CHAPTER III
THE POETIC SELF: LITERARY IDEAS AND IMAGERY
IN DAY LEWIS'S POETRY
One very remarkable feature about Day Lewis as a poet is that he expresses many literary ideas in his poetry. Most of his important ideas in criticism are studied in Chapter I, Section III. But what is the difference between expressing an idea in prose and in expressing the same idea — I mean the approximately same idea — in poetry? Since imagery is the 'constant' in poetry, the difference (the difference might range from greater perception to greater dimensions of meaning) must, to a large extent, be attributed to imagery. Let us now study the relationship between the literary ideas and imagery as found in the poetry of Day Lewis.

In his poems Day Lewis makes many references to the poetic process. He distinguishes three stages in the process of image-making. In his *The Poetic Image* Day Lewis says that "the identification of the poet with the objects which appeal to his senses is the initial step in image-making".¹ This stage is described by him in his poem "Travelling Light". The following is the description:
At first
Objects become attached to you,
Then you to them, while they accrue
Like interest on an overdraft
Draining your substance through their graft,
Until they've grown, with you conniving
Reasons or substitutes for living.²

The first difference between the description given in
The Poetic Image and the description in the lines cited
is that the latter description is more vivid than the
former. The simile 'like interest on an overdraft' attempts
at presenting the idea of the attachment in a clearer
manner than the prose expression 'identification of the
poet with the objects'. Secondly, the objects 'growing'
from within the poet suggests that they have become a
part of his life. The image of the objects growing within
the poet is important in that it tells us more about the
nature of the 'identification' than the prose passage. The
second stage in the process of image-making is that wherein
'a series of images pass through the mind', according to
The Poetic Image.³ But how do the objects become memories?
A passage from "An Italian Visit" answers the question:
There's no way of telling
Which objects are really kin to us,
    which we have partaken of life with,
Until, deep buried, they draw blood from
    us and are eloquent.
Home is where we inter our travels, but
equally give them
A chance to germinate beneath the dust
    and the housework,
The preoccupied face of routine, the protective
sleep of the heart.
Then on a gust of travail, something, is
born, crying
'I am your flesh and blood'.

The objects, which are absorbed into the poetic consciousness of the poet lie 'buried'. The image of the objects lying buried, when observed in association with the images of germination and 'born' suggests that the process of image-making is associated with the imagery of child-birth. What is the nature of the 'protective sleep of the heart'? Again, another passage from the same poem explains the idea very clearly:

A weeping firmament, a sac of waters,
A passive chaos — time without wind or tide,
Where on brief motiveless eddy seeth the
Lost faces, furniture, animals, oblivious litter —
Envelop me, just as the incipient poem
Is globed in nescience, and beneath
A heart purged of all but memory grows.
The various impressions and objects absorbed into the poetic consciousness, though forgotten by the poet, are not lost; they grow. Nobody knows how much time it takes for these memories to emerge as images into poetry. The heart of the poet is the field in which the seeds of various images are planted; he must be patient till the time the seeds sprout up. Therefore, Day Lewis often uses the images of conception, birth and sometimes of harvesting, while expressing his ideas about creative writing. He talks of writing poetry in terms of cultivation:

A farmer's used
To the silence of things growing,
weather breeding.
More silence, more acres.6

The poet is the cultivator awaiting the proper season to reap his harvest. The farmer can do all that is there within his power to make the soil fit for the crop; but he cannot make the seed sprout at his will. Patience, therefore, is his second nature. Therefore, Day Lewis says:

We expect nothing... we only
Await: this pure awaiting—
It is the kind of worship we are taught.7
The association of the poet and the cultivator is found in many poems. However, there are certain differences pointed out here and there. For instance, in the poem "Bread and Wine", Day Lewis suggests the difference between the poet and the cultivator. The cultivator, however greatly engrossed he is in cultivation, can never fuse himself into the plants he grows. He is always conscious that he is working and that his aim is to produce something. But in the case of the poet, the poem produced and the poet himself get fused into one. The poet and the poem are not different; they are one. They are one in the sense, the poem coming as a part of the poet's self, is his own life expressed in the form of images.

The idea of image-making, in association with the images of 'growth' and germination, gives birth to a network of images which are somehow associated with the idea. One cannot say for a certainty whether these images are consciously introduced by the poet, or whether they are associated thus in the psyche itself. Whatever be the origin, one thing is certain: the images express the idea of image-making more vividly, more picturesquely, and in a sense, more precisely than the expression employed in criticism.
According to The Poetic Image, the third stage in the process of image-making is selection and interpretation of the images. How are images in poems selected? Day Lewis resorts to metaphor even in The Poetic Image to describe the process. According to his account given there, an image first enters the mind of the poet; he uses that image as a 'bait' to catch some other images. When this line (the bait) goes deeper into the sea of experience, it catches many fishes in the form of memories, imagination, phrases, etc. But all the fishes do not suit the poet. He chooses some and throws the rest back into the sea. Slowly a pattern develops out of the dark. The interpretation of his experience and the pattern of the images grouped together becomes the theme of the poem. In his poems Day Lewis describes the mind of the poet as 'any child loved attic'. When the mind of the poet is passive all the memories, buried deep in it, flock to it in a trance-like state. How some kind of pattern emerges out of this kind of flocking memories is described by Day Lewis in "An Italian Visit". When the poet is in a mood to compose, he is 'pressed' and 'mobbed' by a large number of images. Out of these he finds one word, 'the word of command', which makes all the rest fall into their places. The process is described in a context where the
poet describes the comprehension of Rome from its ruins. The idea of image selection is appended to the idea of comprehension of Rome as a comparison:

As when composing a poem, the tangle of images
And jangle of words pressing hard on you, mobbing you, may
Compel you to choose the right moment to disengage
And find one word, the word of command which makes them
Meekly fall into their ranks, and the march continues...9

Though the idea of image selection is expressed almost in prosaic terms, it gains its strength by being juxtaposed with the idea of comprehension of Rome. In this case, the fusion of the two ideas is the image. The idea of Rome and the idea of the image enrich each other and tell us of a kind of relationship which is new to us. The fusion of the two ideas, or the stereoscope of the two ideas becomes the image, and both the ideas gain a new dimension owing to juxtaposition.

In *The Poetic Image*, as stated earlier, Day Lewis speaks of the process of image selection in terms of the
angling metaphor. The memory of the poet is compared to the sea out of which the consciousness of the poet catches the fishes of images. Even in the prose work, the image of the sea and the idea of the mind are associated together. In the same poem from which we have cited the previous passage, i.e., in An Italian Visit, there is another passage in which the poet describes the thrill he feels when he realises the recreated experience through the image. How he is able to catch the image is inexplicable as it seems to come to the poet in a mysterious manner.

If you could see her as she flows
   to me apace
Through waves through walls through time's
   fine mesh magically drawn
You would say, this was surely the
daughter of the foam born,
One whom no age to come will ever replace.

The image of the sea, it could be seen, is once again associated with the mind. But what is missing in the prose account, namely, the love of the poet for the image, and his fascination for it is brought out through the image of 'the foam born' in the poem. The beauty of the image and its magnetic attraction for the poet is vaguely suggested as an undertone arising out of the association
between Aphrodite and 'the foam born'. But, however, the image only conveys the mysterious nature of the way in which the poet receives the images from his mind; it does not exactly tell us the way in which images are selected from the point of view of criticism. Day Lewis seems to be suggesting that there is no method as such governing the principle of image selection; he can only interpret an image after he finds it. This idea is expressed in the poem "This Loafer", where Day Lewis says that, to the poet, "...pure caprice tells him/ Where and how to go."\(^1\)

When the poet angles for images two things might happen: he may catch the image and interpret it, or he may lose himself in his image. The fascination of the images is so great for the poet, that he might be caught by the image, instead of his catching it. The image is a very strange fish to deal with. Day Lewis expresses the difference between mastering the image, and being mastered by the image in the poem "Fisherman and / or Fish".

