditional philosophies clashed with Darwinism; contradiction, crudeness on naivety were to be seen in the writers of this period. Joan London writes, "any attempt to judge Jack London’s work without appreciating the environmental forces which shaped his life and work is certain to produce unsatisfactory results, for, probably more than any other writer of his generation, he was profoundly and consciously affected by his time." The effect of the age was great on Jack and he wrote of his age.
RUDYARD KIPLING.

Jack writes about Kipling in his essay, "These Bones shall Rise Again":

That man of us is imperishable who makes his century imperishable. That man of us who seizes upon the salient facts of life, who tells what we thought, what we were, and for what we stood — that man shall be the mouthpiece to the centuries, and so long as they listen he shall endure.*5*

Rudyard Kipling was the source of inspiration in Jack's early writings. The impact of Kipling was so intense on Jack that he wrote in one of his letters to Elwyn Hoffman, "...there is no end of Kipling in my work.... I would never possibly have written anywhere near the way I did had Kipling never been." Joan London also notes in her, Jack London and His Times, about how Kipling inspired him. The influence of Kipling was so deep that his early writings were a mishmash of other writers but prominently of Kipling. He was called the "Kipling of the Klondike". Jack in order to get into print took Kipling very seriously and borrowed form him that art for which Kipling was considered the master— the frame story. These frame stories present a narrator who provides some kind of setting that permits a character to elicit a story from another, recalls some story told to him, or provides some motivation for a character to recall a personal experience. Jack's second and third volume of short stories abound in the type of frame stories. It is an accepted fact about Jack's indebtedness to the
magazine stories which reveal in return his indebtedness to Kipling. We find that there is a remarkable similarity in the short story structure of these two writers. A review of Kipling's stories mentions that Kipling has a "...preaching strain in the background of his soul," and we note the moralizing intend of Jack's early short stories. Kipling's "Plain Tales from the Hills" illustrates a point in moral or some phase of human character in the introductory comments or essays prefixed to his stories, for example in "Three and an Extra", the introductory comment is "After marriage arrives a reaction, sometimes big, sometimes a little one; but it comes sooner or later and must be tided over by both parties if they desire the rest of their lives to go with the current." The story which follows the comment shows a man who leaves his wife for the attention of a fascinating Mrs. Husksbee, to be finally won over by his wife who captivates him by displaying her beauty and charm at a dance. The parallel of the plot is seen in Jack's." Wife of a king." where the wife is replaced by an Indian girl and Mrs. Husksbee with Freda Moloof, a enticing, hypnotizing Greek dancer. Jack would have used this introductory statement of Kipling but instead restored to a lengthy dissertation on man taking native wives and then facing the inevitable attraction of a racial "kind," creating domestic crises. This part of Jack's comment finds a parallel in Kipling's "Beyond the Pale":

A man should, whatever happens, keep to his own caste,
race and breed. Let the White go to the White and Black to the Black. Then whatever trouble falls in the ordinary course of things is neither sudden, alien nor unexpected.*9*

Kipling's frame story borrowed by Jack in his early stories and maintained by Kipling in his writings show how similar in basic form, as well as in content the two men's stories often are is also illustrated by a comparison between Kipling's, "The Three Musketeers" and Jack's "The Death of Ligoun". Both stories consist of a story collector providing drinks to men in order to loosen their tongue so that they will spill special information to the story collector. Kipling's narrator sits with privates Mulvaney, Ortheris and Learoyd, recurrent Kipling favourites and says, "They told me this story, in the Umbrella Refreshment Room while we were waiting for an uptrain. I supplied the beer. The talk was cheap at a gallon and a half." Whereas the setting in Jack's tale is Klondike instead of India and the narrator remarks:

I held the bottle between our eyes and the fire, indicated with my thumb the depth of the draught, and showed it over to him; for was he not Palitlum, the Drinker? Many tales had he told me, and long had I waited for this scriptless scribe to speak of the things concerning Ligrun; for he of all men living, knew these things best.*10*

"A Hyperborean Brew" shows that both the framing and the action of Jack's tale are reminiscent of Kipling's "The Man who would Be king", but where Kipling succeeded in riding the perilous line between romance and reality in his tale of
the calamitous adventures of two rogues who took over a
native kingdom in the wild north of Afghanistan. Jack
produced nothing but a tedious grotesquerie in his yarn
concerning two adventurers who took over a tribe in the wild
north of the Yukon by building a still which brewed
fearfully powerful fire water. Not only are the frames
sometimes parallel but also the stories themselves.
Kipling's 'Dray Wara Yow Dee' for instance, is a story told
by a native to a white audience, a tale of his quest over
the whole of India to find and kill his wife's lover. The
parallel with "An Odyssey in the North" is obvious. Here
Jack presents his frame story using a teller who is clearly
distinguishable from Jack and thus allows himself to
present, more complicated social and moral situations. Here,
Nass, an admirable and complex character-narrator, comes
into conflict with two other idealized characters, making
the readers witness the conflict between civilization and
primitive culture, the white man and the Indian, topics
which, were more complex in their moral overtones. It is
felt that Jack came upon kiplin's frame story as an answer
to the twin demands for more dramatic presentation and a
framework for presenting characters and themes of a greater
complexity that he had first attempted. His writing of the
early period, between 1899 and 1900, is a record of his
gradual acquisition of dramatic methods and a shift from
Kipling, thus showing Jack's originality and superiority in
his achievement.
We also note the influence in Jack's The Call of Wild of Kipling's Jungle Books (1894), especially "Mowgli's Brothers" and "Tiger! Tiger!" No doubt Kipling's animals are human prototypes and closer to the stylized creatures of the traditional animals but a closer look at them present a vision: of animal-human relation seen from the animals point of view; and, more specifically, of the primitive roots of the initiation theme in the conflict of generation - that is, in the confrontation between an older leader and his younger challenger. At their deepest levels, both Kipling's and London's fables are of age and youth, father and son; the reversion to the wild is the recovery of an ancestral birthright. Both Mowgli and Buck spend their early years under the protection of a benign family, than are compelled to venture among alien and unpredictable human beings, only to return to the wild to hunt with their brothers in the wolfpack. London echoes, within this narrative framework a number of Kipling's images and actions. His invocation of the "Law of Club and Fang" and "Law of Meat" in White Fang recalls Kipling's repeated references to the "Law of the Jungle", differing from Kipling's complex, human-like code with the Darwinian cast of Jack's phrases. The imagery of Buck's moonlight battle with Spitz, at the center of the circle of days, may have been suggested by the circle of the wolves at the Pack Council in "Mowgli's Brothers", which takes place at the full moon concerning the challenge to the leadership of old
Akela. Even though Akela misses his chance to kill his challenger and is permitted to live into important old age, a climatic fight occurs between Buck and Spitz, and Akela's rival, the tiger Sher khan, becomes the opponent of Mowgli whom he must meet and kill to establish his right to a place in the pack. And in this process, Mowgli acquires in the eyes of the human villagers a supernatural power like that attributed by the Yeehats to Buck after he has avenged the murder of Thornton.

Kipling's influence can also be seen in Jack's novel, *The Sea-Wolf*, making his presence felt in the beginning of the novel. We note that the *The Sea-Wolf* has been initially at least, been conceived along the lines of Kipling's *Captain Courageous* (1897) and Norris's *Moran of the Lady Letty* (1898). The initial hints for the central motif, of *The Sea-Wolf* may have come from the adventures of Harvey Cheyne, the protagonist of Kiplings *Captain Courageous*. Harvey, the pampered, egotistical son of an American railway tycoon, who is sailing to Europe to complete his studies falls overboard of the fogbound Atlantic steamer when he becomes sea- sick and is rescued, half drowned by a Gloucester schooner out for a month-long fishing voyage off the Grand Banks of New Foundland. The ensuing chapter shows the greenhorn learning the art of handling the ropes and finding an acceptance among the crew and a sense of his own manhood, eventually returning with sufficient muscle and
character to assume his place as a more legitimate heir to his father's millions. The general resemblance between Harvey's adventure and that of Humphrey Van Weyden is clear enough, but there are also some parallels of detail. Both protagonists begin their adventure on the apparent safety of passenger vessels sailing through the dense fog, once in the water, both experience a sense of drifting off to sleep and they are awakened on the vessels that rescue them by what in their half-conscious state seems to be the tolling of the bell. Both Harvey and Humphrey, after they have revived, demand indignantly that they be put ashore with a promise that the captain will be rewarded for their trouble. Both the captains promptly refuse and assign their reluctant recruits to menial kitchen work. Kipling Captain Troop declaring that is "for the sake your health" and Wolf Larsen telling Humphrey that "it's for your own soul's sake. It will be the making of you." Harvey learns his lesson and becomes more cooperative when he balks and is knocked down by the captain, whereas the unwilling Humphrey similarly changes his tune when he sees Wolf Larsen viciously strike another crewman who has expressed his disinclination for duty. Later on, both Harvey and Humphrey accuse the crew of stealing their money. At the same time, Jack like Kipling, sought a prose that was simple and direct, yet evoking strong, intense emotion from its short sentences. Both writers, particularly through the speech patterns of their native characters, invested their prose
with Biblical overtones by employing allegorical rhetoric. They combined a grandiloquent tone with the matter of fact, the exotic with the ordinary, an epic swing with the rapid movement of clipped, journalistic reportage.
CHARLES DARWIN.

