CHAPTER VI

THE VARIOUS WAYS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
THOUGHT AND IMAGERY IN DAY LEWIS'S POETRY
The analysis conducted in the foregoing chapters reveals that Day Lewis wants his poems 'to think', and that there is a good deal of philosophical thought in his poetry. The analysis also reveals that the element of thought is related to Day Lewis's experience and that it is expressed often in terms of striking images. We have seen how thought in Day Lewis's poetry is 'half-discursive' and 'half-evocative'. Although it has been amply demonstrated that there is a close, sometimes, organic, association of thought and imagery in his poetry, it still remains to make a general and systematic study of the nature of the ways of relationship between thought and imagery in his poetry. The aim of this chapter is to examine the various ways of relationship between thought and imagery in general, as found in the poetry of Day Lewis.

Of course, it would be far from truth if we think that the expressiveness of poetry is entirely dependent on imagery and forget the other methods through which a poet might introduce his ideas. Poets use a number of techniques in addition to imagery in expressing thought. The techniques range from the most intellectual
to the most symbolic — from direct statements to symbolic suggestions. Let us look at some of the techniques employed by Day Lewis in expressing thought:

(1) He employs the method of offering quotations (as in *Transitional Poem*, *From Feathers To Iron*, *The Magnetic Mountain* etc.) at the beginning of a poem as a clue to the thought of the poem, a method widely employed by Valery.  

(2) To make the transitions in his thought clear, he uses, sometimes, what might be called 'unpoetical matter' (as, say, in his social criticism in *The Magnetic Mountain*).

(3) To make his ideas and feelings clear, he sometimes employs the technique of "self-dramatisation" (as in a number of the sections in *Transitional Poem*).

(4) Sometimes he employs not one, but a number of characters symbolising the various selves in him (like Tom, Dick and Harry in *An Italian Visit*).

(5) Sometimes he resorts to direct statements of thought and appends some notes from either philosophers or other writers by way of
clarification (there are a large number of examples for this technique in *Transitional Poem*).

We are, however, not concerned with these techniques, since our main focus is on imagery which is the primary 'technique' of Day Lewis in dealing with thought in poetry. Before we plunge into the topic of the relation between thought and imagery it would, I think, be profitable, for the purpose of comparative reference, to see first Day Lewis's use of direct statement in presenting thought.

There are some poems of Day Lewis which begin with a direct statement of an idea, which develops, as the poem progresses, in what looks like a semi-discursive vein. There are images in those poems, but those images are employed either to substantiate or to explain the direct statement made in the beginning. Poems such as "Departure in the Dark", "Days before a Journey", "The Hieroglyph", and "Moral" belong to this category. These poems present statements of experience and imagery is subordinated to those statements. The poems generally begin with an idea and discuss the idea in the lines
that follow. "Departure in the Dark" begins with

Nothing so sharply reminds a man
he is mortal
As leaving a place
In winter morning's dark, the
air on his face
Unkind as the touch of sweating
metal... 4

After a few lines of the description as to how the world
looks dreary and extinct at the point of departure, the
poet makes a direct statement which sounds like a
soliloquy of the poet explaining something to himself:

There is always something at such
times of pass over,
When the dazed heart
Beats for it know not what, whether
you part
From home or prison, acquaintance
or lover —
Something wrong with the time-table,
something unreal
In the scrambled meal
And the bag ready packed by the door
as though the heart
Has gone ahead, or is staying here
forever. 5
There is no synthesis or compression in the expression; there is no employment of metaphor; but for the musically arranged syllables there is nothing to sound poetic in the passage. The beauty and the depth of the thought itself makes the lines poetic. In the next stanza appears an image to explain the idea 'the desire going forth meets the desire returning' -- the image of the Israelites on the point of departure. The last stanza, once again, presents thought in a direct statement:

At this blind hour the heart is informed of nature's.
Ruling that man
Should be no where a more tenacious settler than
Among wrythorns and ruins, yet nurture
A seed of discontent in his ripest ease.
There's a kind of release
And a kind of torment in every good-bye for everyman
And will be, even to the last of his dark departures.  

The poem seems to be thought-dominated in that it appeals to the reader more through the head than through the senses. The beauty of thought in the poem depends on the analysis of experience -- experience which is common
both to the poet as well as to the reader. The reader feels a sense of revelation about the experience, which is vague till he reads the poem, because the poet has given him a clarification. The poet has done something both for himself and the reader; the poet has communicated something to himself and incidentally communicated something to the reader also. Lack of images, either sensuous or otherwise, does not make the poem prosaic; the intrinsically emotional quality of thought raises the poem to the level of poetry.

Lewis does not fashion his themes merely out of the ideas relating to common experiences; sometimes Day Lewis writes poems which are based on a line or a passage which he came across in his studies. A quotation is generally given at the beginning of the poem to provide the poem with a context so that the reader can place the thought generated by the poem in its proper context. For example, the poem 'Moral' seems to be a kind of development and study of an opinion expressed by A.N. Whitehead. Whitehead says, "Moral education is impossible apart from a habitual vision of greatness". That Lewis sees eye to eye with the great mathematician and philosopher is evident from the various references
Lewis makes to him in his criticism. It is probably because Whitehead is one of the philosophers who gives great importance to the intuitive vision of the poet that Day Lewis likes him. The first three stanzas in "Moral" praise the saints and their visions and present the thesis —

Still we need
The vision that keeps burning from
Saintly trust, heroic deed.