There was a time when I
The river's least adept,
Eagerly leapt, leapt,
To the barbed, flirtatious fly.
Thrills all along the line,
A tail thrashing — the sport
Enthralled: but which was caught,
Which reeled the other in?¹²

Evidently Day Lewis tells here that sometimes the image mastered him instead of his mastering the image. The image of the sea in association with the process of image-making, is, thus, often found in his poetry. Day Lewis, sometimes, even indicates his confidence in himself as a veteran angler, through the angling image:

The river's veteran, I
Shall flick my rod, my fin
Where nothing can drag me in
Nor land me high and dry.¹³

Images are the crystallized memories of experiences. They live in the sea of the mind in a medley. In order to understand the nature of his experiences and to interpret them, the poet has to first lose himself in them. After a great acquaintance, he can get at the nature of his experiences. That is why, Day Lewis sometimes employs the images of diving to bring out the nature of the poetic exploration. There are two possibilities for the poet when he indulges himself in poetic exploration: either he
might reveal the nature of his experiences from an objective point of view with an "airy unattachment", or he might lose himself in the depths of the sea of his experiences. The contrast between the airy unattachment and the committal to the deep is well-worked out in the poem "The Passion for Diving". The poem presents the picture of a middle-aged man jumping into the river and immediately coming out of it. The man jumps not for display; there may be pleasure and pride in that leap. But most, says Day Lewis,

...it is the sense of challenge, a boy's
Need and fear of solitary estrangement
With powers beyond his power, that springs
the leap.

The man recalls a young self in that poise
And pause between an airy unattachment
And the blind, brief committal to the deep. 14

The two images of the man standing on the shore and the boy committed to the deep present the two possible ways in which experience and the poet might be involved in. The remarkable point is that we often find the image of the sea in relation to the idea of the image-making.

The contrast between "the airy unattachment" and the "committal to the deep" is well worked out in the poem
"The Disabused", where the image of the sea is found, once again, in association with the idea of creative writing. The poem is written in the form of a dramatic monologue, in which the speaker speaks of three characters, namely, himself, his brother Tom, and his daughter Helen. The poem is allegorical: the characters represent the mature poet, the young poet and poetry respectively. The speaker is for sometime, swept away by the 'vision' of Tom, his younger self, but he finds that an emotional approach to life leads one nowhere. Instead, he prefers the "airy unattachment". That is why he willingly lets Tom drown.

That is also why he refuses to be 'infected' by his daughter's emotions. The speaker keeps both Helen and the ghost of Tom at arm's length and tells the latter.

Yes Tom,
It rather proves my point — a sign that I was right not to embroil myself in Helen's Hysterical maelstrom. What she needs from me is rational guidance, realism, detachment, not facile gestures of pure self-indulgence. You and your 'vision' Tom! No, I am not buying it. One delusion is quite enough.
The 'delusion' referred to in the lines, as we shall shortly see, is an allusion to Day Lewis's shattered belief in communism during his youth.

Day Lewis's poetry also contains many references to the special nature of the poetic apprehension. In his criticism Day Lewis maintains a distinction between the artistic apprehension and the non-artistic apprehension. The non-artist, Day Lewis says, has no distinct nature of apprehension because he is accustomed to view things as they are conditioned by time and space. That is to say, the non-artist takes things for granted; he does not bother about the speciality or the significance of the objects he happens to come across. The artist, on the other hand, peels the objects off their associations and marks their particularity. For the artist the particular nature of the object is of greater interest, and, therefore, he studies each object and each experience as though he has come across them for the first time in his life. He tries to catch the uniqueness behind each phenomenon. The word 'catch', once again suggestive of the image of angling, is found in many passages of Day Lewis where he describes the nature of poetic or artistic apprehension. In the poem, "The Young Girl", Day Lewis describes a young girl looking
at something or trying to recollect something. However, one thing is certain: her eyes 'elude this summer's day'. They look,

Far, far,
Ahed of deep within they peer,
Beyond those customary things,
Towards some golden Age, that is now, is here.  

The interesting point about the nature of the rapt apprehension is that the eyes look not at things, but into things. The eyes penetrate through the customary associations to catch the true nature of the objects under perception. They try to catch the truth behind the appearance. Our day to day experience of objects makes objects 'customary'; the objects are hidden under a 'shell' of illusion. The artist's job is to peel the things off their customary associations and reveal their real nature. In other words, poetic apprehension can be called a kind of apprehension of things sub specie aeternitatis, viewing things in their eternal order. The desire to 'catch the truth' from the flux of life is found very frequently in the poems of Day Lewis. In "The Sitting" Day Lewis says:

I know the curious hands are shaping,
reshaping the image
Of what is only an image of things impalpable.
I feel how the eyes strain
To catch a truth behind the oracular presence.
The image of the 'eyes' straining to catch the essence of the things by penetrating into them presents the idea in a vividly sensuous form. In "An Italian Visit" Day Lewis explains the importance of the poetic apprehension:

I find the whole in elusive fragments;
let one be caught
And profoundly known -- that way, like
a skeleton key, the part
May unlock the intricate whole. 19

To catch a fragment of reality, though it is only a fragment, becomes a passion or desire of the poet, because, each fragment gives a partial intuition of the reality. The perception of the whole in 'elusive fragments' is another way of expressing the idea that we perceive things as 'segregated wholes'. But the idea is almost made concrete with the help of the images 'skeleton key' and the unlocking of 'the intricate whole'. Here, we understand the value and the significance of the poetic perception also. Day Lewis says that he 'catches' a glimpse only to 'deliver it' from the limitations of time and space, and from the shell of illusion which covers it. To perceive things in their eternal order and to learn the truth about them is the first and the foremost desire of Day Lewis. He wants not, only to catch such moments but also to 'deliver
its golden ghost*. The word 'deliver' also becomes an image in the poems of Day Lewis. For instance, in An Italian Visit he says:

Could we compel
One grain of one vanishing moment to deliver
Its golden ghost, loss would be gain
And love step naked from illusion's shell.20

The desire to catch the vanishing moment is linked generally with the theme of travel in Day Lewis. In the same poem, from which we have just cited a passage, there is another instance where Day Lewis speaks of 'delivering its holy spark'. Here are the lines:

Now is a chance to make our flux
Stand and deliver its holy spark—
Now, when the tears rise and the levees crumble,
To tap the potency of farewell.21

In "Elegy for a Woman Unknown", Lewis writes of poetry in terms of voyaging and explains the thrill he has enjoyed during the best hours of voyaging in his poetic explorations. He says,

Those were our best hours -- the mind disconnected
From pulsing time, and purified of accidents.22
By breaking the shell of illusion around one's own perception, the poet learns to comprehend the eternal order behind the temporal modes of things; and in the process he becomes a master of things by having liberated himself from the clutches of time. The idea being based on an intellectual concept, the images Lewis employs tend to be of an intellectual kind. The images that express such ideas are, though they contain a latent sensuous element, cannot be perfectly visualised by the reader however asiduously he makes an attempt at visualizing them. For instance, in the following passage, where Day Lewis speaks of the thrilling moments of his life when he has enjoyed the feeling of liberation from time, he says:

Times when horizon, heart, sky, sea
Dilate with absolute potency—
The present at its highest power,
The course in view, the wake in the flower...23

The images in the lines seem to be superficially sensuous. But when we try to visualise them, they elude our imagination. 'Dilate' is a sensuous word; to visualise the picture of 'horizon, heart, sky, sea/Dilate' is difficult because the picture is beyond the scope for visualisation. Similarly, 'the course in view' and 'the wake in the flower' seem to be images having some sensuousness; and, in fact, they are.
But the poet has subordinated the sensuous element to
the intellectual content in such a manner that the image
becomes an image of thought instead of an image of
impression.