Charles Darwin was one of the major sources of influence on Jack London’s literary theory. He was aided in his belief of Darwin’s theory by his reading of Ernst Haeckel’s book, The Riddle of the Universe, wherein the German biologist has proposed the essential unity of organic and inorganic nature. From Darwin and Haeckel Jack derived his belief in evolution through natural selection and a belief in acquired characteristics, which was a useful source for Jack as it helped him in justifying his passion and imperialism. The effect of Darwin was not only profound in Jack but at the same time it was dramatically bringing forth new sets of thinking due to the theory of evolution in the minds of the thinkers of those days. Darwin became one of Jack’s intellectual mentors alongside Herbert Spencer. We can say that Jack’s real private struggle with life which he dramatized in his stories so vividly and excitingly, became for him an epitome of the Darwinian Struggle for Existence.

It is slightly complex for present day people to comprehend the shattering, revolutionary effect of Darwin’s theory. The general conception of the so called intellectual of those days about the creation of the world was precisely the year 4004 BC and that the various species of flora and fauna were immutable as they had always been the same, although variations or developments within each kind may have been possible. It was during the prevailing of such
ideas that Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859 stated that the earth was many millions of years old; and that all extent species had evolved from a common beginning in the sea at some remote moment of time. There had been no design or order in the process of evolution but it had taken place through the accumulation of infinitesimal and accidental variation, wherein millions upon millions of individuals (in whatever species) were wasted in the struggle for existence and in which the slightly superior variation managed to survive and reproduce itself. This had a tremendous effect on the thinkers of those days and Jack too was deeply impressed. The effect was so deep that no writing of Jack has been spared by this great stalwart. We find the echo of Darwin's evolutionary theory in Jack's letter to Cloudesley Johns:

I do not believe in the universal brotherhood of man....I believe my race is the salt of the earth. I'm a scientific socialist, not a utopian.... An Evolutionist believing in natural selection.... I can not but hail as unavoidable the Black and Brown going down before the White."16"

Jack's early life made him believe that life was a struggle and the Darwinian concept of survival of the fittest went along with this preconceived idea of Jack. He illustrates the Darwinian concept of survival as a fundamental assumption in explaining the human existence in his North land stories wherein Jack tends to see man as an animal concerned for its survival. The Klondike experience gave him the necessary
setting to explore the influence of environment on man. His stories of Northland portray the true nature of his protagonists, that of animal instinct, when they are forced to encounter the hostile environment. Jack proclaims that this desire for survival is the primary instinct in man. He shows in his stories the many ways in which the animals demonstrates his materialistic impulses: encounter with other men, with vicious animals and with an inscrutable universe. The choice of survival is limited and though man appears to be civilized, situations and circumstances brings forth the latent atavism. The pressures of environment coupled with a biological inclination towards man's animal nature combined to prove the Darwinian theory for Jack. Jack's first collection of stories, The Son of Wolf, describes man's attempt to survive the forces of nature, the threat of savages and the competition with other future seekers, at the same time, it introduces his adaptation of Darwinian inspiration, the superiority of the inevitable white man - in short racism.

The characters of Jack's Northland stories are Darwinian "animals" in disguise who learn to adapt themselves to environment as they know that there is no compromise except adaptation. This relationship is vividly described in the beginning of "In a Far Country:"

When a man journeys into a far country, he must be prepared to forget many things he has learned, and to acquire such customs as are inherent with existence in the new land; he must abandon the old ideals. To
those who have the protean faculty of adaptability, the novelty of such change may even be a source of pleasure; the pressure of the altered environment is unbearable.... It was better for the man who cannot fit himself to the new groove to return to his own country; if he delay too long, he will surely die. *17*

The Darwinian concept of survival of the fittest is carefully woven into this pattern of man's struggle. His Northland stories show such pattern, "In a Far County," two men, who remain behind without heeding the advise of staying all by themselves, fail to survive because of their inability to adapt themselves to the environment. In "The White Silence," the hostile environment overcomes Mason when he along with his wife and Malemute Kid tries to get to civilization before spring. Here in these stories Jack makes it clear that the "Law" of survival stands for all level of existence, no one is free from its clutches. The weakened Malemute's dogs are eaten by their stronger partners and the dogs even attack men when they are unable to survive on their rations. The Darwinian survival is stated in its simplest term, when Malemute returns to camp from his search of food:

Bursting into the camp... (Malemute) saw the girl in the midst of the snarling pack, laying about her with an axe. The dogs had broken the iron rule of their masters, and were rushing the grub. He joined the issue with his rifle reversed and the hoary game of natural selection was played out, with all the ruthlessness of its primeval environment... man and beast fought for supremacy of the bitterest conclusion.*18*

The evolutionary process is present in both men and the dogs and their method of survival suggest that they both
obey the same laws, but their adaptability method of survival is different as men is merely a higher order of animal. The naturalist believed that men under stress showed his latent animal traits - his atavism. Jack dramatized his interpretation of Darwin in "The Law of Life" where the Indian is forced, to accept the principle that it is only the fittest who are capable of surviving. The Darwinian survival of the fittest gave birth to Jack's racism which is portrayed in "The League of the Old Man" where Jack applied this survival theory to the success of the virile, imaginative race - the Anglo-Saxons. It is seen that Jack has not verified the concept of a "struggle for survival" in his best novel, The Call of the Wild, which is an observation of primitive evolutionary forces at work; their expression was natural to Jack and represents perhaps his most sincere convictions. We can draw a lot of parallels in Buck emerging fully as a creature of the wild. Buck foresees in the death of Curly that there is no fair play once you are down; to survive he has to be fit. Buck starts adapting himself to his natural habitat especially after his realization that this new environment was going to be his new home and thus he makes friend with the wolf. The two of them:

came down into a level country where were great stretches of forest and many streams, and through these great stretches they ran steadily... running the side of his wood brother toward the place from where the call surely came. Old memories were coming upon him fast, and he was stirring to them as of old he stirred
to the realities of which they were the shadows. He had done this thing before, somewhere in that other and dimly remembered world, and he was doing it again, now running free in the open, the unpacked earth underfoot, the wide sky overhead. *19*

There are other instances too showing this evolutionary process like his learning to kill not just for the sake of killing but killing in order to feed himself.

The blood longing became stronger than ever before. He was a killer, a thing that preyed, living on the things that lived, unaided, alone, by virtue of his own strength and prowess, surviving triumphantly in a hostile environment when only the strong survived. Because of all this he became possessed of a great pride in himself, which communicated itself like a contagion to his physical being. *20*

Even late in his life Jack was not free from the Darwinian struggle of the fittest.

**HERBERT SPENCER**

Herbert Spencer was closely linked to Charles Darwin in Jack London's thought, and they overlapped each other in his writings. The work of Darwin and Spencer was probably the most important influence on Jack London's thought during his formative (1896-1903) years. He gleaned from them a knowledge of revolutionary theory and a belief in a materialistic version of the universe. In 1900 Jack wrote to his friend, Cloudey Johns:
Have you ever thought that all life, all the universe of which you may in any way have knowledge of, bows to a law of continuous redistribution of matter? Have you read or thought that there is a dynamic principle true of the metamorphosis of the universe, which will express these ever-changing relations?  

He also wrote to C.F. Lowrie late in 1910, "I'll name my teachers as Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, and all the school of evolutionists."