The Fourth Stanza brings the thought to a completion and appears like advice:

Accept the flawed self, but aspire
To flights beyond it; wiser far
Lifting your eyes unto the hills
Than lowering them to sift the mire.

The poem is full of explicit statements instead of images which present thought in an implied manner.

Next to presenting thought through direct statement, Day Lewis employs the intellectual images, or the images of thought to express his ideas. These intellectual images seem to be greatly similar to direct statements, but they are not really so. They can,
in fact, be really called the 'images of thought' or the intellectual images, because however direct and undisguised they seem to be as statements, they still contain some element of the sensuous, even though it may be difficult for the reader to have any strong sensuous impressions. What distinguishes this kind of images from direct statements is that whereas the direct statements do not contain any sensuous element, these images contain a latent sensuous quality, though the sensuous so found is often subordinated to the intellectual. These images are usually introduced by Day Lewis when he tries to introduce concepts, either philosophical or political. What distinguishes this kind of expression from the other kinds is that these statements do not receive the support of any 'vehicle' apart from themselves; on the other hand we find in them only thought in the process of its formation or evolution. Generally Day Lewis appends notes from philosophers or creative writers whose ideas he wants to introduce through intellectual images. While suggesting the attainment of the single mind as the only method to overcome the disorder felt both within and without, Day Lewis says,
It is certain we shall attain
No life till we stamp on all
Life the tetragonal
Pure symmetry of brain. 11

'Till we stamp on all life...brain' is an image containing some element of the sensuous, but the poet directs the reader's attention to the intellectual element by appending a note. The note appended to the lines from Spinoza indicates that they refer to the interactionism in Spinoza in conceiving the mind as the source of order. 'The tetragonal symmetry' is expected by the poet to suggest the geometric study of life, so much desired by Descartes and finally employed by Spinoza to an approximation of perfection.

The statements of thought are often emotional statements made in contexts where the emotion is justified. After reaching the conclusion that nothing can perturb the single mind, Day Lewis says:

But there is nought surprising
Can explode the single mind
Let figs from thistles fall
Or stars from their pedestal
This architecture will stand. 12
The single mind being the epipsyche and as the poet is still in the process of attaining it, the emotion behind the emphasis in the statement seems poetic. Though the strength of the single mind is expressed in terms of architecture, the metaphor does not seem greatly sensuous as the visual element is subordinated to the intellectual. A similar way of sub-ordinating the sensuous to the intellectual is found in many instances. For example, when Day Lewis writes of the eternal order behind the temporal modes, expressing his doubt as to why he is not satisfied with things as they look, he says:

Why must I then unleash by brain
To sweat after some revelation
Behind the rose, heedless if truth maintain
On rose-bloom her station? 13

The thought dealt with in the lines is metaphysical, but the context makes it appear an emotional statement by being framed as a question. By implying that the 'rose-bloom' is the temporal mode and the truth that remains behind it is the eternal law, Day Lewis is evidently questioning himself as to why he is worried about something behind the appearance. The rose-bloom, as it appears in the passage, does not create any sensuous
impression on the reader's mind as the poet does not want the reader to visualise it. The image of the rose-bloom is subsumed under the metaphysical idea. The intellectual images also contain the element of the sensuous, but the poet manipulates that element so artistically that the reader is not allowed time to realise it. To say that man is not satisfied with what he has and still craves for something beyond his limitations, Day Lewis says,

It is an easier thing
To give up great possessions
Than to forego one farthing
Of the rare unpossessed.  

The statement seems more direct than the one just cited, but 'one farthing' still suggests something familiar and concrete. Even in highly intellectual utterances there is something concrete which limits thought from becoming entirely abstract. When Day Lewis says

...individual truth must lie
Within diversity;
Under the skin all creatures are
one race
Proved integers but by their face.
he is talking of perceiving things sub specie aeternitatis; things in their eternal order. The words 'creatures' as something concrete substitutes the idea of the temporal mode in the passage; what is really an abstract idea becomes comprehensible to the reader with the help of a relatively concrete image.

The same method is found working in many passages of Day Lewis. To express a general idea a particular image or a particular example is chosen so that the passage becomes less prosaic. To say that "those who rob the public for private good are dishonest" sounds too general and prosaic; but to say

Who ruins farm and factory
To keep a private mansion
Is a bad landlord, he shall get
No honourable mention. 16

is to express a general idea with the help of a particular
example. 'The farm', 'the factory' and the 'private mansion' are images that could be immediately grasped, however vague and indefinite they seem to be.

