UNIVERSITE NATIONALE DU RWANDA

FACULTÉ DES LETTRES

THE FUNCTION OF IMAGERY IN STEPHEN CRANE'S FICTION

by

Jean Baptiste RUFATABAHIZI

Mémoire présenté en vue de l'obtention du grade de Licencié ès Lettres, Département d'ANGLAIS.

Director : Kate LATTIN

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For my dead father

and

the bereaved family.

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Jean Baptiste RUFATABAHIZI

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INTRODUCTION

Although literary critics have mentioned the poetic qualities of Crane's work, and described its imaginative and metaphorical features, I have been able to discover that no study has closely examined the role that the writer's use of imagery plays within his work. The type of imagery Crane uses is not merely ornamental, but an integral part of the total meaning of the work. While exploring the function of Crane's imagery in his fiction, I intend to show how his use of imagery is essential to his naturalistic stance, and therefore how the imagery emphasizes the sense of the oppressive forces that Crane believes operate on man. Before examining Crane's imagery in detail, it is useful to assess Crane's importance within American literature in general and to define briefly the concept of naturalism, which is vital to his work.

Famous during his lifetime, forgotten for two decades after his death, Stephen Crane had recovered his fame as an American writer by 1920[1]. As a novelist, a poet and a newspaper reporter, Crane is one of the significant writers of his generation; a generation that included writers such as Frank Norris, Jack London and Theodore Dreiser. Praised by recent critics, Crane is now viewed as "a man of two ages, the last of the nineteenth century, the first of the moderns".[2] Maggie : A Girl of the Streets, Crane's first book, "combined the literary impulses of the past and prophesied experimental things to come".[3] Therefore, we may

consider Crane as a pioneer of modern American literature.

Born in 1871 in Newark, New Jersey, Crane was brought up in a Christian family whose faith was resented by the young writer from the very beginning of his adolescence. Crane wrote his significant literary works in the 1890's. Maggie : A Girl of the Streets was written when Crane was only twenty or twenty one. The book was published under the pseudonym of Johnston Smith in 1893.

With its bold theme of the brutality and the squalor of the slums, with its explosive, coarse language, and relentless ironic undercurrent, the novel was expected by Crane to produce a tremendous effect upon the public readership of the day; unfortunately, it attracted almost no attention. Contemporary readers viewed the "brutal, coarse, cruel" novel as a piece of writing of "vulgar realism".[4] However, although the book was deemed "gross" by most critics, "the clear-visioned" Howells viewed if differently. The novel "had the quality of a Greek tragedy".[5]

> *As a study of New York life, Maggie : A Girl of the Streets is a remarkable book. There is much realism of a certain kind in it that unfits it for general reading, but once in a way it will do to tell the truth as Maggie does.*[6]

Maggie : A Girl of the Streets enjoyed favourable and well-deserved criticism twenty years after Crane's death. Unlike literary critics of his day, Crane's recent critics put the novel in its right

place. Indeed, modern critics realized that through his novel, Crane for the first time introduced into American literature the portrayal of actual slum life together with the actual language of the working classes. Different aspects of life in the slums are portrayed without passion or pity in an almost documentary style. Ironic and devoid of an overtly expressed sympathy, the language of Maggie : A Girl of the Streets shocked conventional romantic minds.

During his lifetime, Crane's fame as a novelist did not come until after the publication of The Red Badge of Courage (1895). Crane's novel is "a genuine tour de force", both artistically and psychologically. "One of the best of American fictions",[7] The Red Badge of Courage mirrors "a study of human emotion under the conditions of war, of reactions in the soul of a boy".[8] Crane was not even born when the civil war took place, yet his novel reflects apparently authentic details and real emotions as if the writer himself had experienced them.

Unlike Crane, Ambroise Bierce wrote stories of the civil war based upon experience rather than from an imagination fed on tales of heroism and glory.

> *Bierce's tone was a natural ontgrouth of a personality so shocked by war that is held itself together only by the compulsive demonstration that meaningless slaughter contained all the meaning there was.*[9]

Throughout his war stories, Ambroise Bierce was interested in conveying this attitude. In "A Son of the Go ds", the writer points out

that "incredible heroism goes for naught"; heroism is mistaken for suicide in 'One of the Missing"; "Killed at Resaca" shows the "hero defamed and his heroism misrepresented".[10] Like "An Occurence at Owl Creek Bridge", Bierce's most famous story, [illegible] the writer's civil war stories portray battle as being a violent and horrible event. The protagonist is betrayed, and pursues heroism to death." The men who respect orders, who are heroic, who are honorable, are glorified, although they always die".[11]

Unlike Bierce, Crane in The Red Badge of Courage did not portray what he saw, but what he imagined. Crane is not interested in showing the events of war, but how he believes man feels under the conditions of war. Unlike Bierce's hero, Crane's hero is not one "who respects orders" or one "who is honorable", but a private who undergoes fear and secretely deserts his regiment, but who eventually comes back and enjoys fame as a "hero" at the right moment. Crane's hero is a simple soldier with weaknesses and fears, likely to betray his regiment but at the same time, capable of fighting boldly. He represents the common soldier who is often a victim of fear; his heroism is made up of a complex of motives and conditions, and is not simply the result of a man's devotion to a noble cause.

With The Red Badge of Courage, Crane introduced into American literature a new perception of war devoid of traditional, conventional sentimentality and idealization. For the first time war was portrayed as it is - destructive, war is not associated with glory and romance, but horror. Interested in condemning the glorification of war, Crane at the same time attempted the more difficult task of recognizing the human

values underlying heroism.[12]

Crane's originality lies in his vision of art :

> *... I also know that I do the best that is in me without regard to praise or blame... for I understand that a man is born into the world with his own pair of eyes, and he is not at all responsible for his vision - he is merely responsible for his quality of personal honesty. To keep close to this personal honesty is my supreme ambition.*[13]

Without denying Crane's literary importance, Richard Chase says that The Red Badge of Courage lacks unity; the composition is often confusing.[14] But this opinion loses its credit when one remembers that Crane's stories are composed by episodes" related more by mood and image than by plot, theme and character."[15] Other critics contend that just as Crane's perception challenges earlier traditional beliefs, it is quite acceptable that the writer's view should preclude both traditional plotting and traditional syntactic organization.[16] "Viewing man as an uneasy juggler of fears and pretensions who acts as they compel him", Crane uses an appropriately unusual syntax.[17]

> *The complex sentence with its independent clause and one or more dependent clauses, in the main, gives way to separate images independently and equally represented. Taken together, they may form a pattern,*

> as the dots of the pointillist taken together form colors and shapes which do not inhere in the particular dot, but the creator puts down only the dots and leaves the generalizations to the observer.[18]

Born in the latter half of the nineteenth century when realism was the prevailing current in American literarure, Crane is sometimes wrongly viewed as a realist. This perception is "inappropriate and misleading", since "Crane's fiction is radically different from that of the realists".[19]

Indeed, as James B. Colvert points out,[20] if Crane chose certain characteristic subjects and themes including slum life, war, prostitution and alcoholism, his sense of realism is quite different from those of Howells, Twain and James. Unlike traditionally held realists, Crane's reality is not "a fixed, definable, irreductible fact that would carry the same meaning for any normal, truthful observer", but something "complex, ambivalent, ambiguous and elusive".

Crane's fiction finds its right place in the so-called "watershed of modern American literature",

> the brilliant episode between the older authors of the Gilded Age and the writers of the next generations - Faulkner, Hemingway, Anderson, Eliot, Pound and others - who, along with Dreiser, were to bring modern

> literature to the fulfillment that was forecast but not achieved in the 1890's.[21]

That is to say, Crane's fiction mirrors attitudes and ideas of the so-called new naturalism, represented by three writers including Crane himself. Frank Norris, Theodore Dreiser and Stephen Crane are viewed as the "three leading late nineteenth-century American naturalists"[22] Maggie : A Girl of the Streets (1893), The Red Badge of Courage (1895) and George's Mother (1896) are works by Crane that most strongly reflect his naturalism.

To point out Crane's naturalistic originality one should first highlight the conventional characteristics underlying traditional naturalism. Traditionally, American naturalism was viewed as being "essentially realism infused with a pessimistic determinism".[23] Like realists, naturalists were faithful to the details of contemporary life; unlike realists, naturalists depicted everyday life by emphasizing the role played by causal forces, namely" heredity and environment, in determining behavior and belief".[24]

Unlike the traditional definition of naturalism which "handicapped thinking both about the movement as a whole and about individual works within the movement",[25] the new definition was to change to include "fictional sensationalism (an aspect of romanticism) and moral ambiguity" a quality inconsistent with the absolutes of determinism."[26]

To grasp the significance of the new American naturalism, it is wise to rely on Donald Pizer's definition.

> I would like, therefore, to propose a modified definition of late nineteenth-century American

naturalism. For the time being, let this be a working definition, to be amplified and made more concrete by the illustrations from which it has been drawn. I suggest that the naturalistic novel usually contains two tensions or contradictions, and that the two in conjunction comprise both an interpretation of experience and a particular aesthetic recreation of experience. In other words, the two constitute the theme and form of the naturalistic novel. The first tension is that between the subject matter of the naturalistic novel and the concept of man which emerges from this subject matter. The naturalist populates his novel primarily from the lower middle class or the lower class. His characters are the poor, the uneducated, the unsophisticated. His fictional world is that of the commonplace and unheroic in which life would seem to be chiefly the dull round of daily existence, as we ourselves usually conceive of our lives. But the naturalist discovers in this world those qualities of man usually associated with the heroic or adventurous, such as acts of violence and passion which involve sexual adventure or bodily strength and which culminate

in desperate moments and violent death. A naturalistic novel is thus an extension of realism only in the sense that both modes often deal with the local and contemporary. The naturalist, however, discovers in this material the extraordinary and excessive in human nature.

The second tension involves the theme of the naturalistic novel. The naturalist often describes his characters as though they are conditioned and controlled by environment, heredity, instinct, or chance. But he also suggests a compensating humanistic value in his characters or their fates which affirms the significance of the individual and of his life. The tension here is that between the naturalist's desire to represent in fiction the new, discomforting truths which he has found in the ideas and life of his late nineteeth-century world, and also his desire to find some meaning in experience which reasserts the validity of the human enterprise. The naturalist appears to say that although the individual may be a cipher in a world made amoral by man's lack of responsibility for his fate, the imagination refuse to accept this formula as the total meaning of life and so seeks a new basis for man's sens of his own dignity and importance.[27]

To illustrate the "modified definition", and also to suggest the possible range of variation within it, Donald Pizer has used three representative works by the three leading naturalists: Frank Norris's Mc Teague-(1899), Theodore Dreiser's Sister Carrie (1900) and Stephen Crane's The Red Badge of Courage (1895).

> A central theme in Norris's work is that beneath the surface of our placid, everyday lives there is turbulence, that the romance of the extraordinary is not limited to the distant in time and place but can be found "in the brownstone house on the corner and in the office building downtown." Norris therefore used the incident which had stimulated him to write the novel, a vicious murder in a San Francisco kindergarten, as a controlling paradox in Mc Teague as in scene after scene he introduces the sensational into the commonplace activities and setting of Polk Street....
>
> Norris believed that the source of this violence veneath the surface placidity of life is the presence in all men of animal qualities which have played a major role in man's evolutionary development but which are now frequently atavistic and destructive. Norris's theme is that man's racial atavism

(particularly his brute sexual desires) and man's individual family heritage (alcoholic degeneracy in Mc Teague's case) can combine as a force toward reversion, toward a return to the emotions and instincts of man's animal past.[28]

Even more than Norris, Theodore Dreiser creates a sense of the solidity of life. His early novels in particular affirm that we cannot escape the impact of physical reality and that this fact is one of the few that man may know with certainty. So the several worlds of Carrie - her sister's working class existence, her life with Drouet in Chicago and with Hurstwood in New York achieve a sense of massiveness both in their painstaking documentation and in their inescapable effect on Carrie.[29]

The Red Badge of Courage also embodies a different combination of the s nsational and commonplace than that found in Mc Teague. Whereas Norris demonstrates that the violent and the extraordinary are present in seemingly dull and commonplace lives, Crane, even more than Dreiser, is intent on revealing the commonplace nature of the seemingly exceptional.[30]

Thus we may see the variations in approach of these three writers. This suggests the possible range of variation within the very definition of new American naturalism. As Donald Pizer argues,

> *Crane shows us what Norris and Dreiser only suggest, that there is no separation between the sensational and the commonplace, that the two are coexistent in every aspect and range of life. He differs from Norris in kind and from Dreiser in degree in that his essentially ironic imagination leads him to reserve the expected and to find the commonplace in the violent rather than the sensational beneath the trivial.*[31]

Richard Chase contends that

> *Crane's naturalism involves less observation of social detail and social reality than does Norris', and far less than does Dreiser's. Crane's naturalism remains relatively poetic, abstract, pure and impressionistic.*[32]

"Compared with Hawthorne and Melville, or even with Henry James and Mark Twain," as Richard Chase argues,

> *Stephen Crane is a modern writer - almost, one might say, a twentieth-century writer. His frankness, his bohemianism, his naturalism, his entire alienation from everything genteel, aristocratic, or puritan testify to his modernity.*[33]

Of Crane's work the critic Richard Chase wrote :

> *Crane's prose writings, more so than his verse, make him the supreme poet of American naturalism. It is an extreme poetry - brilliant, abstract, not quite human, written by an obsessional and self-destructive poet.*[34]

In other words, imaginative and metaphorical, rather than literal and discursive, Crane's fiction strongly relies on imagery to convey the writer's message.

Although in this study I intend to give a comprehensive survey of the imagery Crane uses in general, I will specifically examine two central types of imagery that control and emphasize Crane's view of man's position within society. These are the images of the battlefield and of the prison[35] that combine and stress respectively man's sense of mental strife whether on the literal battlefield in The Red Badge of Courage or in the tough urban environment of Maggie : A Girl of the Streets, his lack of individual freedom, and his inability of escape the constricting forces of his environment. Both of these images highlight the amorality of life precluding the existence of the sense of sin, and that of the feeling of responsibility for one's actions. In addition, through the use of these images, Crane challenges the romantic conception of heroism, and moral sentimentality.

This study will be based upon two text s in particular : The Red Badge of Courage and Maggie : A Girl of the Street - Crane's most important works which are both dominated by imagery of the battlefied and of the prison. George's Mother, Crane's short novel, will also be mentioned to support this discussion.

The study will be divided into two main chap ters, each devoted to the examination of a particular group of images. In the first chap ter, the emphasis will be put on the discussion of The Red Badge of Courage as a supporting text, while the second chapter will be mainly supported by Maggie : A Girl of the Streets and George's Mother.

FOOT NOTES

[1]Jacques Bersani, et al, eds., Encyclopaedia Universalis, vol. 5 (Paris : Encyclopaedia Universalis France S.A.; 1980), p. 59.

[2]Hennig Cohen, Landmarks of American Writing (Washington : D.C. : V.O.A, Forum Editor, 1975), p. 193.

[3]Cohen, p. 193.

[4]Corwin K. Linson, My Stephen Crane (Syracuse University Press, 1958), p. 21.

[5]Linson, p. 22.

[6]Linson, p. 22.

[7]Richard Chase, ed., The Red Badge of Courage and Other Writings (Boston : Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960), p. XV.

[8]Linson, p. 43.

[9]Larzer Ziff, The American 1890s (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), p. 170.

[10]Ziff, p. 170.

[11]Ziff, p. 171.

[12]Ziff p. 199.

[13]Linson, p. 29.

[14]Chase, p. XV.

[15]Chase, p. xiv.

[16]Ziff, p. 198.

[17]Ziff, p..197.

[18]Ziff, p. 197.

[19]James B. Colvert, ed., Great Short Works of Stephen Crane (New York : Harper & Row, 1965), p. vii.

[20]Colvert, p. vii.

[21]Chase, p. ix.

[22]Donald Pizer, Realism and Naturalism in Nineteenth-Century American Literature (New York : The Southern Illinois University Press, 1966), p. 14.

[23]Pizer, p. 11.

[24]Pizer, p. 12.

[25]Pizer, p. 12.

[26]Pizer, p. 2.

[27]Pizer, pp. 12-13.

[28]Pizer, pp. 15-16.

[29]Pizer, p. 19.

[30]Pizer, p. 24-25.

[31] Pizer, p. 26.
[32] Chase, p. x.

[33]Chase, p. x.

[34]Chase, p. xiii.

[35]Pizer, p. 123.

CHAPTER ONE

IMAGERY OF THE BATTLEFIELD

Like realism, Crane's naturalism should be viewed in a sense as "a polemical weapon against romanticism, as a theory of exclusion as well as inclusion."[1] Indeed, Crane's naturalistic fiction rejects the idealization of life or the alteration of reality in the interest of moral or religious preconceptions. It includes actual characters in actual situations. Crane's fictional world involves poor and uneducated characters in unheroic settings, to demonstrate the falsity and destructiveness of "a moral or romantic vision of amorality."[2] Therefore, "consciously and pointedly antiheroic," Crane's imagery is meant to "deflate potentially heroic moments" or, by extension, the "literary and cultural tradition of idealized courage and chivalry."[3]

In The Red Badge of Courage, the imagery of the battlefield controls the novel, deflates romantic heroism and signifies the destruction of individuality, confidence and naive preconceptions about war. The controlling imagery of the battlefield is supported by relevant images of the animal, the machine, the ghost and the garden.