The nature and value of such a recreation from
the mass of the deeply felt and uniquely perceived experiences
is described in the concluding lines of *An Italian Visit*. The pattern emerging out of the selected images tells
us of the kinship of all things and therefore it gives us
knowledge of the pattern of life, of the relationship
between things, and of the relationship between things and
feelings. Apart from knowledge, the pattern also gives
pleasure, the pleasure of revelation, the pleasure of advancing
to a state of becoming from a state of being. Poetry leads
us into a world of timelessness. Harry, a character in
*An Italian Visit*, explains the nature and the significance
of the poetic perception in the poem:

I took a ghost for my glass
And focussed through it the inchoate,
atomized face of becoming.
Then, from the tower in the sky to the
tiniest flower on the earth's hem,
All was distinct, illustrious, full-formed
in the light of necessity,
Time's cocoon fallen away from the truth
and kinship of all things.\(^\text{24}\)
Let us examine the nature of the imagery employed in explaining the idea in the passage cited above. There are some sensuous and concrete things mentioned, which we can easily visualise; we can, for example, visualise 'glass' and focussing something through it; we can also visualise the 'Cocoon'. But these words lose their sensuousness when they are applied to things that could only be perceived by thinking and imagination. The juxtaposition between the concrete and abstract terms in the image decides the nature of the image. The sensuous picture of taking a glass and focussing something through it and the abstract idea of focussing the 'atomized face of becoming', and the concrete picture of the 'cocoon' in association with the abstract, though personified Time and becoming "Time's Cocoon" suggest the idea behind the juxtaposition. The sensuous element is there, but it is there only to help the reader in stimulating his intellect.

With regard to the image itself there are many references in the poetry of Day Lewis. He has written a poem, "The Image", where the image is called the shield given by Athena to Perseus in the legend of Perseus and Medusa. Perseus could not look at Medusa face to face and live; therefore, Athena bade him to focus the image of
Medusa in it. "And by this primitive Radar device", says Day Lewis in The Poetic Image, "he was able to attack her without setting eyes upon her". Reality presents a confused spectacle today and, therefore, the poet uses the image 'as a shield in which he may focus reality for the sword thrust of his imagination'. In "The Image" Day Lewis writes:

Now, in a day of monsters, a desert
   of abject stone
Whose outward terror paralyse the will,
Look at the gleaming circle until it has
   revealed you
The glare of death transmuted to your own
Measure, scaled-down to a possible figure
   the sum of ill.
Let shield take that image, the image
   shield you.²⁶

The image, as explained in the lines cited, is a withdrawal from the real, 'the better to come to grips with it'. Lewis believes that 'every successful image is the sign of a successful encounter with the real'.

How Day Lewis came to associate the poetic image with the Medusa legend is difficult to guess. Freudian analytic interpretation has certainly nothing to do with
it, because Freud interprets the panic at the sight of Medusa as a form of the castration threat connected with the terrifying sight. The image appears in many poems of the modern poets, but each poet has his own interpretation. To Robert Graves, the image symbolizes the way in which the poetic Drama was a rite of spiritual cleansing for the Greeks. To Louis MacNeice, the image of Perseus confronting Medusa seems to symbolize mental illness and mental deficiency. If at all it is any external source that brought the image of Perseus confronting Medusa into the mind of Day Lewis, it may be Valery's "La Pythie" where the subject is the poet's struggle between abstract thought and poetry. In the poem, the priestess imagines an 'ideal world' in which she should be the Medusa's head capable of turning everything into a stone. As Bowra says, "It is Herodiade applying her desires for herself and the whole world, the artist wishing to reduce the whole of experience to a final, irrefragable order, the human spirit trying to create its private universe of other men". Interpreted in Bowra's words the symbol of Perseus and Medusa in Valery seems to have a close resemblance to the image in Day Lewis. Probably Lewis was conscious of Valery's employment of the image.
Whatever be the source of the image, it appears continually in the poems of Day Lewis. It is the central and persistent image in his poetry, since it appears in his poems written at all stages of life. The image is found in *From Feathers to Iron*, an early poem:

Now the young challenger, too tired to side step  
Hunches to give or take the decisive blow.\(^3^1\)

Perseus is often referred to either as the 'young challenger', or the 'challenger' or the 'cloudman'. The Gorgon's head is generally described as 'the ant-hill'. The image appears in the poem "It would be Strange":

It would be strange  
If from the consternation of the ant-hill  
Arose some order angelic, ranked for loving,  
Equal to good or ill.\(^3^2\)

The description of the image of Medusa confronted by Perseus is found in *An Italian Visit* where the 'ant-hill' appears as 'the oafish Dread':

Look rather at the oafish Dread,  
The cloud-man come to strike it dead,  
Armed with a sword and Gorgon's head —  
Magic's credentials.\(^3^3\)
The description of the image, which is a description of the aim and essence of poetry in Day Lewis, undergoes no change irrespective of the changing selves in him. In *The Poet's Way of Knowledge* Day Lewis refers to the traditions of mimetic and symbolic magic; probably he thinks that the image is something like a magician's mirror. The image, however, is the modern poet's, and especially Lewis's, means in his attempt at a better understanding of the world where 'the centre falls apart' and at controlling it by coming to grips with it. Since knowledge is power according to Day Lewis, he attempts at gaining power over the confusing modern scene through his images. The same interpretation of the image of Perseus confronting Medusa is found in *The Poetic Image* also.

So far we have examined how Day Lewis expresses his literary ideas through images, and we find that the images give greater precision and, sometimes, greater dimension of meaning to his ideas. Now let us see how the 'transitions' in his thought affect his employment of imagery. In a number of poems and in his critical works Day Lewis talked about (the theme of 'transition' is discussed in Chapter V) the 'transitions' in the evolution of his poetic self. It would be profitable to examine this and see how his use of imagery is related to it.
There seem to be four stages in the poetic career of Day Lewis. The first stage is the one in which he wanted to renounce the "village idiocy" and face life. The second stage reveals his commitment to an ideal, love for realism, and his contempt for the poetry of withdrawal. In the third stage he is a disillusioned poet, disappointed with his earlier ideology. The third stage, like the first one, can be called a transition, because it brought a great change in his attitude to life and poetry. The fourth stage is the stage of withdrawal from social life where the poet explores the 'within' rather than the 'without'. The four stages show four distinct attitudes of Lewis to life. In consequence, the ideas and images signifying poetry and the poet in the four stages also appear different.

In Transitional Poem Day Lewis describes what he thought of himself as a poet in his early life. The picture is very clearly given. He thought of himself as a keen young poet looking into the running streams in solitude 'brooding from chaos to last trump'. 'A poet should be secluded' seems to be his idea then. He says,

I thought to have had some fame
As the village idiot
Condemned at birth to sit
Oracle of blind alleys:
Shanglied abroad the galleys
I got reprieve and shame.
He also says that he has learnt that 'it is high time to renounce/ This village idiocy', because of his association with new friends and new ideas.