A third method which Day Lewis follows to deal with thought is to present an idea and then to illustrate it with the help of an image. This method of introducing the universal in terms of the particular where the particular is chosen for the sake of the universal is seen working in juxtaposition and simile. There are many instances in Day Lewis where there are direct general statements juxtaposed with images which are tethered to each other either by 'emotional logic' or by some connecting word. In this kind of tethering it is possible to distinguish the thought and the image separately and clearly. Images, in this process, are employed by the poet to explain a difficult idea or to illustrate it. The relationship in these passages seems similar to the paradigmatic construction of models found in philosophers and political theorists. A discursive thinker is not without imagination; nor does he throw imagination overboard; he requires imagination, first, to clarify things to himself and, secondly, to make his ideas clear to the reader. A political theorist
explains the function of the state in terms of the human body; a neurologist explains the function of the brain in terms of a radar or teleprinter set. Day Lewis himself explains the nature of the poet in terms of a receiver set in A Hope for Poetry. In the paradigmatic construction of models the comparisons are not chosen at random; they are chosen deliberately and consciously so that they can explain certain ideas which the thinker wants to make clear. Day Lewis says that images are also chosen deliberately; they can be employed to explain or clarify thought or experience. The images put in apposition to ideas generally clarify or illustrate those ideas. Therefore, such images can be called paradigmatic images.

A study of the paradigmatic images in Day Lewis throws light on some of the ways in which thought and image are linked in his poetry. One way in which the relationship is maintained is through juxtaposition. An idea is presented in the form of a statement, and immediately it is supported by an image which throws light on the idea. The connection between thought and image in some cases is suggested by mere apposition so that no connecting word is introduced. While expressing
contempt for compromise or 'Mean', Day Lewis says:

For the mind must cope with
All elements or none --
Bask in dust along with weevils
Or criticise the sun.

The first two lines introduce an idea through direct statement and the next two lines support and explain the idea with the help of the two images of the weevils basking or criticising the sun. There is no connecting word or linking word between the idea and the images except the dash. In some cases it is found that the image comes first followed by thought:

Speaking from the snow
The crocus lets me know
That there is life to come and go.

The image of the crocus sprouting its head from the snow expresses the idea of ressurrection. "That there is life to come and go" is a very general idea which the reader may not grasp very clearly unless it is put in apposition to the image of the crocus. The lines that express the idea that the full man must face the real and at the same time try to reach the ideal are:
The tree grips the soil, the bird
Knows how to use the wind;
But the full man must live
Rooted yet unconfined.

The connection between the images in the first two lines and the idea in the next two is achieved purely by means of apposition. But more than juxtaposition and emotion, what links the idea to the image seems to be the pattern of sentence construction. The semi-colon at the end of the second line indicates that the sentence is incomplete; unless the latter half of the sentence is given, the meaning of the full sentence is difficult to grasp. The secret of many juxtaposed ideas and images in Day Lewis seems to lie in the structural patterns of sentences and in the use of the punctuation marks such as the dash, the colon, and the semi-colon.

The placement of the image, however, need not be overstressed because whether it comes before an idea, or after it, it always throws light upon the idea. The images put in apposition to ideas are functional images in that their function is either an explanation or an illustration of an idea.
One of the recurring themes in Day Lewis is the conflict in man between his love for the past and the anticipation for the future. Man suffers from both these defects in that he is always unfaithful to the present which is the 'unique minute'. By either thinking always of the future with eager anticipation, or thinking of the past with nostalgia man suffers immensely. Day Lewis expresses the idea in the following lines:

No doubt for the Israelites that early morning
It was hard to be sure
If home were prison or prison home:
the desire
Going forth meets the desire returning.  

The image of the Israelites on the point of departure is juxtaposed with the idea 'the desire going forth meets the desire returning'. Both the image as well as the idea are parts of one sentence, the link between the two being the colon. The image separated from the idea might convey some sense but not the same sense when it is tethered to the idea. The idea, on the other hand, is too abstract to be grasped unless it is explained
by the image.

To give another example; the theme of time and eternity is another recurring theme in Day Lewis. He believes that eternity does not mean duration but the intense realisation of time as the given moment. The death of an individual is of little importance as long as the species to which the individual belongs is beyond destruction. That is why Day Lewis says 'eternity lies in the seed'. To express the idea he seeks the image of the daffodils which are the 'they' in the following lines:

They from earth's centre take their time
And from the sun what love they need;
The proud flower burns away its prime,
Eternity lies in the seed. 22

The image of the 'proud flower' burning away its prime is the particular taken by the poet to express the universal 'eternity lies in the seed'. The connection once again lies in juxtaposition and emotion. The rational void between the first three lines and the
last line is filled by the sentence structure and the emotional logic.

All functional images, however, are not images of juxtaposition depending on punctuation and sentence pattern in Day Lewis. Some images are tethered to the idea which they throw light upon with the help of connecting words which make the image and the idea the comparison and the compared or vice versa, giving the relationship the form of a simile. The simile is generally supposed to be logical, discursive and analytic and hence it is discarded as something outdated in modern poetry. In fact, some aestheticians branded the simile as something prosaic. W.B. Stansford calls the simile analytic and concludes his analysis of the figure by saying 'simile is to prose as prose is to poetry'. The modern aversion to the simile lies in the romantic conception of poetry, in the notion that the poet should seek the universal for the sake of the particular and not the other way round. Modern critics seem to believe that the imagery of the Augustan period is functional and not generative, because the Augustans sought the particulars for 'universals'. Whatever be the ideal of the modern poets, the paradigmatic
construction of images in Day Lewis suggests that he sometimes seeks the particular for the universal eventhough he might dislike such a process.