The battlefield suggests Fleming's mental strife; the protagonist's mind is the battlefield through which the problems of potential desertion, the fear of retribution and the sense of remorse at personal failure foster and maintain chaos. The imagery of the mental battlefield controls the novel

as the protagonist's experience in the novel controls the events of the story.

War is waged in Fleming's mind before the protagonist participates in literal war. Fleming's mental war becomes fierce when the private is compelled to take part in literal war. Fleming's mental battle is intensified by the fear of retribution associated with his desertion. The protagonist's mental war comes to a climax when at the end of the novel, Fleming is plagued by remorse at his sense of personal failure. That is to say, the protagonist's mental struggle takes place before he experiences battle at first hand, and gradually worsens after his direct involvement. Hence, the imagery of the mental battlefield controls the novel; a physical involvement in war is shown to intensify the protagonist's mental strife.

The imagery of the battlefield is dominated by the four main images mentioned above. Moreover, there are minor images that support these. The use of animal imagery suggests primarily the savage side of man, the "throat-grappling instinct" that emerges in a violent setting. The novel involves several categories of animal, namely mythical creatures including dragons and other monsters, wild and domestic animals, birds and fish. The use of animal imagery supports the impression of a mental battlefield since Fleming's mind anticipates savagery on the literal battlefield; savagery anticipated in the mind of the protagonist brings about fear and therefore, destroys confidence; as a result, Fleming's mental misery increases. Animal imagery is found throughout the novel; it stresses primarily the reduction of man, under such circumstances as war, to a creature of instinct.

As a tool for destruction, a machine suggests man's loss of individuality and humanity. he machine denotes the repressive power that

Fleming feels under battle fire. The image of the machine connotes the effect of literal battle upon the protagonist's mind - complete destruction of Fleming's first romantic preconceptions of war. Undoubtedly, the image of the machine suggests the intensification of Fleming's mental misery. This image is introduced into the novel when the protagonist is about to betray his regiment.

The image of the ghost operates in the following ways: associated with supernatural forces, the ghost suggests the climax of Fleming's fear. The ghost suggests Fleming's anticipation of his failure to fight "like a hero." Shadowy and lifeless, the ghost suggests the loss of individual self; ghost-like, soldiers seem drained of vitality and spirit in battle. Moreover, associated with its haunting nature, the ghost connotes Fleming's remorse at his failure as a soldier. With its immortal endowment, the ghost denotes Fleming's inability to enjoy mental peace at the end of the war. In this last case, the ghost plays a role similar to that of the minor image of disease prevalent in the last part of the novel.

The image of the garden, associated, in the novel, with hell, embodies evil in action, that eventually overcomes Fleming on the battlefield. It is this very evil in action that will lead him to desert the regiment. Ironically, he yields to the corruption of evil in action by returning to his regiment and therefore, by fighting. The images of the animal, the machine, the ghost and the garden deflate romantic heroism in battle; in particular, they seem to deny the sense of man's humanity, intelligence, self-esteem and dignity.

One feature of Crane's style in The Red Badge of Courage

is that we are presented with a protagonist who remains, for the most part, silent. Instead, Crane shows us the thoughts of Fleming and implies moods and reveals feelings through the use of images. In The Red Badge of Courage, I will show how imagery is important in the way it reveals the protagonist's emotions and reactions.

As Richard Chase mentions in his introduction to The Red Badge of Courage And Other Writings, Crane's characters are "figures or ideas about people rather than real people." Therefore, the protagonist in The Red Badge of Courage is a representative character whose mind stands for the minds of many soldiers, young inexperienced ones in particular. The adjective "young" is very significant since throughout the novel, Crane often labels his main character as "the youth". His real name is of little importance; he is significant as a representation of the way any young man might react in battle. Fleming, the youth, is drawn from his countryside environment to the battlefield to experience the horror of war; he is naive, and without particular intelligence, a symbol of the common man used to attack the weight of conventional opinions concerning war.

A study of the function of the imagery of the battlefield in The Red Badge of Courage requires a chronological examination of the evolution of the states of the protagonist's mind as he moves from inexperience to experience. This study will emphasize the importance of animal, machine and ghost imagery as it occurs throughout the novel, and will close with a consideration of the imagery of the garden. The chapter will be concluded by a brief examination of battle imagery in Maggie: A Girl of the Streets.

The chronological study of Fleming's mind involves three major

phases within the novel. The first phase is characterized by the protagonist's mental isolation from the army that leads to his eventual flight. Fleming fails to identify himself with the group ofwhich he is a member - his regiment. Fleming's mind moves from ignorance, goes through doubts and culminates in the knowledge of the truth - the horror of war. His earlier romantic pretensions are progressively destroyed by doubts and fears.

The second phase is characterized by the protagonist's physical and mental separation from the regiment, the complete loss of the feeling of oneness, necessary in the army. Fleming's mind relies on rationalizations to survive; he has destroyed the "battle brotherhood", the social bond uniting him to his fellow soldiers. Unlike the first phase, the second phase denotes Fleming's desertion, and connotes the loss of his individual identity; he is doomed to live as a member of his society.

The third phase is dominated by the protagonist's recovery of confidence through the "red badge of courage", undeservedly thrust upon him by chance. Ironically and symbolically, the "red badge of courage" helps him to recover his social identity in the army, and to enjoy the admiration of others through his activities in battle.

This study of Crane's imagery in The Red Badge of Courage will involve three main sections corresponding to the three phases indicated above. Whilst the four main groups of images are recurrent throughout the three phases of the novel, there are certain individual images - all belonging to one or another of the groups above - that are particular to specific areas of the novel .

Before moving on to an examination of the protagonist's state of mental war, one should first consider his state of mind before battle. Before he enlists in the army, Fleming ejoys a mental peace that denotes confidence, harmony and hope th'gh it is continually shown to be based upon ignorance and immaturity. Naive and inexperienced, Fleming idealizes war before his enlistment. "In visions he had seen himself in many struggles. He had imagined peoples secure in the shadow of his eagle-eyed prowess"[4]

Fleming's visions of "many struggles" exclude the real horror of war. These visions suggest an idealism towards war, entail a perfect heroism which bears little relationship to the sordid realities of battle. His concept of war suggests the high self-esteem of a young man. He views himself as a future hero whose strength will protect others.

From his home his youthful eyes had looked
upon the war in his own country with distrust.
It must be some sort of a play affair (p. 117).

With his illusions fostered by his country life and his youthful age, Fleming views war as a game. "Secular and religious education had effaced the throat-grappling instinct, or else firm finance held in check the passions" (p. 117). Fleming seems to think that the civilization of mankind has eradicated the primitive "throat-grappling instinct". He does not know that his secular and religious education, and the rhetorical speeches about patriotism, glory and war, mask a terrible reality. Lacking experience, Fleming fails to see war as an exacting event through which the principle of the "throat-grapp ling instinct" controls the behaviours of individual fighters.

> He had burned several times to enlist. Tales of great movements shook the land. They might not be distinctly Homeric, but there seemed to be much glory in them. He had read of marches, sieges, conflicts, and he had longed to see it all. His busy mind had drawn for him large pictures extravagant in color, lurid with breathless deeds (p. 117).

Blinded by romantic illusions, which Crane deftly mocks by suggesting a forthcoming war which does not have epic grandeur, Fleming is eager to enlist in the army. His confidence and ardour for war are due to his mistaken conception of life. Based on ignorance and immaturity, Fleming's state of mental peace changes to one of mental strife when he faces the prospect of battle in earnest. As a result his confidence is destroyed through his knowledge of the truth about war, which is without romance, and where the survival of individual fighters depends to a large extent upon external forces beyond their control.

> One night, as he lay in bed, the wind had carried to him the clangoring of the church bell as some enthusiast jerked the rope frantically to tell the twisted news of a great battle. This voice of the people rejoicing in the night had made him shiver in a prolonged ecstasy of excitement (p. 118).

The church bell is rung to signify news of battle, but also

acts as a call to potential recruits. Symbolically, the sound of the church bell moves Fleming from his peaceful home, and portends the forthcoming mental torture he will experience on the battlefield. As he lies in his bed, Fleming is excited by the noise of people rejoicing; he seems to anticipate war as a wonderful experience through which he will show his "heroism".

As a young recruit, Fleming begins to undergo a progressive change. His confidence is undermined by veterans' tales about the horror of war. Hence, he begins to question his anticipated heroism. Fleming's mental torment is often introduced by imagery appealing to hearing. "A thundering lie" about the day of the first battle, the veterans' tales about the nature of war, "the exciting clickety-click" of a horse, the owner of which comes to give orders, all affect Fleming's mind. Ironically, before the war is actually waged, Fleming is already engaged in mental strife; he is fighting against a problem that "had kicked its heels at the outer portals of his mind" (p. 121): to flee or not to flee from imminent battle. This introduces the conflict that will be resolved at the end of the first phase within the novel.

At this very moment in the novel, Fleming becomes more aware of what awaits him in battle. He has moved from the stage of ignorance and illusions to that of opinions and doubts. The stage of ignorance denotes Fleming's lack of experience; as a result, the naive recruit anticipates war as a glorious event devoid of horror. Therefore, his confidence is based upon romantic illusions. The stage of opinions denotes the progressive destruction of Fleming's illusions; the opinions of experienced soldiers undermine his confidence; Fleming is puzzled

by the contradiction between his earlier mistaken vision of war and the opinions of veterans who have seen action; hence Fleming's doubts about his power to fight. Although he does not trust the veterans's tales, he cannot reject them as being totally false. He is a "fresh fish" (p. 121); this image ridicules Fleming's early sense of self-importance, and is an ironic contrast with that of "eagle-eyed prowess".

Fleming's problem, created by hearsay and the veterans' tales about war, troubles him so much that it spiritually isolates him from the rest of his regiment; he tries hard to find out whether there are any other soldiers who may be faced with the same problem of potential flight; unfortunately, he finds none of his kind. This increases his discomfort and spiritual isolation. The seperation from his fellow soldiers is based upon both his doubts about his performance on actual battle and his fear of the knowledge of his doubts being sensed by his fellow men. As the veterans progressively give him more information about the horror of war, Fleming increasingly wonders whether he will really manage to become a hero on the battlefield. His mind concentrates on his potential failure to fight rather than his potential victory. As doubts about his behaviour under fire keep on shaking his confidence, Fleming tries hard to hide his inner misery to the rest of his regiment; indeed, if Fleming's fellow soldiers detected his anticipated failure to fight, he feels that he would be labelled as a coward or a villain. Fleming has become "a mental outcast" because of his self-destructive thoughts. Obsessed with fear, Fleming thinks that any failing is noted by others, including his mental self-seclusion, which is actually unknown to the rest of his regiment (p. 130).

In the first section of the novel, Crane's imagery suggests the progressive torture of the protagonist's mind. The animal imagery that Crane uses, signifies fear and connotes the progressive degradation of human dignity; man is no loger a rational being, but merely a creature ruled by animalistic instinct. Fleming is frightened by the "throat-grappling instinct" embodied in his conception of the enemy anticipated in his mind as a monster. The image of the monster, associated with extraordinary size and shape, also suggests Fleming's inner misery increasingly tormenting him as he prepares himself to face the unavoidable war.

The significance of the question of Fleming's plan to flee from the battle and its effect on his mind are highlighted by the imagery of the monster.

> *In the darkness he saw visions of a thousand-tongued fear that would babble at his back and cause him to flee, while others were going coolly about their country's business. He admitted that he would not be able to cope with this monster. He felt that every nerve in his body would be an ear to hear the voices, while other men would remain stolid and deaf* (p. 131).

The image of the monster suggests Fleming's fear and the destruction of the bond linking him to the rest of his regiment. At this moment in the novel, Fleming's mind undergoes a tremendous distress; doomed to brood over his problem, Fleming can no more speak; symbolically, his communicative ability is destroyed to stress his isolation from the army. Indeed, he thinks that one of his fellow soldiers has detected his fear. Both his face

and his voice seem to have betrayed him. Wilson, the "loud soldier", realizes that Fleming is blushing and remarks, "you' re getting blue, my boy. You' re looking thundering peeked. What the dickens is wrong with you?" (p. 129) Fleming's facial expression can no longer hide his inner agony.

Moreover, his voice, when he is able to use it again, is "as bitter as dregs", and also betrays him. Fleming's bitter voice suggests the aggression due to his discomfort. Unlike Fleming, the loud soldier shows an attitude of enthusiasm and pride; he claims that he is going to fight "like thunder" (p. 129). Fleming's aggressive voice denotes his inner agony contrasting with the expressed enthusiasm of other privates proud to boast of the number of people they are going to kill in the war (p. 129). The image of the monster, therefore, denotes Fleming's fear, and connotes the destruction of confidence and communication and, by extension, the destruction of Fleming's identity as a member of the regiment he belongs to.

Depressed and aware of his failure to identify himself with his military group, Fleming undergoes a self-inflicted mental torture through his anticipation of the repressive power of war. The image of the monster highlights the self-destructive imagination; this can be clearly seen in the following passages.

> *From off in the darkness came the trampling feet. The youth could occasionally see dark shadows that moved like monsters (p. 126).*

These monsters, identified with dark shadows, stand literally for the enemy, but also for the dark side of man, including his instinct for

annihilation. His exaggeration suggests Fleming's diseased mind; plagued by fear, he falls a prey t hallucination. It implies the grotesque decisions, including that of making war, that man sometimes takes to achieve his purposes.

> *Staring once at the red eyes across the river, he conceived them to be growing larger, as the orbs of a row of dragons advancing* (p. 126).

The red eyes across the river refer to the camp fires reflected by the river. The image of the dragon denotes Fleming's intense hallucination, nd connotes his lack of courage to face the unavoidable. The camp fires reflected by the river suggest the fire breathed out by the imaginary dragons which may consume Fleming's body.

> *A moment later the regiment went swinging off into the darkness. It was now like one of those moving monsters wending with many feet* (p. 121).

Viewed as "a moving monster wending with many feet" the regiment embodies the "throat-grappling instinct". The image of the moving monster contrasts with the image of the game used previously when Fleming was still at home, before his enlistment: war "must be some sort of a play affair". Instead, the moving monster signifies Fleming's disillusionment based upon the opinions of other soldiers rather than on the experience of war itself. Fleming unconsciously begins to question the innocence that must be transformed through the experience of battle.

Undoubtedly, this image of the monster points out Fleming's progressive mental disintigration. Ironically, he undergoes this mental torture before his participation in a single battle. Crane seems to be

concerned to destroy completely the romantic vision of his protagonist before dropping him into the horror of battle itself.

Before moving Fleming to the first stage of the forthcoming battle, Crane introduces a new image - the image of the snake. While the monster is associated with fear and progressive mental torture, the snake is associated with poison and betrayal.

> *There was an occasional flash and glimmer of steel from the backs of all these huge crawling reptiles (p. 126).*
>
> *The rushing yellow of the developing day went on behind their backs. When the sunrays at last struck full and mellowingly upon the earth, the youth saw that the landscape was streaked with two long, thin, black columns which disappeared on the brow of a hill in front and rearward vanished in a wood. They were like two serpents crawling from the cavern of the night (p. 127).*

The regiment is not only viewed as a potential threat, but also as a venomous body. The regiment has betrayed Fleming's belief in the romance and glory of war. He realizes that he has been cheated and wishes to abandon his regiment, even though at this point it is impossible. The regiment, described as a snake, is associated with a hidden destruction, that the youth only now begins to grasp. This anticipated discovery of destruction underlying the forthcoming battle is symbolically a poison to the already weakened mind of the private.

Before Fleming's first battle, Crane's imagery is dominated by the images of the monster and the snake. The two images function as a mirror intended to show the genuine feelings of the new soldier. The images of the monster and the snake show Fleming's growing fear and awareness of his earlier misleading romantic preconceptions. Disillusioned before his first fight, he wants to return home, but he realizes that he cannot do so. At this moment in the novel, Crane's imagery shows that Fleming is not the brave soldier ready to die for his country; lacking the disciplined training of a professional soldier, Fleming broods obsessively on his personal plight. Now sensitive to the amorality of war, Fleming needs an injection of boldness to reduce his sensitivity, in order to adapt himself to this particular setting of war through which the motto seems to be "kill or be killed".

In other words, Fleming needs the direct experience of battle to come to terms with war. The adoption of insensitivity to the amorality of war would help Fleming's diseased mind by neutralising his fears, and his thoughts of escape. Once insensitive to the amorality of war, Fleming, like other soldiers, would be able to carry out the orders given by his commanders.

To behave like a hero in war, Fleming has to acquire the dose of insensitivity that underlies the training of professional soldiers. This type of feeling is reflected in the English World War I poem, "Insensibility" by Wilfred Owen:

Happy are men who yet before they are killed
Can let their veins run cold.
Whom no compassion fleers

Or makes their feet

Sore on the alleys cobbled with their brothers.[6]

Therefore, the rest of the novel shows the reader the gradual development of Fleming's insensitivity to the amorality of war, a prerequisite underlying the recovery of confidence and the acquisition of the boldness necessary in combat. The gradual development of insensitivity will take place through his exposal to horror especially in the last stage of the first phase and during the second phase. The acquisition of insensitivity will not be effective before the last phase is reached.