Herbert Spencer's First Principle was a source of inspiration for Jack London, where in he found a method to unify his stray and loose thoughts which he had so far failed to assimilate into a working philosophy of life. Spencer's single consistent concept reduced everything to a unity and presented to Jack a compact and concrete view of reality that made the universe appear as a model in which everything was subject to inevitable laws. Jack wrote in his autobiographical novel Martin Eden:

And here was the man Spenser, organizing all knowledge for him, reducing everything to unity, elaborating ultimate realities, and presenting to his startled gaze a universe so concrete of realization that it was like the model of a ship such as sailors make and put into bottles. There was no caprice, no chance. All was law.

If Darwin was the scientist of evolution, Herbert Spencer was its philosopher. His famous Synthetic Philosophy undertook a new synthesis of knowledge based on a new guiding idea - evolution. Spencer's doctrine of the survival of the fittest and theory of atavism was appropriated by Jack London and they became the ideal
backbone of many of his stories of the Klondike and the
South Sea tales where men and animals struggled against each
other as well as against nature. Spencer asserted that
evolution is a fundamental law of social as well physical
process where life was tested by the number, complexity and
length of the contacts between inner and outer (internal and
external) forces. Life for Jack as for Spencer was a matter
of response and adjustment on the part of an organism to
external pressure, and so was in an important way,
determined by the universal machine. As Jack put it:

All evolution, all change, is from without, in not
from within, out. The fundamental characteristic of all
is IRRITABILITY. In the other words, capacity for
feeling pressures from without. Life itself is an
equilibrium, between what is within and what is
without...If all forces which impinged upon organism
were constant, you would have a constant organism.
There would be no change. And there would be no
development. The economic pressure from without, forces
the change, forces the idea...causes the idea.*24*

Jack thought of the "pressure from without" as operating
primarily in nature and society — two differentiated but
fundamentally similar force — spheres. In A Daughter of the
Snows, for example Jack endows Jacob Welse, the older-
generation klondike hero with this very Spencerian wisdom:

Accustomed to do battle with natural forces, he was
attracted by the commercial battle with social
forces....In the mellow of time, he got a proper focus
on things and unified the phenomena of society
precisely as he had already unified the phenomena of
nature.... The same principles under-laid both; the
same truths were manifest of both.*25*

Further we note that the continuous process of evolution
eliminates the unwanted with the emergence of the most perfect which is in complete harmony with its surrounding. But the process continue to evolve into mutual dependence, first in its own species than with other species leading to co-operation for survival. In these co-operative efforts, for man and animals alike, the inclination of individual members must for a time, be sublimated in favour of the groups's need, and the leader enforces this co-operation. Co-operation enables the species to survive but survival of the fittest leads to multiplication of the fittest. At the same time social evolution leads to larger and more complex levels of existence where group living is accompanied by integration of the individual members and interdependence of each such units. The life and development of the whole is however, independent of the separate parts; while individuals are born and eventually die, the body politic lives, grows and increases in organizational completeness and thus the more complex forms, whether individual creatures or social organizations are the more stable. Thus Spencer saw the social struggle for existence as leading up to the ultimately perfect and stable society. Spencer says that whenever the complexity of the environment increases, the forces of an organism or individuals must adapt and adjust to it and thus maintain an equilibrium and if in the process they fail to do so, they are rightfully removed in order for a better evolution of the individuals or organism. In Martin Eden, Jack calls such types the:
Mass of weaklings and inefficient who perished according to biological law on the ragged confines of life. They were the unfit....Nature rejected them for the exceptional man. Out of the plentiful spawn of life she flung from her prolific hand, she selected only the best."27"

Jack's voracious intellectual appetite gobbled up Spencer's emphasis on the necessity of progress and the perfectibility of individuals; survival of the fittest theory and advocacy of the individual over society. At the same time Jack was also drawn to Ernest Haeckel's ideas in The Riddle of the Universe, which were compatible with Spencer's ideas. Haeckel's "conversation of energy" is nothing but synonymous with Spencer's "Law of the persistence of force."

Jack was fairly dissatisfied with Spencer's agnosticism and with much of his social philosophy and thus he was drawn to Haeckel and Karl Marx. But at the same time Fiske's accommodation of Spencer and Christianity seemed to Jack a completed blind alley. He wrote about this to John early in 1900:

Spencer was not openly, that is, didactically favorable to a material basis for thought, mind, soul, etc., but John Fiske has done many queer gymnastics in order to reconcile Spencer, whose work he worships, to his own beliefs in immortality and God. But he doesn't succeed very well! He jumps on Haeckel, with both feet, but in my modest opinion, Haeckel's position is as yet unassailable."28".

and in another letter,

What's this chemical ferment called life all about? Small wonder that small men down the ages have conjured
gods in answer. A little god is a snug little possession and explains it all. But how about you and me, who have no god? *29*

Jack wrote late in 1914 to Ralph Kasper:

I have always inclined towards Haeckel's position. In fact, "incline" is to weak a word....I join with Hackel in being what....I am compelled to call " a positive scientific thinker." *30*

In The Kempton-Wace Letters Jack London who composes Herbert Wace's letter talks about the phenomenon of love in the whole context of Spencerian evolution. He begins with Spencer's definition of the essential nature of life about adjusting the inner relations with the outer relation and its origin in the impelling necessities of "Nutrition and Reproduction". Wace says, stressing the determinism and rationalism:

As Ernst Haeckel, that brave old hero of Jena, explains - "The irresistible passion that draws Edward to the sympathetic Otilla, or Paris to Helen, and leaps all bounds of reason and morality, is the same powerful, unconscious, attractive force which impels the living spermatozoon to force an entrance into the ovum in the fertilization of the egg of the animal or plant -the same impetuous movement which unites two atoms of hydrogen to one atom of oxygen for the formation of a molecule of water."

But with the advent of intellectual man, there is no longer need for obeying blind and irresistible compulsion.... As he controls and directs the great natural forces... so will he control and direct the operation of the reproductive force so that life will not only be perpetuated but developed and made higher and finer. *31*

Jack was so strongly influenced by Spencer that his doctrine of biological evolution had been "flatly accepted" in its...
description of "the survival of the fittest." Jack asserted in his essay, "Wanted: A New Law of Development," that "it is in the struggle of the species and against all other hostile forces in the environment that this law operates: also in the struggle between individuals of the same species."

Jack's experience in the Klondike increased his enthusiasm for the "survival of the fittest" of Spencer. To note Jack's enthusiasm we again go back to his autobiographical novel, *Martin Eden* wherein he describes his response to the book: *First Principles:*

Morning found him still reading. It was impossible for him to sleep. Nor did he write that day. He lay on the bed till his body grew tired, when he tried the hard floor, reading on his back. But he was now learning form Spencer what he never had known, and that he never could have known had he continued his sailing and wandering forever. He had merely skimmed over the surface of things, observing detached phenomena, accumulating fragments of facts, making superficial little generalizations and all and everything quite unrelated in a capricious and disorderly world of whim and chance."33"

The impact of Spencer is so profound that he farther says that Martin's major intellectual discovery was Spenserian naturalism. Spencer for Martin; achieves "the correlation of knowledge - of all knowledge:"

This new concept was a perpetual amazement to Martin, and he found himself engaged continuously in tracing the relationship between all things.... He drew up lists of the most incongruous things and was unhappy until he succeeded in establishing kinship between them all.... Thus, he unified the universe... observing and charting and becoming familiar with all there was to know. And the more he knew, the more passionately he admired the universe, and life, and his own life in the midst of it all."34"
Spencer’s ideas were electrifying for Jack; he derived the theory of evolution from Charles Darwin and from Herbert Spencer, he learned that the process was not arbitrary, but actually tending towards harmony and an integrated peaceful society. We can also put it this way that Herbert Spencer was important to Jack in his application of Darwinian principles to society and his unification of knowledge by application of universal laws.

