

The Slow News of Need: prologue¹

for Bernadette Panettieri, daughter of Lois Gorley, mother of Joan Barry

The Seasons of Need²

1. The End of the Rain Water (29 February, 1988)

Machilipatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India:

“I couldn’t live without Beauty. She promised she felt the same. Parents desert love marriages, so we lived alone. I studied for the civil service exam. I got high marks. The interview went well. My friend had inside news. Without a one lakh bribe, they refuse to give positions. I asked my wealthy father. He said my life is refuse while I live with a Madiga. She was pregnant. We’d never argued. We wasted nothing. Reboiled rice scrapings were our food.

She refuses to ask *her* father. She insists he won’t give. We fight. I hit her. I’m sorry. She refuses to forgive. She spends this night angry in our landlord’s house. I drink. I find a rope, make a noose, move a chair, and use the ceiling fan.”³

2. The Time of the Excited Insects (1 March, 2002)⁴

Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India:

“Yesterday began our Languedoc, our St. Bartholomew’s Day, our Kristalnacht. Christian-haters mimmick Jesus-hating Christians imagining Satan and killing Cathars, Huguenots, Jews, now us again. Babur built his Masjid at Ram Janmabhoomi replacing stupas Ashoka built to honor Gautama. The Dalit Valmiki called Ram perfect though innocent Sita killed herself because Ram imagined Ravana raped her.

RSS drape saffron over their khaki and scream they love Ram. They love him so well that because he was born at Ayodhya they have to torch Ahmedabad shops and homes with people locked inside, gang rape women in front of their husbands and children, chop babies from wombs (their machetes and lingams they think must be the left hands of god) under police supervision, to unite the nation.”

3. The Vernal Equinox (22 March, 1523)

Muhlhausen in Thuringen (now Germany):

“The last sheaf bound, one week remained to yield the Earl his portion and to Tithe. Threshing should be four days’ labor, milling two,

¹ The following 365 and a quarter lines in 24 monologues together are the prologue of the longer poem, “The Slow News of Need.”

² Translations of the Chinese calendar’s 24 fifteen- to sixteen-day time periods provide the section titles.

³ The lines can be dated on a perennial calendar forward and backward from the quarter line at February 29, “the ceiling fan.” (Later an appointment letter prudently arrived.)

⁴ The previous day for this speaker was February 28.

but eighteen bushels must go up the long road
and five are due the Bishop for the poor.

The boy could work no more, the mill seized
for the creek ran low, the wife stood obliged
to aid her folk. The year's just measure exceeded
my strength. Of our share, thirty, unthreshed till last,
rain spoiled most. It lies mildewed, not fit for rats.
By Februar all we could eat was gone.

I could ask sustenance, and pardon
For my fault. But I have not begged before
and would not now. Tell Brother Thomas
I will stand by him. I have no other."

4. The Clear and Bright (7 April, 2002)
Cheltenham (near Philadelphia), Pennsylvania, USA:

"Dad, video games and CD's push toy sales down.
Marge splurged to keep the kids' spirits up.
So, maybe it was me too—that one third discount
sucks you in—her folks always made Christmas
the prime time of the year. Well, I didn't want
to see the writing on the wall. Then it appeared
on the pink slip—five p.m., New Year's Eve.

I know *toys*, but I've looked for retail sales
of damned near any kind in all the malls.
After New Year's, *nothing*. What can I say?
Microsoft has captured the whole market?
Accounts didn't set withholding high enough.
They never do. The guys don't want them to.
What do you think the interest will be by the time
I get work?—*after* the Feds slap on the penalty?
Bankruptcy will hit the mortgage and car.

Yeah, your *income*'s fixed, and your *account*'s low,
But your *house* is your *own*. If *anyone*
gives me a chance, you *know* I work like a dog."

5. The Grain Rains Fall (20 April, 1948)
Huazi, near Mukden (now again Shen-yang) Liaoning, China:

""The way of heaven is to make empty what is full
and increase what is modest." This harrassed century,
Britain forced opium on us, Japan slavery,
Americans slept till struck. Mao brays like a mule
against Kung. Chiang honors ancestors but only his own.
Millet is deaf to both. Sixteen war years, fields bare,
still no planting. Young men in mountains, young women whored.
One learns *I Ching* to serve, but without grain, rule is a hull.
Our debts make me depend on men who melt our coins down
and pour them into one solid mass beneath their floor.

We lack cash for broken rice. From this day I will not care what Mao says if he knows even that one way of heaven.”

6. The Summer Begins (15 May, 1953)

Leipzig, (then East) Germany:

In the current of history, to stay afloat
one must serve property, command, and pride,
so the weight of insight must always sink.
But we can dredge the river for dreams.

Philanthropists in ragged trousers
still gild the houses of the leisured
while their children lie on mottled rags
in tenements they can't afford,
and they bring them up to slavery
with the delusion that they cannot dream.
The work of dreams they leave to Morris,
Bakunin, Tressell, Marx, and Blake.

Let's pledge ourselves against exhaustion.
Though fear of dread makes them will to die,
we'll gently reach beneath their pillows
to touch their dreams before they thought to lie,
and draw the replicating thread of hope—
like Crick and Watson pipetting DNA—
from the colloid of fear, sigh by broken sigh.

7. When the Grain is to Fill (29 May, 1943)

Bhubaneshwar, Orissa, India:

“Cows *die* in Rohini, Sir, they don't give *milk*.
Krishna requires ghee, you must give, and we—
yes, it is our duty, yes, I *do* admit it Sir—
must give ghee—no, it is not arrogance,
begging your pardon, Sir, that I disagreed—

I am a humble man, I remain in my place,
forgive me for denying you, I did not mean
to put ignorance before knowledge, Sir—
surely the slokas are right—it is a mere
matter of fact I came this way to tell you,
please, someone else must provide—

I cannot *buy* ghee, Sir, the cow is dead,
the well is dry; like you, we wait for rain—
Sorry, Sir, for comparing, please forgive.”

8. The Grain in Ear (7 June, 1984)

Sept-Iles, Quebec, Canada:

“Two hundred forty years ago, coming from Halifax,
Sept Iles and Baie-Comeau were Acadia again. Ten years later
the Cajun swamps of Lake Pontchartrain got our kin,

the damned, to sing “Louisiana, the child that walks just waits.” Eight generations we knitted, fished, and loved.

Thirty years ago we boomed. Then Brian Mulroney, our own native son, got the bright idea he could be P. M. if he just shut Knob Lake Mine down and bought cheap iron ore from Brazil, where people die digging. Campaign contributions came in tens of millions.

I’ve always wished I’d known Goethe. If I had, he’d have asked me to write him a verse about a town without naming it. If I did my best, he couldn’t have said if it was Sept-Iles, a New Orleans drain, or Rio Doce. I’ve got no more to say about local poetry.”

9. The Summer Solstice (22 June, 1141)

Aztlan (now Chaco Canyon, New Mexico):

“Only today dawn strikes our door. They call us tzitzimime because they want to eat our hearts. At night Kachinas come but cannot protect us. Though water flows through the sluices I will not add my children’s blood and tears. Their eyes are worth more than these walls. We will follow Kokopelli. He always keeps the needful on his back. The song of his flute carries further than the hummingbird can fly. By nemontemi of One Rabbit this place will be Mictlan.”

10. The Slight Heat (6 July, 1286)

Carcassonne, France

“You Bulgari, your soul is a scar on the perfect face of God. Look into His Face. See what you have done. He who gave His Life for you weeps at the sight of you. He hangs here even now in infinite sorrow and pain seeing Satan has reached into your heart when you needed only to cry out to Him, your Savior, who knows pain you cannot imagine even now. I beseech you too, cleanse yourself now, recant, go to your Maker pure, beg His forgiveness before Satan drags you into Misery Everlasting....

Is it not clear to you yet?

Pray that the weakness of your flesh is greater than the hardness of your heart. Tell Christ now, when did Satan seduce you? You need not fear, He is waiting, and He Knows, you have only to confess.

Did you not realize that this frail vessel that snaps at the mere turn of a wheel was but the bearer of the infinitely precious Soul vouchsafed to you? Hear his sword strike now to free you of your chains. Hear Him plead for your salvation, hear His Love cry out. For His sake, for the Love of God, abjure your sin, My Son.”

11. The Great Heat, (July 21, 1848)

On board the brig Hope, near Lagos, now in Nigeria

“Get ready. He’s Filatah. Styles himself Aladdin.
Blathers on about the Stagirite, got it from Averroes,
as if Grotius weren’t good enough. Bargains over a hookah.
Says he can bring me anything. Can’t say what language
he told me in. His Portuguese and Spanish are two peas in a pod,
his French is Limberger. He brings the Azanaghi, Ibo,
and Yoruba together—he’d rather lose a few than all—
then trades to mix in bucks of a dozen tongues.
Delivers Kabbazahs house courtesy, but if you take one,
he’ll jack up by half the prices for Ham’s poor bastards,
so keep your saltpeter dry. Might be of the Greek persuasion;
when I refused one he asked, “You like peonies?” and grinned.
He’s canny; he’ll pick up any flick of your eyes. Use bored
contempt. Pretend he’s a fruit vendor. He’ll try to sneak
his rotten apples into your barrel, so use your nose more
than your eyes. He’s made some village someplace think
he’s Napoleon himself by bugging guys like us.”

12. The Autumn Begins (6 August, 1966)

Silver Pavilion, Kyoto, Japan

“If you want to be
happy for one night, get drunk;
one week, marry; your
lifetime, be a gardener.
Wanderers see wayside grass.”
“Wayside grass is real,
not imaginary names
families dream in.”
“Families give names face. Face
is war, outside to inside.”
“Inside to outside
attention seeks quiet flow.
We hang from weak thread.”
“The thread is the silk of care.
Only care can strengthen it.”

13. The Limit of Heat (20 August, 1984)

YMCA Challenge Program, Dorchester, Massachusetts, USA

“Yeah, these kids can teach you things.” The quarter-inch
wire mesh inside the windows stops thrown chairs
from the war inside from breaking glass. Her eyes open wide.
“They want to too. Take Carlton. He never talked.
Took everything in. After he was here three months,
he found me alone. He told me how the social worker
took him from his mother when he was six. He cried.
His whole tactician mask dissolved. I got maternal.
A few months later he saw me trapped in a dilemma
and just said, “How does it feel to need?” He saw I understood.
Since then we’ve always been honest with each other.”

14. The White Dew (6 September, 1737)

Nutimus' Town, Crown Colony of Pennsylvania (now USA)

“Lenni Lenape, the sweet grass bids me say, had we studied the British tribe well before we dealt with Sachem Fenwick we’d have known he was their stalking horse. They have no long-house, so they neither know nor care for each other, but live alone in their hearts like bears and so threaten each other’s children and wives. Too childish to share, each one thinks he needs his *own* land. They drive each other to the wall, and despair. We thought Penn and Fenwick knew *manitto*, but we gave foothold to their need to *exclude*. Penn’s slavish father murdered Spaniards for rum and black slaves only because a bigger Sachem wanted them. The British prevent their wise women from choosing their Sachems. Instead they conspire against women, value them at less wampum, keep them like the slaves even Penn kept, and will not let them set catchers for the children’s evil dreams or teach the children visions. So Penn and Hannah did not know how to raise their own son. This is why Penn’s men, his fraud son Thomas, and puffed-up Logan cheat us, using three men and horse for what one man must walk.”