The last stage of the first phase of the novel is controlled by the image of the ghost. After the earlier experience of ignorance and doubts, the protagonist comes to learn on the battlefield the actual nature of war - destruction, not imagined but witnessed. The ghost imagery denotes the climax of Fleming's fear and that of his mental crisis.

In his mental crisis, Fleming contemplates being killed, which would put an end to his trouble. He views the generals as being "idiots", unaware of the"dangers" of war and interested in "sending them marching into a regular pen" (p. 135). Ironically, Fleming plans to make a persuasive speech likely to prevent the "generals" from causing the death of others; eventually, he realizes that "a frenzied declamation of the kind would turn him into a worm" (p. 135). As a result, he conceives death to be nothing but rest ; "he would look to the grave for comprehension", since his officers would not trust his persuasive speech (p. 138).

Fleming is introduced to the horror of war by the sight of a dead man with an "ashen face" (p. 134). This brings his mental torture to a climax, since the intense contemplation of this figure increases his need for

escape. "He vaguely desired to walk around and around the body and stare; the impulse of the living to try to read in dead eyes the answer to the Question" (p. 134). At this point Fleming has gained crucial perception; he comes to know that the earlier rumours and the veterans' tales were not false; he understands that he has come to look at "war, the red animal - war, the blood-swollen god" (p. 135); he has come to be slaughtered, along with his fellow soldiers, "like pigs" (p. 135). This animal imagery suggests Fleming's discovery of both the destructive nature of war and its falsity as a romantic and glorious experience.

The following images of the ghost are intended to highlight the climax of Fleming's fear before and during his first participation in battle. That thet occur after his dramatic encounter with the corpse is significant, as if the impact of seeing the dead man continues to haunt his imagination. "Smoke clouds went slowly and insolently across the fields like observant phantoms" (p. 138). The image of the ghost connotes Fleming's anticipated failure to cope with the requirements of war. Psychological ly the ghost connotes the protagonist's loss of individual self; his mental vitality has now completely faded away.

> *A shell screaming like a storm banshee went over the huddled heads of the reserves. It landed in the grove, and exploding redly flung the brown earth (p. 140).*
>
> *With the passionate song of the bullets and the banshee shrie ks of shells were mingled loud catcalls and bits of facetious advice concerning places of safety* (p. 140).

Once viewed as passive spectators of the battle, insensitive to the plight of mortals about to destroy one another, observant phantoms now change into active hostile fighters; they take part in the battle, and act as messengers of bad news, or omens of imminent death.

The shells connote the overriding power that cannot be defied by human force; in the protagonist's mind, the defeat of his regiment seems to be predetermined by the haunting ghosts, the shells, which side with the enemy. Therefore, as Fleming seems to think, it is no use to try to fight against the invincible enemy.

In the following passage, the image of the ghost is combined with that of the baby to stress Fleming's physical inability fo fight at this moment of the battle.

> *Buried in the smoke of many rifles his anger was direct : not so much against the men who he knew were rushing toward him as against the swirling battle phantoms which were choking him, stuffing their smoke robes down his parched throat. He fought frantically for respite for his senses, for air, as a babe being smothered attacks the deadly blankets* (p. 144).

Before pointing out the images supporting that of the ghost in deflating heroism, it is wise to stress how this last stage of the first phase in the novel differs from the preceding stage c haracterized by war anticipated in Fleming's mind.

Unlike the preceding stage, this last stage of the first phase is characterized by actions; moreover, Fleming uses his eyes to look at destruction,

not his imagination which previously anticipated war. With his eyes concentrated on the physical battlefield, Fleming has no more time to think. "The youth, forgetting his neat plan of getting killed, gazed spellbound" (p. 138). Fleming is affected by the performances and failures of the fighters seen on the physical battlefield. Moreover, his mind is affected by his own incapacity to fight. Fleming's inner agony finds no comfort.

Bewildered and unable to flee during the first battle, Fleming feels compelled to "work at his weapon like an automatic affair" (p. 143). Under the pressure of the fierce battle, the youth "suddenly lost concern for himself. He became not a man but a member" (p. 143). The youth's regiment unexpectedly wins the first battle; Fleming decides to flee when the second battle takes place. To show how the first battle affected Fleming's mind, one should point out the images used which stress his mental state.

In addition to those images already mentioned, Crane uses the following images to stress the "absence of heroic poses": the image of the composite monster and that of a bird, a wet parrot.

"The composite monster which had had caused the other troops to flee had not then appeared" (p. 141). The image of the composite monster refers to the whole unit; the composite monster embodies one of the units skilled at fighting, that belongs to the enemy's army. Like the abnormal animal, the hostile unit is associated with an extraordinary repressive power that cannot be defeated, in Fleming's opinion.

"In his agitation the colonel began to stammer .... The colonel perchance to relieve his feelings, began to scold like a wet parrot" (p. 142). The image of the wet parrot suggests on the one hand dehumanization, and on

the other, absurdity, which debases the status of the colonel. Ironically, the colonel loses the basic characteristic distinguishing him from other animate beings - language. He can no more think and adequately express his ideas; he is identified with a parrot that incongruously repeats nonsense. Symbolically, struck dumb with horror and almost deafened by the uproar of exploding shells, man leaves his communicative endowment to weapons that reduce his dignity to naughty. Paradoxically, a battery "speaks" (p. 138). It is as if these larger units, elements of the war-machine, have their own identities, expressing not the frailties or doubts of the individuals within them, but an ironhard power and a fearless savagery.

The images of the composite monster and the wet parrot suggest a singular absence of romance in general, and a deflation of military hierarchy in particular. Ironically, an officer, in this specific case a colonel, does not enjoy the pride and esteem associated with his high-ranking social position. Once impressed by his officers, under peaceful conditions, Fleming is undoubtedly bewildered when he realizes that even the dignity and esteem of high-ranking officers are brought to naught in wartime. The realisation that his superiors are not inviolate, god-like men, deepens the misery of Fleming's diseased mind. "Perspiration streamed down the youth's face, which was soiled like that of a weeping urchin" (p. 143).

Affected by the atmosphere of war, Fleming's inner agony manifests itself through rage and sweat, as he continues to watch his insecure fellow soldiers who may share his fear. Crane introduces the image of the domestic animal devoid of security to show Fleming's plight.

> *Following this came a red rage. He developed the acute exasperation of a pestered animal, a*

well-meaning cow worried by dogs... His impotency appeared to him, and made his rage into that of a driven beast (p. 144).

The image of the "cow worried by dogs" suggests Fleming's desperate situation. Identified with a domestic animal, Fleming should be expected to be protected by his master. Like a cow worried by dogs, Fleming is menaced when there is no master nearby to defend him. Indeed, the commander of Fleming's regiment, the master in this context, is himself threatened by the enemy. The images of the cow worried by dogs and the helpless driven beast emphasize once again the insecurity of Fleming's mind and the antiheroic reactions that emerge under the conditions of war.

The first battle Fleming experiences marks the gradual development of his insensitivity to the amorality of war. In addition to the "dead man" already mentioned, Fleming is exposed to horror through the sight of the following scenes in the first battle. The first scene involves the "stammering" colonel and "a babbling and blubbering" soldier; through the experiences of the colonel and the private, Fleming learns that fear is common to all soldiers, both privates and officers.

Moreover, in the second scene, Fleming is taught that war affects both simple and high-ranking soldiers in the same way; both privates and officers alike face the violence of war. For instance, the lieutenant of the youth's company is shot in the hand. "He began to swear wondrously as if he had hit his fingers with a tack hammer at home" (p. 140). We may note again the commonplace comparison unheroic and unromantic. Furthermore, the captain of the youth's company died in an early part of the action (p. 145). Unexpectedly, the protagonist comes to know that the captain's "fame" as

a martyr of patriotism is forgotten as soon as he passes away. Indeed, the captain's corpse will not be borne home triumphantly to be buried decently, but is doomed to fester where it has fallen.[7]

Surprisingly, the "babbling and blubbering" man mentioned in the first scene, is unexpectedly "grazed by a shot that makes the blood stream widely down his face" (p. 145). Although the first battle, through its horror, contributes in a sense to the gradual development of Fleming's insensitivity to the amorality of war, to his indignation and to his maturity, it is still too early to expect him to change into a bold soldier.

It is in the second battle that Fleming manages to flee from his regiment. Fleming and his close fellow soldiers expected this battle to take place a week later. Suddenly the soldiers are startled by the roar, "Here they come again!" (p. 148) to point out Fleming's state of mind, Crane once again uses animal imagery. The following image of "a jaded horse" suggests Fleming's lack of strength and courage:

> *Into the youth's eyes there came a look that one can see in the orbs of a jaded horse. His neck was quivering with nervous weakness and the muscles of his arms felt numb and bloodless. His hands, too, seemed large and awkward as if he was wearing invisible mittens. And there was a great uncertainty about his knee joints* (p. 149).

"He began to exaggerate the endurance, the skill, and the valor of those who were coming.... They must be machines of steel" (p. 149). Introduced at the very end of the first phase in the novel, the image of the machine stands for the omen of Fleming's eventual betrayal. The machine

connotes the invincibility of the enemy in Fleming's mind. The image of the machine, associated with destruction, is introduced to suggest the severance of Fleming's relationship to his regiment. Symbolically, the "subtle brotherhood" is destroyed, the bond uniting Fleming to the rest of his regiment, the social microcosm, is cut off. The obligations of good citizenship are betrayed and forgotten.

> *He blanched like one who has come to the edge of a cliff at midnight and is suddenly made aware. There was a revelation. He, too, threw down his gun and fled. There was no shame in his face. He ran like a rabbit* (pp. 149-150).

This image of the rabbit is reductive, giving a slightly foolish aspect to Fleming in our minds, but also shows him to be a hunted and frightened victim. It suggests his identification with a creature in flight, ruled by the inherent instinct for self-preservation. Socially alienated, since he has betrayed his regiment, Fleming can no more be protected by the social body - his regiment - as long as he is isolated from them. Fleming has become a prey to fear, and is physically unable to face his aggressor.

In the first phase of the novel Fleming's mental crisis comes to a climax when he throws down his gun and flees. This connotes his mental disintegration illustrated by the image of the machine. Fleming's desertion implies that he is still too sensitive to acquire the amorality necessary to face war. The images mentioned in this section of the novel, support the controlling imagery of the mental battlefield. They emphasize Fleming's mental torture, and portend his mental alienation, reflected by the severance

of the social bond uniting him to his regiment.

Indeed, the images of the monster and the dragon open the door to distress in Fleming's mind by replacing the "eagle-eyed prowess" that was associated with innocence and confidence. They stand for Fleming's destructive fear as he continues to learn, from other privates, of the terror of war. The image of the snake represents Fleming's discovery of betrayal; his romantic preconceptions of war have been betrayed; while the images of the monster, the dragon and the snake highlight Flemingg's destructive doubts and fears, the image of the ghost introduced in Fleming's mind, suggests fear and an exaggerated anticipation of war. As the ghost haunts the living man, the problem of potential desertion haunts the protagonist's mind. The image of the ghost controls particularly the last stage of the first section of the novel, at the end of which Henry Fleming deserts the regiment.

Minor images worth mentioning in these concluding paragraphs of the first section include those of bees, of the flood, of stones and of the hammer. They support the common theme of destruction. With their stinging power, bees, identified with the enemy, connote a threat to Fleming's mind in particular, and his regiment in general. Similarly, the flood connotes the possibility of submergence in death for the fighters while stones and the hammer are tools associated with destruction.

Before introducing the image of the machine in the novel, Crane uses continually the images of the monster and the dragon, the omens of the forthcoming flight, to show how Fleming's growing fear has become unbearable. The image of the wet parrot denotes physical weakness, and connotes the dehumanization of individual fighters while the image of the

machine suggests a fierce assault made by the enemy, and Fleming's incapacity to face it. That is to say, the first phase of the novel portrays Fleming as a belligerent involved in a mental battle which he loses: his inner conflict overcomes and betrays him, culminating in his flight from his regiment.

Fleming enters the second phase of his mental battle by deserting his regiment. His mind in crisis takes refuge in attempts at rationalization in order to survive, as Fleming himself continues to run, trying hard to find a secure place to hide his body. Once away from battle fire, Fleming realizes that he cannot enjoy mental peace. Surprisingly enough, the forest, the physical refuge in which Fleming has hidden his body, increases his mental misery. Indeed, it is in this very forest that Fleming unexpectedly finds a corpse, one of the by-products of the "grinding of an immense and terrible machine" - the battle (p. 158).

The unexpected horror in the chapel-like refuge shocks Fleming who realizes that he canrot ejoy here the security he had hoped for. Fleming's attempts to look for a secure escape cannot withstand the effect of his discovery in the forest. As a result a new problem troubles him: the guilt of his crime, and the inherent fear of retribution. Insecure in his asylum and plagued by guilt, Fleming wants to recover his social position in the regiment and, at the same time, to avoid punishment by masking his crime. To recover his social position in the regiment, Fleming has to find convincing and protective arguments to explain his desertion. Hence,

Fleming's new-born inner conflict, whether he will succeed or fail to convince other soldiers that he is not a "villain" who willingly deserted the army.

In the second section of the novel, it can be seen that images used in the first section are still important, and that a number of new images are significant. These include the particular images of the church, of the tomb and of disease. Both common and particular images suggest the intensification of the battle fire Fleming has fled from. The image of the chapel, associated with solace, suggests a refuge for the diseased mind. Ironically, there is neither solace nor security in the chape-like environment; as a result, the protagonist has to prepare himself for death alone, or to return to his regiment. The image of the church is also associated with spiritual crisis.

Images of disease control the second section of the novel. Blindness connotes Fleming's failure to realize in time that his desertion cannot be rewarding. Insanity suggests Fleming's mental disintegration; his reason has been overcome by his instinct. Like an insane person, Fleming's behaviour is not controlled by reason, but by the animalistic instinct for self-preservation. By extension, the fighters are both blind and insane on the literal battlefield. Blind, they are involved in the destruction of man in the name of so-called glory. The images of blindness and insanity deflate human pride in intelligence; they deflate intelligence, the endowment intended to differentiate man from other animals. The image of a sore suggests Fleming's mental pain: he feels guilt at his desertion. Therefore, the sore is associated with this crime.

This second section of Fleming's battle begins with the protagonist's mistaken hope of enjoying security and ends with a note of despair:

Fleming eventually realizes that he cannot find reliable lies to build up sound enough arguments that will mask his crime. Crane's imagery of the battlefield in this second section of the novel, is dominated again by the central images of the ghost, the animal, and the machine supported by relevant images of disease, waves and thunder.

The images of the ghost and of disease denote Fleming's growing awareness of his crime, his subsequent fear of retribution, and his mental agony. The images of the animal, the machine, thunder and waves denote Fleming's fear of physical destruction; they connote the gradual development of Fleming's insensitivity to the amorality of war.

To show Fleming's fear and instinct for self-preservation, Crane introduces images of blindness and insanity. "He ran like a blind man. Two or three times he fell down" (p. 150). The image of the"blind man" suggests Fleming's instinctive reactions under the conditions of unbearably fierce battle. The blind man is associated with a new type of reaction - impulsive flight. Mentally blind, the protagonist takes to his heels, failing to consider the consequences associated with desertion.

The image of the"insane sprinter" suggests that he is running at full speed. Insane, Fleming's behaviour is controlled by his instinct for self-preservation rather than by reason.

> *In his flight the sound of the following footsteps gave him his one meager relief. He felt vaguely that death must make a first choice of the men who were nearest; the initial morsels for the dragons would be then those who were following him. So he displayed the zeal of*

an insane sprinter in his purpose to keep
in the rear .There was a race (p. 150).

With "a dull, animal-like rebellion against his fellows", "his brain in a tumult of agony and despair", Fleming takes refuge in a forest, "as if resolved to bury himself" (p. 154). "He wished to get out of hearing of the cracking shots which were to him like voices" (p. 154).

Fleming expects Nature to show a sympathetic attitude towards his flight. The forest to which he turns for comfort seems at first to he unkind to him:

> *He was obliged to force his way with much noise. The creepers, catching against his legs, cried out harshly as their sprays were torn from the barks of trees. The swishing saplings tried to make known his presence to the world. He could not conciliate the forest.... So he went far, seeking dark and intricate places (p. 154).*

Crane stresses the indifference of Nature toward Fleming's plight, but his protagonist fails to notice it, and continues to identify his emotions with the natural world. When insects make noises in the forest, "they seem to be grinding teeth in unison" (p. 155). When Fleming throws a pine cone at a jovial squirrel he expects it to show him whether he has been right to desert his army. Since the squirrel "ran with its chattering fear", he believes that it approves of his flight.

Insensitive to the "rumble of death" on the battlefield, Nature, as Fleming erroneously views it, seems to give him assurance through its landscape, "a fair field holding life" (p. 155). "He conceived Nature to

be a woman with a deep aversion to tragedy" (p. 155).

At first viewed as "a solacing Mother who provides the little chapel-like bower for the refreshment of his troubled spirit, when Fleming stumbles upon the obscene corpse in the very nave of the cathedral-like grove, Nature turns out to be "cruelly hostile".