The method of seeking the particular for the sake of the general is very clearly evident in some passages of Day Lewis. Thought as the universal is presented in abstract terms and image as the particular is tethered to the thought either as the comparison or the compared in the form of a simile. To convey the idea that eternity does not mean duration, Lewis employs the images of leaf and linnet. He says,

Love is proved in its creation,
    not eternity;
Like leaf or linnet the true
    heart's affection
Is born, dies later, asks no
    reassurance.

In the lines cited above, Day Lewis employs the word 'eternity' in the popular sense of duration. The first line introduces a general statement and the images of the leaf and the linnet are the particulars to illustrate the general idea. The relationship between thought and
image is maintained by the linking word 'like'.
Sometimes a simile may be implied in that an idea might look like an inference from an image. But more often than not, the contexts where an image precedes the idea suggest that it is the universal for which the poet seeks the particular, as, say, in,

Over dark wood rises one dawn
felicitous
Bright through awakened shadows
fall her crystal
Cadenzas, and once for all the
wood is quickened,
So our joys visit us and it suffices.26

Appearing as it does in isolation, the image seems to be the particular expressing the universal, but in its context it is a continuation of the lines 'Love is proved...no reassurance' just quoted, developing the theme of eternity and duration and, as such, it is just another image explaining the same idea. Sometimes it also happens that the comparison in a simile looks obscure, whereas the compared looks clear:

As needle to north, as wheel in
wheel turning;
Men shall know their masters, and
women their need
Mating and submitting, nor dividing
and defying,
Force shall fertilize, mass shall
breed. 27

What association can there be between 'north' and 'masters' is not clear from the passage, though a well-informed reader might guess that somehow there is an esoteric association between north and goodness and south and decadence in Auden also, where, as Auden says, "North must seem the 'good' direction, the way towards heroic adventures". 28 The image of 'needle to north' strikes one as esoteric, and the reader may be justified in feeling annoyed at it as a kind of private joke. The image 'wheel in wheel turning' clearly explains the idea 'force shall fertilise'.

Some comparisons, however, are strongly suggestive and highly explanatory even though there is nothing sensuous in them, as in

Ah no, the present is nothing unless it is spun from
A live thread of the past,
As the clarinet airs of the early morn are echoed
By eve's full-hearted strings,
As the stars and bells in April
        grass foreshadow
Winter's pure crystallings.\(^{29}\)

The link between the past and present is made clear with the help of 'the clarinet airs' and 'the stars and bells'. But the important point to be noted is that the images are not more sensuous than the 'live thread of the past'. Sometimes the picture created by the comparison is so strong that it makes the reader feel that he has understood the compared also:

Let love be like a natural day
That folds her work and takes
to bed.\(^{30}\)

It is easy to visualise the picture of folding and taking to bed, but it is not so easy to visualise 'love' folding her work and taking to bed. The imperfect analogy makes the reader ponder over the idea, and then he feels that he has understood something though he might not be able to express clearly what he has understood.
A fourth method through which Day Lewis conducts his arguments in his poems is by the employment of the symbolical images or what can be called the 'steno-images'. An image can be employed to represent the samething twice or thrice and, by being so employed, an idea can be tethered to the image. What are called the 'obsessive' or 'recurring' images are generally the images of this kind. The images of the hawk, the kestrel, the swan, the phoenix, the crocus, the sphinx, the unicorn, the household cock, the walled garden, the tower, the island, the exile, the town etc., are almost denotative images. The walled garden is associated with the life and the attitudes of 'the feather bedded middle-class'; and, as such, the image is used as steno-language to achieve precision instead of resorting to prosaic explanation. By making some images represent some ideas consistently, the poet presents his arguments through those images without any vagueness. Several examples can be found to indicate the way in which such images are employed in Day Lewis.

In Transitional Poem Lewis expresses his temptation to be satisfied with things as they stand and to suppress the urging daemon in him which forces
him to embrace the new Marxist ideology in terms of the escape from the 'orchard' or the 'walled garden' which symbolises the middle-class way of thinking:

If I bricked up ambition and
gave no air
To the ancestral curse that
gabbles there,
I could leave wonder on the latch
And with a whole heart watch
The calm declension of an English
year.31

At the end of the section in which the passage occurs, Day Lewis says that he can be 'an orchard god' if he can suppress the vampire in him. The association between the orchard and a way of life thus fixed, he continues to employ the garden image with the slight variations such as 'Eden', 'lawn', 'walled garden', 'private garden' etc. He says that he wants to 'escape Eden' when he wants to say that he wants to join the masses. Leave 'Eden to brutes' says Day Lewis. After taking a decision to embrace the new social thought he tells himself: "You are well out of Eden".