15. The Autumn Equinox (23 September, 2001)

Baghdad, Iraq

“Here we knew the Twin Towers would fall on us too. Already umber sewage swamps streets as if awaiting mangrove seedlings. Staccato sprays of ochre water spurt from pipes like projectile vomiting. Synthetic diamond needles stick in grooves on 45 disks of military marches. Dead phones fail to dial themselves through wire loops tangled on scorched poles. Concrete chunks hang on reinforcement rods from smashed shelter ceilings, crippled teenagers clinging to exhausted parents. A truck tire projects on an axle toward a universal joint, a lecturer’s staff pointing at a remembered blackboard diagram. Craters are zeros aligned in tic-tac-toe winning triplets across runways. Mid-spans of bridges jut above lapping waves, broken legs licked by old brown dogs. Train tracks swing sideways in woozy loops, the circling shadows of vultures. Diarrhea shrivels babies too dried out to cry for soft clean cloths, their mothers whisper to doctors with empty black bags, then wail. Measles blotch children’s cheeks, chickenpox, and again smallpox pock them, zinc-white calamine, like baklava crust, flakes off soft pink skin swelling with mumps. Teachers thumb magazines in front of gray-speckled television screens, waiting for the principal to call, while wives water down tea and scrape pot bottoms. Coffin carpenters order lumber from idle sawmills, generators melted by incendiary bombs. Grave diggers trade shovels, the tinker turns the peddle of his emery wheel, sparks fly like white phosphorous, but harmless, except to on-looking eyes—that know not to look up in the Thousand and One Nights of Stealth.”

16. The Cold Dew (8 October, 2001)

Watson Research Labs, Yorktown Heights, New York, USA

“*Somebody* had to not be afraid of Big Blue. Watson downsized in 85 leaving only PhD’s, trouble shooters shifted to Stamford to help Sales,

in 90 more support staff, in 96, secretaries....
Gates is untouchable, better than Morgan Guarantee.
World income grows at 1.1%, his at 34.27. By 2032
their projected lines will cross. Tiberius pales
before him, Wang wanks, Big Blue turns chartreuse.
I'm going to send him an email now: how's this:
"Aladdin, rub your lamp. Hire me. I made the first
nanotechnological electron photomicrograph.
I'm pissed at your competitors. I can make you
a god, every screen a shrine. Your devout flock
will be watched around the clock. Poor Bill Hearst
had to hide in Hart's Island, but you'll get the last laugh.
I'll bring you patents that will put the world in hock."

17. The Hoar Frost Descends (23 October, 237 B.C.)

Pataliputra, Bharat (now Patna, Bihar, India)

"What little effort I make—what is it for?—that I may be free
from debt to the creatures. The Kalingas taught me this
as though they took the heart from my body. The Sangha taught me
only how to try to put it back. That I am beloved of the gods
shows me only their mercy, for the Sakyas bore a king
who did not need a lesson like mine. For him knowing that
old age, disease, and death *existed* was enough, but for me,
I had to be the *cause* of agony for lakhs of innocents. When
it was already known, why was my real duty not taught to me?
I was a terror even to my own brothers: this was the guidance
we Mauryas gave each other. Our sovereignty was murder.
But still I have not done what I needed to be done for me."

18. The Winter Begins (7 November, 1588)

London, Britain (now United Kingdom)

"Her Majesty wants men of sundry deeds:
philosophers to prove why God rehearsed
the world in measures fit to Kingdom's needs;
poets to convert court gossip into verse
so groundlings can learn whom to love the most;
the armless men for carts too small for horse;
the legless to teach Service in one's Post;
the dull to show why Duty bows to force,
Knowledge being weak, stripped of Noble frame;
the blind to prove the Good let others lead;
the mad to know God's Justice fixes blame
in sinners' souls when they conceal their deed.
Wherefore let fractious villains, cloaked in stealth,
be pounded to mummy to restore Her health."

19. The Little Snow (22 November, 1963)

Plymouth Whitemarsh Township High School, Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, USA

"Last assembly, Mr. Marlowe said we were all disgraced.
After the game the football team destroyed something precious
Dale had. Her Dad came to see him say the right thing to us.

This was different. This time Kennedy was being replaced by Johnson because he'd been shot in the head. That snotty Beth ran around screaming "Oh my God! What will Jackie do?" Her Mom had had tea with Jackie, and they were best friends too. A bum died. Dead leaves covered him. Dogs smelled out his body. They say even all Tokyo cries now. Everyone is sure they love people—but they mean *those who give them a future.*"

20. The Heavy Snow (7 December, 1949)

Huntington, Long Island, New York, USA

"In 41 Churchill told Franklin the Neutrality Law could go the way of the munitions on the Lusitania. Carriers made battleships and cruisers obsolete. We ordered the carriers out of Pearl. My diary says, "Now all they have to do is take the bait." When the line pulled, I struck Kyoto off the target list. Nice place. Uncle Joe never mentioned the bomb at Yalta so we signaled him from Hiroshima. At Bretton Woods we pinned the money down while he couldn't talk, a fait accompli; so tacking on the UN for cover was easy. That young fella Nixon says we can bypass the whole labor caboodle by shipping plants abroad and taking profits out through currency exchange once things settle down. Commies from Manila to Managua will be pissed because our unions won't support them, but they never get their act together as fast as we can."

21. The Winter Solstice (21 December, 2002)

Glasgow, Scotland, UK

"The gray-suited WASP horde, feeding paternal will to conquer, drove me through confused explorations of aspirations to mate, first with a girl affecting British accent, then with one from a Samurai family, then a genius from Vienna, in my sad Cook's Tour of Weiblichkeit, before the gist of my father's goals began to dawn on me. Only frequent defeat made me aware of my Redneck, Canuck, Kraut, and Mick forebears. I married a Polish French Midwesterner to share ambitions, but competition supplants affection. Slow soft nudging at the doors of my heart opened them to my Italian love. The heart, I learned, hates ambition. Her death brought agony but no regret. A Latino woman propped me up, then I left that Rome that stole my soul. A Madiga home taught me what my ancestors knew.

I come back now to find my Sutpen, Snopes, and McCaslin cousins, going by presumed names, littered on sidewalks, in algid pea-green flats, under Home Relief blankets, cut out of the competition by the likes of my family, as we'd been cut out of Europe, as Wall Street cuts out everyone to make investors fat. My Ithaca's 10,000 years back, too far to find; my Penelope

has long forgotten me, yet I'm no worse off than you."

22. The Little Cold (5 January, 1613)

Kanazawa, Ishikawa-ken, Nihon (Japan)

"Rice is tax and stipend. Fearful daimyos seek rice
to pay their samurai. Their farmers must be frugal
or face twin swords. The clever Maeda want gold and silk.
All our five families weave. We must maintain our place.
Warmed by the brazier, household heads discuss fates.
Kneeling women seek to pour tea the moment before
thirst arises; a bad wife lets her husband feel thirst.
Women entreat, apologize, implore, and distract,
but we are not diverted long. The sense is among us
of how we must act. Going her own way, my son's wife
lost his first child, embarrassing us all by running,
acting like a farmer's girl, falling down, unable even
to keep her own feet in order. Will our drawlooms
in twenty years be idle when samurai come? We refuse
to let her serve us. In the corridor she weeps.
But my son's mind moves steadily as the shuttle.
I need not fear, our spirit will find another birth.
If she learns, we will keep her. How can she learn
unless we treat her like Eta? She must know tea
can be poured without her. Weavers too have face."

23. The Severe Cold (20 January, 1972)

VA Hospital, Phoenix, Arizona, USA

"...that shit was good, Doc. So we get the munchies. This dude
I know from Nam is eating chips talking Anasazis this
and Anastasis that. Then he calls me a shit. I know he means
he wants to eat me to turn me into one. I keep seeing his teeth.
He says he sees my brain. Just now Nixon comes on t.v.,
I see his teeth. It's the same thing, Man. That's why I scream.
It shakes people up so they laugh. They show their teeth.
Same damned thing. You don't want me to upset the ward?
The Aztecs made buildings out of skulls. You're no different.
You change and I will. Look in the mirror, Man. Tell me what you see.
You hoard all the money so nobody can do anything without you.
The Frogs enslave the Vietnamese. They try to get free.
You want to keep them enslaved. You use your own old slaves.
You don't let us work and treat us like dirt so just to eat
we'll kill Vietcong. If we try to free ourselves you stick us in here
and gum up our brains with thorazine chains. You a slave trader Man."

24. The Spring Begins (15 February, 1985)

The Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts, USA

"You like the library too? It's warm today. Sun's out.
Look down the street. I was one of them. Rushing for cabs.
Being on time. Sizing things up. Had a family.
Wife. Dog. Kids. House. Car. Seemed o.k. All gone now.
Wife hooked up with another guy. Kids like those people."

She kept the house. Smashed the car. The dog?
 Don't know about the dog. And she was better
 than the rest of them. We keep track of the wrong things.
 Guess it's because we love the wrong things.
 Look at them all. They love the wrong people.”

Commentary on *Seasons of Need*, the prologue of *The Slow News of Need*

1. **Introduction: News, the Calendar, and Experience: 10**
2. **The Argument of the Poem: 14**
3. **Four Arrangements of the Themes: 16**
 - a) **by forms of oppression (political, economic, social): 16**
 - b) **by power relationships (dramatic form): 16**
 - c) **by image, allusion, reference (textual form, basis of *The Days of Need*): 21**
 - d) **by structure against the background of time (basis of *The Slow News of Need*): 21**
4. **Commentaries on Sections of *The Seasons of Need* Arranged by Type of Power: 23**
 - a) **political power: 24**
 - b) **economic power: 31**
 - c) **social power: 37**
5. **Assessing Four Relationships to Power: 41**
 - a) **oppression: 43**
 - b) **confrontation: 46**
 - c) **victimization: 49**
 - d) **self-reformation: 52**
 - e) **summary: 53**
6. **Primary Counterparts of Roles (basis of *The Days of Need*): 54**

Tables:

 - 1) **forms of oppression: 16**
 - 2) **power relationships: 18**
 - 3) ***The Seasons of Need* calendar sequence: 22**
 - 4) ***The Days of Need* calendar principles: 22**
 - 5) **counterparts of power roles: 54**

1. Introduction: News, the Calendar, and Experience

“Slow News” is news that media corporations give lowest priority. High priority news consists solely of matters of interest to political, economic, and social elites. It therefore consists of the public statements and actions of prominent political figures, disasters, wars, and corporations that can affect the decisions of businesses and politicians from day to day, and sometimes also of displays of celebrities. The majority of audiences are presumed to be interested in what interests the elites but which representatives of the elites believe can afford to be made public. Because the middle class seeks its security in emulating what little it can see of the elite, this presumption is safe. Slow news consists of feature articles, analysis, and the circumstances and activities of non-members of the political, economic, and social elites. Editors compile slow news stories through the week and air it as filler for “human interest” on weekends when most reporters are off-duty because no public events are scheduled. Human life in general is slow news because the rich and powerful do not wish to know more about it than they already know, but wish instead to keep attention focused on themselves and each other. Need is slow news because the elites with most control over events, those most able to gain wealth by exploiting labor, to threaten others into political powerlessness, and to extract attention to impose their social norms, experience the least need.