> *At length he reached a place where the high, arching boughs made a chapel. He softly pushed the green doors aside and entered. Pine needles were a gentle brown carpet. There was a religious half light.*
>
> *Near the threshold he stopped, horror-stricken at the sight of a thing.*
>
> *He was being looked at by a dead man who was seated with his back against a column-like tree.... The mouth was open.... Over the gray skin of the face ran little ants. One was trundling some sort of a bundle a long the upper lip.*
>
> *The youth gave a shriek as he confronted the thing. He was for moments turned to stone before it. He remained staring into the liquid-looking eyes. The dead man and the living man exchanged a long look. Then the youth cautiously put one hand behind him and brought it against a tree. Leaning upon this he retreated, step by step, with his face still toward the think. He feared that if he turned his back the body might spring up and stealthily pursue him (p. 155- 156).*

The image of the chapel connotes Fleming's desperate situation, his spirtual crisis and his need for help. Praying seems to be the only solution left to Fleming, who is in a state of physical and spiritual isolation. Ironically, the apparently divine setting, the chapel-like bower, fails to offer the spiritual solace needed. Instead, Fleming meets an "obscene corpse".

The corpse, merely a "thing" devoid of individuality, intensifies the misery of Fleming's mental state. Fleming's unexpected disappointment in the apparently divine setting points out his progressive acquisition of insensitivity to the amorality of war through horror. When Fleming confronts the "thing", he gives a shriek like a diseased child who receives an injection, or a bitter dose of medicine. This very shriek suggests Fleming's growing awareness of his helpless situation: there is no security beyond the regiment. Even Nature, who he seemed to trust as a friend, does not offer solace, but horror.

Once a human being, perhaps a proud or famous soldier, the "thing" has become a prey to ants. The sight of the horrible corpse affects Fleming's mind. His exposal to horror is meant to prepare his readiness to fight.

> *He was pursued by a sight of the black ants swarming greedily upon the gray face and venturing horribly near to the eyes.*
>
> *After a time he paused, and, breathless and panting, listened. He imagined some strange voice would come from the dead throat and squawk after him in horrible menaces* (p. 156).

Insecure in the forest and sensitive to the battle din, the "ripping sound of musketry and the breaking crash of artillery", Fleming moves back to the the battlefield. Crane again uses the images of the animal and the machine to show the protagonist's reactions. The use of machine imagery is particulary striking:

> *The battle was like the grinding of an immense and terrible machine to him. Its complexities and powers, its grim processes, fascinated him. He must go close and see it produce corpses (p. 158).*

The image of the machine in this context denotes Fleming's awareness of the exacting experience of war. It suggests the absurdity of man's whims, and instinct for self-destruction. With its terrifying power, it is also presented here as something fascinating to Fleming; this expresses man's compulsive interest in the grim product he has helped to create, that is now turning face and destroying him, with a remarkable efficiency and indifference.

When Fleming comes to know that the battle is a machine created by man but now beyond his control, he begins to understand that he is too insignificant to be of any importance. Hence he runs in the direction of the battle. This suggests in a sense his fading immaturity. Fleming comes to realize that he cannot enjoy security through desertion. Although he has lost a great deal of his innocence, one cannot say that Fleming has reached the stage of maturity. The next step in his didactic journey toward maturity shows Fleming on a battlefield "owned by dead men", the first products of the machine; then, he moves on to be confronted with the maimed and crippled soldiers, the second victims of the machine.

He came to a fence and clambered over it. On the far side, the ground was littered with clothes and guns. A newspaper, folded up, lay in the dirt. A dead soldier was stretched with his face hidden in his arm. Farther off there was a group of four or five corpses keeping mournful company. A hot sun had blazed upon the spot.

*In this place the youth felt that he was an invader. This forgotten part of the battleground, was owned by the dead men, and he hurried, in the vague apprehension that one of the swollen forms would rise and tell him to begone_* (p. 158).

Confronted with the wounded men, Fleming finds them "cursing, groaning, and wailing" (p. 158).

And from this region of noises came the steady current of the maimed.

One of the wounded men had a shoeful of blood. He hopped like a schoolboy in a game. He was laughing hysterically (p. 158).

These soldiers are in a sense living symbols of Fleming's shame. Indeed, their dreadful plight that suggests participation in the battle, contrasts with Fleming's physical good health that he feels to be synonymous with desertion and betrayal. When Fleming looks at them his guilt at his flight deepens, and therefore his mental torture increases: his physical

good health may betray the desertion that he wishes to keep unkown.

To emphasize Fleming's sorrow, Crane has created two wounded characters termed "the spectral soldier" and the "tattered man". The "spectral soldier" is maimed, with "the gray seal of death upon his face"; he plays a key role in Fleming's mental torture, since he is the protagonist's personnal friend. The "tattered man" is also a living symbol of Fleming's shame. The "tattered man" is described as being "fouled with dust, blood and powder stain from hair to shoes" (p. 158).

> *The youth saw with surprise that the soldier had two wounds, one in the head, bound with a blood-soaked rag, and the other in the arm, making that member dangle like a broken bough (p. 160).*

The"tattered soldier" torments Fleming's mind through both his physical agony and his language. Unaware of Fleming's desertion and eager to befriend him before he dies, the 'tattered soldier" initiates communication in the following way:

> *"Was pretty good fight, wa' n't it?" he timidly said. The youth, deep in thought, glanced up at the bloody and grim figure with its lamlike eyes.*
> *"What?"*
>
> ...
>
> *After a time he turned to the youth. "Where yeh hit, ol' boy?" he asked in a brotherly tone.*
>
> *The youth felt instant panic at this question, although at first its full import was not borne in upon him.*

"What?" he asked.

"Where yeh hit?" repeated the tattered man.

"Why", began the youth, "I - I - that is - why - I - "

He turned away suddenly and slid through the crowd. His brow was havily flushed, and his fingers were picking nervously at one of his buttons. He bent his head and fastened his eyes studiously upon the button as if it were a little problem (pp. 160- 161).

The "tattered man"s question is dramatically ironic and intensifies the misery of Fleming's inner conflict. Numbed with pain and shame, Fleming cannot answer the question. Indeed, he tries hard to avoid the "tattered soldier" who, unexpectedly, will meet him once again to bring his shame to a climax.

Amongst the wounded, Fleming undergoes tremendous agony:

But he was amid wounds. The mob of men was bleeding. Because of the tattered soldier's question he now felt his shame could be viewed. He was continually casting sidelong glances to see if the men were contemplating the letters of guilt he felt burned into his brow.

At times he retarded the wounded soldiers in an envious way. He conceived persons with torn bodies to be peculiarly happy. He wished that he, too, had had a wound, a red badge of courage.

The spectral soldier was at his side like a stalking reproach. The man's eyes were still fixed in a stare into the unknown (p. 161).

The recognition scene involving the "spectral soldier" and Fleming has a destructive effect on the latter. To emphasize their plight, Crane separates Fleming and his friend from the other soldiers. Henry Fleming and Jim Conklin, lagging behind the regiment, are eventually forsaken by the other soldiers, "dragging their own tragedies toward the rear " (p. 162).

The "spectral soldier", now hanging "babelike" to the youth's arm, becomes a heavy burden to Fleming; Conklin's tragedy deeply affects Fleming's inner crisis.

The youth had reached an anguish where the sobs scorched him. He strove to express his loyalty but he could only make fantastic gestures (p. 163).

As if Fleming's sorrow was not destructive enough, Crane thrusts upon him the "tattered soldier" to torment him once again. The "tattered soldier", himself badly wounded, has failed to keep pace. He now joins the two friends in despair. Fleming and the "tattered soldier" are doomed to watch the "gradual strangulation" of the "spectral soldier" as he loses his physical force. At the very last moment of his life, the "spectral soldier", who had besought his friend to help him, refuses help and tries hard to run, "looking for a place, like one who goes to choose a grave" (p. 161).

"Gawd! He's running!"

Turning his head swiftly, the youth saw his

> *friend running in a staggering and stumbling way toward a little chump of bushes. His heart seemed to wrench itself almost free from his body at this sight. He made a noise of pain. He and the tattered man began a pursuit. There was a singular race (p. 163).*

This passage stresses Conklin's unexpected reaction when he is about to die. Physically and mentally weakened the "spectral soldier" refuses to keep on hanging upon Fleming's arm. Instead, he tries hard to run. This reaction contrasts with Fleming's earlier desertion. Aware of his imminent death, Conklin seems to be indignant at his plight and the need for Fleming's help.

Through the spectral soldier's death, Crane shows Fleming's sorrow stressed by the use of the following image of a cruel animal.

> *He now sprang to his feet and, going closer, gazed upon the paste-like face. The mouth was open and the teeth showed in a laugh.*
>
> *As the flap of the blue jacket fell away from the body, he could see that the side looked as if it had been chewed by wolves. The youth turned, with sudden, livid rage, toward the battlefield. He shook his fist (p. 163).*

Undoubtedly, the spectral soldier's gradual death connotes a greater assimilation of the bitter dose of horror that will foster Fleming's boldness.

> *The youth desired to screech out his grief.*

> *He was stabbed, but his tongue lay dead in the tomb of his mouth. He threw himself again upon the ground and began to brood. The tattered man stood musing (p. 166).*

The image of the tomb denotes Fleming's silence, and connotes his change of reaction when faced with a personally affecting horror. He is "stabbed", yet he remains silent; Fleming's sorrow, due to his friend's death, plays a key role in bringing his earlier innocence to naught; now he has been exposed to many horrors, ranginging from the destructive sight of maimed and crippled soldiers to his destructive encounter with dead soldiers.

The horror of war is now particularized through the loss of a personal friend. With this didactic experience, Fleming is likely to lose a great deal of the fear which would inhibit bold action in battle. Indeed, after his failure to enjoy inner security in the forest, Fleming's indignation at the horrors of war, fostered by wounded and dead soldiers including his personal friend, is likely to reduce the fear of facing the unavoidable.

In spite of Conklin's death, Crane deems it necessary to deepen Fleming's grief through the tattered man's words to him:

> *They went slowly on in silence. "Yeh look pretty peeked yerself", said the tattered man at last. "I bet yeh 've got a worser one than yeh think. Ye'd better take keer of yer hurt. It don't do t' let sech things go. It might be inside mostly, an' them plays thunder. Where is it located?"...*

The youth had been wriggling since the introduction of this topic. He now gave a cry of exasperation and made a furious motion with his hand. "Oh, don't bother me!" he said. He was enraged against the tattered man, and could have strangled him. His companions seemed ever to play intolerable parts. They were ever up raising the ghost of shame on the stick of their curiousity. He turned toward the tattered man as one at bay. "Now, don't bother me", he repeated with desperate menace (p. 167).

The image of the thunder brings the dramatic irony of this scence to a climax. Unknown to the tattered man, Fleming's wound is not inside his body, but inside his mind. Ironically, the pain of guilt affects Fleming's mind like "thunder". Like thunder, the tattered man's remark is unexpected and sudden. Naturally associated with physical destruction, thunder, in this specific case, is symbolically associated with mental torment.

His "Good-bye" to the tattered man, occuring at the very moment that the unfortunate is about to die of his battle wounds, points out how his guilt has become unbearable. On the other hand, this "good-bye" connotes Fleming's developing insensitivity to humanity. Now used to horror, Fleming has received through his experience an injection of inhumanity since he manages to abandon the tattered soldier when he needs help. "His extreme stage of isolation from the regiment and from mankind occurs when he abandons the tattered soldier".[9]

The tattered man looked at him in gaping amazement.

> *The youth, looking at him, could see that he, too, like that other one, was beginning to act dumb and animal-like. His thoughts seemed to be floundering about in his head. "Now - now - look - a - here, you Tom Jamison - now - I won't have this - this here won't do. Where - where yeh goin'?"* (p. 168).

This paragraph shows the plight of the tattered soldier when Fleming abandons him; he has already reached a stage of delirium preceding death.

To show Fleming's mental agony during his complete isolation from mankind, Crane uses new images of the "knife" and the "arrow".

> *The simple questions of the tattered man had been knife thrusts to him. They asserted a society that probes pitilessly secrets until all is apparent. His late companion's chance persistency made him feel that he would not keep his crime concealed in his bosom. It was sure to be brought plain by one of those arrows which cloud the air and are constantly pricking, discovering, proclaiming those things which are willed to be forever hidden. He admitted he could not defend himself against this agency. It was not within the power of vigilance* (p. 169).
>
> *Furthermore, he was much afraid that some arrow of scorn might lay him mentally low before he could*

raise his protective tale (p. 174).

These images of the knife and the arrow echo the image of the ghost associated with Fleming's shame. Moreover, there are further images, of the "burden", the "sore", the "worm" and the "craven loon" which are used to stress Fleming's pain as he realizes that isolation cannot be rewarding.

> *As the youth looked at them the black weight of his woe returned to him. He felt that he was regarding a procession of choosen beings. The separation was as great to him as if they had marched with weapons of flame and banners of sunlight. He could never be like them (p. 170).*
>
> *He discovered that he had a scorching thirst. His face was so dry and grimy that he thought he could feel his skin crackle. Each bone of his body had an ache in it, and seemingly threatened to break with each movement. His feet were like two sores. Also, his body was calling for food. It was more powerful than a direct hunger. There was a dull, weightlike feeling in his stomach, and when he tried to walk, his head swayed and he tottered. He could not see with distinctness. Small patches of green mist floated before his vision (p. 171).*
>
> *A moral vindication was regarded by the youth as a very important thing. Without salve, he could*

> *not wear the sore badge of his dishonour through life. With his heart continually assuring him that he was despicable, he could not exist without making it, through his actions, apparent to all men* (p. 173).
>
> *He would truly be a worm if any of his comrades should see him returning thus, the marks of his flight upon him* (p. 171).
>
> *In despair, he declared that he was not not like those others. He now concluded it to be impossible that he should ever become a hero. He was a craven loon. Those pictures of glory were piteous things. He groaned from his heart and went staggering off* (p. 172).

Fleming turns to self-hate and despair, in contrast to his earlier self-importance. We have come a long way since the depiction of a Fleming eager to display his "eagle-eyed prowess". He comes to the conclusion that he is "a villain" who will have no chance to enjoy mercy. Unless the regiment loses the battle, he is "a condemned wretch" (p. 173). Ironically, the only way left to Fleming to recover his social identity is the loss of battle by his regiment. To illustrate Fleming's growing fear of retribution, Crane uses once again the images of the serpent and the machine connoting both betrayal and the repressive power of the regiment.

> *Presently the calm head of a forward-going column of infantry appeared in the road. It came swiftly on. Avoiding the obstructions*

> *gave it the sinuous movement of a serpent (p. 169).*
>
> *A defeat of the army had suggested itself to him as a means of escape from the consequences of his fall. He considered, now, however, that it was useless to think of such a possibility. His education had been that success for that mighty blue machine was certain; that it would make victories as a contrivance turns out buttons (p. 173).*

At the end of the second phase of Fleming's mental battle, the protagonist is at the mercy of a bleak despair. Fleming's inner conflict finds no solution. Indeed, the protagonist feels that he cannot manage to convince other soldiers that he is not a frightened villain who deserted the regiment on purpose.

Moved by the instinct for self-preservation when he deserted the regiment, Fleming is now stimulated by the same instinct to recover his place in the regiment. He had learned through experience that individual survival is unthinkable outside society. Socially alienated, and mentally disintegrated at the very beginning of the second phase of his mental battle, Fleming desparately needs social redemption at all costs by the end of the second phase.

To recover his social identity Fleming needs external forces beyond his control to help him. Fleming's individual efforts have proved useless to rescue him from isolation. Crane intervenes and helps his protagonist. Unexpectedly, the fight is lost to allow Fleming to recover his position,

unnoticed, in the regiment. Moreover, the writer provides his protagonist with the prerequisites needed to enjoy the trust and mutual confidence of his fellow soldiers, the members of the social microcosm which is the regiment: undeservedly thrust upon him, a red badge of courage and a battle flag are symbolically the redeeming devices used by Crane to free Fleming from retribution and to give him the strength to recover "his feeling of oneness with his fellows" and to enjoy success in the last stages of the battle.

In the third phase of Fleming's mental battle, it is under battle fire that he tests his power. Before moving on to a close examination of this last phase of the novel, it is necessary to indicate the main points underlying the previous phases.

In the first phase of his mental battle, Fleming devoted most of his time to thoughts; he was brooding over his anticipated involvement in battle. Unable to flee from the first battle, he then was compelled to play his part in it as "an automatic affair". Desperately threatened by the second battle, the youth put down his gun and deserted his regiment.

Characterized by his flight denoting physical and spiritual isolation, the second phase of Fleming's mental battle may be labelled as the phase of knowledge. Through this phase, Fleming comes to know the destructive horror of war; moreover, he comes to realize that once the truth is known - that war is destruction - one cannot enjoy security by betraying it through flight; rather, one has to face horror and rely on forces beyond one's control to survive; indeed, as Fleming himself comes to know, there is no security to be found on the battlefield where horror is rampant. That is to say, in the second phase of his mental battle, the protagonist, inactive on the physical battlefield, devoted most of his time to the acquisition

of lessons.

Unlike the second phase, the third phase of Fleming's mental battle is devoted to the protagonist's performance of public deeds while hiding, at the same time, private failings. At this stage in the novel, Fleming has acquired the dose of boldness he needed. Psychologically, Fleming is ready to fight without scruples. The protagonist's inner conflict will find solution in his active participation in battle. To fail or to manage to recover his social identity through courageous actions on the physical battlefield is now the major problem in the protagonist's mind; he is no longer contemplating persuasive speeches full of lies to justify his flight; he is rather concerned with recovering through actions what he failed to achieve through words in the second phase of his mental battle - confidence and the feeling of oneness with his regiment.