Nor is this association between an idea and
an image limited to a single sequence of poems. The steno-images are an advantage to the poet in that he can take a short cut through them in presenting thought in an oblique and implied manner. To gain that advantage Day Lewis employs the same image to symbolise the same idea throughout his poems. While talking of his would-be-born-child in From Feathers to Iron, Day Lewis says:

Day and night will make armstice
for this one
Entering the walled garden who knows
the hour of spirit
Reconciled to flesh. 32

In The Magnetic Mountain the Mother says that 'the flower grew first' 'warm in my walled garden'. 33 In "Noah and the Waters" the reader is asked to choose between the two alternatives:

On the one hand all that habit
enders;
The lawn is where bishops have
walked; the walled
garden is private
Though your bind weed lust over-runs
it. 34
On the other hand, the fight for resurrection. In the "Sketches for a self-portrait" the image appears as the "well-shaved lawn". In *An Italian Visit* Day Lewis speaks of the "smuglawned residences" of the English.

The image of the 'walled garden' appears consistently in the poems of Day Lewis for over a period of nearly thirty years, always with almost the same associations. The image being a steno-image, is a short-cut for expressing an idea. The image appears frequently in the poems of political commitment and appears now and then in the poems written after 1939. After his disappointment with the political ideology the image appears only in those contexts which refer to his earlier self. The image, being a mere symbol for an idea, naturally disappears when the idea is discarded.

Similar is the case with almost all the steno-images. The Sphinx stands for doubt; the unicorn for faith; the phoenix for spirit; the crocus for resurrection; the tower and island stand for separation; the hawk, the kestrel and the raven, for intelligence, ideology and adventurousness; the stormcock and the household cock for the satisfaction with the banal, and so on. In
addition to being symbols for ideas, the images also help the poet in presenting arguments without involving him in explicit statements. While thinking to himself whether it would be all right for him to be satisfied with the world as it is instead of attempting to alter it, Bay Lewis introduces arguments of the old and new faiths in terms of the household cock and the bird of altitude:

Better by far the household cock
Scratching the common yard for corn
Whose rainy voice all night at will
Can signify a private dawn.
Another bird, sagacious too,
Circles in plain bewilderment
Where shoulder to shoulder long waves
march
Towards a magnetic continent.

The images of the two birds stand for two ways of life, and therefore, the contrast of the images suggests the contrast of the two ways of life.

Apart from the images to which the poet tethers ideas making the images a steno-language, those ideas, there are some other images which are by nature symbolical by being drawn from the classics. The
christmas rose and the christmas child apart, there are many references to Artemis, Abraham, Mathuselah, Minos, Achilles, Nestor, Patrocles etc. which have been studied in the foregoing chapters. These classical images are also similar to the steno-images in their function in that they stand for associated ideas. There is no meddling with the associations of these images since their symbolic element is well established, and Lewis takes advantage of these established associations. Now and then he substitutes the classical images also for ideas and makes them speak in an implied manner. While declaring his allegiance to the new friends and the new faith, Day Lewis says "Nestor shall die and let Patrocles live" which is a very precise way of paraphrasing the whole conflict between the old and new ideologies.

The fifth method which Day Lewis adopts in dealing with thought in his poetry is by employing generative images. In many of his poems, and especially in the poems written after 1948, Day Lewis presents an image at the beginning of the poem, and begins to analyse or develop the image as the poem progresses. In the process of contemplating the image, the image
generates thought. The whole poem becomes an image into which merge the objective image and the subjective element of thought. The poems wherein generative images are employed usually begin with an image of either a scene, an object, or an experience and the poem ends with the interpretation of the image. To understand how these generative images work it would be useful to examine some poems in which such images are employed.

The poem 'Seen From The Train' begins with the picture of a landscape seen by the poet from the train. The opening lines are:

Somewhere between Crewkerne
And Yeovil it was. On the left of the line
Just as the wrinkled hills unroll
To the plain. A church on a small green knoll
A limestone church,
And above the church
Cedar boughs stretched like hands that yearn
To protect or to bless. 40

The lines present a very clear picture to the eye which the poet wants the reader to contemplate. There is no
eidetic element in the picture except in the last two lines of the passage cited where the poet compares the cedar boughs to the hands 'that yearn to protect or bless'. In the second stanza the poet tells the reader that he had seen the picture in all its vividness — the knoll, the church and the cedars being the important details — twice, or thrice, when he happened to go that way previously. But what surprised the poet this time is that, as he says,

Though I gazed as I passed
All the way down the valley, the
knoll was not there,
Nor the church, nor the trees it
mounded.41

The strange experience now makes him think of 'what came in between to unsight' him. The scene was not something imagined by him; he is confident that he had seen it twice or thrice. Perhaps there is nothing wrong with his eyes; perhaps the landscape itself has some mysterious eye. He begins to think:

. But suppose, only suppose there
might be
A secret look in landscape's eye
Following you as you hasten by,
And you have your chance —
Two or three chances
At most — to hold and interpret
it rightly
Or it is gone for eye. 42

The image develops the thought of the 'secret look in
the landscape's eye'. When this thought begins to
strike the reader he slowly begins to forget the picture
of the landscape so that he can concentrate upon the
thought. Day Lewis himself directs the reader by saying
that he cares little whether he sees the church again
or not. 'But', he says,

...blindly my heart is racked
When I think how, not twice or thrice,
But year after year in another's eyes
I have caught the look that I missed
today
Of the Church, the knoll, the cedars —
a ray
Of the faith, too, they stood for,
The hope they were food for,
The love they prayed for, facts
beyond price —
And turned by eyes away. 43