Nor is this image of the 'village idiot' found in 'Transitional Poem' alone; Day Lewis refers to the poet as a village idiot in The Poetic Image also. The poet as a village idiot, according to the early poems, is one who loves solitude, refuses to have anything to do with the world around him, and wants to create poems out of brooding rather than out of experience. The "Village idiot's" attitude to life can be summed up as the attitude of one satisfied with his walled garden. As Day Lewis says,

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 the English year.

The 'village idiot' is better exposed in The Magnetic Mountain where he becomes the Fourth Enemy.
You're a poet, so am I:
No man's keeper, intimate
Of breeding earth and brooding sky,
Irresponsible, remote,
A cool cloud, creations eye.
Seek not to turn the winter tide
But to temperate deserts fly:
Close chain-mail of solitude
Must protect you, or you die.\textsuperscript{40}

The first revolt against 'village idiot', thus, is found in \textit{Transitional poem}, and the revolt is appreciated in \textit{The Magnetic Mountain}. After his revolt against his earlier self, Day Lewis now feels that he should have a face to face encounter with reality. In this context he says in some of his poems, that trends like abstract art are useless for they are not really rooted in reality.

Day Lewis argues that the very concept of abstract art is meaningless, because all abstraction is an abstraction from some whole. Lewis expresses the belief that the real is the basis for poetry. He says:

\begin{quote}
Few things can more inflame
This far too combative heart
Than the intellectual Quixotes of the age
Prattling of abstract art.\textsuperscript{41}
\end{quote}
The reason for Day Lewis to attack abstract art seems to be grounded on the fact that abstract art refuses to recognise that poetry patterns life.

No one would deny it --
But for the blind man's passion
Cassandra had been no more than
draggle-skirt,
Helen a ten-year old fashion.

Yet had there not been one hostess
Ever whose arms waylaid
Like the tough brambling a princeling's journey or
At least no peasant maid
Redressing with rude heat
Nature's primeval wrong,
Epic had slumbered beneath his blindness
And Helen lacked her song. 42

While Day Lewis agrees that the story of Helen was certainly rooted in Homer's passion ('the blind man's passion'), he insists that Homer did not create it out of pure fancy or imagination. If not Helen, Day Lewis argues, Homer must have seen some woman, either 'one hostess' or a 'peasant maid' who had redressed 'with rude heat/Nature's primeval wrong'. If Homer had not observed the nature of women like Helen of Troy, his epic, Day Lewis says, would have 'slumbered beneath his blindness' and Helen would have 'lacked her song'.

It is worth noting here that Day Lewis substitutes Helen and Homer for reality and the poet respectively. The whole literary idea gains a new dimension in precision through this substitution.

This belief that poetry is, and should be, based on the real, makes Day Lewis embrace realism and feel a great contempt for the poetry of withdrawal. Probably his early poetry shows a bitter revolt against the symbolist poetry which was based on the assumption that subjects like Politics and Metaphysics are dangerous to poetry and hence to be discarded. One clear enemy to the revolutionary poet, as Day Lewis's criticism as well as his early poems reveal, is the poet like T.S. Eliot who merely reveals his disgust at the rotten society. Day Lewis indirectly attacks Eliot in The Magnetic Mountain:

"Counters of spoons and content with cushions They pray for peace, they hand down disaster."  

'Counters of spoons' seems to be an indirect reference to Eliot. Similarly, when Lewis says "we have passed the place of the temperate race/ And the land of the one-eyed man" it is difficult not to be reminded of the one-eyed
The poets who have no attachment to the communist ideal are supposed to be those who drain the reservoir in times of drought 'through private pipes for baths and sprinklers'.

The disgust for the 'village idiot' and the symbolist poetry is the outcome of Day Lewis' love for the commitment. The transition from the first stage of poetic career to the second—from the village idiot to the revolutionary poet—takes place slowly. What looks like an argument and debate about the two kinds of poets in the poems written before The Magnetic Mountain appears as a choice and determination in it. The arguments in the early poems are conducted in terms of images. The two kinds of poets are spoken of in terms of the household cock and the Kestrel. The good and bad of both sides are well-discussed in Transitional Poem:

Better by far the household cock
Scratching the common yard for corn,
Whose rainy voice all night at will
Can signify a private dawn.

The poetry of the village idiot may signify a private dawn, but being a poetry of solitude it has little importance.
for society. On the same grounds it is useless also, for the society. Another bird, which may be the Kestrel,

Circles in plain bewilderment
Where shoulder to shoulder long waves march
Towards a magnetic continent.49

Between the household cock and the kestrel, Lewis chooses the latter. The choice is very clearly indicated through the same image in The Magnetic Mountain:

But see! not far, not fiction, a real one
Vibrates like heat-haze full in the sun's face
Filling the heart, the chaste and fleet one,
Rarely my kestrel, my lucky star.50

What attracts the poet to the kestrel is the nature of the bird. It is a bird that 'soars' and at the same time 'fees upon the earth'. The joy in life, Lewis seems to believe for a time, lies in the 'dance of action'. Therefore, he asks the reader

Submit to your star and take
Command, oh start the attacking movement51
When once Day lewis makes the Kestrel's way of life his ideal, he is no longer interested in the household cock—the private poet. He expresses his desire to become a wind "to shake the world out of its sleepy sickness". "Make us a wind", he says,

From a new world that springs and

gathers force,

Clearing the air, cleaning the wound;

Sets masses in motion and whips the blood.52

He imagines himself to be a tree giving a voice to the 'rising wind'.53 He feels that the "red advance of life" calls out for "common blood". In addition to the hawk and the kestrel, the skylark is also included in the list of images suggestive of the life of action. The Skylark is a bird which floats up "where voice and wing are one,/ A singing star, a note of light".54

The desire to act for 'life's sake' leads him to think of life in terms of sweat and labour. The lover's eye is the "hawk's eye" because it sees "only the point of desire".55 The poet's, on the other hand, rests on all like the moon in "level contemplation",

197
...making roof and ruin
Treachery scorn and death into silver
syllables
And out of worn fragments a seamless
coat. 56

Day Lewis wants not only the poet's eye and the lover's eye but also 'the historical eye', which, in his own words, is

To see this ploughland curve as a
graph of history,
The unregarded sweat that has made
it fertile,
Reading between the furrows a desperate
appeal
From all whose share in them was bitter
as iron.
Hearing the young corn whisper
The wishes of men that had no other voice... 57

At this stage in his poetic career (i.e., in 1936) Lewis seems to have believed that the shadows of doubt and fear would vanish 'only in the heart of decision' and 'in the hearts cleared for action'. 58 He asks his readers to stand by him, and be responsible:

Stand with us here,
The past at your feet, your fingers
nervous like the lark's wing
To be up and doing. 59
He assures the readers that a new life will certainly emerge out of the existing chaos and disorder of modern life. He says that the readers await 'a judgement and a choice'. The only proper thing that the readers should do, according to Day Lewis, is to look to him whom "We will call Noah, figure of your fate,/ Him understand, him obey". 60

The poetry of this period (1930-37) is packed with excitement, desire for action, and the anticipation of a bright future. Urgency peeps through the lines,

Hands off! The dykes are down.
This no time for play.
Hammer is poised and sickle
Sharpened. I cannot stay. 61

The construction of the very short sentences indicates that it is not a time for play, but action. The images of hawks, kestrels, herons and the skylarks circle through the lines. For the reader of these poems there can be little doubt that the flood of the communist myth swept Day Lewis off his feet.