Quite a number of Jack’s writing manifest the influence of Spencer. In his Alaskan wilderness fiction, he adopts Herbert Spencer’s emphasis on adaptability. The only difference is that Jack used a controlled environment in *The Call of the Wild* and adaptability and survival led not to civilization but to the savage wilderness where he was convinced that only the fittest survived whether be it men or animals. Whereas in *White Fang*, written as a companion piece to *The Call*, he showed just the opposite side of the picture that is evolution instead of devolution, civilization instead of decivilization. Both have dog heroes, in one the dog changes from the tame to feral and in the later a wild wolf-dog gradually learns to survive and thrive in captivity. The presence of Spencer’s *First Principles* is clearly felt in the description of nature especially in the very beginning of *White Fang*: the effects of the "White Silence"—the vast still winter desolation,
has on the two minor characters trekking across with a coffin. Jack observes that:

It crushed them into the remotest recesses of their own minds, pressing out of them, like juices from the grape, all the false ardores and exaltations and undue self - values of the human soul, until they perceived themselves finite and small, specks and motes, moving with weak cunning and little wisdom amidst the play and interplay of the great blind elements and forces.*35*

The "hostile environment" where pressure from every side dictate its creatures survival is Fang’s world. The survival of the fittest and natural selection is graphically portrayed in the wolf-lynx-porcupine struggle, where One-Eye waits after catching a ptarmigan, for the outcome of the lynx and porcupine intent on survival for life. Then the chapter "The Law of Meat", shows the physical survival where Fang learns while hunting with his mother that the law of life is to kill or be killed. Even though the Darwinian and Spencerian motifs are clearly not discussed either in forceful or clear terms, they are strong parallels with their motifs disguised to suit the need of Jack London. The Darwinian "accident" proves Fang’s salvation when the Indian tribe is gripped in the throes of famine, while the other dogs perish and are eaten because of lack of food. Fang survives. Jack writes:

Fortune seemed to favor him. Always, when hardest pressed for food, he found something to kill. Again, when he was weak, it was his luck that none of the larger prey animals chanced upon him. Thus, he was strong from the two days eating a lynx had afforded
him, when the hungry wolf pack ran full tilt upon him. It was a long, cruel chase, but he was better nourished than they, and in the end outran them. And not only did he outran them, but, circling widely back on his track, he gathered in one of his exhausted pursuers.*36*

Now to go back to the novel, The Call of the Wild. This novel starts with the initiation of Buck to the nature of wild. His first experience at the hand of the red sweater man who forces him to learn the first lesson of his life that is submission to the code of violence and toil. As the story progresses further it starts becoming clear that life is going to be a brutal struggle with only the strongest coming out victorious. It will be this victorious individual who will be able to reap the harvest of being his own master and lead the others less capable than himself. Spenser writes: "The authority of the strongest and cunningest makes itself felt among savages, as in a herd of animals."37 Buck's first day experience at the trail shows him learning the work and working as a part of the team. Spenser again comes into picture as he has said that the most primitive states of development require individual desires and inclinations to be suppressed in favour of the group. Spenser says:

From the lowest living forms upwards, the degree of development is marked by the degree in which the several parts constitute a co-operative assemblage—are integrated into a group of organs that live for and by one another.*38*

Buck learning to borrow himself into the snow for warmth.
his theft of meat all shows his instinct to survive and remain strong. Jack writes:

The first theft marked Buck as fit to survive in the hostile Northland environment. It marked his adaptability, his capacity to adjust himself to changing conditions, the lack of which would have meant swift and terrible death.*39*

The struggle of survival in the most primitive circumstances always has the role of conflict among its members as it leads to the survival of the fittest only. Buck learns that it is only the winner who happens to remain alive whereas the looser are finished off by the rest. Buck realizes that only the fit who adapts himself to the prevailing environment has the right to live. At the same time conflict should not be allowed to reign in a group. Spencer says that many "creatures that hunt in packs, or that have sentinels, or that are governed by leaders, form bodies partially united by cooperation. These lead or sentinel members help keep order and insure the survival of the group. Thus struggle for leadership between Buck and Spitz is an inevitable echo of Spencer, as leadership has to emerge in order for a smooth and successful functioning of the team and as well as for its survival. As per Spencer, challenges for leadership like the struggle between Buck and Spitz, are frequent and at times necessary but too much of anything is bad and will automatically lead to the halt in the progress of the group and endanger its species, resulting in the breaking up of unit or disintegration. At
the same time Spencer says that disintegration can also occur if the personal desires of certain individual of the group is left unchecked. This has its parallel in the novel, not among the animals but among the finer, refined animals, the temporary masters of Buck, Charles, Mercedes and her brother Hal. The failure of these three who fail to adapt themselves to the hostile North and meet their death is the strongest comment on survival and adaptability Jack makes in his novel. There are many instances showing this theory of Spencer but even though Jack constructed his story on the theme of survival he drew no direct social or economic conclusions.

Jack’s next work which shows the influence of Spencer is The Sea-Wolf. It is rather wrong to say, that this work is more influenced than others but traces of Spencer’s influence can be seen in all his writings. We note in his works that theories about social organization plays important role where men or animals are engaged in an effort to survive. The Sea-Wolf’s world is a ship at sea where individuals are forced to struggle to survive the intolerable conditions enforced by the brutal captain, Wolf Larsen. The condition prevailing on the ship is nothing less than a primitive society and the setting of the novel is during that period of social evolution which Spencer refers to as the militaristic stage of human social development. the one that immediately follows the primitive state on the evolutionary
scale and proceeds the altruistic modern industrial society of the future. The ship, Ghost world's governing values are of an age which has long passed away and thus the inevitable disintegration of the Ghost is a must as it is not capable of adapting itself to the complexities of modern life. The life depicted on the Ghost is a microcosm of the world once it was and we note that the name Ghost is not accidentally written but chosen with an intention.

Spencer's definition of a primitive society, "homogeneous assemblage of individuals having like powers and functions" where a chief arises as the "authority of the strongest and cunningest makes itself felt among savages" has a strong parallel with the society on the Ghost as it is a feudal set up with everyone on board a vessel to the lord, Wolf Larsen. Again Spencer's theory comes into picture as he says that all types of communities are alike characterized by "separation into classes, as well as by separation of each class into more important and less important units. The social structure of the ship's crew portrays this picture of Spencer where we see individuals being ranked according to their specialization, for example men like Jack Horner, Smoke and Henderson who are strong and skilled with weapons and hunts seal for Wolf Larsen are being placed at the top of the crew ladder, whereas the ladder follows with man who act as steers and boat pullers for the hunters, following next in the ladder. This way the hierarchy goes down to the lowest like the cook, Thomas.
Mugridge, who is abused by every one on the ship. Spencer's militaristic stage of social development has the subordination of individual for the benefit of the group which is also the case on the Ghost. He says in *First Principles*:

> From the lowest living forms upward, the degree of development is marked by the degree in which the several parts constitute a cooperative assemblage—are integrated into a group of organs that live for and by one another. *43*

But as there is difference between Spencer's self denial and discipline needed for group survival with Larsen brutal oppression and cruelty, it is sure to lead to dissatisfaction and discontent among the members of the community; and when such is the situation of the community according to Spencer chaos and disintegration occurs in that community. The world of Ghost sees such rebellion in the attempt of desertation of the ship by Kelly, Johnson and Leech and an attempt on Larsen's life by the crew member. When such rebellion takes place it means a halt in evolution and progress towards a higher stage of development, thus leading to social disintegration and regression. Spencer say social progress can be achieved only by:

cessation from these antagonism which keeps alive the brutal element of the human nature and by persistence in a peaceful life which gives unchecked play to the sympathies and advance to higher forms of man and society essentially depend on the decline of
militancy.*44*

The end of Ghost is a ghost ship with all its crew gone and its society destroyed. The advance stage of cooperation among individual for the better good and advantageous growth of all could have only been reached if condition prevailing on Ghost was checked and nipped in the bud stage. The whole development of human being for better society can take place only if there is a equilibrium between the forces of the nature and the realm of an individual mind. Social progress which includes development of intellectual and moral capabilities can only be achieved writes Spencer:

cession from these antagonism which keeps alive the brutal elements of human nature and by persistence in a peaceful life which gives unchecked play to the sympathies.*45*

Jack always believed that to become a serious writer he had to have strong, working philosophy of life, as all his accumulated knowledge due to his voracious reading would remain unsystematized and useless. He did discover a philosophy in Spencer's First Principle which permanently effected his writing and thinking. Spencer's philosophy of the need to adapt to the environment in order to survive the struggle for the existence appealed to him most: and at the same time Spencers idea that only the fittest men survived and that the best of them dominated the rest is also present in Jack's writings. This philosophy suited the need of Jack
who himself had risen in the social hierarchy.

**FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE**

Nietzsche was the most important influence on Jack's thought. Although it is difficult to assess the impact of Nietzsche on Jack London and how much of Nietzsche Jack actually read, Nietzsche of all, remained a powerful intellectual presence whose hold on his imagination Jack struggle all his life to break. Nietzsche seems to offer Dionysian life and energy, the chase, the battle and the discovery. Looking at Wolf Larsen physical prowess and his belief that his body is made for utility, we find a similar strain in Nietzsche's Zarathustra. The world of **Ghost** is meant for the survival of the physically fit and Wolf warns Van Weyden that he can no longer stand on "dead men's legs". Likewise Zarathustra admonishes the aspiring man to climb under his own power: "if you would go high, use your legs. Do not let yourself carried up: do not sit on the backs and heads of others. I wish that I could put everyone who is sad back on firm land and firm legs."