The slow news of our actual lives bubbles through the crust of public preoccupation like the broth of a pot pie through its upper crust as it bakes. The cook uses the crust to regulate the heat of the contents and to beautify it, but the family is nourished by the contents, not the crust,

and the contents dry and burn where they bubble through. The controllers of our public attention conceal from us the nourishment we need, and only inadvertently tell us what we'll lack. (What's missing is of course what most interests me, for that is what we need to know to act a little more sensibly.) And the contents that escape the pie into visibility arrive at the table dried and burnt, its substance evaporated away. What we want is the contents before it escaped to view, and that we must infer from the bit we see. We must ourselves re-supply its fluid actuality with the stuff of our own lives and imagination to know what it is.

The slow news of our actual lives has a variable rhythm, stretches of monotony punctuated with variety and crisis, and just as it is now compiled and reinserted into public consciousness at odd moments when the powerful are not leading the media around by the nose, the time when something occurs is often not the time when one is conscious of it. Consciousness requires different circumstances than events, generally more propitious, so the pain can be borne. The poem has twenty-four sections ordered by the twenty-four time periods of the traditional Chinese calendar. Each of the twenty-four speakers makes a statement on a particular day in that two-week interval regarding events that have somehow culminated in it by the cause and effect relationships of fact or consciousness. What the speakers say is slow news because they would not or could not say it in public, so it is private testimony to events. In general, what the powerful allow the public to fix its attention on is what is useful to them, so the actual motives and impacts of events generally remain private and are revealed only in diaries, letters, conversation, thought, dreams, and fantasy. The labor of literature is to attempt to correct for the continual misrepresentation of human reality in the public realm.

The modern Western calendar is an odd artifact of imperial Rome appropriate to our Praetorian minds. It is a quirky revision of the 2800-year-old Roman republican calendar, which originally slept through 61 days every winter and was in love with the moon but didn't notice seasons. Because the Vernal Equinox had wandered off to the Ides of May, Julius Caesar gave 46 B.C. 445 days to hook it back onto the Ides of March again. He had his Egyptian astronomer Sosigenes patch up the Roman one so the plebians and slaves could be informed that when they were plowing it was indeed Spring, which made the patricians sound less stupid. This shows that even Julius knew that the lowly had brains their superiors would be wise to acknowledge at two-month intervals, apparently the time that it took slow news to become public in those days.

In 8 B.C., when Augustus was getting on in years, and so could use some more time, and wanted to be remembered as a summery sort of guy who had, after all, come along only after Julius, Augustus grabbed a month for himself. This required some finagling because Sextilis, the used month he was trading in, was one day shorter than the month his esteemed predecessor had scrapped, Quintilis having had 31 days. February was the month for the infernal gods nobody liked, so nobody minded when Augustus stole one of its days so that August have 31 too. With one last wiggle of his shoulders, Augustus fitted himself nicely into the year by squishing September into 30 days, an adequate time for a month unprotected by an emperor, donating its day to October, and giving one of November's to December. So over 38 years, Julius and Augustus pushed the seventh month to the ninth place, the eighth to the tenth, the ninth to the eleventh, and the tenth to the twelfth, carved out months varying from 28 to 31 days with a meter no one can scan, threw out the moon altogether because neither those guys nor their heirs wanted the goddess to come back to interfere with their man's world, and left a seven-day error every thousand years.

By 1545, the errors amounted to 10 days. The Spaniards were then working indigenous South Americans to death digging gold and silver out of Peru; kidnapped people were squatting in pens up and down the African coast; and people were climbing trees in India and Indonesia to grab spices for European soups. So bankers were demanding that ship owners tell them when their ships were coming in, ship owners were getting on their captains' nerves, and navigators were complaining that their tables were mixed up. This made the fast news people impatient for

their gold, silver, slaves, and spices. So some fast news folk went to Pope Paul III, but his astronomers didn't quite agree until 1572, when he died. Gregory XIII walked in on this emergency, but he thought fiddling with the calendar was as big a deal as Julius and Augustus thought it was since, after all, a lot of rich people kept appointment books, so he waited until 1582, when he concluded the astronomers had it right and the time had come to fix it. Since everybody was sure to be celebrating the Feast of St. Francis on October 5—the best advertisement the Church had because Francis made Christianity look Christian—and nothing in the next 10 days could have similar public importance, he made October 5 to 14 vanish by proclaiming the Feast to be October 15 and threw out some future February 29ths, leaving us with what we've got now.

So this calendar we impose on the rest of the world comes from Romulus and Remus [sic], the Egyptians, Julius and Augustus, and Gregory XIII, with a little help from their friends, some murmuring from plebian farmers, and some pushing and shoving by navigators and bankers. Of these, Julius and Augustus took the most initiative, but they were supposed to be gods, so nobody dared to mind. We literate folk have been so contented with the arrogance we're allowed to clothe our servility in that we've gone on with this contraption of a year for two millenia, pleased to let Julius and Augustus continue to consume the summers of our lives, as the state always does, without a complaint from anyone until the French Revolution, which our quarrels suffocated and our rulers contained and squelched. We quickly readjusted ourselves to the calendar of empire, proud to have a share in extending to others the domination we suffer.

There's no perfect calendar, of course, because the spinning of the earth has a peculiar relationship to its ellipse around the sun, the moon's ellipse around us, and our movement around the Milky Way against the background of the further stars. But it's certainly a fast news calendar, with all those Jack Horner official types putting their thumbs in our pies if we have any pie, and leaving them plumless. It's not a good calendar for the slow news of need. So I considered others: the Muslim lunar calendar, the Jewish lunisolar calendar, and the Hindu calendar, (by far the most intricate, with time periods ranging from one fourth of a second to millenia and a special role for the intervals of Jupiter's apparent movement.) But I didn't like them because the slow news of need comes from us on earth; it doesn't descend from the sky.

The Mayan calendar had Uayeb, the Aztec Nemontemi, both evil-omened 5-day intercalary intervals when everything has to go wrong apparently because, being days astronomers couldn't account for, they seemed to fall out of the sky like meteors between politely symmetrical 20-day months. Each Aztec fifty-two-year-cycle begins on 2 Reed and ends on 1 Rabbit, the most disastrous year imaginable. Beginning on 2 Reed and ending on 1 Rabbit seems mildly appropriate to human life; one is, after all, a rearrangement of two thinking reeds—our flesh is certainly grass, though the thinking part might be self-flattery—and one usually does die alone, going, perhaps, wherever the rabbit Alice met leads us, and through most of history we've been lucky to live 52 years. And I admire the realism of nemontemi and uayeb; it's certainly true to war, famine, plague, nightmare, and psychosis, all those periodic things institutional Christianity has reserved for the Apocalypse, as if that weren't going on all the time, and as if we weren't doing it ourselves to each other through chains of proxies we don't want to acknowledge. But I can't figure out what the 20-day months have to do with reality, and the days are all named after spirits I can't understand though, that, of course, might be true to life too. Current belief is that Mayan civilization consumed its environment but the Popul Vuh makes me think the Mayans might have become too frightened of each other to bear living together—which, of course, might make the Mayan calendar appropriate for the folk of Rwanda or Myanmar, or Medellin, Colombia, or Langley, Virginia.

The calendar most appropriate to us has to have something to do with what we sense and do. Calendars fixated just on the sun, stars, moon, and planets are certainly good for having astronomers, priests, and administrators telling us what to do; they make it convenient, for instance, for the US government to announce that henceforward one-day holidays will all be on

Mondays or Fridays, which multinationals find more efficient, or that Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays are no longer on February 12 and 22, but on one day, Presidents Day. And for several thousand years such calendars have kept people waiting around to find out if the sun or moon actually rose in the right place to have a festival. So all those calendars are top-down fast news calendars.

The problem with a calendar connected to what we sense and do is that we sense and do different things in different places. The Inuit waits months for the sun to rise while in Tokyo people ride trains back and forth to work, New Zealanders shear their sheep, Indians plant and harvest, and Somalis wait for rain. For the slow news of need, a calendar has to be local, and no calendar will fit what we suffer and do.

Yet of all the calendars I could find, the Chinese came closest. It's a calendar for temperate farming. Wherever we are, most of us either labor or else have nothing to labor with or on, so wait for some leftover scraps of the labor of others, and suffer whatever seasons we have. The Chinese calendar delicately marks the Chinese seasons: "The Waking Insects," "The Grain in Ear," "The Hoar Frost Descends," "The Little Snow," each fifteen day periods, a fortnight plus one, with five or six having a doubled day inserted—quietly gearing up and down instead of uniting them all into one catastrophic nemontemi when everything stalls out. Adjusted year by year, each fortnight begins on either of two or three days, so the year starts on February 3, 4, or 5, at "The Beginning of Spring," sensibly half-way between the Winter Solstice and the Vernal Equinox. Of all years, this is the one closest to what the largest number of us actually live in. The Koreans and Japanese hold by it too; and haiku traditionally contain a word appropriate to the fortnight, so poets have built up for the Japanese memory hundreds of ways of feeling the time of nature move through them, of sensing the past touching the present, a gift we Westerners have neglected to make for ourselves. "Ah yes, it was just now, when the first plum bud appears, that Bashoo realized this, he could have been standing right here." Yet the Chinese are giving it up, preferring high rises to paddy fields, as tax collectors do.

A beautiful calendar on which we've imposed the nightmare of history.

That calendar stands behind this poem. The poem witnesses the most incongruously unnecessary human events being spread across the benign seasons, events about which the public world lies for the convenience of our oppressors.

Each line corresponds to one day. The poem as a whole serves as the table of contents for a longer poem of 366 sections, *The Days of Need*, that can be used as a book of days in a perpetual calendar, 365 of the sections averaging 24 lines each, the one for February 29 being 6 lines because it occurs only once every four years, with moderate exceptions. As those sections are completed, I invite others to convert those lines into titles to write a *Book of Hours of Need* with sections averaging 60 lines to fill in the minutes.