A note of disappointment with the new faith and a feeling that he had probably wasted many years of his
poetic life over something which is a kind of 'a political 

game' appears for the first time in Overtures to Death 
written in 1938. It is significant that the volume 
contains Nabara, a poem which describes the heroic fight 
of the Spanish ear-ruled captains with the huge German 
Destroyer. The Spanish Civil War, as a test case, proved 
for the poets of the thirties that Russia was more interested 
in improving herself than in encouraging and participating 
in the class struggle. 'Nabara' is a poem based on the 
Spanish Civil War.

In "Regency Houses" Day Lewis asks a question:

Are we living—we too 
Living extravagant farce 
In the finery of spent passions? 
Is all we do and shall do 
But the glib habitual breathing 
Of clocks where time means nothing 
In a condemned mansion?62

The lines, the question, and the image of the clocks in 
a condemned mansion suggest the bitterness of the poet 
against what he thought was a betrayal. He feels unhappy 
to find that nobody cares for the 'crest fallen cocky' 
meaning probably the revolutionary poet. Out of this
disappointment emerges another image — the image of the swan slowly rising from the 'stricken pool'. It is interesting to note that the images of the hawk, the kestrel, the heron, and the skylark disappear entirely in the poems written after 1938. Instead of the images of the birds of altitude, there is now the image of the swan. The poet describes the swan in the poem "Behold the Swan".

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 prophecy.

From the stricken pool of feelings arises the unhurried swan which symbolises a change in the poetic self of Day Lewis. The tranquility and the dignity of the swan, however, is yet to be attained by the poet as he still feels it a puzzle and confusion why his love of action for life's sake ended in a disappointment. In "Self-criticism and Answer", Lewis says to himself:
Let yours be the start and stir
Of a flooding indignation
That channels the dry heart deeper
And sings through the dry bone. 64

The indignation slowly loses its bitterness and becomes a
sadness and a regret. In "The Nevrotic" he describes
himself as

Death mask of a genius unborn
Tragic prince of a rejected play;
Soul of suffering that bequeathed no myth:
A dark-tower and a never-sounded horn —
Call him what he will, words cannot ennoble
This Atlas who fell down under a bubble. 65

The contrast between the optimistic self which ardently
tells every one that "nothing is innocent now but to act
for life's sake" and the sad self which declares "we who
lived by honest dreams/Defend the bad against the worse" 66
is very striking. Referring to his earlier self, the
poet says:

One the rare air made dizzy renounced
Earth, and the avalanche took him at
his word:
One wooed perfection—He's bedded deep
in the glacier, perfect
And null, the prince and image of despair. 67
The picture of the young poetic-self who was prepared to place his faith in Marx first and in the Muse next, and the self who did not relish the idea of compromise slowly vanishes, and the picture of the matured man accepting the commonplace begins to replace it slowly. In "Song" Day Lewis says:

My heart, like corn, was broken for
A harvest I could not have. 68

In An Italian Visit, referring to his early committed self, Day Lewis says that those were his 'gambolling days' when he led 'Leviathan in a dance' in his 'urchin glee' till the 'lurching waves shoaled out with a school of wishes'. 69

The end of the committed poetic self appears in the poem "The Poet" where Day Lewis explains his position:

Dying any man may
Feel wisdom harmonious, fateful
At the tip of his dry tongue.
All I have felt or sung
Seems now but the moon's fitful
Sleep on a clouded bay,
Swan's maiden flight, or the climb
To a tremulous, hare bell crest. 70

Out of this disappointed and disillusioned self is born a new self which hates to be swept away by any emotion.
'Time-serving' is what this new poetic-self positively hates. The idea that poetry should not be cramped by commitment recurs again and again. It makes its first appearance in Overtures to Death, where Day Lewis says,
Alluring the past, the future, their bright eyes yielded
Or enlarged in a mist of fable.
But he who can look with the naked eye of the Now —
He is the true seer, able,
To witness the rare in the common
and read the common
Theme for all time appointed...

To understand 'the value of our stay' seems to be the aim of Day Lewis' poetic self after 1948. The social preoccupations and the psychological theories of Marx and Freud are thrown overboard, and once again a fresh beginning is made from the start to seek the rare in the common. The poetry written after 1948 may be called the poetry of withdrawal or the personal poetry, since the poetic-self of Day Lewis begins to explore itself rather than the world around. That is why the poems published after 1948 indicate Day Lewis's attempt to look within rather than without for poetic exploration.

The poems written after 1948 present Day Lewis's changed attitude to poetry. He now says that human problems cannot be solved with 'tears and kisses' and that it is not right to 'embroil' himself in the 'hysterical
maelstrom of emotions. He refuses to be swept away by emotions; he does not want to be dragged into the river by the fishes he wants to catch. The image of the swan disappears and the images of the voyage and travel begin to appear frequently. While the journey images of the early period are generally the images of the locomotives and the ships, the voyage images of the later period are the underwater images. Day Lewis is happy to enter the world of his memories his 'child — loved attic' — to feel that he is real, he is alive. He wants to dive deep into himself — into his personal experiences to gain a clarification of those experiences. Almost all his later poems reveal this tendency.

A study of Cecil Day Lewis' poetic self reveals that it is a self of conflicts and contradictions. There are transitions in his poetic life from one stage to another which are effected by the changing attitudes of the poet towards life. His poetry indicates that he has been struggling hard 'to live with himself'. As a result, he often seems to be doubtful of himself, of his ability as a poet in exploring reality. Since every new self indicates the death of the earlier self, he feels that his poetry is a series of 'fresh beginnings'. That also
is, probably, why he feels that his work lacks continuity. The same ideas about his poetry are found voiced in some of his poems. He sometimes even feels that 'silence were best' for him:

\[
\begin{align*}
& I \text{ fear this careful art} \\
& \text{Would never storm the sense:} \\
& \text{Its agonies are but the eager} \\
& \text{Retchings of an empty heart.} \\
& \text{It never was possessed} \\
& \text{By divine incontinence} \\
& \text{And for him whom that eygre} \\
& \text{Sweeps not, silence were best.}
\end{align*}
\]

In *An Italian Visit* Day Lewis expresses his fear that he lacks sequence:

\[
\begin{align*}
& \text{It's sequence I lack, the talent to grasp} \\
& \text{Not a here and there phrase} \\
& \text{But the music entire, its original stream} \\
& \text{and logic. I'd better} \\
& \text{Accept this, perhaps,} \\
& \text{As nature's way: matter, the physicists} \\
& \text{tell one, is largely} \\
& \text{A matter of gaps.}
\end{align*}
\]

A fear that his poetry and his exploration might result in nothing, that 'time' might 'superannuate the workmen' of his rhyme also raises its head now and then. In
An Italian Visit, Day Lewis says:

A driven heart, a raven-shadowing mind
Loom above all my pastorals, impend
My traveller's joy with fears
That travelling has no end. 82

Here and there, though very rarely, appears another intention of Day Lewis — to annul the difference between the word and the deed. The idea is philosophical, but Day Lewis introduces it only to feel sorry that he could not, however, bring about such a harmony. In Transitional Poem Day Lewis uses 'the word' in the sense of Heracletan Logos. 83 In 'Sketches For a self-portrait' he says that he practised words like 'a secret vice'. He expresses the wish,

Oh, innocent vice —
Could every thing be reduced to a form of words. 84

He seems to feel that he could not achieve such a harmony, and that becomes another source for his fear.