The philosophy of Nietzsche says that Wolf is a creator and individual artist who is beyond good and evil and his moral values are those which he chooses to set for himself. There is an intellectual denial of existence of
good and evil on part of Wolf Larsen whereas Zarathustra asserts that they do not exist, save in the mind of the heard. "And whoever must be a creator in good and evil, variably, he must first be an annihilator and break values." The individualism of Wolf Larsen and Zarathustra admits no form of cooperation, socialism or altruism. According to them altruism is man's only chance for survival in the face of an indifferent nature and universe, and Zarathustra makes clear that the aspiring man must disavow any concern for his fellow man: "Thus my great love of the farthest demands it: do not spare your neighbor." Likewise many other similarity can be traced in his short stories. We also note the influence of Nietzsche's idea of marriage in Jack's thought especially in his work, The Sea - Wolf. As per Jack, Wolf is attracted to Maud because of the need in life to perpetuate the species, to produce an even higher form of life. Parkey quotes Schopenhauer in illuminating Wolf's attempted rape of Maud: "The brute is an embodiment of present impulses whose needs... arise only in relation to the objects that lie before it and within reason of those impulses .... " Zarathustra's comments on marriage are similarly doctrinaire: "Not merely to reproduce but to produce something higher -- toward that, my brothers, the garden of marriage should help you."

Jack London's own experience and personal "hereditary preferences" found articulation in Friedrich Nietzsche's theory of evolution wherein the struggle against all types
of odds resulted in the Superman. Jack was interested in all works of Nietzschean world conqueror, the strong and ruthless superman, the blond beasts who were destined to be the rulers and emperors ever all other men. He read and discussed several of the books by the cult of Superman. Thus Spake Zarathustra, The Will to Power, Genealogy of Morals, The Case of Wagner, The Antichrist and later wrote a preface for Leo Berg’s The Superman. The “philosopher-athlete” of George Bernard Shaw’s in Man and Superman had an immense appeal to Jack. Nietzsche preached the "will to power, demonic assertiveness" and had a beliefs in the values of action for itself, which had great emotional appeal for Jack without any clear philosophy. Wagenknecht, sums up Jack’s views:

Theoretically, he was a materialist, socialist, Darwinian, Nietzschean — all in one: and many of his admirers have trustingly envisioned him as perched upon the backs of all these horses, even they were galloping furiously in different directions.50

Jack was taken up by Nietzsche’s language and slogans such as "the blond beasts" "the glade perishes," the "Superman", "live dangerously" etc. He was emotionally and aesthetically attracted to Nietzsche’s ideas which thrilled him with his heroic vitalism and superman theory. Jack concurred:

I look to the strong man, the man on horseback to save the state from its own rotten futility. Nietzsche was right.... the world belongs to the true nobleman, to the great blond beasts, to the non-compromisers, to the
"yes sayers."

In Martin Eden, we see Nietzsche again on the level of abstraction. Martin proclaims his belief in Nietzsche when he is accused of being socialist, and rivals Ernest Everhard in his arrogance:

Nietzsche was right. I won't take the time to tell you who Nietzsche was but he was right. The world belongs to the strong - to the strong who are noble as well and who do not wallow in the swine trough of trade and exchange. The world belongs to the true noblemen, to the great blond beasts, to the non-compromisers, to the "yes-sayers". And they will eat you up, you socialists who are afraid of socialism and who think yourselves individualists. Your slave morality of the meek and lowly will never save you - oh, it's all Greek, I know, and I won't bother you any more with it. But remember one thing. There aren't half a dozen individualists in Oakland, but Martin Eden is one of them."

Nietzsche reinforced his belief in superior individuals and the necessity to attack corrupt institutions for e.g. his adventuring in "blond - beastly fashion" brought him a jail sentence for vagrancy, precipitating his conversion to altruistic responsibility of his fellow man. Jack identified with Nietzsche's portrait of the suffering, creative man who created beauty and embraced all of life. Nietzsche's ideas on culture and human psychology had a much deeper and more meaningful effect on Jack and it appears to have animated his thinking throughout his life. Avis Everhard, for example, the heroine of The Iron Heel, whose perspective is closer than her husband's to that of the benevolent editor, experience a calm detachment in the midst of horrible street fighting in the wake of the Chicago
uprising. She attributes this state of mind to a "passionless transvaluation of values" echoing Nietzsche's "Umwertung alter werte" to reflect a very positive potential for future spiritual development latent in her reaction.

We again go back to *The Sea-Wolf* and we note that while writing *The Sea-Wolf*, two ideas were part of Jack's thinking, first, he believed that the super-man was a materialist without any tempering of idealism, who would eventually fall victim to the melancholy as he had failed to work out a compromise between the flesh and the spirit. We find a preference to this idea in the very first chapter of *The Sea-Wolf*, where we see Van Weyden returning from a visit to Charley Furuseth, his friend who reads Nietzsche and is a proponent of a "subtly complex materialism." Later in the novel we again see Van Weyden pointing out that Larsen is suffering from the same melancholy as Furuseth, "the penalty which the materialist pays for his materialism."

And the second idea of Jack was that he believed that the superman was anti-social and would thus have no place in the new socialist society. He asserts his case of altruism in his article, "How to become a Socialist." "I could see myself only raging through life without end like one of Nietzsche's blondbeasts, lustfully raving and conquering by sheer superiority and strength." The result of this blond-beastliness could only leave a shattered, twisted body and spirit, which we see so clearly in the case of Larsen.
Jack wrote in a letter to George P. Brett, then president of the Macmillan Company, "I as a you know, am in the opposite intellectual camp from that of Nietzsche. Yet no man in my own camp stries me as does Nietzsche. Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and Jack's *The Sea-Wolf* has a strong perallal regarding men of extremely intense will giving little regard to human value of existence and its sentimentality. The driving power of both Wolf Larsen and Zarathustra have little to do with cooperation rather it tends to the will of power; and the desire to assert oneself regardless of the consequences. At the same time they both feel that only those men should be scorned who are incapable of evil rather than men who do evil. and by fiercely asserting oneself are both able to realize fully the act of living: as Schopenhauer, they assign a positive value to evil. In "Zarathustra's Prologue" we find the central thesis of Nietzsche's thought as well as Wolf's - a celebrating of the will to live:

 Behold I teach you the overman. The overman is the meaning of the earth let your will say: the overman shall be the meaning of the earth! I beseech you, my brothers, remain faithful to the earth, and do not believe those who speak to you of other-worldly hopes."58"

Van Weyden notices this traces of Nietzsche in Wolf at
the inhumanely treatment meted out to the dead sailor seabol. Wolf asserts his nihilistic philosophy to the unbelieving Van Weyden:

I believe that life is a mess... It is like yeast... a hour, a thing that moves for a minuet an hour, a year, or a hundred years, but that in the end will... their strength. The lucky eat the most and live the longest, that is all.*59*

Jack's understanding of Nietzsche was that he heralded the superman who was attuned to beauty and was not bound by slave morality, and symbolized the ecstasy of creativity, freedom and joy. Nietzsche exerted a powerful hypnotic attraction for him - so powerful that he symbolically tires to kill him off in The Sea-Wolf and Martin Eden.