And after I'm gone I hope some people will want to fill in the seconds, taking cues from the minute lines. I hope they will call that *The Minutes of the Meeting of Need*, for if people by that far too long delayed time have not yet decided that needs are worth meeting, we will all be dead or very rapidly dying. If the latter, people might make new calendars appropriate for the seasons of whatever place people then call home—perhaps Machu Picchu if enough of Greenland and Antarctica melt from the Greenhouse Effect. Or Kap Morris Jesup if the ozone hole expands only northward from New Zealand and Tierra del Fuego. Or Tonga if anthrax spreads over the land but doesn't do as well at sea. Or Kerguelen if prevailing winds carry nerve gas. Or the seasonless Carlsbad Caverns if satellite coverage becomes a bit oppressive. Or the Sahel, Venus, or the planet closest to Alpha Centauri if people then want to come in from the cold of Nuclear Winter—any place the fast newsmakers might have neglected. Or someone might just want to start afresh because she thinks the outline of *this* poem less optimistic than, say, the *I Ching*. This poem has just 24 basic units that keep repeating, but the *I Ching* codifies 64 situations with 4096 variants that repeat at irregular intervals, a far more interesting conception of time. But since those kindlier days when King Wu compiled the *I Ching* in prison, having been escaped the fate he

would have had if he'd been less worthy, that of being chopped into bite-size chunks but not eaten, the world has changed. 4096 variants are no longer sufficient. Certainly vaporization must be counted as a 4097th variant, Echelon as a 4098th, and financial derivatives a 4099th. So even making at truly complex poem modeled on the *I Ching* might be insufficient to the modern world, and not sufficiently pessimistic. So I've opted for the simplicity of the good old Chinese calendar, and am hoping its sustainable repetitiveness is optimistic enough.

The Chinese calendar is richer than ours but hardly ideal; it's less than 10,000 years old and may not serve us well, if we're here, in 2525 when the tides might have stopped, altering weather patterns, because Bill Gates' heirs have dismantled the moon to make it a solar collector while J. Edgar Hoover's assigns have nanotechnological commandos invading through the corners of our eyes to snip Unamerican dendrites, all of them supervised, of course, by capos of the non-existent Mafia.

Our need is out of synch with both the natural world and the public world. So sometimes it appears like the obsessive speech of Jean Galand his victims must suffer through, spreading out over the limits of its fortnight across the top of the pie, evaporating away in the heat. Other times it shrinks into pure dread, as it does for the Anasazi woman's small eight lines as she is squeezed out of history, and one must look down into history to see the unreported terror of what we can become, and watch it bubble up again in the mind of a Vietnam veteran, and spill over into the next year. The howling of wolves is too great for the mind of man, wrote Blake, so it is no wonder fast news confines itself to what we imagine we can play with on the tips of our tongues and fingers. The slow news makes us gag.

2. The Argument of the Poem

The thesis of the poem is that the suffering of avoidably unfulfilled need is caused by the upward flow of human energy through the three hierarchies of economic, political, and social power, and that powerful people use that energy to control, for their own benefit, through those hierarchies, the actions of those beneath them. People occupy high, intermediate, or low positions in each of the three hierarchies, wielding what economic, political, and social power they have to defend themselves and to gain advantage if possible, contributing their energy to those above them as they must, extracting energy from those below them if they can and want to. Yet hopeful people are aware that happiness is not gained either by monopolization of the energy of others nor by subservience to supposed superiors, but by productive work guided by actual concern for others on the basis of shared perceptions, strengths, and vulnerabilities. Loss of this knowledge is despair. The higher one is in the hierarchies, the easier it is to conceal despair, for one is more able to draw on the energy of others to substitute for one's own missing concerned productivity.

Eight of the twenty-four speakers focus on uses and effects of economic power, eight on political power, and eight on social power. Because different societies create different relationships among the forms of interpersonal power, and allow power in one form to be converted into power in another form in different ways, some situations involve two, or even all three forms of power, but the crisis that defines the situation depends on a lower individual's vulnerability to one form of power or a higher individual's ability to wield one. Of each group of eight, two discuss how and why they wield power over others in ways they would not publicly reveal. Two discuss the motives and characters of those who oppress them. Two describe the effects of oppression on themselves and others, and may make pleas for liberation. Two describe their efforts to free themselves from the flow of power in which they are enmeshed, either to stop oppressing others or to stop themselves from acting in the transmission of oppression from those above to those below them.

The poem has a temporal and a thematic beginning. The Chinese calendar can begin on February 3, 4, or 5, with the First Solar Term, "The Beginning of Spring." Because the spring of hope begins with hearing the truth of actual experience, the temporal beginning is the last line of the speech of a Vietnam veteran to his psychiatrist. The thematic beginning is on February 16, the

first line of the speech of a young man who committed suicide on February 29, 1988, because of the unbearable social oppression he experienced that crushed his hope for any joy in his life. The thematic end, the last line of the speech of a homeless man on the steps of the Boston Library on February 15, 1985, is his observation on the city's people, that "They love the wrong people," because they attempt to love people whom they believe in some way facilitate their ambitions rather than those who most need love or have the most love to offer. He has survived his crisis without suicide and found some contentment in abandoning the ambition that led him to his disaster. Though this leaves him marginalized, powerless, and alienated, it has returned to him some hope because he can again tolerate his actual relationship to the world instead of fleeing it to gain interpersonal power over others. Because, for each of us, experience of history begins with our conception and ends with our death, the experience of history is always beginning and ending, so any date could be regarded as beginning or end. The poem is here presented in its thematic order because, for each of us, the experience of life is of the birth and death of hope, and our inmost personal labor is the birth, maintenance, and rebirth of hope in the face of the opportunities, deceptions, and oppressions of our interpersonal niche.

The speakers are scattered through space and time, but are connected to each other in several ways. The relationships between the forms of interpersonal power and the actuality of our experience are complex, so each section of the poem alludes at least three other sections that comment on implications of what each speaker says. For instance, Aladdin, the man who can obtain anything he wishes, is mentioned twice directly, once obliquely. First, in section 11, the slave trader, Cornelius Driscoll, says that the Filatah slaver he awaits calls himself Aladdin; Driscoll advises deceit as a necessary defense in dealing with him because he regards Aladdin as deceitful. Second, in section 16, the IBM inventor calls Bill Gates "Aladdin" in the course of inviting Gates to regard him as his Jinn. Third, in section 15, the teacher in Baghdad referring to the American assault on Iraq as "The Thousand and One Nights of Stealth" hints again at Aladdin. Stealth fighters and cruise missiles are Jinns in the lamp of American politicians, providing them with the ability to destroy whatever they want (except, perhaps, Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, or Muammar al-Khaddafi, if they actually want to destroy the people whose threat justifies their funding), courtesy of the military-industrial complex. The man who can get whatever he wants is dangerous to himself and others, for he needs no sense of consequences. It's because they lack that sense that Driscoll and Aladdin trade slaves, US leaders are willing to re-invade Iraq, and the IBMer, who thinks his mind his Jinn, almost feels ready to use nanotechnology to conquer the world for Bill Gates.

Four of the six primary oppressors are figures of whom some historical record exists. The eighteen who are more oppressed than oppressive are mostly people of whom there is little or no public record; what they say is what people in their positions must have experienced. Fragments of the speeches are recorded quotations, but none of the speeches themselves are because the most oppressive rarely reveal their actual motives, and the oppressed are rarely recorded.

The history of human experience must be imaginatively reconstructed by attention to detail, identification of patterns only visible from a distance in space and time, establishment of cause and effect relationships, and comparison of meanings with contexts. The poem presents history as a set of typical speeches about the perceptions of particular speakers about their relationships to others in which the significant events are determined by relative interpersonal power of the actors. Behind these speeches lie complex circumstances the speeches themselves cannot fully explicate. The following is a guide to some of those circumstances. I argue that the speeches and situations I have chosen are a guide to human experience because they can serve as analogues for a wide array of the kind of experience that has always concerned us most, the experience we inflict on each other. That is why I have constructed the poem as a table of contents for a perpetual calendar: given our vulnerabilities and powers, we must always be involved in experience of situations of these types.

These situations have moral implications we can learn. All we can actually do is learn to alter the patterns of our own actions because all other efforts involve efforts to assert power over others and so cannot contribute unequivocally to our progressive growth. We can change our effects on others by becoming more conscious of power; by divesting ourselves of power; by forbearing when we nevertheless have overweening power, as we always have over children, the sick, the insane, and the elderly; by supporting people in inferior positions in their efforts to represent, free, and assert themselves; by speaking on behalf of those who really cannot speak; by resisting efforts of the more powerful to dominate us and others; and by continuously seeking the goal of progressive equalization of power by any non-contradictory productive means available.

3. Four Arrangements of Themes

The poems can be treated thematically in five main patterns.

a) The first is by attending to the type of oppression. Political oppression consists of the threat and use of force; it has military, political, and legal forms. Economic oppression consists of control of access to productive resources; its method is marginalization by control of property in order to gain the ability to exploit, that is, to acquire the benefit of more labor than one pays for. Social oppression consists of the control and manipulation of attention in order to acquire esteem which can in turn be used to degrade and threaten to degrade others by mobilizing community opinion to condemn or threaten to condemn, attacking the self-esteem of those who feel vulnerable. I will comment on the sections first in the order of the *forms* of oppression:

Arrangement of Sections by Form of Oppression:

(To read, left to right: Relation of speaker to persons in event discussed; section number; name or role of speaker, venue, "world," type of society, time period, current nation, number of lines/days.)
(The counts of numbers of lines and days are only first approximations from the categorizations based on crucial acts; almost all sections refer to more than one form of oppression.)

Political Oppression: sections 20, 18; 2, 5; 15, 9; 13, 17: (106 lines and days, 15.75 below average)

Oppressors: 20 Henry Stimson, Huntington, Long Island, NY, 1 st world modern USA	1949	16
18 Francis Drake, London, 1 st world pre-industrial, pre-colonial UK	1588	14
Confronters: 2 secularist activist, Gujarat 3 rd world developing current India	2002	11
5 official, Manchuria 3 rd world developing modern China	1946	12
Pleas of Victims: 15 teacher, Baghdad 3 rd world developing/destroyed current Iraq	2002	22
9 mother, Aztlan "3 rd " ancient agricultural pueblo New Mexico, now USA	1141	8
Self-Reformers: 13 teacher, Dorchester 1 st world urban modern USA	1984	11
17 Ashoka, Pataliputra "3 rd " high agrarian culture ancient India	237 BC	12

Economic Oppression: sections 16, 11; 14, 3; 8, 4; 24, 6: (129 lines and days, 7.25 above average)

Oppressors: 16 IBM technocrat, Yorktown, NY 1 st world current USA	2001	16
11 Cornelius Driscoll, Brig "Hope" 3 rd world 19 th century Nigeria	1848	18
Confronters: 14 Papunehang, Pennsylvania Colony, 3 rd world vs. developing 1 st USA	1737	16
3 peasant, Mulhausen, pre-industrial agrarian 1 st world, Germany	1523	14
Pleas of Victims: 8 poet Sept Iles, small city, 1 st world, recent Canada	1984	15
4 toy salesman Cheltenham suburban 1 st world modern USA	2002	21
Self-Reformers: 24 homeless man Boston 1 st world urban recent USA	1985	10
6 Bloch, Leipzig, "2 nd " world, urban, fairly recent East Germany	1953	14

Social Oppression: sections 22, 10; 19, 23; 1, 7; 21, 12: (130.25 lines and days, 8.5 above average)