The "another's eyes" in the poem channels the thought to
the inhuman indifference shown by the poet to some one deeply in love with the poet. The pictures of the "landscape's eye" and "another's eyes" stand side by side in the mind of the reader who begins to appreciate the revelation of the relationship between the image and the idea. The image of something seen from the train may have some sensuous appeal, but it has not its fullest impression until the poet brings in "another's eye" and thereby reveals the relationship by patterning experience. The thought assimilates experience into itself and the reader feels the thrill of new discovery. The poem reveals something of a hitherto unperceived relationship to the reader; and it thrills him with its pattern. The poem operates upon the reader by convincing him of the truth of its pattern; it gets the desired response from the reader, a response which Auden seems to have so much desired to get: "that's true; now why did I not think of it myself?"44

The same method seems to be in operation in many poems of Day Lewis. In "In the Shelter" Day Lewis presents the image of a child nursing a doll in a shelter in the opening lines. The child is "all instinct"; genius "could never paint the maternal pose/More daftly
than accident had roughed it there". From the image of the child the poet develops the thought:

No argument for living could long sustain
These ills: it needs a faithful eye, to have seen all
Love in a droop of a lash and tell it eternal
By one pure bead of its dew-dissolving eternal.

The picture of the child nursing the doll melts into the thought of faith in love. Unless analysed for the study of the component parts, the thought and the image are fused together into a whole.

The generative images found in the poetry of Day Lewis are frequently pictures of commonplace scenes or trivial incidents which generate profound thought. A large number of poems written in 1960 present images which are generally pictures of a scene, an animal, a view from a window, a scene witnessed in a park, or something watched in a zoo or a circus. The method is always the same—starting with an image and developing a thought out of it. However, since the image appears
first, thought appears as something generated by the image. As in Thomas Hardy and Robert Frost, ordinary and commonplace experiences which are supposed to be trivial, unpoetical or commonplace are taken and they are contemplated in such a manner that thought is generated out of them. What is interesting in the method is, in contrast with the paradigmatic images which are employed to explain thought, that the particular is of importance here and the poet seeks the universal in the particular. The poet, through his exploration of experience and sensation, brings out the uniqueness or the individuality of that experience or sensation, and by so doing establishes its relation in the pattern of life. These poems which are total images begin with a picture inviting the reader’s attention to the here and now of the experience by introducing the picture with the demonstrative pronoun 'this' or indicating the correct position from where the poet views the picture. For instance, the poem "View From an Upper Window" begins with the picture of what is seen from the window:

From where I am sitting, my
window frame
Offers a slate roof, four chimney
pots,
After presenting the picture and drawing the attention of the reader to the details of the picture, the poet begins his exploration with a series of questions. He first asks: 'What am I meant to do with the prospect?' Should he take what the picture can say of 'immediate relevance' and think that the picture is significant because like history the various parts of the picture such as the roof, the chimney pots etc., 'happened to happen that way' or should he amplify and exaggerate the picture? Suppose he begins to exaggerate, where is the margin or end to the process of exaggeration? He asks himself the question:

But why if one is chasing the paradigm right forward and back
Step at embryo, roots or sky? 47

No, exaggeration leads one nowhere, he thinks; man should learn to see 'a fragment as a kind of whole' and understand the need for frames. The poem ends with the conclusion:

One aerial, half a leafless tree,
And sky the colour of dejection. 46
Who knows?—
Each of us may be set here, simply
to compose
From a few grains of universe a
finite view
By one who occasionally needs such
frames
To look at his boundless creation
though:*

The image presented at the beginning of the poem is the
starting point for the development of his thought. The
image is generative because it generates thought; and
the whole poem wherein the thought and the image are
webbed together is an 'intellectual and emotional complex'
and by being so, becomes an image. Most of the poems
which contain generative images begin with a picture, a
gestalt taken from the flux of experience. The opening
lines of many poems begin with the here and now. The
following are some of the examples:

This tree outside my window here,
Naked, umbrageous, fresh or sere...
("On Not saying Everything")

The man up there with red trunks,
middle-aged paunch
Rapt in a boylike singleness of mind...
("The Passion For Diving")
In the foreground, clots of cream-white flowers
(meadow-sweet Guelder? Cow parsley?); a patch of green: then a gate...
("The Gate")

This manikin who just now
Broke prison and stepped free...
("The Newborn")

A shepherd stands at one end of the arena.
Five sheep are unpenned at the other..
("Sheep dog Trials in Hydepark")

Sunlit over the shore
terns — a flock of them — flew
With sword play supple as light
Criss-crossing the orchard blue.
("Terns")

The poems begin with the pictures of things or objects the poet has watched—a tree, a scene, a prospect from a window, a newborn child, a shepherd and his sheep, a flock of terns etc. The picture is carefully presented with the details which the poet wants to develop as the poem progresses. The picture, though eidetic, may be
called an image of impression without any gross element of thought. The picture is often so striking that it impresses itself upon the mind of the reader. The picture is a gestalt; its importance lies in that it attracts the attention of the reader and drives him to contemplation. Out of the picture is developed the thought which clarifies and relates the picture in the context of life. Experience and exploration appear as image and thought; the element of thought separates the picture from its own context and unites it with the poetic exploration. What begins as the poet's own experience ends up as the common experience of all.