In the last phase of Fleming's mental battle, the mental struggle is as exacting as in the previous mental battles. Indeed, Fleming cannot escape from his previously shameful experiences, his flight and his cruelty toward the dying "tattered man". He knows of himself what other soldiers on the physical battlefield cannot see in him, his act of desertion. In other words, Fleming's rationalization of his private failings and the fear of betraying them through shameful actions on the physical battlefield, requires a great deal of mental strength. Crane's imagery still functions to show Fleming's mental torture, his fear of retribution, and to deflate romantic heroism by mocking Fleming's reactions in particular, and by ridiculing the behaviour of the soldiers in general.

In the last section, one finds again the images of the ghost, the machine and disease. Moreover, there are images of wild animals,

including the snake, the monster, and the buffalo, and domestic animals, such as the hound. Mentioned previously, the images of the sea and of thunder are fully developed in this last section. The image of the coffin is present in the last part of the novel, and connotes death and cowardice on the physical battlefield. In this last phase, through which the protagonist has managed to enjoy fame as a good fighter, the battle has become fiercer than before. Therefore, the images highlight primitive animality in action, at its highest level.

Victorious fighters are identified with hounds in pursuit of prey. The image of the ghost that controls the last stage of the third section plays a key role in the novel. The ghost, associated with immortality, connotes Fleming's haunting remorse for his private failings on the battlefield, unknown to the rest of the army - his desertion and his inhumanity reflected by his failure to help a dying soldier. The ghost of shame present in Fleming's mind prevents him from enjoying the so-called glory associated with his public deeds that are applauded by other soldiers in the last stages of the war.

Before providing him with the redeeming red badge of courage, Crane introduces the image of the sea associated with hostility. In addition, the image of the animal is used once again to suggest fear of retribution.

> *The column that had butted stoutly at the obstacles in the road-way was barely out of the youth's sight before he saw dark waves of men come sweeping out of the woods and down through the fields. He knew at once that the steel fibers had been washed from their hearts. They were bursting from their coats and their equipments as from*

entanglements. They charged down upon him like terrified buffaloes (p. 174).

The fight was lost. The dragons were coming with invincible strides. The army, helpless in the matted thickets and blinded by the overhanging night, was going to be swallowed. War, the red animal, war, the blood-swollen god, would have bloated fill (p. 175).

The images of the "dark waves", "terrified buffaloes", "dragons" and "red animal" highlight Fleming's fear of capital punishment if the regiment comes to know Fleming's betrayal.

The fight lost, the soldiers confused and dismayed, Fleming enjoys the opportunity to join the retreating infantry. Unexpectedly and fortunately, Fleming gets the wound he was longing for to mask his earlier desertion.

They sometimes gabbled insanely. One huge man was asking of the sky: "Say, where de plank road?" It was as if he had lost a child. He wept in his pain and dispay (p. 175).

Eager to run, the "huge man" is troubled by Fleming who, ashamed of his flight, is trying hard to ask him questions, "stammering, struggling with his balking tongue" (p. 175).

"Let go me!"
"Why - why -" stuttered the youth.
"Well, then!" bawled the man in a lurid rage. He adroitly and fiercely swung his rifle. It crushed upon the youth's head. The man ran on. The youth's fingers had turned to paste upon the other's arm. The energy was smitten from his muscles. He saw the flaming wings of lightening flash before his vision. There was a deafening rumble of thunder within his head (p. 175).

He went tall soldier fashion. He imagined secluded

spots where he could fall and be unmolested. To search for one he strove against the tide of his pain (p. 176).

The images of the "flaming wings", "thunder" and "tide" denote Fleming's physical agony and connote spiritual redemption through pain. Fleming's wound is not gained through any noble or heroic action; it is simply the result of a fellow soldier's exasperation.

Ironically viewed as the red badge of courage, Fleming's wound symbolically plays the role of a passport to the recovery of his social identity. Through the so-called red badge of courage, Crane seems to suggest that it does not matter whether what one believes in is right or wrong; what matters is the effect associated with one's belief(s). Indeed, other soldiers believe in Fleming's courage, ironically associated with the wound, cowardly gained. Although the general belief in Fleming's courage is false, it is associated with an unexpected effect - the recovery of social identity. That is to say, behind this wound, Fleming hides his shame; one may even view the wound as a personal flag of shame associated with his desertion; yet, society represented by the regiment in this specific case, views it as a red badge of courage. Shame is mentally a destructive weapon; ironically, the red badge of courage brings about faith and mutual confidence, mentally constructive in society. Fleming embodies the contradiction of personal shame and social esteem.

Wounded, Fleming is helped by a friendly soldier who shows him the whereabouts of his regiment. To show Fleming's fear of potential punishment and his physical agony due to the wound and to his hunger, Crane uses again the imagery of disease and of monsters.

The youth went slowly toward the fire indicated by his departed friend.... He had a conviction that he would soon feel in his sore heart the barbed missiles of ridicule. He had no strength to invent a tale; he would be a soft target.

He made vague plans to go off into the deeper darkness and hide, but they were all destroyed by the voices of exhaustion and pain from his body. His ailments, clamoring,

forced him to seek the place of food and rest, at whatever cost (p. 180).

The use of "sore" connotes Fleming's heavy burden of guilt while the "barbed missiles" stand for anticipated and feared retribution. Similarly, the "black and monstruous figure", used in the following sentence, represents anger and the repressive power anticipated in Fleming's mind, embodied by the regiment that he once betrayed. "Of a sudden he confronted a black and monstruous figure" (p. 180). The figure denotes the first private Fleming meets when he comes back to recover his place in the regiment.

On his return to the regiment, Fleming unexpectedly tries to reduce the importance of his flight; as no one has discovered his cowardice, this seems to reduce its significance. His vision of himself recovers dignity. "He had performed his mistakes in the dark, so he was still a man" (p. 190).

His panting agonies of the past he put out of his sight.

In the present, he declared to himself that it was only the doomed and the damned who roared with sincerity at circumstance. A man with a full stomach and the respect of his fellows had no business to scold about anything that he might think to be wrong in the ways of the universe, or even the ways of society. Let the unfortunates rail; the others may play marbles.

A faith in himself had secretly blossomed. There was a little flower of confidence growing within him. He was now a man of experience. He had been out among dragons, he said, and he assured himself that they were not

so hideous as he had imagined them. Also they were inaccurate; they did not sting with precision. A stout heart often, defied, and defying, escaped.

And furthermore, how could they kill him who was the chosen of gods doomed to greatness.

He remembered how some of the men had run from the battle.... They were weak mortals. As for himself, he had fled with discretion and dignity (p. 190- 191).

Crane's use of language stresses Fleming's pride and confidence renewed. If one remembers the past experience related to Fleming's flight, one cannot fail to see that Crane's language at this stage in the novel, is associated with a deflating irony to mock Fleming's reactions after his re-entry into the regiment. Crane is being ironic through the protagonist's self-esteem, that seems to be exaggerated on purpose to mock him. He could not be killed because he "was the chosen of gods doomed to greatness". It is as if, at this point he has forgotten, or hidden from himself, the lessons about war that he has learned up to this point. Recovering his social identity, he also recovers self-delusion though.. perhaps by none it is a protective veneer rather than a sign of naivety. He also appears arrogant now, though ironically he has achieved nothing, has acted in a cowardly way, and was wounded only as a result of another soldier's exasperation.

To show the effect that the forthcoming battle has on the minds of the soldiers, Crane uses once again images of the ghost, the hound and thunder, associated with the fear of potential death.

The men's faces grew doleful from the interpreting of omens. Tales of hesitation and uncertainty on the

part of those high in place and responsibility came to their ears. Stories of disaster were borne into their minds with many proofs. This din of musketry on the right, growing like a released genie of sound, expressed and emphasized the army's plight (p. 193).

This noise, following like the yellings of eager, metallic hounds, increased to a loud and joyous burst, and then, as the sun went serenely up the sky, throwing illuminating rays into the gloomy thickets, it broke forth into prolonged pealings. The woods began to crakle as if afire (p. 195).

....In this part of the field there passed slowly the intense moments that precede the tempest (p. 196).

A single rifle, joined by many others, flashed in a thicket before the regiment. There was a might song of clashes and crashes that went sweeping through the woods. The guns in the rear, aroused and enraged by shells that had been thrown burr-like at them, suddenly involved themselves in a hideous altercation with another band of guns. The battle roar settled to a rolling thunder, which was a single, long explosion (p. 196).

Din, an omen of forthcoming disaster in Crane's novel, creates a destructive effect on the minds of the soldiers. Compared to "a released genie of sound" and the "yellings of metallic hounds", the battle din denotes physical destruction in general, and portends the potential mental and physical disintegration of individual soldiers in particular. Hence metallic

hounds connote the enemy, powerful enough to hunt and destroy its prey, those soldiers doomed to lose the battle.

During the fight, Fleming realizes that war is an exacting experience.

> His fingers twined nervously about his rifle. He wished that it was an engine of annihilating power. He felt that he and his companions were being taunted and derided from sincere convictions that they were poor and puny. His knowledge of his inability to take vengeance for it made his rage into a dark and stormy specter, that possessed him and made him dream of abominable cruelties. The tormentors were flies sucking insolently at his blood, and he thought that he would have given his life for a revenge of seeing their faces in pitiful plights (p. 197).
>
> To the youth the fighters resembled animals tossed for a death struggle into a dark pit. There was a sensation that he and his fellows, at bay, were pushing back, always pushing fierce onslaughts of creatures who were slippery (p. 198).
>
> When in a dream, it occured to the youth that his rifle was an impotent stick, he lost sense of everything but his hate, his desire to smash into pulp the glittering smile of victory which he could feel upon the faces of his enemies.
>
> The blue smoke-swallowed line curled and writhed like a snake stepped upon. It swung its ends to and fro in

an agony of fear and rage (p. 1980).

The images of the "stormy specter", "animals", the "dark pit", the "impotent stick" and the "snake stepped upon" suggest the overriding power of the enemy at the very beginning of the fight. As a result, Fleming's regiment is in trouble; it is undergoing a tremendous experience. Fleming has used up all his strength, and in vain.

> *When the enemy seemed falling back before him and his fellows, he went intantly forward, like a dog who, seeing his foes lagging, turns and insists upon being pursued. And when he was compelled to retire again, he did it slowly, sullenly, taking steps of wrathful despair (p. 198).*

The image of the "desperate dog" suggests that "courage has primarily a social reality, that it is a quality which exists not absolutely but by virtue of other men's opinions."[10] Fleming feels desperate, and actually cowardly, yet his fellow soldiers view him as a courageous private. His "courage" lies in the opinions of other privates rather than in Fleming's actual deeds.

Blinded by rage like any beast which, once injured musters up all its remaining strength to struggle against its aggressor, Fleming devotes all his power to the fight so that he forgets that the enemy has deserted the battleground. As a result, he continues to fire at nothing; ironicallly, he continues to shoot as the aggressive enemy is still present in his mind.

> *Once he, in his intent hate, was almost alone, and was firing, when all those near him had ceased.*

> He was so engrossed in his occupation that he was not aware of a lull.
>
> He was recalled by a horse laugh and a sentence that came to his ears in a voice of contempt and amazement. "Yeh infernal fool, don't yeh know enough t' quit when there ain't anything t' shoot at? Good Gawd!"
>
> He turned then and, pausing with his rifle thrown half into position, looked at the blue line of his comrades. During this moment of leisure they seemed all to be engaged in staring with astonishment at him. They had become spectators. Turning to the front again he saw, under the lifted smoke, a deserted ground (pp. 198- 199).

Crane's treatment of Fleming's reaction to this particular fight destroys the romantic conccept of heroism. That is to say, a hero as convention demands it, controls his actions, and therefore his reactions should consciously depend upon the nature of danger being faced. Fleming's reaction to this particular fight is inconsistent with a situation devoid of danger - which is a floaw deflating ideal courage, and therefore suggesting that "courage is not a conscious striving for an ideal mode of behaviour but a temporary delirium derived from animal fury and social pride or fear".[21]

Although Fleming shoots at an imaginary enemy, his act helps him to enjoy self-esteem:

> These incidents made the youth ponder. It was revealed to him that he had been a barbarian, a beast. He had fought like a pagan who defends his religion. Regarding it, he

saw that it was fine, wild, and, in some ways, easy. He had been a tremendous figure, no doubt. By this struggle he had overcome obstacles which he had admitted to be mountains. They had fallen like paper peaks, and he was now what he called a hero. And he had not been aware of the process. He had slept and awakening, found himself a knight (pp. 199- 200).

The images of "a barbarian", of "a beast", of "a pagan", and of "a knight" denote Fleming's admiration; he seems to he prepared to comply with the requirements of his duty although they may prove ridiculous to him. The image of the "knight" suggests Crane's irony; although Fleming has not really performed a heroic act, other soldiers view him as a bold soldier, a knight worth admiring. Fleming thinks that he can identify himself with his group through barbaric, animalistic actions on the battlefield. He realizes that he has made a long step towards success in battle. Fleming's self-identification with "a beast" suggests the protagonist's recognition of the inhumanity associated with boldness, progressively injected into his mind through his earlier exposal to the horror of war. The recognition he has won from other soldiers has had a positive effect upon his mind; his self-admiration decreases his mental torture, and therefore prepares him to face danger ahead.

As if to suddenly destroy Fleming's new found self-esteem, the writer makes his protagonist overhear his officers who are discussing the next offensive. Fleming now sees himself from another point of view, not as someone admired by his colleagues, but as a mere component of his regiment. The effect is shattering:

"I don't believe many of your mule divers will get back."

With scared faces, the youth and his companion hurried back to the line.

These happenings had occupied an incredibly short time, yet the youth felt that in them he had been made aged. New eyes were given to him. And the most startling thing was to learn suddenly that he was very insignificant. The officer spoke of the regiment as if he referred to a broom. Some part of the woods needed sweeping, perhaps, and he merely indicated a broom in a tone properly indifferent to its fate (p. 203).

The image of the "broom" suggests Fleming's new discovery about war: officers do not worry about the loss of individual soldiers as long as the whole army can win the battle. Identified with a broom, the regiment is a tool used to defend the general interest of the army; as long as the regiment can comply with the requirements associated with its duty and the glory of the army as a whole, no one will worry about the loss of individual soldiers. The whole regiment may be sacrificed for the benefit of the army. Specifically, the protagonist, who formerly viewed himself as the "chosen of gods doomed to greatness", comes to know that he is insignificant as a simple member of the regiment.

In the next bout of fighting, a battle flag is unexpectedly thrust upon Fleming. As a result, the protagonist enjoys tremendous success in battle. Associated with pride, glory and victory, the flag symbolically provides Fleming with new strength and boldness, prerequisites likely to help him to

face horror without scruples.

> *In the mad scramble he was aware that the color sergeant flinched suddenly, as if struck by a bludgeon. He faltered, and then became motionless, save for his quivering knees* (p. 209).

This passage points out the unexpected death of the colour sergeant. This is of benefit to Fleming, as he seizes the flag that the dead soldier was bearing. This symbolically intensifies his strength and boldness throughout the remaining stages of the battle. With the flag in his hand, Fleming begins to fight and act almost as if he was the commander of the regiment.

> *He presently wrapped his heart in the cloak of his pride and kept the flag erect. He harangued his fellows, pushing against their chests with his free hand. To those he knew well he made frantic appeals, beseeching them by name. Between him and the lieutenant, scolding and near to losing his mind with rage, there was felt a subtle fellowship and equality. They supported each other in all manner of hoarse, howling protest.*
>
> *But the regiment was a machine run down. The two men babbled at a forceless thing* (p. 221).

Fleming proves to be more courageous than his lieutenant. His confidence and boldness intensified through the flag seized, Fleming eventually enjoys success in battle; he and his friend Wilson, are complimented by their officers: "They deserve t' be major generals" (p. 218).

Crane closes the novel by echoing the main images uses throughout the work. It is the image of the ghost which controls the concluding pages of the novel:

> *Nevertheless, the ghost of his flight from the first engagement appeared to him and danced. There were small shoutings in his brain about these matters. For a moment he blushed, and the light of his soul flickered with shame.*
>
> *A specter of reproach came to him. There loomed the dogging memory of the tattered soldier - he who, gored by bullets and faint for blood, had fretted concerning an imagined wound in another; he who loaned his last strength and intellect for the tall soldier; he who, blind with weariness and pain, had been deserted in the field.*
>
> *For an instant a wretched chill of sweat was upon him at the thought that he might be detected in the thing. As he stood persistently before his vision, he gave vent to a cry of sharp irritation and agony.*
>
> *His friend turned. "What's the matter Henry?" he demanded. The youth's reply was an outburst of crimson oaths.*
>
> *As he marched along the little branchhung roadway among his prattling companions this vision of cruelty loomed over him. It clung near him always and darkened his view of these deeds in purple and gold. Whichever way his thoughts turned they were followed by the somber phantom of the desertion in the fields (pp. 229- 230).*

The image of the ghost is associated with Fleming's failures, and subsequent mental agony. By ending the novel with this image, Crane seems to point out that there is no individual security outside society; associated with guilt and shame, the ghost stands for Fleming's betrayal;

he betrayed society by deserting the regiment; he betrayed humane society by abandoning the dying "tattered man" at the very moment that he needed help. As a result, he has to pay for it - he cannot enjoy inner peace because of guilt.