KARL MARX : SOCIALISM

Socialism was the next most important influence on Jack's thought or so-called philosophy. It had an early effect which blossomed in later years. His interest in socialism was related both to evolutionary theory and to his attempt to rise above a purely materialistic vision of the universe and man's place in it. According to him socialism was a higher form of civilization because of its essential moral nature. Along with his notion of evolution was linked his idea that socialist leaders would rise and instruct the masses. His socialist essays, "The Class Struggle," "How I became a Socialist. " " The question of the Maximum." "The
Scab,” "The Tramp” and "What Communities lose by the Competitive System" to name only a few important ones, showed the virtues of socialist society and said that it was founded on sympathy, service, altruism, cooperation and brotherhood. These qualities of socialism is brought forth in Jack’s "Introduction" to Upton’s Sinclair’s "The Cry for Justice," an anthology of socialist writings:

The readers will learn that the world can be fashioned a fair world indeed by the humans who inhabit it, by the very simple and yet most difficult process of coming to an understanding of the world. Understanding, after all, is merely sympathy in its fine correct sense. And such sympathy in its genuineness, makes toward unselfishness. Unselfishness inevitably connotes service. And service is the solution of the entire vexations problems of man.*60*

Karl Marx’s The Communist Manifesto, drew Jack London attention while he was on the ‘Road.’ Many a time it figured in talks with his ‘Road’ associates. These conversation aroused a keen interest in Jack to find out about Marx’s writings. When he returned from his hoboing, he got hold of a copy of The Communist Manifesto and was very impressed by it, as it answered practically all the queries which had piled up in his head. The impact was so great that he copied into his notebook the words:

The whole history of mankind has been a history of contests between exploiting and exploited; a history of these class struggles shows the evolution of economic civilization just as Darwin’s studies show the evolution of man; with the coming of industrialism and concentrated capital, a stage has been reached whereby the exploited cannot attain its emancipation, from the
ruling class without once and for all emancipating society at large from all future exploitation, oppression class distinctions and class struggle. 61

The Communist Manifesto became his guide and mentor. He used it whenever he got a chance to speak about socialism. He incorporated it in his essay, short stories and novels. No doubt he discarded those ideas which went counter to his own preconceived prejudices but three basic concept which he initially drew from the Manifesto remained with him till the end of his socialist career: there were:

a) the belief in the class struggle,
b) the conviction that private ownership of the means of production and the interest of the majority of the people were opposed,
c) and confidence in the inevitable emergence of socialism or the eventual triumph of the proletariat.

Jack in his memories, associates the development of his political vision viz. socialism, with experiences in the industrial shops, in prison etc. which introduced him to the reality of the working-class life. The greatest awakening in him regarding class-consciousness came after his initiation into the Erie County Penitentiary: it opened his eyes with realizations that he was a tiny puny creature in the hands of the capitalist and stood no chance against it all by himself. As per Joan London, Jack’s socialism was mainly derived from his associations with the socialist of the Bay Region especially the influence of his friends were
great. He relied heavily on conversation with four brilliant friends for his education in Marxism: Frank Strawn Hamilton, George Speed, Austin Lewis, Ernest Untermann. Lewis and Untermann were also translators of Marxist works in England. Each of them contributed their own snare—from Austin Lewis, the labour attorney, Jack learned much of his Marx. George Speed and Jane Roulston had their own part in Jack’s socialism. The impression of Jane Roulette was so deep in Jack that she appears in his writing as Anna Roulston, the Red Virgin, a fascinating lovable genius whom all men desired, but her devotion to the Cause was so all-embracing that she denied herself love, marriage and motherhood. Of all his friends of the Oakland Socialist, the strongest influence cast on Jack was by the other worldly Strawn—Hamilton who cleared many of Jack’s ideas, where he felt he lacked knowledge. Strawn—Hamilton appears in Martin Eden in the form of Russ Brissenden and as per Joan the glowing passage which describes Brissenden speech is a replica of Strawn—Hamilton:

Living language flowed from him. His thin lips, like the dies of a machine, stamped out phrases that cut and stung... mellow phrases of glow and glory, of haunting beauty, reverberant of the mystery and inscrutableness of life... phrases that sounded clear as silver, that were luminance as starry spaces, that epitomized the final world of science and yet said something more—the poet’s word... but ungraspable connotations of common words. He, by some wonder of vision, saw beyond the farthest outpost of empiricism, where was no language for narration, and yet, by some golden miracle of speech, investing known words with unknown, significance, he conveyed to Martin’s consciousness messages that were incommunicable to ordinary
No doubt he read Karl Marx’s *Das Capital* during his Klondike stay but we find that Jack’s youthful socialism can be more accurately described as anticapitalism and his socialism was basically his own ideas derived in their own forms. He wrote about his belief in the “people’s need to overthrow class rule.” in his article, “Direct Legislation Through the Initiative and Referendum.”

The people no longer forced to hire servants to do their thinking for them, the people eager to exercise their sovereignty, the people glad to escape the bondage of class rule, would spring into the arena, buckle on their armor, and do their own thinking, voting and vetoing. Then would be disenfranchised welcome enfranchisement, while our party tyrants were relegated to obscurity, and the nation with renewed vigor, resume her triumphant progress. Then would our honest men enter into public life; then would “purity in politics” be not only the watchword but the accomplished fact; then would truth, justice, and equity reign. *64*

His later socialist essays and articles also show that his socialist ideas were his own with traces of influence strewn in between, as in his essay, “The Class Struggle,” he drew on his reading of *The Communist Manifesto* and reiterated a Marxist view of history:

“The history of society,” They say, “is a history of class struggles.” Patrician struggled with plebeian in early Rome: the king and the burghers, with the nobles of the Middle Ages later on, the king and the nobles with the bourgeoisie; and today the struggle is on between the triumphant bourgeoisie and the capital which sells its labor for a living. *65*

It is needless to go into details about Jack’s
socialism, as yeomen service to it has already been rendered by many. Jack was not a true Marxist but he was a rebel protesting against the injustice of capitalist society. Similarity lay only in their social vision as Marx social vision was closer to Jack's feeling and perception of his early experience and Jack used socialism as a means for his own salvation.

CARL JUNG

Throughout his writing career Jack embraced various intellectual stance, and it was during the fag end of his career that he turned to the new psychological theories which had caught the imagination of the American people. He read the books of Sigmund Freud, Morton Prince and Carl Jung. Looking at Jack's career, we know that typically his reading was enthusiastically eclectic rather than scholarly and he seized upon a provocative book rather than thoroughly investigating the whole work. Even though he read Freud, Prince and Jung, we are not sure which books or articles of Freud or Prince he read but one thing is sure that he was deeply impressed by Jung's Psychology of the Unconscious. Charmain London mentions that Jack owned this volume and underlined various passages in it. She suggests that the summer of 1916 found Jack intensively reading and discussing this new science and further writes about Jack's exclamation
regarding this new world: "Mate women. I tell you I am standing on the edge of a world so new, so terrible, so wonderful, that I'm almost afraid to look over into it."

She also recounts the time when Jack cheerfully read to her from Beatrice M. Hinkle's introduction to Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious:*

> The value of self-consciousness lies in the fact that man is enabled to reflect upon himself and learn to understand the true origin and significance of his actions and opinions; that he may adequately value the real level of development and avoid being self-deceived and therefore inhibited from finding his biological adaption. He need no longer be unconscious of the motives underlying his actions or hide himself behind a changed exterior, in other words, be merely a series of reactions to stimuli, as the mechanists have, but he may to a certain extent become a self-creating and self-determining being."68"

This was the world of ancient archetypes and primitive myths, a totally new world which opened the window of his intellectual probing into the Polynesian myths. These myths which he had listened in disbelief sprang forth in his creative work resulting in a series of extraordinary stories during the last six months of his life. These works were published posthumously in *The Red One* (1918) and *On the Makaloa Mat* (1919), signified not only a pioneering effort on Jack's part but it also opened up a new dimension in modern literature. Jack is credited with being the first American writer to make use of Jung's theory of racial memory and archetypes. How indebted Jack was to *Psychology of the Unconscious* is clearly established in the last
Alaskan story he wrote—"Like Argus of the Ancient Times."
As per Jung, a wandering hero, representing "ever—restless
desire" undertakes a perilous "night journey" into a
mysterious land, representing a subconscious secret, in
search of the "treasure difficult to attain." Finally the
journey ends in the death for the sun—hero wanderer which
is "the highest summit of life," resulting with the
heroe's return to water (the womb) and emerging reborn in
the east. Likewise Tartwater, the seventy-five—year old
protagonist who is called "Old Hero" in "Argus" is driven by
gold "fever" to search for treasure and becomes lost in a
heavy Arctic snowfall during the long night of winter. As
Tartwater comes close to death and drifts between
consciousness and unconsciousness. Jack describes the state
of Tartwater's awareness in Jungian terminology:

More and more time he spent in his torpor, unaware of
what was day—dream and what was sleep—dream in the
content of his unconsciousness....Old Tartwater...
recovered, within himself, the infantile mind of the
child-man of the early world... and went to myth-
making, and suntheorizing, himself hero-maker and the
hero in quest of the immemorable treasure difficult
attainment.... Either must he attain the treasure—for
so ran the inexorable logic of the all-devouring sea,
the blackness eater of the light that swallowed to
extinction the sun each morning in the east and that
had become to man man's first symbol of immortality
through rebirth... *70*