Oppressors: 22 weaver, Kanazawa, old "1 st world" feudal Japan	1613	20
10 Jean Galand, Carcassone, "1 st world" medieval, feudal France	1286	20
Confronters: 19 boy junior high school 1 st world suburban fairly recent USA	1963	10
23 G.I. asylum inmate Phoenix, Arizona, 1 st world fairly recent USA	1972	16
Victims: 1 examinee Machilipatnam, A.P. 3 rd world urban developing recent India	1988	13.25
7 cowherd Bhubaneswar, Orissa, 3 rd world "urban" colonial WWII India	1943	14
Self-Reformers: 21 academic Glasgow 1 st world urban deteriorating current UK	2002	22
12 monk Kyoto 1 st world rapidly re-industrializing fairly recent Japan	1966	15

b) The second way to regard the themes is by attending to the relationship between the person and the forms of oppression exerted. Oppression is an actual *action*. One person oppresses *another*. All that is *actually* abstract about it is the generalization of the term to include a wide variety of economic, political, and social actions. What makes oppression *appear* abstract is that society is institutional, so that one person's oppression can be *transmitted* through another to a third. Because our *relationships* have some stability, the *capacity* to oppress accumulates in superior roles and *vulnerability* to oppression accumulates in inferior roles. Oppression can appear abstract from *below* because one confronts multiple agents of one's superiors, each agent committed to long-term relationships and patterns, so oppression can be sensed as normal, necessary, or natural. Oppression can appear abstract from *above* because it is habitual and because one does not experience the effect of one's actions on others, but only the convenient result one receives. Oppression can appear abstract if one imagines one is "objective" and on the "*outside*," but that is because one is abstracting *oneself*, and is not attending to the concreteness of one's *own* relationships to others, or one is attending only to those *aspects* of acts of oppression that can be manipulated easily with abstractions, such as numbers. When we're in the *middle* of a chain of oppression, as most of us are, we find it convenient to *talk* about oppression as if it were abstract, because that relieves us of the obligation to name the oppressor, the action, the persons oppressed, and our own role in the matter. Most social science is written in this middle position with the convenient disguise of objectivity, and those of us in the middle layers normally, with quiet relief or gratitude, adopt the disguise because it relieves us of having to admit that we are submitting passively to the will of our superiors and inflicting real damage on our subordinates. Hence it is normal to *talk* about oppression as if it were abstract and the self-deceptive middle classes are shocked by honest reporting, clear writing, the sidewalk talk of the lower class, and the home office and bedroom talk of the upper class. *The Slow News of Need*, by focusing attention on the issue of identifying the positions of the speakers, relies on the conventions of artistic freedom to offend this norm of polite middle class conversation. Because poetry, drawing on the social power of its origins in religious ritual, is presumed to be inspiring, one is allowed to say in a poetry reading what one would be removed from the dinner table for saying. This privilege is, in fact, appropriate, because the original function of religion is the integration of society through the at least symbolic repair of the damage done by oppressive actions. In traditional societies, when religion still performed its function, the repair was more than symbolic; people actually changed their relationships because of religious activity. This, of course, is the intent of *The Slow News of Need*: that we see the need to actually change our relationships not only because of the pain they cause us, but because of the damage they do.

So the analysis of oppression depends on the identification of the speaker's *position* in relation to the persons mentioned. All people are oppressed by adults in childhood and, throughout life, are confined by their associates, particularly the elders of their immediate families, and must react to the web of their near-equals in national and global power. But in the upper reaches of society, where income, political clout, and prestige in fact can be fairly secure in normal times, what little oppression one experiences is caused only by psychological immaturity that makes most dependent on things and relationships they don't actually need. Nearly all people are oppressed throughout life to some extent, and a smaller majority also oppress others in some contexts and ways, primarily as transmitters of oppression from above. So deciding whether a speaker must be seen as an oppressor or a victim of oppression is contextual; it depends upon identifying a particular situation and a particular form of oppression. Where one individual or group uses its superiority in money, power, or esteem to extract the value of labor, obedience, or undeserved respect from another individual or group, or to marginalize, coerce, or humiliate and degrade the second individual or group, I count the first as the oppressor and the second as oppressed. No institution in human life relies totally on just one dynamic of oppression, as John Kenneth Galbraith so cogently argued in *The Anatomy of Power*, which added much subtlety and accuracy to Bertrand Russell's analysis in *Power: A New Social Analysis*. Iris Marion Young

pursued the analysis from the perspective from the bottom in “The Five Faces of Oppression,” the second chapter of her *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. I argue in *Differential Interpersonal Power Flow* that she missed a “face” because what she calls “cultural imperialism” is actually a compound of an downward and a concealed upward flow of social power, as the other four “faces” are paired upward and downward flows of economic and political power. This pattern of three flows of power governed the selection and placement of the types of situations, intentions, and decisions examined.

There are some advantages in viewing the themes primarily in terms of whether a) the speaker was actively committed to oppressing certain others vs. b) was actively trying to reform the structure of the power relationship so as to be cease being oppressive and to free others, or c) was, in being victimized, at least internally confronting and analyzing the oppressors, vs. d) was, in victimization, primarily experiencing the suffering involved and futilely pleading for release. First, this arrangement emphasizes the character and societal niche of the speaker, so it makes one consider the sections as dramatic monologues regarding particular decisions. Second, it is humanly realistic in that, to the oppressor, the gaining of advantage is the goal and the type of oppression used is the means, so that most oppressors use multiple means at their disposal, while, to the oppressed, oppression is one’s condition and is perpetuated by multiple circumstances and methods. This pattern governed the basic drafting of the monologues. The four categorizations of position relative to uses of power is indicated in the chart below.

Arrangement of sections by their Power Relationships: Within each of the three main sections, discussion follows the following order: (Read from left to right: code O(oppressor), C(confronter), V(victim), S(self-reformer), matched with P (political), E (economic), or S (social); form of interpersonal power; section number; name of speaker if given, place if not, or both; 1st or 3rd world; modern or old (pre-industrial); Nation; year; number of lines or days; Inner Arrangement/Primal Arrangement.)

Oppressors revealing their oppression of others: sections <u>10</u> , <u>11</u> , <u>16</u> , <u>18</u> , <u>20</u> , <u>22</u> (104 days,		
OP Political: 20 H. Stimson 1 st world modern USA 1949	16	12.7 over average)
<u>18</u> F. Drake 1 st world old London 1588	14	
OE Economic: <u>16</u> IBMer 1 st world modern USA 2001	16	
<u>11</u> Cornelius Driscoll 3 rd world old Nigeria 1848	18	
OS Social: <u>22</u> weaver Kanazawa 1 st world old Japan 1613	20	
<u>10</u> Jean Galand Carcassone 1 st world old France 1286	20	
Confronters of their own and other’s oppressors: 2, 3, <u>5</u> , <u>14</u> , 19, <u>23</u> (79 days, 12.3 under average)		
CP Political: 2 activist Gujarat 3 rd world modern India 2002	11	
<u>5</u> official Manchuria 3 rd world modern China 1948	12	
CE Economic: 14 Papunehang 3 rd or 1 st old USA 1737	16	
3 peasant Mulhausen 1 st world old Germany 1523	14	
CS Social: 19 junior high student 1 st modern USA 1963	10	
23 G.I., Phoenix 1 st modern USA 1972	16	
Victims of oppression who believe they cannot confront their oppressors: 1, <u>4</u> , 7, 8, 9, <u>15</u> (93.25 days,		
VP Political: 15 teacher 3 rd world modern Iraq 2002	22	1.9 over average)
9 mother 3 rd world old New Mexico 1141	8	
VE Economic: 4 toy salesman 1 st world modern US 2002	21	
8 poet Sept Iles 1 st modern Canada 1984	15	
VS Social: 1 examinee & suicide 3 rd world modern India 1988	13.25	
7 cowherd 3 rd world modern India 1943	14	
Self-reformers attempting to escape or change their oppressive roles: <u>6</u> , <u>12</u> , 13, <u>17</u> , <u>21</u> , 24 (89 days,		
SP Political: 13 teacher Dorchester 1 st world modern USA 1984	11	2.3 under average)
17 Ashoka, Pataliputra 3 rd world ancient India 237 BC	12	
SE Economic: 24 homeless man Boston 1 st world modern USA 1985	10	
6 Bloch, Leipzig, 2 nd world modern East Germany 1953	19	
SS Social: 21 academic Glasgow 1 st world modern UK 2002	22	
12 monk Kyoto 1 st world modern Japan 1966	15	

The four basic roles evolved from the conqueror-conquered relationship that conquerors tried to stabilize in the master-slave and master-servant relationships, but, in either, the weaker member easily becomes a mere victim for the relationship is founded on force, exploitation, and humiliation. Hence the third and fourth roles, essentially of the detached observer and of the opposer, tend to evolve; traditionally the observer takes on a monk's role and the opposer becomes the advocate of the servant. Traditional patriarchal families with two sons usually assume this pattern: the father is the leader, the mother is the follower and helper, the first son is the "good son," the trusted heir, and the second son is the "bad son," seeking to stir things up. Families with other arrangements of children tend to create variants on the second two slots. As the structure rigidifies, the father becomes more oppressive, and hence a poorer leader, the mother deteriorates from a follower to a servant as she becomes more victimized, the good son becomes a detached observer, and the bad son seeks to depose the father. In society as a whole analogously polarized roles emerge, the most dominant becoming oppressors, the weakest becoming pure victims, the trusted but not fully empowered heirs becoming self-reformers devoted to maintaining the structure but stopping the abuses, and the opposers becoming rebels or revolutionaries.

This arrangement in the chart creates four groups with six distinctions among them, each of the distinctions having two sides. The distinctions vary in strength because there are covert bonds underlying the distinctions. To be at any time in any of the four roles is to be distinguished from being in any of the other three roles, so each role carries three distinctions.

For instance, an oppressor is not a victim in a particular relationship because, to be an oppressor, he or she has to have a victim. So that distinction is necessarily strong because of the bond of domination. But the oppressor, to pursue oppression, is also significantly not a self-reformer, though there is no requirement of public evidence of the distinction; the self-reformer can appear to approve of the oppressor, and the oppressor can presume on the self-reformer. Thirdly, the oppressor certainly cannot be a confronter of oppression in *that* relationship and, if he is, in another, similar relationship, he is hypocritical. That distinction is thus *logically* strong but not *materially* strong, and so is fraught with potential for deceit. The underlying bonds from the oppressor's point of view are that the victim serves the oppressor, the self-reformer represents the conscience of the oppressor, and the oppressor desires either the consent and cooperation or the exclusion and discrediting or even the elimination of the opposer, fundamentally because the oppressor wants unrestricted rights over the service of the victim. As oppression deepens, the distinctions can again blur because the oppressor demands the same rights over the observer and the opposer that he demands over the servant-victim, attempting to reduce them both to service in a reversion to the original simpler master-slave model.

The distinctions and bonds must be examined from all four positions; each position has three distinctions of varying sharpness and three bonds of varying strength.

The sharpest distinction is between oppressors and victims. Oppressive roles are either given by inheritance or assiduously sought. In either case they require much social learning, considerable commitment, and decisive action. Oppressive roles are reinforced from many sides, are difficult to alter, and in traditional societies, even difficult to escape. Yet, because victimization is one's original position in life, anyone can, under some circumstances, revert to it as a return to infancy.