If one trusts Fleming's view of himself as a successful and heroic figure in the eyes of other soldiers, one might feel that at the end of the novel, he has achieved mental peace. Unfortunately, the protagonist still undergoes mental torture although the literal war has come to an end. This is highlighted by the very image of the ghost. Instead of enjoying (self-)esteem associated with his public deeds, Fleming is plagued by the guilt of his personal failings even though he tries hard to rationalize them. Unfortunately, one cannot enjoy mental peace by relying on rationalization. Indeed, rationalization denotes mental crisis, and therefore precludes inner peace - a prerequisite underlying psychological balance and human welfare.

The image of the ghost suggests also that the apparent is not necessarily true. Unknown to his fellow soldiers who view him as a hero, Fleming is still wretchedly plagued by his hidden failings. The protagonist's public deeds contrast with his private failings. Fleming cannot really experience inner satisfaction because of his guilt.

In his mental war, Fleming lost the two first battles. Overcome by his inner conflict, the protagonist took refuge in flight. Overcome by insecurity in his physical and mental isolation, Fleming failed to recover his group identity through his own actions. To recover his group identity, he had to rely on naturalistic forces beyond his control - the defeat of the army, the unexpected wound and the flag thrust upon him. One may

say that apparently Fleming wins the last battle of his mental war. Supported by outer forces beyond his control, Fleming manages to recover the feeling of oneness with his fellow soldiers through his public deeds.

On the other hand, Fleming's last mental battle is lost in a sense, if one remembers that the ghost of guilt and shame is harmful to mental health; the mental scars have been cured through the recovery of group identity, but the mental scars cannot "fade like flowers" as the protagonist seems to think. One may enjoy inner peace while bearing bodily scars, but one cannot enjoy inner security if the scars are located in the mind. Associated with immortality and overriding power defying human forces, the ghost connotes Fleming's guilt and shame which will deny his psychological peace.

To close the study of the imagery of the mental battlefield in The Red Badge of Courage, it is useful to consider the supporting imagery of the garden. It occurs throughout the novel, but achieves its significance in the last stage of Fleming's mental strife. Indeed, it is in this last section of the novel that the garden, colorful in the earlier sections, becomes hellish. The image of the garden in The Red Badge of Courage produces, and intensifies, an ironic effect in the novel. Both colorful and hellish, this image reduces man's sense of dignity and self-esteem by suggesting the "core of amorality" inherent in human nature, hidden behind an apparent "shell" of perfect morality, virtue, if not holiness. Identified with a garden, the literal battlefield consists of strange flowers that do not suggest romance; they rather portend Fleming's imminent

mental strife. In the following passage the red colour is introduced to mean danger in general.

> *A river, ambertinted in the shadow of its banks, purled at the army's feet; and at night, when the stream had become of a sorrowful blackness, one could see across it the red, eyelike gleam of hostile camp fires set in the low brows of distant hills (p. 115).*

The red colour is echoed in the following sentence to suggest danger individualized in Fleming's mind.

> *Staring once at the red eyes across the river, he conceived them to be growing larger, as the orbs of dragons advancing (p. 126).*

The image of the colorful garden supports the imagery of the mental battlefield. The colorful garden consists of bright and dark colours dominated by blue, red, yellow and gray. Bright colours do not only suggest order associated with nature. Paradoxically, they are often meant to show horror or Fleming's mental crisis.

> *At nightfall the column broke into regimental pieces, and the fragments went into the fields to camp. Tents sprang up like strange plants. Camp fires, like red, peculiar blossoms, dotted the night (p. 128).*

It is the battlefield which is identified with a garden; its flowers reflect Fleming's mental state of mind. The image of the red garden ironically suggests the danger haunting Fleming's mind; he is in danger of losing his life. He feels lonely although he is still with his fellow

soldiers. Associated with blood, the red colour implies the sacrifice of individual soldiers, the prey to the "red animal - war, the blood-swallen god." Red is also associated here with courage deflated, since the plight of the dead and the maimed, is imposed upon them. The dead and the maimed are not martyrs who under went agony on purpose, but individual victims who were accidentally doomed to face unavoidable tragedy. Fleming's "red badge of courage' actually connotes cowardice, since it was undeservedly thrust upon him; he was woumded before he proved to be "a hero"; Fleming's unexpected wound is rather meant to mask his desertion, and therefore to protect the protagonist.

The omen of danger and sacrifice of blood, red implies the mood of fear and indignation. Unlike red, yellow suggests sorrow and portends degeneration and decay. Gray suggests bleak despair and portends disintegration.

> *The eyes, staring at the youth, ha d changed to the dull hue to be seen on the side of a dead fish. The month was open. Its red had changed to an appalling yellow. Over the gray skin of the face rom little ants. One was trundling some sort of a bundle along the upper lip (p. 155).*

This passage portrays a dead man left on the batle field. It is the corpse Fleming meets in the "very nave of the cathedral-like grove", during his isolation from the regiment. The yellow colour suggests the loss of good health and strengh . In the following passage the gray colour

portends the forth coming disintegration of Fleming's friend. He is going to die before Fleming's very eyes.μ

> *Another had the gray seal of death already upon his face. His lips were curled in hard lines and his teeth were clinched. His hand were bloody from where he had pressed them upon his wound. He seemed to be awating the moment when he should pitch headlong. He stalked like the specter of a soldier, his eyes burning with the power of a stare into the unknown (p. 159).*

The image of the garden combined with the image of hell mirror and intensify the effect of the battle upon Fleming's mind.

"This sight also filled him with wonder. The brigade was hurrying briskly to be gulped into the infernal mouths of the war god" (p. 151). Once viewed as a blood-swollen god, war is now identified with a hellish god ready to swallow its worshippers-fighters. Ironically, the hellish god is venerated in a strange temple portrayed as a garden used for growing shells—— "They looked to be strange war flowers bursting into fierce bloom" (p. 148). Within the hellish temple, the doomed soldier is viewed as "a devotee of a mad religion, blood-sucking, muscle-wrenching, bone-crushing" (p. 163).

The image of the hellish garden suggests evil in action, viewed by Fleming on the battle field. Compelled to worship the hellish god, individual soldiers are not satisfied with the experience of war. "The slaves toiling in the temple of this god began to feel rebellion at his

harsh tasks. The fools" (p. 148).

The image of the hellish garden points out Fleming's mental disintegration culminating in his flight. Sensitive to the destruction of war, Fleming views it as a hellish experience harmful to individual fighters. As a result, he deserts the regiment. Fleming's flight implies that the young recruit cannot cope with evil in action. Innocent and suddenly exposed to the horror of human self-destruction, Fleming symbolically tries hard to run from the corruption of evil in action on the battlefield. Naive, the protagonist is still unaware that one cannot escape from the contamination of evil rampant in society, of which one is a member. If the army has decided to defend "the general interests" of the country through the destruction of the enemy, a private like Fleming cannot fail to take part in the destruction of man by man.

When he takes refuge in the rationalization of his flight, Fleming thinks that he has fled early because of "his superior powers of perception" (p. 172). "A serious prophet upon predicting a flood should be the first man to climb a tree" (p. 172). This image of the prophet contrasts with the image of hell. The prophet suggests eagerness to save one's audience from a forthcoming disaster, while hell suggests damnation.

Fleming fails to be a prophet in a hellish environment. Instead, constantly exposed to the corrupt and corrupting filth, the result of evil in action, Fleming eventually identifies himself with evil to recover the feeling of oneness with his fellow soldiers. Fleming's acceptance of the corruption of evil takes place when, eager to join his regiment, he envies his fellow soldiers who, identified with "ugly fiends" remained, and fought, on the battlefield.

> *He denounced himself as a villain. He said that he was the most unutterably selfish man in existence. His mind pictured the soldiers who would place their defiant bodies before the spear of the yelling battle fiend; and he saw their drippling corpses on an imagined field, he said that he was their : muderer en .*
>
> *Again he thought that he wished he was dead. He believed that he envied a corpse (p. 173).*

Fleming's acceptance of evil as an inherent part in human nature is highlighted by his participation in the last stages of the battle. His lieutenant calls him an "infernal fool" when, unknown to him, Fleming keeps on firing at the enemy that had already left the battlefield. From then on, Fleming's fellow soldiers viewed him as a"war devil". Ironically, Fleming recovers confidence, and enjoys mental reintegration through the acceptance of evil - his participation in the destruction of other human beings.

In short, the images of the hellish garden denote evil in action on the physical battlefield, and connote Fleming's eventual unconscious acceptance of inner evil as an inherent part of human nature. The image of the hellish god or the red animal suggests the violent behaviour of man, similar to that of other animals devoid of human intelligence. The red animal embodies the irrational vicious part in human nature dominated by wild passions and instincts including those of destruction and self preservation.

Like The Red Badge of Courage, Maggie: A Girl of the Streets communicates the insight underlying Stephen Crane's work - "the essence of the human condition is a state of war".[12] As "an anti-heroic allegory of life"[13], The Red Badge of Courage portrays war as a setting through which the innocent youth emerges from ignorance into knowledge through his experience in battle. Similarly, Maggie: A Girl of the Streets mirrors life as a state of war, violence, fear, strength and cunning. The opening chapter shows Jimmie Johnson fighting for the honour of Rum Alley against the children of Devil's Row. This is much more than a childish street game; it foreshadows a violent future, shows us a Jimmie Johnson already battling to preserve his self-esteem, and presents the background of violence and destruction in which the rest of the novel is set.

The imagery of the battlefield is central to The Red Badge of Courage, and also important in Maggie: A Girl of the Streets. In the two novels, the imagery of the battlefield functions as an effective device intended to show Crane's view of man within society. It stresses man's sense of mental strife both on the literal battlefield and in the frustrating milieu of Maggie: A Girl of the Streets.

In The Red Badge of Courage, the most significant images of the animal and the machine, the ghost and the garden, supporting the controlling imagery of the battlefield, reveal the state of the protagonist's mind, unknown to the rest of his regiment; moreover, they suggest the ugliness of war that lies beneath society's superficial

conception of it. The imagery of the animal suggests the "throat-grappling instinct" precluding romance and glory in war. The imagery of the machine suggests man's self-inflicted pain and his untamed instinct for destruction. The imagery of the ghost implies an amorality which precludes man's sense of sin on the battlefield. The imagery of the hellish garden embodies evil in action, rampant and unavoidable and deflates sentimental morality.

There are two battlefields in The Red Badge of Courage; the literal battle intensifies Fleming's mental strife and therefore, challenges his romantic conception of war as "a play affair". Throughout his mental war, Fleming proves a belligerent doomed to lose. Overcome by obsessional fear, the protagonist eventually deserted the regiment and thereby, severed the social bond uniting him to his regiment. Alienated and eager to recover his social identity, the protagonist failed to find adequate lies that would justify his desertion and thereby help him to avoid retribution. Although he apparently enjoyed fame as a good fighter in the last stages of the literal war, the protagonist actually failed to enjoy mental peace because of the remorse associated with his desertion and his inhumanity. Therefore, the imagery of the mental battlefield in The Red Badge of Courage is used to deflate man's sense of heroism, wisdom, humanity, intelligence and dignity. It emphasizes the primitive aspects of man that lie behind his "civilized" veneer.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Christopher Butler and Alain Fowler, eds., Topics in Criticism (Gatesheard: Northumberland Press Ltd., 1971), p. 159.

[2]Donald Pizer, Realism and Naturalism in Nineteenth-Century American Literature (New York: The Southern Illinois University Press, 1966), p. 130.

[3]Pizer, p. 25.

[4]Richard Chase, ed., The Red Badge of Courage and Other Writings (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960), p. 117. All parenthetical page numbers refer to this edition.

[5]Pizer, p. 28.

[6]M.H. Abrahams, et al, eds., The Norton Anthology of English Literature, vol. 2 (London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1962), p. 1936.

[7]Pizer, p. 25.

[8]James B. Colvert, ed., Great Short Works of Stephen Crane (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), pp. VIII- IX.

[9]Pizer, p. 29.

[10]Ibidem, p. 29.

[11]Pizer, p. 25.

[12]Pizer, p. 123.

[13]Pizer, p. 26.

CHAPTER TWO

IMAGERY OF THE PRISON

In Crane's fiction, one finds that imagery related to the prison, like the imagery of the battlefield, controls and stresses Crane's view of man in society. The images relating to the prison suggest limitation and frustration. Crane sees man as in a state of confinement; his prison is made up of the economic and social forces that surround him. "Man is pretty much at the mercy not only of his own illusions but of superior social and cosmic forces and of his own instincts".[1] Any sense of freedom he cherishes is a vain illusion; in reality he is controlled and directed in a succession of levels, from that of the social background into which he is born, to that of his family. The family, seen at its best as a protective and loving framework in which the individual may develop his potential, at worst may be a repressive and restrictive force which marks man for life.

Crane's use of imagery related to the prison limits or denies man's freedom to control his own destiny. In this chapter, I will consider how it operates in The Red Badge of Courage, Maggie: A Girl of the Streets and George's Mother.

Characters in Crane's fiction do not have the good fortune to receive a benign or well disposed judge when they stand before Fate. Their sentence is for life, and there is no chance for them to have it red uced. A prey to the external forces which determine their economic and social status, they are also victims of the inner drives inherent within them -

emotions such as fear and hunger. Henry Fleming finds himself unable to enjoy security outside the "moving box" that makes up his regiment. Maggie is unable to escape the prison of her environment; she escapes from the prisons of family and factory life, only to be forced into a life of prostitution.

At the very beginning of The Red Badge of Courage, Fleming is a prisoner of his illusions about war; he enjoys the confidence and security which he will quickly lose on the battlefield. His participation in battle, which is symbolically his introduction to social life, destroys these illusions. As a result, he becomes a prey to fear, thirst, hunger and restlessness. At the end of the first section of the novel - under the terms of my definition in Chapter One - he puts down his gun and deserts the regiment; at this point he still believes in his freedom to detach himself and live apart from his society. He discovers that he cannot exist independently, and finds salvation in his return to the regiment, both physically and psychologically.

In The Red Badge of Courage, several images, those of the hole, the cave, the box and of iron, contribute towards Crane's demonstration that Fleming's behaviour is directly based upon the conventions and beliefs of the society in which he lives. The regiment, which represents Fleming's society, controls the actions of its individual members. By enlisting in the army, individual soldiers have given up any chance to freedom that they might have had. As a result, they have to be ruled, and to live, according to the obligations and privileges associated with the particular group of society they belong to - the army.

The army controls individual lives within it, placing them in a series of units platoon, regiment, brigade, battalion, company....

(We might draw a parallel between these units and social groups man finds himself in civilian life.) Fleming's small room in one of the army's regiments is only to be entered through "an intricate hole":

> After receiving a fill of discussions concerning marches and attacks, he went to his hut and crawled through an intricate hole that served it as a door (p.116)
>
> After a time the tall soldier slid dexteriously through the hole. The loud private followed. They were wrangling (p.122)

The word "hole" seems to suit Fleming's lowly status in the regiment and suggests constriction and restriction. At this point in the novel, Fleming has begun to brood over his future involvement in battle. He is already wondering whether to leave his regiment. Both physically and mentally, he is in a state of claustrophobia. Inexperienced and naive, Fleming is still unaware that he has given up his freedom by enlisting in the army.

As the novel progresses, the image of the prison is supported by the image of the cave. Identified with serpents, two columns of soldiers are viewed by Fleming, "crawling from the cavern of the night" (p.127). The phraseology suggests that Nature itself has man in a confinement. Moreover,if one remembers the associations in meaning with the word "serpents", discussed in chapter one, the words take on an additional significance. Man loses both his individuality and his innocence in war, and is assimilated into a larger identity which

is associated with evil. The serpent lodges in darkness, and its motion is slow and insidous. Fleming will eventually be compelled to follow his regiment. The serpent is metaphorically a body that cannot tolerate any betrayal that may be undertaken by its individual parts. The serpent is ruled by one law, "obey."

The regiment is also described as a "moving box", which is shown in the following passage to be Fleming's prison:

> But he instantly saw that it would be impossible for him to escape from the regiment. It enclosed him. And there were iron laws of tradition and law on four sides. He was in a moving box (p.133).

Unlike the image of the cavern and that of the hole, the image of the metal box suggests a closed gaol. Fleming finds himself trapped within his regiment. There is no means of escape, and Fleming's temporary retreat later in the novel is shown to be futile. The image of the box denies the possibility of freedom and individuality; it suggests that man has become a thing, motionless, to be moved and used when needed. Fleming realizes his state of confinement when he is about to participate in his very first battle. He thinks that the "merciless government" has taken a wrong decision in allowing soldiers to be slaughtered "like pigs"(p.135). He deems the generals "idiots to send them marching into a regular pen." This last quotation refers us back again to ideas discussed earlier in my study - in particular, the view of man as a domestic animal, used for the needs of his masters; his pen, or prison is where he

will await his death.

At the end of the first part of the novel, Fleming tries to escape, but isolated in the forest he has taken to as a refuge, he comes to realize, ironically, that desertion will not bring him liberation and security. Even nature itself seems to be confining him:

> Sometimes the branches formed chains and tried to hold him back. Trees, confronting him, stretched out their arms and forbade him to pass (p.157).