In fact the whole story is cast in Jungian concepts, with
Jung's concept of libido figuring in Tartwater's reaction to
his life and surrounding. Jack had underlined in his copy of
Psychology of the Unconscious, the definition of "libido" by
Dr. Hinkle:

He. Jung, saw in the term libido a concept of unknown nature, comparable with Bergson's elan vital, a hypothetical energy of life ... (a) cosmic energy or urge manifested in the human being (and like) the energy of physics.*71*

The echo of this new world reverberates in the other five stories, all collected in On the Makaloa Mat. The Jungian doctrine present in Charamainbiography states that the libido can be released from disturbing subconscious secrets and can find creative outlets if the troubled person confesses his secrets. This is seen in the humorous fiction. "When Alice Told Her soul." Here Alice Akana who runs a brothel, has accumulated information about the indiscretions of Honolulu's social elite. A desire for redemption is awakened in her by Abel Ah Yo and is told that she must make a public confession in order to be redeemed. The narrator of the story, who is Jack, intrudes at this point to show his awareness of the new science of psychology:

Scientifically, though he did not know it and though he continually jeered at science, Abel Ah Yo was right... The result of such a baring would be unity, tranquility, happiness, cleansing, redemption and immortal life.*72*

The next story, "The Tears of Ah kim," is explained by Jungian design and is related to the Oedipal complex which is Jung's concept of "the sacrifice." Ah Kim who has been regularly punished with a bamboo stick by his mother cries
on the last day of his beating which indicates his guilt of
incestuous impulses and his desire for being punished for
it. The bamboo stick, "predominantly a mother symbol,"
signifies authority and punishment and also Mrs. Tai Fu’s
motherhood and its phallic connotations reinforce Ah ’ kim’s
incestuous guilt. Jung writes in his chapter, "The Sacrifice"
"that in order to overcome guilt and achieve maturity, a
person must find a "sexual object," to "replace the forbidden
mother," which explains the marriage of Ah Kim to LiFaa
wherein the libido energy is transferred to another object.
Jung writes, freedom from the mother is symbolized in myths
by an allusion to death followed by the new, mature
relationship which evokes a sense of eternal germination
and renewal and floral imagery.

The remaining three stories in On the Makaloa Mat, "The
Water-Baby," "Shin Bones," and "The Bones of kahelili"*-testifies to the influence of Jungain thought and are imbued
with mythic overtones and an examination of the contents of
unconsciousness. Richard O’Conner writes about Jack’s
fascination with psychology as of "a man sliding down the
face of a cliff and grabbing at rocks and bushes to stay his
fall." Whereas Charmain writes that Jack was ready "to
face his naked soul... but that was not new with him. It was
the old tragedy that had begun with his earliest
probings."

The last story before his death, "The water - Baby",

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is quite revealing narrative wherein John Lakana (Hawaiian name of Jack London) fishing with Kohokumu, an aged Hawaiian, discusses myths, the scientific theories of evolution, the nature of dreams and the meaning of life and death. Then claiming the sea as his mother kohokumu articulates his primitive religious beliefs with those primordial images which according to Jung, emanate from mankind's "collective unconscious." I quote in length to show this:

"From her, the sea, my mother, I received my strength. Whenever I return to her arms, as for a breast clasp, as I have returned this day, I grow strong again and immediately - she, to me, is the milk giver, the life source -- "

Shades of Antaeus!" thought I.

"Some day, "old Kohokum rambled on, "when I am really old, I shall be reported of men as drowned in the sea. This will be an idle thought of men. In truth, I shall have returned into the arms of my mother, there to rest under the heart of her breast until the second birth of me, when I shall emerge into the sun a flashing youth of splendor like Maui himself when he was golden young."

"A queer religion," I commented.

When I was younger I muddled my poor head over queer religions," old Kohokum retorted, "ButListan... Why have I thought this thought of my return to my mother and of my rebirth from my mother into the sun? You do not know, I do not know, save that, without whisper of man's voice or printed word, without prompting from otherwhere, this thought has arisen from within me, from the deeps of me that are as deep as the sea... Is this thought that I have thought a dream?"

"Perhaps it is you that are a dream," I laughed...

There is much more in dreams than we know," he assured me with great solemnity."Dreams go deep, all the way down, maybe to before the beginning..... "*75*

"Shin Bones" and "The Bones of Kahelili" have been explained in detail by James Moollintok and in the process revealing
the Jungain interest of Jack in libido theory and its revelation in myths. Charmain remarks on Jack’s absorption in Jungain theory during the last phase of his life:

Throughout Dr. Jung’s chapter on “Symbolism of Mother and Rebirth,” there are penciled indications of Jack’s grasp of the meaning of folk-lore and mythology of recorded time. Also the comprehension of how to raise lower desires to higher expressions. He has underscored Jesus’s challenge to Nicodemus, cited by Jung. “Think not carnally or thou art carnal, but think symbolically and thou are spirit.”*76*.

For Jack London Jung’s Psychology of the Conscious was just the last in a series of romantic calls to completion, to self-identifying and self-sustaining nobility.

Jack was a prolific reader; throughout his short life he digested all those ideas which went along with his ideas and discarded or modified the rest to suit his philosophy. Numerous influence can be traced to his writings, even his novel. Before Adam was influenced by the “germ plasm theory of heredity” formulated by the German biologist, August Weismann and his The Scarlet Plague shows pessimism and influence of the socialist he so much admired, H.G. Wells. In relation with The Sea-Wolf we notice in the formation of Wolf Larsen, Milton, Robert Browning, Dante to name a few. His works displays an impressive amount of information, a wide range of reading; but it is unassimilated, disordered information and never suggest to the reader the strong consistent view of life evident in the greatest writers; but the medley of conflicting and contradictory ideas represent

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an "advanced" mind of about 1900. Like kaleidoscope fragments of coloured glass, Jack's chaotic, eclectic beliefs take on a semblance of order when viewed in the right perspective. Had Jack lived a little longer he would have contributed a great philosophy to the world of literature and mankind in general.

INFLUENCE OF JACK LONDON ON OTHER WRITERS

The decade of the twenties witnessed other major American writers whose careers and reputation have eclipsed Jack or his followers: Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Faulkner. We can see in those who followed Jack debts to the beginning he made: Hemingway's simplicity of style and rugged masculinity, Dreiser's disillusionment with the American dream, even the macho narrative of Norman Mailer or James Jones. All these might well pay a tribute to Jack London. Martin Eden anticipates the disenchanted success novels of Theodore Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, and Scott Fitzgerald. Jack ushered in a new prose for the modern fictionist which was particularly well suited to the short story and to the depiction of violence and physical action found in the works of Hemingway, Ring Lardner and Norman Mailer.

Jack's self-dramatizing style of existence and his short, jerky bald method of writing especially in *South Sea Tales* is a remarkable forecast of Ernest Hemingway in tone
and style. It seems Hemingway forgot to acknowledge the inventor of the mode. Even though no clear cut influence can be traced on Hemingway. Prof. Earle Labour writes that he was told by Ernest’s sister Marcelline Hemingway Sanford that there were several copies of Jack’s books in the Hemingway’s home that Ernest had read in his youth. The stylistic similarities of Hemingway with Jack London is quite evident:

The niggers spread out and headed for the shore, swimming. The water was carpeted with bobbing heads, and I stood up, as in a dream and watched it all - the bobbing heads and the heads that ceased to bob. Some of the long shots were magnificent. Only one man reached the beach, but as he stood up to wade ashore, Saxtorph got him. It was beautiful. And when a couple of niggers ran down to drag him out of the water, Saxtorph got them, too.

I thought everything was over then, when I heard the rifle go off again. A nigger had come out of the cabin companion on the run for the rail and gone down in the middle of it. The cabin must have been full of them. I counted twenty. They came up one at a time and jumped for the rail. But they never got there. It reminded me of trapshooting. A black body would pop out of the companion, bang would go Saxtorph’s rifle, and down would go the black body. Of course, those below did not know what was happening on deck, so they continued to pop out until the last one was finished off. *78*

Further we see the intimation of the "new prose" as described in "The Jokers of New Gibbon", underplaying human suffering:

It is a devil island, and old koho is the the big chief devil of them all.... I remember six years ago, when I landed there in the British cruiser. The niggers cleared out the bush, of course, but we found several who couldn’t get away. One was his latest wife. She had been hung up by one arm in the sun for two days and
nights. We cut her down, but she died just the same. And stocked out in fresh running water, up to their necks, were there women. All their bones were broken and their joints crushed. The process is supposed to make them tender for eating. They were still alive. Their vitality was remarkable. One woman, the oldest, lingered nearly ten days. *79*

Jack can virtually be said to have invented the modern prize - fight story. Jack's *The Game* (1905) deals with scenes and themes that link his vision of boxing to the fiction of Hemingway who was fascinated by boxing, its characters and its metaphors, throughout his career. Hemingway too was concerned with the solitary individual who tested himself in a rugged and adverse conditions. *The Game* is an overdrawn inquiry into the meaning of life and death. Genevieve's stunned bewilderment at the swift death of Joe in combat is similar in tone to Frederick Henry’s reaction to the death of Catherine in childbirth in Hemingway’s *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) Hemingway denounces "the game" whose rules are never made clear:

That was what you did. You died. You did not know what it was about. You never had time to learn. They threw you in and told you the rules and the first time they caught you off base they killed you.*80*

Earlier Frederick Henry had thought, "This was the end of the trap. This is what people got for loving each other."