On the scale of society as a whole, for an oppressor, the most likely *apparent* transition is to become a confronter of the oppression of certain others. An oppressor can do this selectively without confronting the facts of his or her own oppressive acts, hence without self-reformation. This is a standard part of most leadership roles: the leader claims to be acting on someone else's behalf and is outraged at some other oppressor's abuse of the leader's supposedly devoted followers, that is, those he oppresses and who facilitate his oppression of others. This is standard hypocrisy and represents no actual change. (Note that a confronter can slip into a leadership role by assuming that part of it against the oppressor, gaining a following, and oppressing his

followers when the former leader is displaced.) The most likely *actual* transition is toward self-reform, which generally occurs when actual involvement with those the oppressor represents in confrontations begins to bring self-awareness. This is unlikely unless the oppressor has some actual experience of victimization in the course of representing others in confrontations, or has, as Eleanor Roosevelt had, such exceptionally powerful memories of one's own oppression in childhood, that, despite elite status, some identification with victims is still possible. But if such memory is present, dealings with oppressors of those one represents, and with confronters, can bring to awareness the significance of the oppressive maneuvers one has learned to use oneself, and can lead to self-reformation.

The weakest distinction is between genuine self-reformers and confronters, who share a kind of sibling bond. This is because both act in the cause of weakening oppressors' ability to victimize. The self-reformer who never confronts oppression is a quietist or opportunist. The confronter who is incapable of self-criticism and self-correction, and who does not nurture others, has no principles and is likely to be or become oppressive. The two need each other, and neither can actually succeed without the other. Substantial self-reform is not possible unless one adopts the cause of others by identifying with them strongly enough to make the continuation of one's own oppressiveness impossible. Confrontation becomes confrontation on behalf of others when one feels one's bonds with other victimized people are strong. The more that identification grows, the more one is driven to reform the oppressive aspects of one's own behavior. So the distinction is primarily one deriving from one's original status, either from among or below the locus of the forces one opposes, the self-reformer coming from the higher relative position. Confronters and self-reformers have a joint interest in attempting to form a real or symbolic barrier between oppressors and victims. This cooperative work blurs the distinction between the two. I regard the unification of self-reform and confrontation on behalf of others as the goal of the good life.

The second weakest distinction is between victims and confronters; a victim can learn or decide to confront, and a confronter can revert easily to victimization. Each monologue contemplates a decision in which the speaker defines or modifies his or her position in terms of victimization and confrontation. The poet in 8, for instance, is developing into a confronter, while the peasant in 3 will revert to victimization. The student in 19 is taking his first independent action of social thought and can easily revert to the victimization of his middle class student status because of its prospect of gaining some professional status to oppress others. The G.I. in 23 is struggling desperately not to accept the victim role of a mental patient. The other eight in the second and third groups are at greater distances from the boundaries between the two roles, but all have some potential to shift. We see the young husband in 1 at the instant in which, having abandoned all hope of being promoted to an oppressor's role, and being exhausted by confrontation and the effort to adapt to victimization, he plunges into the purity of absolute victimization.

The distinctions are between self-reform and victimization and between self-reform and oppression are relatively weak from the self-reformer's side because they depend on consciousness, will power and, if not self-sacrifice, sacrifice of opportunity. Self-reform requires self-discipline, but self-discipline always suffers from selective attention and weakness of will, and can lapse. If others still believe that one is in a position to oppress, a lapse of self-reform can make one oppressive. If no one notices, one's self-reform, of course, has been illusory. Not that anyone will tell one. If one does not believe one is in a position to oppress, and others don't believe it either, it is easy to lapse from self-reform to victimization; no one is likely to notice any difference unless one has become prominent for confrontation.

It is easy for a victim to become an oppressor if the opportunity arises, (but it rarely does arise except in the family and on the playground), and easier to become a confronter than to become a self-reformer.

The most difficult role, of course, is the self-reform that actively affects others, preventing the oppressive acts of oppressors, alleviating the suffering of victims, and helping

them to strengthen their desire and self-confidence. This is the egalitarian role that reduces the steepness of the power hierarchies, and it develops gradually in society as confronters and self-reformers, in their desire to help victims, learn from each other and, learning from the victims, learn to assist victims to become confronters and self-reformers. Very rarely, a society can gather enough mutual strength in this way to substantially reduce oppression.

c) Specific events, persons, places, phrases, and images recur. Each of the 24 sections refers to a minimum of three other sections, and the mutual references assist in defining the meanings of the events and the intentions and sensibilities of the speakers. The speakers vary widely in their degree and type of awareness of their relationships to others, their impact on others, and their own characters compared to the characters of others. The purpose of the mutual references is to invite comparisons between the speakers' conceptions of themselves and the conceptions that others would have of them. This is a model of the problems we all have in attaining some degree of self-knowledge. The themes that govern the allusions are themes of consciousness, and were generally adjusted upon reflection. They form a web. The chart at the conclusion of this commentary gives a rough indication of the web of power relationships between the speakers and the persons mentioned and alluded to. That web and other webs of associations form the basis of *The Days of Need*; I hope that poem itself will be a better commentary than any I can write discursively.

d) Last, there is the theme of human time itself and some emerging plot of the poem in time. Here, like almost all of the rest of us, I'm in over my head. Because I don't believe in collective consciousness, I don't believe history has a plot in the sense that Hegel and many Christians do. But neither do I think history altogether plotless as many post-modernists do. I sense some kind of plot, both one of development of types of productive resources and a subtler unconscious plot of potential growth of awareness and neoteny, but with many backward windings and sometimes wholesale destruction that does not necessarily lead to progress, except from the arrogant point of view of those who believe their present existence signifies some superiority to their predecessors. All we really seem to know is our little experience, which we know poorly, yet we all imagine some framework that holds us in relation to others. I suppose my view is biological, but it certainly is not Spencerian. Whatever framework we have, however, we project onto our sense of time, and so do I.

The sense of time of modern physics is far more interesting than what preceded it in the West, but I'm concerned with the time of human experience, which the ancient Chinese sense of time in the *Shuo Kua* of the *I Ching* represents more accurately. I do not understand its details, which may have been lost, but it is not the Western sense of homogeneous time that served the Industrial Revolution. Instead it is a sense of one heterogeneous layer overlaid on another heterogeneous layer, human time overlaid on the natural time of the earth and heaven, or perhaps phenomenal time overlaid on noumenal time. I try as I can to reconstruct it. It is humbling to believe it likely, as I do, that the authors of the *I Ching* experienced actual clarity about the "Primal Arrangement." If I had such clarity, this would, of course, be a far better poem. I have only my fragmentary imagination. I regard humility toward the universe as good, terrifying as some of the experiences that drive one to humility are, and contrary to the experiences that make one humble towards one's human superiors. Sorting them out is difficult, and seems to be the work of religion. Though I have not been able to sort them out, yet I have an intuition that there is some coordination among experiences of awe and that it is better to attempt to find some relationship among them than to ignore or deny them.

I do not choose to reconstruct as I can one of the ancient Chinese senses of time out of any belief that recorded history contains word of a golden age or an ideal society; the social structure implied by the *I Ching* has as many horrors as most. Writing seems to have arisen as an effort to control or influence events at a distance in time and space, and so only arose in societies in which one group had already conquered and in some way enslaved another group. Therefore, if there is a record, it is a record of a society in which some people violated the wills of other

people. To me, societies approach an ideal in direct proportion to the degree to which people do not violate the wills of others; the more the hierarchies of political, economic, and social power are reduced, the better the society. So to find a model of a good society, one must imagine it. Perhaps the “Ice Man” lived in one. Some illiterate, particularly hunting and gathering societies, have preserved remarkably better customs of self-organization. But no account of actual events written by authors contemporaneous with the events concerns a society much worth emulating. This includes religious texts: their golden ages were gilded, not golden.

The traditional sense of time of unconquered societies has generally been cyclical. Cyclical time is the time of sustainable life. In it one’s ancestors are not essentially different from oneself, nor one’s descendents; one trades places with them, as they will with oneself. If we cannot reacquire such a sense, if we cannot learn to live again so that such a sense corresponds to our living, how can we fail to destroy ourselves?

The Chinese calendar is closer to that sense than any other I can find.

The events of the poem form a sequence superimposed on the yearly sequence of the seasons. The *I Ching* views the daily human time of interpersonal events (the sequence of “Later Heaven” or “Inner World Arrangement” as the foreground with eternal time in the background, “Earlier Heaven,” the “Primal Arrangement” shining through it. I believe the first is called the “Inner Arrangement” in recognition of the fact that the time of history is subjective time; even our notion of objectivity is merely a standardization of our conditioned subjectivity. This background time, the time of Tao, has qualities independent of human time, for the time of human history is out of order with Tao. The tragedies we create are unnecessary; they arise from insecurity and self-blinding. Yet the truth speaks through them, no matter how we attempt to disguise it. The original time of the nature we are destroying, with the natural meanings of the cycle of birth and death, persists despite our attempts to rise ourselves above the bodies of those we oppress. When the sequences are pieced together and compared with the seasons, some vision of this appears on the far side of our slaughter of each other’s hearts. If we were truthful enough with ourselves to see the Primal Arrangement that exists prior to and despite our conception of ourselves as separate individuals, we would not make each other suffer.

Sequence of Recounting. The Poem follows the following Primal Arrangement in its first presentation.

(Monologue or solar season number, thematic code (see above), “world,” (1st or 3rd) “age” (“modern” or “old”), date, number of lines (or days), foreground time/background time, equinox/solstice.)

1	<i>VS 3 m India</i>	1988	13.25		13 RP 1 m USA	1984	11
2	<i>CP 3 m India</i>	2002	11		14 CE 1-3 o USA	1737	16
3	<i>CE 1 o Germany</i>	1523	16	Chen/Li	Equinox	<i>15 VP 3 m Iraq</i>	2001 22 <i>Tui/Kan Equinox</i>
4	<i>VE 1 m USA</i>	2002	19			16 <i>OE 1 m USA</i>	2001 16
5	<i>CP 3 m China</i>	1948	12			17 RP 3 o India	237BC 12
6	RE 1 m Blok	1953	19	Sun/Tui		<i>18 OP 1 o Britain</i>	1588 14 <i>Chi'en/Ken</i>
7	<i>VE 3 m India</i>	1943	14			19 <i>CS 1 m USA</i>	1963 10
8	<i>VE 1 m Canada</i>	1984	15			20 <i>OP 1 m USA</i>	1949 16
9	<i>VP 3 m Mexico</i>	1141	8	Li/Chi'en	<i>Solstice</i>	21 RS 1 m Scotland	2002 22 <i>Kan/Kun Solstice</i>
10	OS 1 o France	1286	20			22 <i>OS 1 o Japan</i>	1613 20
11	<i>OE 3 o Nigeria</i>	1848	17			23 <i>CS 1m USA</i>	1972 16
12	RS 1 m Japan	1966	15	Kun/Sun		24 RE 1 m USA	1985 10 <i>Ken/Chen</i>
			179.25				186

Because historical time does not follow the Primal Arrangement, the poem has two beginnings and two ends. It is presented first in its Primal Arrangement, beginning on February 16 in a social bondage resulting in suicide and ending on February 15 in liberation unrecognized by others. The poem is then presented in its Inner World Arrangement as the key and index to *The Days of Need*, beginning on February 5, the last of the three possible dates of the New Year, and ending on February 4. In this form it begins with an accusation of mental oppression and ends with one of physical oppression. Both are true, though not of the same person, for in history we

act as each others' puppets, unable because of our misperception of others' perception to disentangle ourselves from each other to ground ourselves in our deeper reality. In one sentence, the paired accusations join year to year of the Inner World Arrangement to produce history.