This kind of fear and doubt, of course, are natural because they appear as a matter of psychological necessity. Each dominant passion generates a dominant
fear, the fear of its non-fulfilment. The love for something involves, naturally, the fear for that something. The fears of Day Lewis about his poetry are merely indications of his love for poetry. Such doubts and fears are to be expected in the case of one who feels nothing else "so real, so central or so fully absorbing, as the writing of verse". Indeed, says Day Lewis, "it is only when I am engaged upon a poem that I have a positive sense of physical well-being, however exhausting or futile the struggle with the words". Struggle, conflict and fear seem to be inevitable where love for something appears as the dominant passion.

The study of 'transitions' in the evolution of literary ideas in the poetry of Day Lewis indicates that there is a close relationship between his literary ideas and his employment of imagery. When Day Lewis thinks of the poet as one who makes poetry out of the mind-stuff, he uses one group of ideas to describe the poet and poetry; when he thinks of the poet as one who involves himself in the mainstream of life, and as one who makes his poetry out of the real existing world, he employs a different set of images to describe the poet and poetry. This fact reveals that there is a close association between the
changing ideas in Day Lewis's mind and his employment of imagery. A change in the attitude of Day Lewis towards a subject, as our study reveals, does not take place all of a sudden; it goes through the slow process of 'transition'. Thus, behind the change in every idea, there is a period of transition which slowly leads Day Lewis's mind to the acceptance of a new idea. Since ideas are closely related to images, the change in ideas leads to the change in the images that express those ideas.

The reasons for the changes found in the employment of images can be easily grasped if the study made of the 'transitions' in thought is borne in mind. When Day Lewis considers the poet as one whose 'metier' is solitude, and whose poetry is the outcome of 'brooding' or imagination without any strong connection with life, the image employed to reveal the poet is the 'village idiot'. When he feels that the poet should be involved in the stream of life and when he believes that the full man must be 'rooted yet unconfined', the image that represents the poet is the bird of altitude — either a hawk or a kestrel. When he is disappointed with his social ideology, the image that symbolizes the poet is the swan rising from the stricken pool. Probably the swan image is employed to suggest beauty,
balance and dislike for haste. It may have its origin in the expression 'the swan song' as Day Lewis seems to have felt the shock of disappointment so severely that he thought it impossible to write any more poems. When he is prepared to accept the 'now', and court the commonplace, he begins to look more within than without, and, in consequence, the images of travel and voyage replace the earlier images.

We have, thus, seen how the transitions in the literary thought of Day Lewis influence his imagery. It is these transitions that are mainly responsible for the recurrence or the disappearance of some images. In the second chapter we have seen how Day Lewis believes in the idea that the poetic self (or the poetic emotion) works upon the material drawn from the human self (or the human emotion). That is, Day Lewis says that human experiences such as memories, attitudes, ideas, etc., are converted into poetry by the poetic self. Now let us examine how the poetic self operates upon the material provided by the human self.

Memories, impressions, psychological traits and experiences enter the poems of Day Lewis which generally describe the states of life, and which are generally nostalgic.
Memories from childhood, say, appear in poems that deal with the theme of childhood. But the interesting point about these memories is that the poet does not use the first person while introducing these memories. Usually the third person pronoun 'he' or 'his' is employed. For instance, "Passage from Childhood" begins with the lines,

His earliest memory, the mood
Fingured and frail as maidenhair
Was this - a china cup somewhere
In a green, deep wood.

What was once the personal memory of the poet, is now generalized and presented to represent the state of childhood in general. The poet seems to think that others are like him in experience, and that what is true of his experience is also true of them. Thus he makes the particular the universal. The reader easily understands the image of the 'china cup' because he, too, like the poet, may have had some memories which are not recorded. But the image, though not very clearly understood by him in the beginning, becomes very clear to him when he completes the reading of the poem. The sad feeling that the 'he' of the poem lives to find again somewhere,

That wood, that homely cup; to taste all
Its chill, imagined dews; to dare
The dangerous crystal.
Then a series of images are presented to suggest the childhood of the 'he' in the poem. The person's peculiar habit of looking into mirrors, his quickness in reacting to 'justice or injustice', his tendency of withdrawing into a 'shell', his self-pity, his 'exile' mood, and his dreams of eternity present a picture or pattern of childhood. As far as the pattern is concerned, each is functional in throwing light on the theme—namely childhood. But these images suddenly gain their force and become vital, when the poet explains how the person had lost the blissful state of childhood:

Now, beyond reach of sense or reason,
His life walks in a glacial sleep
For ever, since he drank that cup
And found it poison.
He's one more ghost, engaged to keep
Eternity's long hours and mewed
Up live flesh with no escape
From solitude...

The 'china cup', which, in the first stanza was introduced only as a memory, by the time it reached the last stanza, has become a metaphor for eager anticipation found in the child to grow up. The 'cup' has, thus, become an image suggesting the restlessness and the inner urge of the child in piercing the mist of the future. The various
images in the poem contribute to the thought that man is helpless against impulses and inner urges even from childhood, which make him unhappy.

Thus we find that memories in Day Lewis enter poems which describe a state of life, that the particular experiences of the poet are made universal and that they become metaphorical. Let us, now examine "O Dreams, O Destinations", which is a poem packed with a number of memories and the personal experiences of the poet. It is one of the poems of Day Lewis which have won applause from many critics. To Cox and Dyson it is a poem that "can be returned to with pleasure: it is a splendidly civilized poem". Clifford Dyment calls it a "beautiful sonnet sequence about childhood". According to Reymond Tschumi it is "a series of nine compact and rich sonnets" where "the thought is no longer explicit but involved in a continuous stream of images". Though Cox and Dyson have tried to explain why the poem can be called a "splendidly civilized poem", no other critic has made any study of the poem in detail. A study of "O Dreams, O Destinations" might give us a clue to the secret behind the image-patterns with regard to memories and impressions in the poetry of Day Lewis.
"O Dreams, O Destinations", as the title itself suggests, is a highly nostalgic and an intensely personal poem in that the poet expresses in it his longing for the innocence of infancy and childhood. It is a sequence of nine sonnets. The nostalgia for innocence of childhood is counter-balanced by the equally powerful urge in Day Lewis's temperament, namely his characteristic trait of looking forward into the future with eager and passionate expectation. Almost all the images in the poem seem to be the direct outcome of the poet's experiences in moments of absorption. The sources of most of the images that appear in the poem are already discussed in the second chapter.

The First Sonnet in the poem is about the state of infancy. 'For infants time is like a humming shell' says the poet. Infants are hardly conscious of the turmoil around them; they 'faintly' hear the noisy conversations of the elders. They live in a state of womb-warm sleep and they are ignorant of what "hunger for the corn". Day Lewis employs two images to suggest the blessedness of infancy: one, the image of the humming shell and the other, the image of the telegraph pole. Both the images, as it has already been pointed out, are the images of the impressions that formed in his mind in his early life. The
interesting factor about the images is that Day Lewis does not present those images as though they are his personal observations; on the other hand, he uses those images as those representing the common experiences of all children. He does not say that he felt that time was like a humming shell; he says "For infants time is like a humming shell". What originally was an image made of personal experience is generalised now and the poet stands like an observer examining that experience. It is not the infant or the child that speaks but the mature poet. After presenting the two images, the poet expresses his opinion:

Faintly they hear, through the womb's 
lingring haze, 
Arumour of that sea to which they 
are born; 
They hear the ringing pole of summer days, 
But need not know what hungers for the corn.  