The sixth or the last method through which Day Lewis expresses thought in poetry is by employing the images of impression. If in the poems where generative images are employed it is possible to find the image of impression and the generated thought, there are some other poems in which the thought is contained in the image itself. A perfect equivalence is maintained between thought and image in all such poems so that it is impossible to analyse or separate the element of thought from the image. These poems are highly metaphorical in that they present only the vehicle, the tenor being
altogether dropped. The poet does not present a picture and begin to explore it for meaning or significance; he simply presents a picture, the meaning of which is implied in the picture itself. The suggestion of thought implied in the images so presented is indirect to a great extent as the aesthetic object seems to be every thing. There are sections in the long sequences of poems also where the poet refrains from making any comment on the metaphor presented. The passages, or poems, in which these images of impression appear reveal an inextricable fusion of the vehicle and tenor; the identification of the subject with the object is complete. How this complete fusion is achieved can be seen from a section in "From Feathers to Iron":

Twenty weeks near past
Since the seed took to earth.
Winter has done its worst,
Let upland snow ignore;
Earth wears a smile betrays
What summer she has in store.
She feels insurgent forces
Gathering at the core,
And a spring rumour courses
Through her, till the cold extreme
Sleep of grove and grass is
Stirred, begins to dream.
So when the violins gather
And soar to a final theme,
Broadcast on winds of ether
That golden seed extends
Beneath the sun-eye, the father
To ear at the earth's ends.

The lines quoted form an entire section in *From Feathers to Iron* which describes the earth after the 'seed took to earth'. What is it the poet is talking about in this section? Is it the earth or the pregnant mother?

The section, being a part taken from *From Feathers to Iron*, indicates that the image of the earth is merely a disguise for the image of the pregnant woman. The unity between the subject and the object is so thoroughly achieved that even the pronoun 'she' cannot throw light on either separately. However, the passage cited is only a very simple example for the method, as it is helped by the context in the suggestion of the subject.

In the equivalent images as the one cited just above, thought and image do not exist separately, but in unity. There is a kind of 'unified sensibility' behind all such images. Here is another passage from *Transitional*
Poem:

Look where cloud squadrons are
Stampeded by the wind
A boy's kite sits as calm as Minos
If the string be sound:
But if there are no hands
To keep the cable tense
And no eyes to mark a flaw in it,
What use the difference
Between a gust that twithers
Along the wainscot at dawn
And a burly wind playing the zany
In fields of barley corn?

The passage, considered in its context, can, at best, be called a brief poetical effect, since it metaphorically describes the power of the single mind. The context tells the reader in which way he has to interpret the vehicle, even though the lines do not contain any explicit comment. The poet, by resorting to metaphor gains the advantage of presenting the abstract concept of the power of the single mind in sensuous images so that he can discuss thought in an indirect way. The association grows further and further as the association between the single mind and the kite is achieved; it is not the single mind which the poet compares to Minos, but the kite. The
kite and the winds seem to exist almost independently
of the subject, namely, the single mind.

What appears here and there in the early poems
as an advantageous method to discuss philosophical ideas
in a disguised form, develops into the image of impression
in the later poems. Individual poems, without any lines
running either before or after them, do not have a context
outside them and as such they do not depend on something
without and external for the purpose of explication. The
thought is entirely implicit in that the vehicle is highly
suggestive of various connotations out of which the
reader is at liberty to choose the one which he thinks
is appropriate. It is generally about poems of this kind
that battles rage between critics of various schools.
Since no meaning can be definitely associated with an
image, some argue, that the image does not say anything
other than what it is; others argue, that the suggestion
of several things need not mean saying nothing. In this
context it is useful to examine the implications involved,
with the example of a poem in which the tenor is
altogether dropped, so that a clear idea can be had to
discuss the nature of this kind of image. The following
is the text of the poem "Behold the Swan":
Behold the swan
Riding at her image, anchored there
Complacent, a water-lity upon
The ornamental water:
Queen of mute October air,
She broods in that unbroken Reverie of reed and water.
Now from the stricken Pool she hoists and flurries,
And passes overhead
In hoarse expressive flight:
Her wings bear hard
On the vibrant air; unhurried
The threat and pulse of wings,
the throat
Levelled towards the horizon,
see—
They are a prophecy.

What is the prophecy?
What is it the poet wants to convey through the poem "Behold the Swan"? There is no subject matter except in the choice of some parts of the image, which results from the eidetic perception. Is the poem a mere description of the swan, 'riding at her image' and then flurrying from the stricken pool? The poem, which presents the image of the swan, does not make any statement; but still one who reads the poem feels that
there is some implicit thought. Probably the whole image is an image of the poet trying to extricate himself from the stricken pool of his social commitment, to shift to a fresh lake which is not a stricken one? By discarding the tenor, the directive element, the poet has gained precision; but, at the same time, he is taking a risk regarding expression. The picture presented in a poem may be beautiful, it may be striking and rich in details, but it still remains a mere picture if it does not reveal the relationship between life and itself and if it does not suggest how the reader can assimilate it into his experience. The most general idea that the image of the swan creates may probably be the picture of the poet pulling himself out of disappointment towards a better life of peace and tranquility. Many poems included in the recent collections as *The Room and Other Poems*, and *The Gate and Other Poems* present only the images without any comments or directing clues so that the burden or the pleasure of interpreting the meaning of a poem is entirely left to the reader.