The Days of Need follows not the order of the monologues, but of the calendar itself:

Solar Term Beginning	Earlier Heaven, Primal	Later Heaven, Inner World
1 Spring Begins Feb 3-5	Chen, arousing, eldest son	Ken, mountain, youngest son
2 Rain Water Feb 18-20	thunder (leaving)	(Ken leaving)
3 Waking Insects Mar 5-7	(Li approaching)	(Chen approaching)
4 Vernal Equinox Mar 20-1	East, Li, light, clinging	Chen, arousing, eldest son
5 Pure Brightness Apr 4-6	second daughter, fire	(Chen leaving)
6 Grain Rain Apr 19-21	(Tui approaching)	(Sun approaching)
7 Summer Begins May 5-7	Tui, joyous, pleasure, lake	Sun, gentle, wind, eldest daughter
8 Grain Fills May 20-2	youngest daughter	(Sun leaving)
9 Grain in Ear June 5-7	(Ch'ien approaching)	(Li approaching)
10 Summer Solstice June 20-1	South, Ch'ien, creative, heaven	Li, light, fire, clinging,
11 Lesser Heat Jul 6-8	father (leaving)	second daughter (leaving)
12 Greater Heat Jul 22-4	(Sun approaching)	(K'un approaching)
13 Autumn Begins Aug 7-9	Sun, gentle, penetrating, wood,	K'un, devoted, earth, mother,
14 End of Heat Aug 22-4	wind, eldest daughter	receptive (leaving)
15 White Dew Sept 7-9	(K'an approaching)	(Tui approaching)
16 Autumn Equinox Sept 22-4	West, K'an, danger, middle son	Tui, joyous, pleasure, lake,
17 Cold Dew Oct 8-9	water, clouds, abysmal	youngest daughter
18 Frost's Descent Oct 23-4	(Ken approaching)	(Ch'ien approaching)
19 Winter Begins Nov 7-8	Ken, keeping still, youngest son,	Ch'ien, creative, heaven, father
20 Lesser Snow Nov 22-3	mountain (leaving)	(leaving)
21 Greater Snow Dec 6-8	(K'un approaching)	(K'an approaching)
22 Winter Solstice Dec 21-3	North, K'un, devoted, earth,	K'an, danger, middle son, water,
23 Lesser Cold Jan 5-7	mother, receptive (leaving)	clouds, abysmal (leaving)
24 Greater Cold Jan 20-1	(Chen approaching)	(Ken approaching)

The footnotes to *The Seasons of Need* reflect the order above.

4. Commentaries on Sections of *The Seasons of Need* Arranged by Type of Power

The commentaries treat the monologues as historical drama. The length of the commentaries does not reflect the complexity of the texts, situations, or personalities, but the contentiousness of current views regarding the significance of speakers and events. I have sought to be clear about why I attribute the motives and perceptions to speakers that I attribute to them, and to distinguish somewhat between characters and events of historical record and those of inference and imaginative reconstruction. Hence the commentaries on uses of political power are 30% longer than the average of the commentaries.

In this section I comment more on the oppressors and the self-reformers than on the victims and confronters because the oppressors' self-concealment needs unraveling and the lives of the self-reformers contain complexities of self-altered roles. I try to provide a bit of social history to flesh out the accounts of the lives of the victims and confronters. The confronters normally speak quite well for themselves when they get the chance to speak. The victims are normally heard by no one and often have difficulty explaining themselves because the powerful succeed in ruling their problems not to exist. The commentaries attempt only to explain very obscure details that could otherwise yield misreadings.

The poem itself seeks to give roughly equal time to the four types of points of view, but some characters tried to frustrate it. The confronters were generally the most cooperative. They speak more powerfully and succinctly than most people do, so they together take up 13.5% less space than the average. Papunehang was the most forthcoming of them; after all, he said, "I love to feel where words come from." The G.I. was relieved to talk to me because his damned shrink had almost persuaded him he was crazy. The oppressors tended conceal, and evade, but I

wouldn't let them go until they coughed up the facts. Driscoll was so self-satisfied, the Kanazawa weaver so pretentious, and Jean Galand so full of rant that I let them hang themselves, but it took a lot of rope, so together the Oppressors together squandered 13.9% more than the average. The reformers together and the victims together both come in quite close to the average, but for different reasons, the reformers because they have some self-control, want to communicate clearly, and are willing to cut themselves to length, the victims because they generally believe they can't go on at length, but are lucky to get any hearing at all. I had to keep prompting four of the victims; only one, the toy salesman, was a loudmouth. The teacher from Baghdad was a dream to work with, probably because he was so worn out he just let himself go. He wishes he'd become a doctor, but he's too old now.

Three fourths of these characters befriended my imagination. But not all. I've never understood Will Rogers, who claimed he never met a man he didn't like. I know he met Roosevelt and think he met Stimson and Nixon too. Maybe even Billy Graham, Rockefeller, and McCarthy. What if he met Roy Cohn? J. Edgar Hoover? But maybe he stopped making that claim later in his career.

To understand the poem as it is written, first attend to the fact that the monologues themselves comment on each other because each speaker knew what the previous ones had said, and several were prescient. Footnotes are designed to dispel obscurity, not to replace the processes of critical reading. The background text is ongoing history itself as we each experience it in daily life, so refer to your own experience and your empathic ability to reconstruct the experience of others, not to what you are told. *The Days of Need* will elaborate *The Seasons of Need*. I hope confronters and self-reformers together will write *The Book of Hours of Need* to develop *The Days of Need* and will help get the victims into a position to write *The Minutes of the Meeting of Need*.

I'll summarize. The order of commentary is political, then economic, then social oppression. Each category has 8 monologues. i) First are two oppressors characterizing their own oppression. ii) Second are two victims of oppression confronting their oppressors, characterizing them, and making decisions about their attitudes or actions towards them. iii) Third are two victims of oppression who believe they cannot confront their oppressors but plead in various tones for deliverance from the facts of their oppression. iv) Fourth are two self-reformers, people who inherited oppressive roles in their societies but have tried to change or escape from those roles to join with their supposed inferiors or at least stop treating them badly. There is always an immediate pair in each category to hint at the range within it, and other contrasting pairs are easily found to aid reflection.

A. The Nature of Political Oppression: i) 20, 18; ii) 2, 5; iii) 15, 9; and iv) 13, 17

B. The Nature of Economic Oppression: i) 16, 11; ii) 14, 3; iii) 8, 4; and iv) 24, 6

C. The Nature of Social Oppression: i) 22, 10; ii) 19, 23; iii) 1, 7; iv) 21, 12

(If you skip around through that to count from 1 to 24, you'll see a kind of plot in the poem that goes by the order of the seasons rather than the order of the events recounted. As I mentioned in the fifth part of the last section, that's my idea of the Primal Arrangement trying to peak through the Sequence of Later Heaven.)

A. The Nature of Political Oppression: 20, 18; 2, 5; 15, 9; 13 & 17:

i) Political Oppressors on their Oppression: 20 & 18:

The two political oppressors are Henry Stimson and Francis Drake. We catch them in entirely different contexts; Stimson, in old age, having not a fear in the world, casually reveals his deepest secrets. Drake acutely conscious of his courtly role, reveals himself inadvertently by trying to write an elegant poem for which, being so thoroughly realistic, he can't find the properly elegant images and tone.

20: Stimson, then 82, muses at home in retirement 11 months before his death. He has recently completed his autobiography, *On Active Service in Peace and War*.

Typical of upper class politicians, Stimson has spent his life in elaborate public lies governed by traditional elite loyalties and is capable of honesty with the inner circle committed to the same public lies for what they believe some good and necessary cause they can't distinguish from the good of their own group. His honesty is only shocking to us outsiders, the middle class (including intellectuals) that his group assists in our self-deception. The middle class, which requires self-deception in order to convey upper class deceit downwards, cannot imagine that the upper class' self-insulation allows it to function on the basis of long-term and detailed deceit instead of on the basis of middle class confusion. But for systematic concealment of secrets, clarity of mind is necessary, and a major source of upper class arrogance is their perception that those just beneath them are dupes. That we are dupes because they want us to be does not concern them; to them it appears as a fact of life, for they think we don't deserve to be told their secrets. We lack the proper breeding and the necessary absolute disdain for those below us.

On December 7, 1949, the 8th anniversary of Pearl Harbor (and the first day of "The Heavy Snow" in the Chinese Calendar), thinking over the results of World War II, Stimson looks back through his diary and sees his actual entry for November 30, 1941, "Now all they have to do is take the bait."⁵ In 1927 he was a special commissioner to Nicaragua, and 1927-28, the Governor General of the Philippines, so he was more informed about the condition of labor in poor countries than other Americans. He was a staunch anti-communist committed to increasing American power and contemptuous of any considerations that could block its progress. To him, everyone outside the plutocratic elite was far too ignorant to be worth listening to for a moment. Stimson makes no mention of his role in Manchuria, which he'd dubbed "The Stimson Doctrine" because he believes he bears no responsibility for the failure of the League of Nations or the unwillingness of Hoover to commit troops to fight the Japanese in Manchuria. To Stimson, the Japanese aggression there was merely another justification for baiting the Japanese with Pearl Harbor and using massive bombing, the fire-bombing of Tokyo as well as the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He was Chief Advisor on Atomic Policy under both Roosevelt and Truman.

Stimson believes his real effect on history began in 1940 under Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in what he did to steer the US into its position of maximum advantage in 1945 by fusing American economic, military, and diplomatic interests to create the basis of the present US economic empire. Churchill had been trying since 1939 to get Roosevelt to enter World War II. Roosevelt could not commit US troops to the war in Europe because in 1937 the US Congress had passed the Neutrality Act, which prohibited US entry into any war to aid an ally, so the US could only enter a war if attacked. Roosevelt made Stimson Secretary of War in 1940 because, though Stimson was a life-long Republican, he was the leading member of The Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, so his appointment could create bipartisan support for US conduct in the war Roosevelt intended to enter.

The situation bore similarities to the US position through most of World War I. In 1917, when Wilson had the US enter the war, he cited German submarine warfare as a reason. At the beginning of the war, Germany had said it would sink any US vessel, cargo or passenger, carrying war materiel. In May, 1915, the British ocean liner Lusitania left New York harbor with 173 tons of arms and munitions secreted in its forward hold. A U-boat sank it. At the time it was claimed that the ship went down so quickly because its boiler exploded after the torpedo, but in 1972 it was made public that the second explosion was of the munitions and that German spies in New York Harbor saw the munitions being loaded.⁶ Churchill and Roosevelt had access to that

⁵ I first saw this quotation in a volume privately printed as a memento for members of FDR's administration. Robert B. Stinnett revealed the reality behind them in *Day of Deceit: the truth about FDR and Pearl Harbor*, (New York: Free Press, 2000.) Before the signing of the UN Charter, no one challenged the idea that secrecy was essential for international relations.