The two images presented in the beginning lead to thought; the images are directed towards a purpose. After the semi-lyrical thinking comes the conclusion which is once again evocative:

They are the lipping rushes in a stream— 
Grace-notes of a profound, legato dream.
The second Sonnet deals with the theme of childhood. Two images of personal experience from childhood are given and immediately the poet interprets the images. Children look down upon the morning mist that wraps the valley, but they wish to tear it up. They watch 'the spring rise inexhaustibly' but already their mind is 'on the sailed and glittering estuary'. The images of the children wishing to tear the mist and watching 'the spring rise' are images from Day Lewis' childhood, but he speaks of them as the common experiences of every child and makes his nostalgic comment:

Fondly we wish their mist might never break,
Knowing it hides so much that best were hidden;
We'd chain them by the spring, lest it should broaden
For them into a quick sand and a wreck.

The middle-aged man; or, the old man's feeling of regret that children should suffer from anticipation and the desire to keep them chained to childhood appear as the development of the images. Actually it is the thought of the older man that is seeking the images for expression and explanation, though it may appear the other way round when reading the poem. What makes the semi-lyrical lines
greatly poetic is the longing of the poet which sums up the sonnet:

But they slip through our fingers like the source, like mist, like time that has flagged out their course.

Just as the child cannot escape the thrill of anticipation which really makes him sadder and sadder as he learns to face truth, the old man is equally helpless about his nostalgia since he cannot escape the feeling even though he knows that he cannot get back what he has once lost.

The Third Sonnet is more discursive than the first two, as it begins to explain the misfortune of human life. There are no personal and evocative images employed in this sonnet. However, thought itself appears like a vague and non-sensuous image because of the intensely felt regret of the poet:

Reaching towards the farthing, we begin it, Looking beyond, or backward, more and more We grow unfaithful to the unique minute Till, from neglect, its features stale and blur.
Then appears the long comment which sounds like loud thinking about the 'fatal move'. Animals and birds are not unfaithful to the unique minute as they are not worried about what they had done or what they should do. Man alone lives in the past and future, and so, he is always unfaithful to the present. It is the curse of man.

The Fourth and the Fifth Sonnets are about 'youth time' which is a period when man passes through the tunnel of "alternating light and shade". The young man is not satisfied with what he sees; he always wants to know the reality behind the appearance. The image of the young man passing through alternate phases of brilliant, dazzling light and the 'Egyptian darkness' are the images coming from the personal life of the poet. They are employed by the poet now to examine the state of 'youth time'. The images are the basis on which the poet begins to build the structure of thought. But once again it is well to remember that the images are sought by the poet to discuss a state of life and to illustrate an idea.

In the Sixth Sonnet, the poet expresses his wonder at the 'gross experience' of the 'youth time'. He says:
whither we flew,
Why we should agonize, we hardly knew—
Nor what ached in us, asking to be born.

The 'youth time' like infancy, is a period of the dreamy life of man with a difference—while the infant unconsciously dreams, the young man creates a world of dreams out of his wishes. The poet, being an older man now, knows that one comes to age not in dreams, but in living the real life. As Day Lewis says:

Ah, not in dreams, but when our souls engage
With the common mesh and moil, we come of age.

The Seventh Sonnet deals with the state of being 'older'. The old man is not worried about infinite extension; he is satisfied with the 'limited objective'. He knows that there can be no end to any war if one begins to fight. The sonnet presents statements in a neutral tone instead of images. The knowledge that young men know little, though useful, is something that makes the old man lose his 'appetite for wholeness' and accept the banal. Talking of the stage of being 'older', Day Lewis says:
Lost the archaic dawn wherein we
started,
The appetite for wholeness; now we prize
Half-loaves, half-truths—enough for the
half-hearted,
The gleam snatched from corruption
satisfies.\textsuperscript{102}

The Eighth Sonnet presents the reflection of the poet on
the age of being 'older'. Even though the old man is
prepared to accept the 'half-truth', he is not completely
free from the defect of anticipation. He is still un-
faithful to the unique minute as his heart "yearns to the
sighing distances of beyond".\textsuperscript{103}

The Ninth Sonnet presents the thought of Day Lewis
about human life and the dual nature of man. Man has two
opposite and conflicting selves in him — one self wishing
to travel like a bird and the other desiring to settle like
a bird. 'Each is our wish', he says. But the sad truth
that man cannot escape this conflict tones the thought and
makes the observation passionate. Day Lewis sadly observes:

\begin{quote}
Alas, the bird flies blind,
Hooded by a dark sense of destination:
Her weight on the glass calm leaves no
impression,
Her home is soon a basketful of wind.
Travellers, we're fabric of the road we go;
We settle, but like feathers on time's flow.\textsuperscript{104}
\end{quote}
The urge to travel and the urge to settle are compared to the urges in a bird in a simile. 'To travel like a bird' and 'to settle like a bird' are, as Day Lewis says, the desires of man. The simile slowly disappears and a metaphor replaces it. The poet, instead of talking of man now talks of the bird by fusing the wishes of man and bird into one image. The bird image helps him to reach the conclusion that we settle 'like feathers on time's flow'. The image of the 'feathers' settling on time's flow, though not sensuous by itself, is made sensuous with the help of the bird image which precedes it.

Writing of 'O Dreams, O Destinations', Cox and Dyson have called it a 'half-discursive, half-evocative' poem like Auden's 'In Time of War'. The reason for the mingling of the discursive and evocative elements can be understood if the way in which the evocative images are employed in the poem is understood. When the poet thinks of a particular period in his life, images from that particular period jump into his mind becoming evocative and suggestive. A contemplation of those images appears discursive as the poet begins to think of those periods of life. The images are kept before the reader to draw his attention; the poet then goes on speaking in terms of the images to throw light on the subject. The commentary
or the interpretation of the poet appears as the discursive element, whereas the images that come from life appear to be evocative.

Many poems in which images of memories and experiences are found exhibit similar traits. "Cornet Solo", "Last Words", "The Innocent", "O Dreams, O Destinations", "Passage from Childhood" etc., are poems which contain a large number of memories. In all these poems three characteristic ways of the employment of imagery is found. They are:

1. The images are used to suggest a state of life.

2. They are universalized, i.e., they are employed as though they are common experiences of all people in a particular state of life.

3. They are directed towards thought which sums up either the stanza or the poem. Sometimes the image gains a greater significance in that it becomes metaphorical. Thought in the poem seems to be a result of the image in that, a contemplation of the image results in thought.

Thus, it can be observed that the 'self' or 'the Human Self' which enters the poetry of Day Lewis becomes
the 'not-self' by being turned into common experience. That is to say, the memory, which is the local and particular in the context of the poet's life becomes the universal in the context of the poem. The image, entering the poem as a slice of reality (i.e., as a part of the poet's life), is consciously reflected and interpreted by the poet. The reflection and interpretation involved in the process lead to thought, which is a sum of various ideas on the subject. What was originally a 'word-picture' of a memory or experience, becomes, as Day Lewis said, 'a happy marriage of object and sensation' or, as Ezra Pound said, 'an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time'.

The images resulting from the peculiar associations of the poet with certain persons, who are either his friends or his relatives, do not seem to be so fruitfully employed as the images resulting from the memories, experiences, psychic traits etc. of the poet. The reason why these images cannot be transformed into real poetic images is also obvious; the images are merely the 'word-pictures' describing persons, and as such, they cannot be universalized. For example, the lines,
You, first, who ground my lust to love upon
Your gritty humorous virginity....

or

Next the hawk-faced man, who could praise
an apple
In terms of peach and win the argument.

or

She next, sorrow's familiar, who turned
Her darkness to our light....

or

Last the tow-haired poet, never done
With cutting and planning some new gnomic prop
To jack his all too stable universe up:--...

which contain images describing Mary, Rex Warner, Margaret and Auden, are not likely to be clear to the uninformed reader. When the reader begins to question himself about the 'you' or 'the hawk-faced man' or 'sorrow's familiar' or 'tow-haired poet' he does not get any reason for the employment of the images. For instance, when a reader questions why the poet should be 'tow-haired', the passage does not throw enough light on the image. These images made of psychological associations lose their strength by being too personal and esoteric. It is quite likely that
Images of this kind are more a hindrance than a help to the poems in which they appear.