While the images of the "hole" and the "cave" suggest the loss of individual freedom, the imgge of the "box" suggests the impossibility of real escape. Fleming's temporary desertion is meant to verify for him whether or not the prison is actually unavoidable. Insecure in the forest, Fleming's stay outside the regiment shows him that he cannot escape from the gaol embodied by military duty.

The word "iron" seems to confirm that Fleming's prison is binding, that he will not escape. It emphasizes Fleming's conviction that he cannot be free. Having moved from inexperience to experience, from ignorance, through hearsay, to knowledge, Fleming reaches an understanding about his position in the army, as in life itself. He will have to accept his room within the "moving box", the regiment. The regiment, in turn, stands for society with its binding conventions, customs and beliefs:

> His mind heard howls of derision. He was trodden beneath the feet of an iron injustice (p.153).

These words point out his realization that his desertion was vain, since it did not favour freedom and security. The "iron injustice", echoing "iron law" and "iron tradition" (p.133) connotes the destruction of individuality for the"benefit" of society; individual soldiers have to give up their lives to protect the so-called esteem or honnur of their country. Fleming deems military convention to be unjust because individual soldiers who sacrifice their blood cannot enjoy any reward in compensation, and are doomed simply to rot on the battlefield. Convinced that he has been caught in a "steel trap" (p.167) by enlisting in the army, Fleming feels compelled to rejoin his regiment, the "moving box". He accepts the unavoidable duty to fight.

In Maggie: A girl of the Streets, "the slum and the home are not only battlefields, however, but also enclosed arenas."[2] Maggie, the protagonist in the novel, is a prisoner within the settings in which she is doomed to live, the Johnson family, of which she is a member, the shirt factory in which she works and the world of Bowery theatre saloons, her "new home" after her rejection by her family.

A prisoner of her environment, Maggie is at the mercy of destructive characters who are themselves the products of their environment. Maggie, brought up in a brutal family that eventually rejects her, is psychologically destroyed by a cast of amoral characters who direct her life. Indeed, when betrayed by Pete, her lover, Maggie is denied forgiveness by her mother when she returns to her family home. Suffering her mother's rejection, Maggie turns to

prostitution after Pete's refusal to help her. To study Maggie's imprisonment, it is wise to examine closely her physical and social milieu by following her step by step as she moves from childhood to adolescence, from innocence to jaded experience.

The image of the prison is supported by relevant images of the animal, the den and hell. The prison is hellish since the victim has no chance of salvation, and undergoes a punishment which, ironically, she has done nothing to deserve. The prison is animal-like, since the fundamental guide to conduct within it is an instinctive amorality: it is controlled by physical appetite. The image of the animal precludes the applicability of moral laws within this prison-like setting. The image of the den is associated with primitive savagery. The den is the dwelling-house of the prisoner; the very word suggests the intense physicality of the setting.

> The girl, Maggie, blossomed in a mud puddle. She frew to be a most rare and wonderful production of a tenement district, a pretty girl.
>
> None of the dirt of Rum Alley seemd to be in her veins. The philosophers, upstairs, downstairs, and on the same floor, puzzled over it.
>
> When a child, playing and fighting with gamins in the street, dirt disgusted her. Attired in tatters and grime, she went unseen (p.15).

In these lines one notes a tension between a potentially sentimental subject matter - a beautiful young child, a potential heroine - and the ironic tone in Crane's style, the references to the Bowery philosophers and the contrasts set up between "rare" "wonderful" and the "tenement" district. Treated in a wholly sentimental style, Crane's story might well have become exactly the type of tale which the Bowery inhabitants he describes would have delighted in. But throughout this novel, the injection of irony destroys a sentimental response to the tale. In addition, Maggie is indeed innocent, but also ignorant and foolish, and she is is not saved from her eventual fate by a handsome lover. Untouched by her physical milieu, Maggie's purity becomes a prey to the amorality rampant in the minds of characters who contribute to her imprisonment and downfall.

Maggie "blossomed in a mud puddle", her first prison. Associated with dirt, both physical and spiritual, the "mud puddle" connotes both her family, Maggie's immediate environment, and the society itself. Poverty is one of the exterior forces that affect Maggie's life. In this novel, poverty is a force bringing about, almost inevitably, dishonesty and eventual spiritual bleakness; as far as Crane is concerned, the feeling of guilt and responsibility for one's wrong actions, has been destroyed among the characters he describes.

As a smal child, Maggie lives in a family which is a prison to her. Within the family, Maggie and Jimmie are not comfortable children likely to view the parents as "idols" to imitate; they are,

rather, doomed children dropped into a brutal family and denied the chance of education, security and respectability; the parents are so careless and irresponsible that children feel like "invaders" in their very family (p.10). The Johnson family is identified with "a panther's den" (p.10); the "panther's den" suggests savagery; it suggests the brutal, animal-like life that the Johnsons lead. As a child, Maggie cannot escape from the squalor and the brutality of the "panther's den."

In the Johnson family, Mary, Maggie's mother is the dominant figure:

> She was chanting in a mournful voice, occasionally interjecting bursts of volcanic wrath at the father, Jimmie judged, had sunk down on the floor or in a corner (p.10).

Moreover, both the mother and the father are addicted to drink; they drink as if to forget their misery. Their drunkenness often leads to mental strife and domestic violence. In such a family, Maggie cannot be expected to grow up with the necessary moral strength likely to help her.

Crane compares Maggie to "a tigress." "Maggie, with side glances of fear of interruption, ate like a small pursued tigress"(p.7). The image of the tigress connotes the animal-like behaviour prevailing in the Johnson family. Maggie cannot remain untouched by her family milieu; like her brutal parents, she mistreats her little brother, Tommie. In an ironic and symbolic gesture, Crane involves Maggie in an act of theft on the account of her younger brother's death, but this

theft, of a minor nature, reveals only that Maggie is still essentially pure:

> The babe, Tommie, died. He went away in an insignificant coffin, his small waxen hand clutching a flower that the girl, Maggie, had stolen from an Italian (p.11).

The Johnson family is also identified with hell:

> During the evening he had been standing against a bar drinking whiskies, and declaring to all comers confidentially: "My home reg'bar livin' hell! Why do I come an'drin' whisk' here thish way? 'cause home reg'lar livin' hell!" (p.9).

A cliched expression is given a deeper significance. Johnson drinks in the public house to enjoy a temporary escape from the hell that is his home. He escapes from the destruction of his hellish family to experience self-destruction through drink. Johnson cannot escape from his milieu. When he comes back home drunk, he quarrels with, and fights against, his wife, the living symbol of his hell. Tormented by his home life and addicted to drink, Johnson is a prisoner of his environment, both physically and psychologically.

In the family, the children are victims who cannot free themselves from the prison-like milieu.

> The small frame of the ragged girl was quivering. Her features were haggard from weeping, and her eyes gleamed with fear. She grasped the urchin's arm in her little trembling hand and they huddled in

> . . . . . a corner. The eyes of both were drawn by some force, to stare at the woman's face, for they thought she need only to awake and all the fiends would come from below (p. 11).

This passage vividly shows the children's reaction to their hellish environment. The mother is lying asleep, on the bare floor after a fight with her husband. Mr. Johnson is compared to the commander of all fiends, "they thought she need only awake and all fiends would come from below". Maggie's mother is equated with danger and with fear.

Imprisoned by poverty and the wild brutality around her, Maggie is a victim without hope. When Johnson dies, Maggie's plight worsens. Maggie's mother, depressed by her husband's death and in a state of destitution, becomes a cross to bear; she becomes more aggressive than ever. Her "years were divided up into periods of thirsty days" (p. 13). Addicted to drink, she turns to petty crime.

> *The mother had gradually risen to such degree of fame that she could bandy words with her acquaintances among the police justices. Court officials called her by her first name. When she appeared they pursued a course which had been theirs for months. They invariably grinned, and cried out, "Hello, Mary, you here again?" Her grey head wagged in many courts (p. 16).*

> *When arrested for drunkenness she used the story of her daughter's downfall with telling effect upon the police justices. Finally one of them said to her, peering down his spectacles: "Mary, the records of this and other courts show that you are the mother of forty-two daughters who have been ruined. The case is unparalleled in the annals of this court, and this court thinks - "* (p. 43)

It should be noted that Crane's use of sardonic humour, seen in the quotation above, constantly blocks the intrusi n of sentimentality.

Maggie's brother, Jimmie, is also ironically portrayed as a handicap to Maggie, and as a victim of his environment. He is depicted as "a brutal urchin" in the slum. "When Jimmie was a little boy he began to be arrested. Before he reached a great age, he had a fair record" (p. 15). When Johnson died, the "vague position of head of family" was thrust upon Jimmie. Menaced by poverty, Jimmie becomes a truck driver defying laws and "despising obvious christians". "He menaced mankind at the intersections of the streets" (p. 12).

> *During that time his sneer became chronic. He studied human nature in the gutter and found it no worse than he thought he had reason to believe it. He never conceived a respect for the world, because he had begun with no idols that it had smashed* (p. 12).

Whilst Maggie cherishes romantic illusions that are eventually shattered, Jimmie's view of life is cynical. His posture is one of

contempt. As the new head of the family, Jimmie compels Maggie to go and work in a shirt factory. By this stage Maggie has become a teen-ager. Prisoner of her family, Maggie enters another prison - the shirt factory.

> *By a chance, she got a position in an establishment where they made collars and cuffs. She received a stool and a machine in a room where sat twenty girls of various shades of yellow discontent. She perched on the stool and treadled at her machine all day, turning out collars with a name which . . might have been noted for its irrelevancy to anything connected with collars. At night she returned home to her mother (pp. 115- 116).*

The "yellow discontent" on the faces of her fellow employees emphasizes the suffocating confinement which affects both the mental and physical health. "The air in the collar-and-cuff establishment strangled her. She knew she was gradually and surely shrivelling in the hot, stuffy room" (p. 25).

When Pete comes into Maggie's life, the protagonist has neither the moral strength nor the maturity to see him realistically. Her only answer to the hopelessness of her situation is to indulge in romantic fantasy. "Under the trees of her dream-gardens there had always walked a lover" (p. 18). She believes that she may escape from her prisonlike environment through love. When Pete befriends her, Maggie views him as the ideal lover, the living symbol of the door leading to liberation from her family and the shirt factory.

Blinded by her illusions, Maggie idealizes Pete and fails to notice his flaws. She is seduced by his strength, his elegance and his job as a bar-tender.

> *Here was a formidable man who disdained the strength of a world full of fists. Here was one who had contempt for brassclothed power; one whose knucles could ring defiantly against the granite of law. He was a knight (p. 19).*

Crane has ironically transformed the conventional romantic image of the chivalrous knight: this hero is a Bowery bar-tender.

> *She reflected upon the collar-and-cuff factory. It began to appear to her mind as a dreary place of endless grinding. Pete's elegant occupation brought him, no doubt, into contact with people who had money and manners. It was probable that he had a large acquaintance with pretty girls. He must have great sums of money to spend (p. 19).*
>
> *To her the earth was composed of hardships and insults. She felt instant admiration for a man who openly defied it. She thought that if the grim angel of death should clutch his heart, Pete would shrug his shoulders and say, "Oh, ev'ryt'ing goes" (p. 19).*

Of the paragraphs above, Crane describes Pete through the mind of his admirer; Maggie is seduced by Pete's strength; blinded by admiration, Maggie exaggerates Pete's power, "One whose knucles could ring defiantly against the granite of law". Born in a violent family, Maggie is attracted by a strong and violent man who, she believes, will free her from the drudgery of her work and the violence of her home.

Ironically, she wants to escape from her amoral family by entering a new amoral prison through Pete.

The second paragraph points out two factors that she feels would contribute to Maggie's liberation - money and good manners as opposed to the misery and coarseness of the frustrating milieu she wishes to escape from. Maggie thinks that Pete's job as a bartender would contribute to the removal of her frustration. As she continues to anticipate, and to brood over, the benefits associated with Pete as a lover and a bartender, the squalor of the factory begins to appear to her mind, more and more frustrating. It is "a dreary place of endless grinding".

The last paragraph highlights Maggie's admiration for Pete, idealized as the man who offers opportunities for a better life. Pete is viewed as the man who can change Maggie's world of "hardships and insults" into that of comfort and compliments; Maggie wants above all a place to rest and be content, the place to love and be loved. Pete seems to be a potential panacea for Maggie's problems. "Swaggering Pete loomed like a golden sun to Maggie" (p. 25).

With Pete as a boyfriend, Maggie is about to explore the world of Bowery theatre saloons associated with "drunkenness, roughness, squalor, and tawdry sentimentality which passes for entertainment".[3] Undoubtedly, Maggie is fascinated by the "new world" of the Bowery. However, it is this very world associated with physical and sexual welfare that will prepare the protagonist for her later life.

An orchestra of yellow silk women and bald-headed men,

> *on an elevated stage near the centre of a great green-hued hall, played a popular waltz. The place was crowded with people grouped about little tables. A battalion of waiters slid among the throng, carrying trays of beer glasses, and making change from the inexhaustible vaults of their trousers pockets (p. 21).*

Before examining closely Maggie's experience in the world of the Bowery, it is necessary to see whether or not the environment in which Pete works as a bartender is associated with the opportunities for a better life as she imagines.

> *On a corner a glass-fronted building shed a yellow glare upon the pavements. The open mouth of a saloon called seductively to passengers to enter and annihilate sorrow or create rage (p. 34).*

This passage depicts the milieu in which Pete, works. The saloon is a refuge through which clients come and "annihilate sorrow or create rage". With his violence, Pete, the bartender, identifies himself with the brutal setting. Hence, the world Maggie is about to explore is not so very different from her home in terms of violence. Worse, she is about to be "trapped in the universal net of sex".[4] That is to say, eager to escape from the immediate prison of her home and factory, Maggie will eventually fall a victim of sexual warfare.[5] Blinded by illusions fostered by her enclosed world, Maggie mistakes Pete for a reliable friend.

Maggie's escape from her family is introduced by Pete's invitation

to a show. The very evening when Maggie is expected by Pete to leave her family for the show, she fails to return hom at the usual time. Back home, Maggie finds her mother drunk and raving. When she sees her daughter, Mrs Johnson begins to curse her. At this very moment Pete arrives in order to take Maggie to the show; to Maggie's sorrow and humiliation, Pete is exposed to chaos; he finds Maggie waiting for him "in the midst of a floor strewn with wreckage" (p. 20).

> *Her mother drank whiskey all Friday morning. With lurid face and tossing hair she cursed and destroyed furniture all Friday afternoon. When Maggie came home at half-past six her mother lay asleep amid the wreck of chair and a table. Fragments of various household utensils were scattered about the floor. She had vented some phase of drunken fury upon the lambrequin. It lay in a bedraggled heap in the corner (p. 20).*
>
> *"Hah!" she snorted, sitting up suddenly, "where yeh been? Why don' yeh come home earlier? Been loafin' 'round d' streets. Yer getting 't' be a regular devil" (p. 20).*

The image of "a regular devil" denotes the anticipation of the conventional response to Maggie's eventual future. In this context, the regular devil connotes sexual corruption rampant in the world of the Bowery. The image of hell controls the rest of the novel as the protagonist progressively explores her "hellish" prison - the streets associated with amorality and Maggie's downfall. Involved in the world of the Bowery, Maggie is too naive to realize that Pete is not

the man who can improve her plight for long. Jimmie's absence from home, and Mrs Johnson's absence and drunkenness contribute to Maggie's downfall, since Pete, aware of the way of life of the Johnsons, continues to invite Maggie to regular shows to win her as a sexual partner.

> *In the evenings of week days he often took her to see plays in which the dazzling heroine was rescued from the palacial home of her treacherous guardian by the hero with beautiful sentiments. The latter spent most of his time out in pale-green snow-storms busy with a nickel-plated revolver rescuing aged strangers from villains* (p. 26).

This passage shows the way the plays are a reflected image of the romantic fantasies of the audience. This a particular time in Maggie's case; indeed, Maggie sees her own story enacted before her. The "dazzling heroine was rescued from the palacial home of her treacherous guardian" like Maggie, rescued from the brutal family of hardships and insults; the "treacherous guardian" Maggie escaped from is her raving mother. Similarly, Pete is identified with the "hero with beautiful sentiments" For Maggie and the romantic heroine on the stage, their plight is similar - both look for rescue and salvation.

> *Shady persons in the audience revolted from the pictured villainy of the drama. With untiring zeal they hissed vice and applauded virtue. Unmistakably bad men evinced an apparently sincere admiration for virtue. The loud gallery was overwhelmingly with the unfortunate and the* oppressed

> *They encouraged the struggling hero with cries, and jeered the villain, hooting and calling attention to his whiskers. When anybody died in the pale-green snow storms, the gallery mourned. They sought out the painted misery and hugged it as akin* (p. 27).

There is an ironic contrast between the normal lives of the "shady persons" in the audience and their response to the "villainy" on stage. To the members of the audience the play represents an elevated explanation of their own state of misery and amorality. The world they see before them is a morally unambiguous and one in which they are victims. It is a world of false values, but also in which they find some kind of outlet. For Maggie it offers a sense of release and of hope:

> *Maggie always departed with raised spirits from these melodramas. She rejoiced at the way in which the poor and virtuous eventually overcame the wealthy and wicked. The theatre made her think. She wondered if the culture and refinement she had seen imitated, perhaps grotesquely, by the heroine on the stage, could be acquired by a girl who lived in a tenement house and worked in a shirt factory* (p. 27).