From the study made so far in this chapter of the relationship between thought and imagery in the poetry of Day Lewis, it can be said that Day Lewis employs
six methods to express thought in his poems. The six methods, for the sake of convenience, can be listed as follows:

(1) By presenting thought directly and explicitly through direct statements.

(2) By employing 'intellectual images' or 'images of thought' in which the sensuous element is subordinated to the intellectual.

(3) By employing paradigmatic images to illustrate ideas.

(4) By employing 'steno-images' or symbolical images which represent associated ideas.

(5) By employing generative images.

(6) By employing images of impression or equivalent images.

Thus the study reveals the relationship between thought and imagery is found sometimes swinging between the two extremes of pure thought and pure impression and sometimes reaching an equivalence. What look like direct statements in poems are entirely devoid of the sensuous element or the 'vehicle'; what look like pure images of impression are totally devoid of the element Intellectual element or the 'tenor'. While thought seems to be
dominant in some poems, images seem to be so in others. Apart from direct statements of thought, the five kinds of images found in Day Lewis's poetry are linked with the element of thought in it. The images of thought are more abstract and less sensuous than any other kind of images and therefore they look like direct statements or utterances.

In our contemporary demand for intensity, paradox and irony, we are apt to give too much of importance to complex and evocative imagery, frequently unmindful of the fact how images function in poems. We always think of the highly evocative images to the neglect of the philosophical and metaphysical statements that are interspersed with the highly evocative images. As John Press points out, "we stress the infinite resonance of Blake's images in: 'Ah, Sunflower! Weary of time' but forget his address to 'Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love' is pure philosophical argument that dispenses almost entirely with imagery." Critics concentrate and make much of the poetical effects and the cinematic technique of The Waste Land, making the readers feel that the 'emotional logic' is the only kind of logic to be found in genuine poetry. The same poet who wrote The Waste Land also wrote "Little Gidding", where he
Day Lewis's appreciation for Hardy is evidently based on his love for the exploration of experience. In some poems of Hardy there are no sensuous or striking images; instead of the powerful images the poet introduces a series of 'flat, almost banal utterances' in a calm and neutral tone of voice. Day Lewis has understood, and brought to light, this characteristic feature of the poetry of Thomas Hardy. It is, at the same time, wrong to assume that Hardy's poetry is lacking in sensuous imagery; he employs images of the generative kind which give birth to the element of thought.

The paradigmatic images and the symbolical images are not something of a special feature in Day Lewis; every poet makes use of such images more for convenience and precision probably, than to sound poetic. Most of the modern poets employ these two varieties of functional images to conduct arguments in poetry. However, as Day Lewis himself observes the use of the functional images often suggests the method of seeking the particular for the sake of the universal and not vice versa.
The employment of generative images which generate thought is, however, the most effective method in Day Lewis. The generative images seem to meet his need and his conception of poetry as a means for the exploration of experience in which the 'happy marriage' of the object with sensation can be fully achieved. Sometimes, whole poems of Day Lewis are based on generative images.

Day Lewis's poetry is autobiographical to a great extent in that it is based entirely on his experience and not any kind of what may be called the pure 'mind stuff'. As such it is a field for exploration of truth, or the means for understanding the essence behind the temporal modes. The poems of Day Lewis, however, are not the field wherefrom thought is banished, because they really 'think'. The poems give knowledge -- the knowledge of the relationships between objects and between objects and things. The poetry of Day Lewis tells us of the 'feel of things' and it is successful in that field. The study of the relationship between thought and imagery now having been completed, we are now in a position to arrive at certain conclusions regarding the results of the study. What conclusions
can be arrived at will be discussed in the next chapter.
Foot Notes


2. "Philosophy means two things chiefly: to think clearly, which is metaphysics; and to rule wisely, which is politics". 
   - *The Story of Philosophy*, p. 29.


5. Ibid., p. 214.


10. Ibid.


14. Ibid., p. 36.
15. Ibid., p. 40.
17. A Hope for Poetry, p. 75.
24. Greek Metaphor, p. 29.
25. From Feathers to Iron, CP., p. 53.
26. Ibid.
27. The Magnetic Mountain, CP., p. 112.
30. The Magnetic Mountain, CP., p. 89.


32. From Feathers to Iron, CP., p. 89.

33. The Magnetic Mountain, CP., p. 89.

34. "Noah and the Waters", CP., p. 165.


36. An Italian Visit, CP., p. 328.

37. See chapters IV and V above.

38. Transitional Poem, CP., p. 44.

39. Ibid., p. 21.


41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid., p. 295.


45. "In the Shelter", CP., p. 298.
47. Ibid.
55. *From Feathers to Iron*, CP., p. 60.
57. "Behold the Swan", CP., pp. 203-204.
59. Ibid.