Images coming from the study of authors are also likely to be confusing if they are not properly welded into the context of the poem. It is one thing to present the drift of the thought found in a particular work of philosophy, and it is another to present a carefully worded axiom, or idea of a particular author. Where the idea is too general and well known to the reader, it is easy to present it in poetry. But where an idea is known only to the 'initiated' few, the poet cannot make it very clear unless resorting to some methods external to poetry, such as offering foot-notes. The difference can be very easily seen with the help of two examples:

1. It is certain we shall attain
   No life till we stamp on all
   Life the tetragonal
   Pure symmetry of brain.  

2. Look where the cloud squadrons are
   Stampeded by the wind,
   A boy's kite sits as calm as Minos
   If the string be sound.

The difference between the two images, namely, 'life the tetragonal pure symmetry of brain' and the boy's kite
sitting 'as calmly as Minos' is at once apparent. The
first image is too abstract and elusive; it had to be so
because the poet wanted to introduce a concept of Spinoza
directly. Day Lewis himself seems to have felt that the
image was not well directed, because he himself appended
the following foot-note to it:

I would warn you that I do not attribute
to nature either beauty or deformity,
order or confusion. Only in relation to
our imagination can things be called
beautiful or ugly, well-ordered or confused.

The first image is difficult to understand
without a foot-note. But the second image, which presents
the idea — 'mind is the source of order' — requires no
such foot-note, because the images of the kite in the wind,
and the image of Minos explain it thoroughly. That is to
say, ideas derived from authors become successful in pro-
portion to the generality and popularity of the content
they express. Since a detailed study is going to be made
of the political and metaphysical thought in the poetry of
Day Lewis, any more discussion as to how ideas from authors
enter the poetry of Day Lewis is not necessary here.

We have seen, in our study in this chapter, that
Day Lewis expresses his ideas about poetry, poetic process, and the poetic image either in the form of metaphors, or in the form of comparisons, or in the form of direct statements. Ideas about the poet's absorption and assimilation of human experience into the poetic mind are expressed generally through images of birth, or harvesting. The poet's way of grasping the images are usually expressed through the images of diving and angling, i.e., through the images of sea. The ideas about poetic exploration, i.e., the poet's search for truth behind the 'flux' of feelings are expressed through the images of journey and voyage. The idea of poetic exploration is expressed in terms of journey images during his commitment period, and it is expressed in terms of voyage after 1938.

We, thus, find that Day Lewis's literary ideas are expressed neither through science images nor through technological images, nor through technological images, nor through the images of geography and civilization. We might say that Lewis employs images chosen from the field of nature — nature in the broad sense which includes the human being also. Birth, harvest, birds, voyage (sea) and journey (land) can be classified as various manifestations of nature. In this sense, I think, Day Lewis employs nature-imagery in the expression of his literary ideas.
The results of the study made of the Poetic Self in Day Lewis can be summed up point-wise for the sake of convenience. They are:

1. Day Lewis expresses similar ideas about the nature of poetic apprehension and image-making and about the relationship between ideas and images in poetry as a poet to those expressed by him in his critical works as critic.

2. There are two transitions in his poetic self which divide his poetic career into four stages. The first transition took place when he relinquished 'village idiocy' to become a committed poet. The second transition took place when he disliked 'time-serving' and began to court the commonplace, loving a life of withdrawal. Thus, there are four periods in his poetic career—the period when he thought he was a lazy village idiot, the period when he actively participated in the social and political life of the period, the period when he felt disappointed with communism and the period when he preferred a withdrawal from
life. The images that represented the poet in these four periods are also different. In the first period he calls the poet 'a village idiot'; in the second a 'hawk' or a 'kestrel'; in the third a 'swan'; and, in the fourth a 'traveller' or explorer.

3. Memories, experiences, impressions and psychological traits do appear in his poems, but when they appear they lose their individuality and become general. That is, Day Lewis transforms the particular into the universal in his poems. Personal experiences are generally employed as images describing states of life. The poet takes an objective stance by presenting his experiences in the third person.

4. Psychological associations of persons and properties such as the 'hawk-faced man' and the 'tow-haired poet' tend to be esoteric as they are too personal.

5. Ideas from authors enter the poems of Day Lewis, but they become successful images in proportion to their generality. A particular definition
or axiom is likely to be confusing in poetry, whereas a general or a popular idea can be successfully presented.

6. Day Lewis employs nature images to express his literary ideas.

The study conducted in this chapter and the previous one reveals that Day Lewis wanted to participate in politics actively and that he was influenced by the ideas of various philosophers. It is necessary to see how he deals with political and metaphysical ideas in his poetry to understand the relationship between thought and imagery in his poetry. The following chapters, chapter IV and chapter V, discuss Day Lewis's thought in relation to imagery in his poetry.
Foot Notes

5. Ibid., p. 347.
6. "Derelict", *The Room*, p. 15
8. "Bread and Wine", *The Gate*, p. 11
10. Ibid., p. 349.
11. "This Loafer", *The Room*, p. 54.
12. "Fisherman and/or Fish", *The Gate*, p. 54.
13. Ibid.
15. "The Disabused", *The Gate*, p. 36.
17. "This Young Girl", *The Gate*, p. 22.
20. Ibid., p. 345.
22. "Elegy for a Woman Unknown", *The Room*, p. 44.
31. *From Feathers to Iron*, CP., p. 73.
32. "It would be Strange", CP., p. 225.
37. Ibid., p. 21.
42. Ibid., p. 19.
45. "Johnny Head-in-Air", CP., p. 132.


48. *Transitional Poem*, *CP.*, p. 44.

49. Ibid.


51. Ibid., p. 109.

52. Ibid., p. 115.


56. Ibid.

57. Ibid., pp. 161-162.

58. "In the Heart of Contemplation", *CP.*, p. 188.

59. "Noah and the Waters", *CP.*, p. 163.

60. Ibid., p. 164.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title and Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>&quot;Behold the Swan&quot;, CP., pp. 203-204.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>&quot;Self Criticism and Answer&quot;, CP., p. 208.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>&quot;Where Are the War Poets?&quot;, CP., p. 228.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Overtures to Death, CP., p. 185.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>&quot;Song&quot;, CP., p. 204.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>An Italian Visit, CP., p. 344.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>&quot;The Poet&quot;, CP., p. 224.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Overtures to Death, CP., p. 182.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Ibid., p. 185.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>&quot;The New Year's Eve&quot;, CP., p. 276.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Ibid., p. 278.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>&quot;The Disabused&quot;, The Gate, pp. 31-36.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>&quot;Fisherman and/or Fish&quot;, The Gate, p. 54.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>&quot;The Room&quot;, The Room., p. 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>The Burried Day, p. 129.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Ibid.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
237


81. An Italian Visit, CP., p. 332.

82. Ibid., pp. 333-334.


87. Ibid.

88. "Passage from Childhood", CP., p. 205.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid., p. 207.


95. Ibid.
96. Ibid., p. 217.
97. Ibid.
98. Ibid.
99. Ibid.
100. Ibid., pp. 218-219.
101. Ibid., p. 219.
102. Ibid.
103. Ibid.
104. Ibid., p. 220.
106. Ibid.
107. Ibid., p. 21.
108. Ibid.