In *A Farewell to Arms*, Hemingway shows war and love to be the same biological trap that leads to death while in *The Game*, Jack separated his concerns into narrower opposites: The Game (masculinity, violence, the courting of death)
verses a female principle (solace, softness, peace the
courting ritual of lovers) Both novelist, however, show the
surviving lover stunned by death that comes by way of a
larger "game" which is not understood and both offer a
concluding fatalism of flat, factual existence. Jack's
invention of modern prize-fight opened up an arena depicting
the role of their protagonist and the vicious emerging grip
of money. By 1915, Ring Lardner had written Champion with
its savage parody of a boxing champion and during the next
decade Hemingway created stolid Jack Brenner in 'Fifty
Grand', the failed Ivy League hero Robert Cohn in The Sun
Also Rises the stoical Ole Anderson in "The Killers", and
the grotesque Ad Francis in The Battler. And we note that
Hemingway's complete gallery of boxers parallels Jack's
earlier character in variety and interest. The coming
year's saw this sport being used by writers to explore and
expose the seamy underside of the American sport and notable
among them is Norman Mailer who comments on the American
fears and nightmares through his deep probings.

Jack's Martin Eden reflects a technique depicting the
multitudinous thoughts and feelings passing through Martin's
mind: in other words, a process fundamental to the poetic
imagination which reveals a major innovation of the modern
novel — the stream-of-consciousness:

Martin's trick of visioning was active as ever. His
brain was a most accessible storehouse of remembered
fact and fancy, and its contents seemed ever ordered
and spread for his inspection. Whatever occurred in the
instant present, Martin's mind immediately presented associated antithesis or similitude which ordinarily expressed themselves to him in vision. It was sheerly automatic.... Just as Ruth's face, in a momentary jealousy, had called before his eyes a forgotten moonlight gale, and as Professor Caldwell made him see again the Northeast Trade herding the white billows across the purple sea, so, from moment to moment, not disconcerting but rather identifying and classifying, new memory - visions rose before him, or spread under his eyelids, or were thrown upon the screen of his consciousness.*82*

The technique is almost cinematic and even though Jack does not approach James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) or Marcel Proust or William Faulkner's *The Sound and Fury* (1931) but in his concern with the reservoir of memory and the principle of association, London does anticipates their experiments.

F. Scott Fitzgerald's works from *The Great Gatsby* to *The Last Tycoon* shows the influence of Jack's work. Even though no solid evidence has been produced in this regard, one is struck by the similarity between Dick Forest and Dick Diver, both of whom are trying to cope with a wife devoted alternately to his guidance and to her own freedom, a wife who brings on disaster not so much through adulterous infidelity as through subconscious rebellion against being the captive princess. Paula Destern Forrest is a precursor of the American girl whom Zelda in life and through her husband's glorification came to typify. We also note further parallel between Forrest and Gatsby, who is also a grand host of great parties paid for by big business deals,
his shady associations with Meyer Wolfshein being analogous to Forrest's cynical manipulation of the revolution in Mexico. At the same time Forrest plays Tom Graham the interloper who harbors the precious romantic flame. In Graham's case the flame is perhaps more like Monroe Stahr's than Gatsby; for Graham has never laid eyes on Paula before, he merely sees in her aspects of the wife he loved and lost as a young man adventuring on the South Seas. Likewise quite a part of Fitzgerald works has parallel with Jack's *The Little Lady of the Big House*.

Jack also wrote science fiction, decades before the first science fiction magazine popularized the genre. Though Jack was not even one of the first science fiction writer, he did play a part in the science fiction world. Philip Jose Farmer, an award-winning contemporary science fiction writer, tells of Jack's influence on both the genre of science fiction and on himself personally. He describes the elements of Jack's fiction which he felt specifically moulded science fiction writing:

> These were the awe of the vastness, harshness, and indifference of nature set against a fierce admiration of man's fighting spirit and intellect; man's insistence on saying Yea in the face of the inevitable Nay; London's moulding of fantasy with reality, so that the two seem to be one; his basic dictum (anticipated by Heraclitus but are as true now as then) that character determines destiny; the striving by men of awareness to prove that though they came from the apes, they were more than the apes; the importance of using vivid physical detail to exemplify a philosophical basis; the importance of telling a story as if it were fuel for a fire.*83*
Jack's *The People of the Abyss* had a direct affect on George Orwell. George used Jack's method of conscious descent into the life of an English tramp in order to discover the effect of poverty and rotten diet upon himself, but George plunged wholly into the lower depths and out of it emerged a greater work. *Down and Out in Paris and London* than Jack's *The People of the Abyss*. Also Jack's *The Iron Heel* is a sort of prelude to Orwell's *1984* depicting a nightmarish future when America is ruled by a brutal, bloody-handed oligarchy. Then Jack’s apocalyptic ending in *The Iron Heel* in a way looks forward to later climaxes in American fiction such as the mob violence at the end of Nathaniel West's *The Day of the Locust* or the electrocution of David Scheard in Henry Roth’s *Call It Sleep*. 

Jack's "Told in the Drooling ward" reminds us in style, comedy and realism of certain fictional experiments with the feeble-minded to come, in such works as the Benjy section of *The Sound and the Fury*: the portrayal of Lenny in Steinbeck’s "Of Mice and Men", and above all, the inverted world of complete insance asylum novel, ken kessey’s *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*. Thus we note the various influence Jack London cast on the various writers. No doubt Jack did not write a Great American novel but he behaved like the Great American novelist and created the image of
the heroic macho writer. Very few acknowledged Jack's contribution to their talent. We note that he got little thanks from Dos Passos or Steinbeck or Kerouac for pioneering the hobo novel in *The Road*. Norman Mailer never came forth to show his indebtedness to this great writer for the subject of prizefighting and which was glorified by him in his writing. Even Henry Miller forgot his earlier praise of Jack in public later on, except for his acceptance of Jack's talent in a private letter at the time of London's death wherein he admitted that there was not another educated writer of equal courage and fiery energy in America. And of the leading American writers of the next generation only Eugene O'Neill had the grace to acknowledge that Jack London was a major source of his inspiration.

Though more can be written on Jack's influence on others, it is neither fair nor is it possible to trace any writers influence on others. But we do find a certain identical views in relations with ideas and stylistic pattern. What we are interested is not in a transaction of lending and borrowing --but in the kindling of a creative spark in writers by London at an opportune moment.

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1. Hendricks and Shepard. p. 86.
2. Foner p. 52.
3. Ibid pp. 52-53.
8. Ibid. p. 22.
9. Ibid. p. 22.
10. Ibid. p. 23.
11. Ibid. p. 23.
15. Mc Clintock. p. 32.
18. Ibid. pp. 16-17.
8ks.) p. 106

20. Ibid. p. 108.


22. Ibid pp. 326-327.


24. Hendricks and Shepards Letters p. 117.


29. Ibid p. 98.

30. Ibid p. 425


34. Ibid pp. 100-101.


36. Ibid p 197


38. Ibid. p. 17.

41. Ibid. p.22.
42. Ibid. p.22.
43. Ibid p.17.
44. Ibid p. 24.
46. Ibid p.19.
47. Ibid p.19.
49. Foner p.53.
52. Ibid p.297.
55. Foner p.351.
57. Parkey. p.16.
58. Ibid p.18.
59. Bruccoli p.35.
60. Foner p.390.
61. Ibid. p.42.
63. Ibid. p.186.
64. Johnstone. p.36.


68. Ibid p.357.
75. London On the Makaloa Mat, pp.150-152.


81. Ibid p. 320.