Crane's irony, especially in the latter half of the quotation, shows Maggie's dreams to be romantic and unrealistic. The theatre world allows an escape from the confinement of ordinary life. Reality is bitter.

Maggie's affair with Pete leads to her family's rejection of her:

"Aw, yer bote no good, needer of yehs", she said, glowering at her daughter in the gloom. Her eyes seemed to burn balefully.

"Yeh've gone t' d' devil, Mag Johnson, yehs knows yehs have gone t' d' devil. Yer a disgrace t' yer people. An' now, git out an' go ahn wid dat doe-faced jude of yours. Go wid him, curse yeh, an' a good riddance. Go, an' see how yeh likes it".

Maggie gazed long at her mother.

"Go now, an' see how yeh likes it. Git out. I won't have sech as youse in me house! Git out, d' yer hear! Damn yeh, git out!" The girl began to tremble (p. 130).

When Maggie is told to leave home once and for all, Pete who has come to take her to another show, is ready to show her the way leading to this "hell". Mrs Johnson's statement highlights one of Crane's key themes - hyprocrisy, and the inability of characters to view themselves realistically.

The Johnson family is itself the embodiment of disgrace, yet Maggie's mother casts out her daughter in the name of respectability of the family. Maggie's mother is a representative character who, "in a sense, symbolizes the entire Bowery wcild, both its primitive amorality and sentimental morality".[6] Mrs Johnson fails to realize that she is a disgrace to her family, and that Maggie's behaviour reflects her mother's failure as a parent. Ironically, she is quick to view, and to condemn, her daughter as a disgrace to her, when her own behaviour denies any esteem.

Through Mrs Johnson, Crane shows how the moral values held by the world of the Bowery are inconsistent with their prevailing way of life, and the extent to which moral values can be destructive. By casting out her daughter, Mrs Johnson destroys Maggie's life in the name of sentimental morality which she cannot apply to her own life. her morality consists of an attempt to maintain a social respectability.

> *The moral values held by the Johnsons are drawn almost entirely from a middle-class ethic which stresses the home as the center of virtue and respectability as the primal goal. It is a value system oriented toward approval by others, toward an audience.*[7]

This audience consists specifically of the neighbours who compel the Johnsons to wear the mask of morality. In other words, the world of the Bowery consists of people who are imprisoned by the contradiction between "the sentimental morality imposed on the slums by missions and the melodrama" and the grim reality of their own lives. Ironically, this sentimental morality does not reward those who adopt it; instead, it destroys them by compelling them "to judge and to divorce themselves from responsibility from those they judge".[8]

After Maggie's rejection by her family, her mother feels compelled to justify her reaction by denouncing "the girl's weckedness" before her neighbours who find the Johnson family as an interesting topic of speculation. The sentimental morality held by Mrs Johnson, inapplicable to her life, helps her to rationalize her failure to forgive her daughter. Morally, she feels secure since her audience - the neighbours - approves of her rejection of Maggie. We may ironically compare this

audience to that of the theatre; Maggie's mother is quick to view and condemn her daughter's behaviour; yet, hidden behind a virtuous "shell", she fails to recognize that she is not a mother worth admiring in terms of morality.

> *"Ah, Jimmie, what do yehs tink I tumbled to, las' night! It was deh funnies' t'ing I ever saw", she cried, coming close to him and leering. She was trembling with eagerness to tell her tale. "I was by me door las' night when yer sister and her jude feller came in late, oh, very late. Ah' she, the dear, she was a-cryin' as if her heart would break, she was. It was deh' funnies' t'ing I ever saw. An' right out here by me door she asked him did he love her, did he. An' she was a-cryin' as if her heart would break, poor t'ing. An' him, I could see be deh way he said it dat she had been askin' orften; he says, "Oh, gee, yes', he says, says he. "Oh, gee, yes"* (p. 31).

Maggie's affair gives her neighbours both excitement and the chance to apply the sentimental morality that is, in reality, so alien to their own lives. Though the gulf between their moral code and its applicability to their own actions is great, the code itself still acts as a powerful and restrictive force; as a result, Maggie's mother and brother cannot pardon and accept her behaviour.

Again Crane employs a forceful effect by superimposing a layer of irony of Maggie's romantic conception of her position:

> *She contemplated Pete's man-subduing eyes and noted that*

> *wealth and prosperity were indicated by his clothes. She imagined a future rose-tinted because of its distance from all that she had experienced before.* (p. 40).

Forced to leave her former prison, her family, Maggie is now imprisoned by the tawdry Bowery world that her naivety has led her to. Like Fleming in The Red Badge of Courage, Maggie's fate is prompted by a romantic vision of "otherness"; that is to say, both characters see an alternative which they believe will transform them, and give them a heroic and glorious stature in place of their commonplace status. Fleming belives that recruitment will transform him into the heroic figure of war-fiction. Maggie sees herself as the poor innocent heroine who will achieve riches and a perfect love. For both characters escape is illusory, and both learn too late that their dreams were not of their own making, but common myths of their society.

Only three weeks after moving in with Pete, Maggie loses him to another woman:

> *Maggie was dazed. She could dimly perceive that something stupendous had happened. She wondered why Pete saw fit to remonstrate with the woman, pleading forgiveness with his eyes. She thought she noted an air of submission about her leonine Pete. She was astounded* (p. 47).

Maggie's shock is partly the result of losing Pete, and partly due to the disintegration of her romantic vision. The "lion of lordly characteristics" (p. 39), is now a figure with "an air of submission", "pleading for forgiveness"; he is no longer an all-powerful

figure. She has lost Pete physically, and lost the refuge of the dream.

Maggie returns home but is denied shelter by the family; her only hope is to go to the saloon where Pete works in order to plead for help. To her disappointment, Pete rejects her, partly because he is simply tired of her, and partly in the name of respectability required by the owner of the saloon, Pete's boss. Pete fears that his boss may see Maggie. To the question, "But where can I go?", Pete answers, "Oh, go teh hell!" Maggie becomes a victim of the irresponsibility of those who contributed to her situation.

Cast out by her family and rejected by Pete, Maggie is doomed. Before her physical death, the writer points out Maggie's spiritual and social disintegration by portraying her in Chapter Seventeen as an aimless prostitute. Symbolically, she has lost her name and therefore, her identity together with her earlier social place: in an ironic twist of fate, Maggie the "girl of the streets", a child to whom the street is playground and home, has now become the "woman of the streets", and is shown passing through the most glittering part of New Work, "in what is apparently a single action but might symbolize several years".[9] Then,

> *she walks down and down and down through levels of the city life which are also in a sense levels of hell. Downward level by level she accosts increasingly repulsive customers and is rejected until her path ends at the river.*[10]

In short, in Maggie: A Girl of the Streets, I have tried to explain the plight of Maggie, the expressionistic symbol of purity,

"blossomed in a mud puddle", undeservedly imprisoned, condemned and destroyed by her environment. She was born into an enclosed milieu characterized by animalistic struggle and spiritual bleakness. The enclosed milieu contributed to Maggie's downfall, since it provided her with self-destructive romantic illusions. Maggie's mistaken conception of Pete is based upon the romantic view of the world, fostered by her mother, blinded by a sentimental morality. Mrs Johnson "equates a fallen girl with evil and hell" and fails to forgive her daughter.[11] The work place is another prison, and through her relationship with Pete, she expects to find liberation. But instead she is unable to escape from the combination of sexual warfare and "moral poses" in her society. Maggie is overcome and destroyed by her environment. Donald Pizer points out that Maggie's purity has been destroyed by the "very moral codes established to safeguard it".[12]

The image of the prison is also to be found in George's Mother. The main characters involved in the novelette are imprisoned by an environment that compels them to lead a purposeless life. George and his mother are frustrated by material poverty. George is naive and careless when he is expected to be shrewd and careful. He does not realize that his widowed mother needs comfort. As the only son, out of five children, left to his mother, George Kelcey fails to play the roles of both a comforting son to his mother and a substitute for the dead father, responsible for the survival of the family.

George Kelcey "betrays" his mother by taking to liquor and low companions. After her husband's death and that of her four other children, George's mother's purpose in life should be to provide her son with moral strength needed to face the hardships of his future; her failure to achieve this purpose denotes another tremendous disappointment in life for the widow. The following paragraphs show how Kelcey is imprisoned by self-destructive illusion:

> *One day he met Maggie Johnson on the stairs. She had a pail of beer in one hand and a brown-paper parcel under her arm. She glanced at him. He discovered that it would wither his heart to see another man signally successful in the smiles of her. And the glance she gave him was so indifferent and so irresponsive to the sudden vivid admiration in his own eyes that he immediately concluded that she was magnificent in two ways.* (*p. 81*).
>
> *He saw Maggie quite frequently after the meeting upon the stairs. He reconstructed his dreams and placed her in the full glory of that sun. The dream-woman, the goddess, pitched from her pedestal, lay prostrate, unheeded, save when he brought her forth to call her insipid and childish in the presence of his new religion* (*p. 81*).

Crane's story, George's Mother, is set in the same world as Maggie: A Girl of the Streets, indeed, in the same Bowery tenement block, and ironically Maggie Johnson is unknowingly the source of

romantic illusion for George Kelcey, one of the central characters in the tale. One meets her only briefly in this story, yet the encounter emphasizes the extent to which Crane's characters often create self-destructive fantasies. Here, Kelcey is creating Maggie as his ideal while Maggie, totally unaware, is enmeshed in her own dreams about Pete. The following passage highlights George's mother's frustration; to her disappointment, Kelcey does not attend prayer-meetings.

> *"Yeh don't mind what I say no more 'n if I was th' wind in th' chimbly. Yeh don't care about nothin' 'cept goin' out nights. I can't ever get yeh t' prayer-meeting 'ner church.; yeh can't get out of it; yeh swear an' take on sometimes like everthing; yeh never -"* (p. 19).

This passage points out the sentimental morality that George's mother embodies, which is inapplicable to the lives of people similar to her son. Frustrated as both a widow and a mother, George's mother finds refuge in prayer-meetings where she undoubtedly manages to enjoy temporary escape and solace.

To George's mother, praying seems to be the only thing left to her, that gives a meaning to her sentimental life. Blinded by ignorance, she fails to realize that her prayers, associated with sentimental and spiritual purposes, cannot be rewarding for people plagued by, and sensitive to, material poverty that portends a gloomy future. Indeed, unless one is naive like George's mother, one cannot manage to satisfy one's spiritual needs through prayers, before meeting the basic needs for food and clothing. When one is hungry, or sensitive to one's gloomy future due to material needs, one cannot find security

or solace in prayers, . .

Like young people of his kind, George Kelcey cannot enjoy security through prayer-meetings because the dictates of the church are completely inconsistent with his way of life. Forced to attend them by his mother, and eager to please his mother just for one evening, George Kelcey comes to realize that sentimental morality cannot be rewarding for him.

> *One by one people arose and told little tales of their religious faith. Some were tearful, and others calm, emotionless, and convincing, Kelcey listened closely for a time. These people filled him with a great curiosity. He was not familiar with their types* (p. 97).
>
> *At last the young clergyman spoke at some length. Kelcey was amazed, because, from the young man's appearance, he would not have suspected him of being so glib; but the speech had no effect on Kelcey, excepting to prove to him again that he was damned* (p. 97).

Unlike his mother, George Kelcey cannot be impressed by the teadings of the clergyman. Instead of enjoying the spiritual satisfaction that his mother presumably experiences through prayer-meetings, George Kelcey only undergoes subsequent discomfort and has no desire to join his mother at such meetings again. These paragraphs above that show Kelcey's lack of faith, point out Crane's theme stressed in Maggie: A Girl of the Streets; the portrayal of a sentimental morality that has no relation to reality, which is not rewarding, but destructive for those who adopt it.

Indeed, it is this very sentimental morality that underlies the the incomprehension between Kelcey and his mother. Ironically, even George's mother who regularly attends the prayer-meetings, does not seem to know why she attends them; she seems to be an imitator who just follows other God-fearing people to church without questioning their spiritual aims. Symbolically, George's mother devotes her time to such an activity merely to give a meaning to her otherwise purposeless life.

In short, in George's Mother, Crane stresses once again the effect of environment upon his characters. Imprisoned by illusions and poverty, George's mother is also at the mercy of a sentimental morality that has no relation to reality. Kelcey, menaced by poverty, is himself a prey to self-destructive illusions. That is to say, the imagery of the prison that controls Crane's novels, deflates the sentimental morality that offers no reward to those who adopt it; it is often the cause of their destruction.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Richard Chase, ed., The Red Badge of Courage and Other Writings (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960), p. XV.

[2]Donald Pizer, Realism and Naturalism in Nineteenth-Century American Literature (New York: The Southern Illinois University Press, 1966), p. 123.

[3]Henning Cohen, Landmarks of American Writing (Washington, D.C.: V.O.A. , Forum Editor, 1975), p. 196.

[4]Pizer, p. 18.

[5]Pizer, p. 129.

[6]Pizer, p. 127.

[7]Pizer, pp. 124-125.

[8]Pizer, p. 127.

[9]Cohen, p. 97.

[10]Ibidem, p. 197.

[11]Cohen, p. 196.

[12]Pizer, p. 128.

C O N C L U S I O N

At the close of this study, it is necessary to reconsider the attitudes underlying Crane's use of imagery in his work. It is through his use of imagery that Crane expresses his vision of art; as mentioned earlier, the writer's supreme ambition was to express without regard to praise or blame, his personal honesty. That is to say, Crane's use of imagery is associated with revelation; a revelation of the ugliness that surrounds human existence, "an idea that underlies much *realistic*, or *naturalistic*, fiction".[1]

> *Now though perhaps nobody knew it, it was ugliness which really betrayed the spirit of man, in the nineteenth century. The great crime which the monayed classes and promoters of industry committed in the palmy Victorian days was the condemning of the workers to ugliness, ugliness, ugliness: meanness and formless and ugly surroundings, ugly ideals, ugly religion, ugly hope, ugly love, ugly clothes, ugly furniture, ugly houses, ugly relationships between workers and employers.*[2]

Crane's imagery betrays the hypocrisy of the ruling classes by highlighting the ugliness behind apparently wise social ideals, and the falsity and destructiveness hidden behind apparently rewarding beliefs,

conventions and laws.

In The Red Badge of Courage, the imagery of the battlefield contributes to the Crane's destruction of the cultural myths surrounding war, and revelation of war in all its ugliness and horror. It betrays the false traditional beliefs in the glory and romance of war, and shows that in war one loses one's mask of dignity and one's claim to "civilised" behaviour.

Through supporting images of the animal, the imagery of the battlefield suggests savagery, the "throat-grappling instinct" that cannot be tamed. Like the imagery of the animal, the imagery of the machine associated with the protagonist's mental strife, suggests ugliness and destruction; while the imagery of the animal embodies man's inner animality, the imagery of the machine represents the product of that inner instinct for destruction; indeed, the machine as a man-made tool, the result of ugly intention, implies man's self-destruction; once produced by man, the machine turns out to be overwhelmingly more powerful than its maker, and relentlessly crushes him. We see man "abased, and seeming to have paid and mocked at by his own equipment that's hard and good when he's decayed" [3] as pointed out in Douglas' Vergissmeinicht.

By suggesting man's self-inflicted pain that could be avoided, the imagery of the machine reveals Crane's tone of scorn, if not indignation at man's self-destruction. The imagery of the ghost is associated with the amorality of man which precludes his sense of sin and responsibility for his actions. The hellish garden, the fourth strong image supporting that of the battlefield, shows also a tone

of scorn, since it is associated with evil in action, both rampant and unavoidable. That is to say, the imagery of the battlefield that shows the sordid results of belief in a false conception of war, stresses Crane's contempt towards such a belief.

Like the imagery of the battlefield, the imagery of the prison emphasizes Crane's scornful mockery of the sentimental morality that leads to the condemnation and destruction of a Maggie. Crane seems to suggest that although man can never fully control his own destiny, it not necessary for him to be victim to such a hypocritical and often inapplicable social code; the falsity of this code must be revealed, and its dictums transformed.

In conclusion, Crane's use of imagery reflects his personal honesty. It deflates a romantic vision of life; it creates and intensifies his irony, and implies a contemptuous attitude towards man's self-destructive actions. Crane's imagery functions in his fiction as a mirror intended to show man's foibles and limitations, the false and destructive beliefs that inhibit his progress and welfare. By highlighting the errors made by man in society, Crane seems to ask for the correction of destructive beliefs. Through his use of imagery, Crane seems to suggest that a change in moral and cultural values is vital; his work implies a plea for tolerance and greater justice in the area of human welfare; this requires an improvement of man's sense of responsibility and a recognition of his errors. To err is human, but to persevere in error is diabolical.

In short, as Pizer contends, Crane is a naturalistic writer "in the sense that he believes environment molds lives".

> He was less concerned with dramatizing a deterministic philosophy than in assailing those who apply a middle class morality to victims of amoral, uncontrollable forces in man and society.[4]

F O O T N O T E S

[1]Edgar V. Roberts, Writing Themes About Literature (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1973), p. 67.

[2]Roberts, p. 67.

[3]Seamus Heaney and Ted Hughes, eds., The Rattle Bag, An Anthology of Poetry (London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1982), p. 448.

[4]Donald Pizer, Realism and Naturalism in Nineteenthe-Century American Literature (New York: The Southern Illinois University Press, 1966), p. 123.

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