⁶ Colin Simpson, *The Lusitania*, (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1972.)

information. At least one of them would also have known whether the munitions were shipped because the Americans or British, or both, *knew* that the Germans would know, and *intended* to provide a rationale for US entry into the war by using the passengers as bait, or instead intended use the passengers as protection for the arms shipment by relying, despite German statements, on German unwillingness, for fear of bad publicity, to sink a passenger vessel. 1,198 people, 128 of them Americans, died on the Lusitania; 2,400, 100 of them Japanese, died at Pearl Harbor.

Stimson's role with others in setting up the Bretton Woods Institutions was similar to Alexander Hamilton's in setting up the Bank of the United States.⁷ Hamilton aimed to keep control of the money supply out of democratic hands by allowing no vote of Congress to affect the Bank, thereby keeping the economy under purely plutocratic control, and thus created the lynchpin of the republic's relationship to US capitalism. The US public doctrine of "democracy" thus has never included the concept that people have a democratic right to vote on their own economy; *that* democratic right became subject to the charges of socialism and communism, which were cast as somehow intrinsically totalitarian without anyone's reflecting that, if the money supply could *not* be controlled by the people, it had to be controlled by someone *else*, and *that* person or persons had to have dictatorial powers. The IMF and World Bank were set up to have the same relationship to international currencies that the Federal Reserve Bank had to the dollar and the same relationship to the UN that the Congress had to the Fed. This could only be accomplished by establishing the financial institutions *before* establishing the UN; otherwise, the member nations would have a vote in how the financial institutions were to be structured. So the Bretton Woods Conference decided that votes in the IMF and World Bank would be by amount of money invested (so that the richest countries could always win the vote), and they could be placed under the "auspices" of the UN but not act of the UN could ever affect them (so people would believe the UN responsible for them though in fact it would not be.) This worked: the UN now has a budget of 2.5 billion dollars, which is comparable to the budget of the city of Detroit without its school system, while the budgets of the economic institutions are orders of magnitude larger, and the UN Charter cannot be changed without a vote by the Security Council, subject to the veto powers of the US and Britain. Once any small or poor country is in debt, the IMF and World Bank can easily force obedience by threatening to withdraw funds needed to pay the government payroll, thereby controlling policy and legislation from behind the scenes. Because the WTO, planned from the beginning but not implemented until 1995, has executive and judicial powers capable of forcing change in domestic legislation, the three together create a low-profile plutocratic world government for which the UN was designed to divert attention.

Nixon, 36 in 1949, had been reelected to the House of Representatives one year before and was using MacCarthy's prominence and his role in the House Unamerican Activities Committee to gain the national publicity he needed for his successful Senate bid in the 1950 election. I portray him fresh in Stimson's mind because in November, 1949, Nixon would have been making the rounds talking to senior politicians looking for backing for his Senate race and then the Vice-Presidency once figures like Truman and Stevenson could be maneuvered out of the way. I assume Nixon went to Stimson because Eisenhower worked under Stimson in the formation of the military-industrial complex by which the US won the war with lower casualties relative to population than any other country involved, so Nixon would have hoped Stimson's approval would get him Eisenhower's. Nixon's forte was always geopolitics; his appeal to Stimson would have been his imaginative analysis of how to fight communism internationally. In broad terms he saw the isolation of China from Russia and India, the domino theory, and alterations in the working of the Bretton Woods Institutions as the three keys. That Nixon had already imagined letting the dollar float is conjectural. Eisenhower, who in leaving office in 1961 warned the country against the very military-industrial complex he'd been so instrumental in creating, intensely disliked Nixon's underhandedness and cold war zeal, so I assume figures

⁷ See Ron Chernow, *Alexander Hamilton*, (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), esp. pp. 344-355.

around Eisenhower, like Stimson, had to have been impressed by Nixon for Eisenhower to consent to accept Nixon as his running-mate in 1952. Nixon's shrewdness *was* impressive. Like Stimson, Nixon liked to present his actions as if they expressed "Doctrines," borrowing the rhetoric of theology for political opportunism. It was the discrepancy between that public mask and his dirty Watergate talk that most offended most Americans. Stimson, who had less vanity in his ambition, never had to face the kind of opprobrium he would have had to face had it become public knowledge that he and Roosevelt used the Pearl Harbor fleet as bait. He remained a trusted senior public servant to the end.⁸

18: In the Autumn after his destruction of the Spanish Armada, and hence his securing of Elizabeth's position, Francis Drake writes a sonnet. The sonnet describes the political basis of the theocratic "Great Chain of Being" ideology the Elizabethans used to idealize monarchical rule. Drake is well aware that, with its theology deleted, the presumptuous and stark cruelty of the system is so obvious that Christian doctrine could not be reattached to it. The basis of empire Drake was involved in creating required a socializing cover only religion could provide, so powerful Britishers' drive for political and economic dominance resulted in religious warfare before imperial power could consolidate itself on the opening Drake made for it. Drake, while the supremely competent pirate and commander, was also a personally pleasant courtier. In his poem he unites the two in the only way they can be united, through a fairly elegant sense of form and propriety that does not overlook the facts. He certainly would not want the sonnet published because of its tacit insults, particularly in the last line.

Drake's awful sonnet illustrates the reason that powerful people are rarely good writers. They have so much to conceal that everything they write is wooden. What Drake must conceal is the fatuity of the entire order he feels obligated to idealize though he knows perfectly well how it works.

"Villain" or "villein" originally merely meant any villager. But the Norman nobility were a vicious occupying army. The gradual change in the word's meaning is the result of systematic abuse of villagers by "nobles." This change corresponds, of course, to the change of meaning of "noble" from "one having the status of nobility" to "one having elevated intentions." The general servility of speakers of English is visible in the change of meaning; the vast majority identified with their oppressors and flattered them, becoming vicious toward the poor and unarmed, whom, at the behest of the "nobility," they cast as wicked rather than desperate.

Beheadings in Drake's time were followed by people gathering the blood in bowls and apothecaries butchering, drying, pounding, and selling the flesh and bones of supposedly medicinal purposes. Literary Academics prefer to remember only little slivers of "high culture," imagining it was representative of something other than their own aspirations to class, and ignore the facts of social history. But Titus Andronicus, with bodies littered over the stage and meidocre writing, was a play more typical of British culture than the rest of Shakespeare. The "Great Chain of Being" was a terrifying fascistic conception that united Christian theology and the state against the poor in the same way that Hindu theology and most Indian principalities united them against Untouchables and Tribals.

Monarchical rule, no matter how elegantly justified, exerts steady pressure to create servility, and has had the same effect everywhere. Modern "democracies" are little different; the heritage of terror felt towards one's supposed superiors, still largely intact through education, bureaucracy, and the mass media, is the primary instrument of imperialist's hold on their homelands in their rape of the environment and the majority of the world's people. This is Kafka's great theme, the distortion of consciousness and impassiveness that perpetual and normalized fear creates.

ii) Victims of Political Oppression on their Oppressors: 2 & 5

⁸ See Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *Active Service in Peace and War*, (New York: Harper Brothers, 1947.)

The two speakers undergoing political oppression and portraying their oppressors are a social observer and activist of Muslim background in Ahmedabad in section 2 and a civil servant in Manchuria in section 5. Both have lived through intolerable violence yet emerge clear-headed about their circumstances and the state of their nations. The first sees no prospects for improvement, but the second does. Yet out of righteous rage, the first, though actually more desperate, is willing to speak wherever he can get a hearing, while the second, not believing that communication about what he believes can do any good, keeps his mouth shut and goes his way.

2: On February 27, 2002, the coach of a train bound for Ayodhya and filled with Hindutva activists was burned. On February 28, right wing Hindu groups in Ahmedabad began to terrorize Muslim neighborhoods. The massacres spread through Gujarat on March 1; 1,000 to 2,000 Muslims were murdered, and a half million needed to flee their homes. The count is not known because half a million Muslims fled and many bodies were burned and disposed of unidentified and unclaimed.

The murders in Gujarat had three distal causes mediated by politicians. First, the Bharatiya Janata Party has risen to power by focusing all attention on Ayodhya, the Indian counterpart of Jerusalem, and on February 27, 2002, unknown arsonists presumed to be Muslim terrorists burned a train carrying Hindu pilgrims and activists to Ayodhya. (There are reasons to doubt the presumption.) Second, Pakistani and Indian businessmen both exploit Kashmir, so both groups do their best through politicians to prevent Kashmiri independence so they won't lose their expected profits. In Gujarat politicians planned the riots to increase "patriotic" rage against Pakistan. Third, the US "War against Terror" gave US cooperation to the Indian government's oppression of Muslims on grounds of suspicion of terrorism. (John Pilger's article in *The New Statesman*, volume 15, no. 737, Dec. 15-30, 2002, pp. 13-14. raises the possibility that the arsonists could have been US-inspired if the purpose was to provide justification for action against Pakistan.)

The speaker, scholarly, sophisticated, and passionately committed to secularism and justice, piles irony on irony in his bitter outrage. He understands but at this moment is helpless to act. He feels as if his brain were on fire, as Old Testament prophets felt when they perceived that everyone was doing the wrong thing. Insightful people who don't belong to ruling class, and so can't act directly on their perceptions, sometimes feel this. To avoid this unbearable frustration, the middle class deceives itself systematically.

The potential to be assaulted merely because of who one is believed to be is one of our primal political experiences, consciously shared by most minority groups, uniting them against outsiders.

5: On September 18, 1931, officers of the Japanese Kwantung Army blew up a South Manchurian Railway train in Mukden to create an excuse to invade Manchuria. The League of Nations failed to act. Henry Stimson (see section 20) issued the "Stimson Doctrine" that the US would not recognize Japanese claims, but the US did nothing. For the next 18 years, Manchuria experienced the occupation, war, and chaos that the speaker, a humane and conscientious civil servant in the town of Huazi outside Mukden, describes. He is schooled in the Confucian classics and took his education very seriously. Mao deeply offends his sense of tradition, but he has lost his belief that Chiang Kai-shek, whose *views* he basically shares, has anything better to offer. The speaker has been knocked out of the middle class to which he belonged; the Japanese did not allow him to work, and the warlords did not respect his learning, but, he thought, had reverted to barbarism. He begins by quoting the *I Ching* on modesty, and reflects that Mao's position, despite his anti-Confucian rhetoric, is more consistent with it than Chiang's. Mao claims to be a materialist, Chiang to be an idealist, yet he feels Chiang's idealism is hypocritical and Mao is in fact promising to restore at least some of the ancient principles Chiang scorns in action. So he commits himself to Mao on the basis of principle, though he knows other Confucians would not accept his explanation and that he could have a high price to pay for his former and privately continuing Confucian convictions.

The speaker is far more committed to the conventional order than the Muslim activist. Under better circumstances, he would practice self-deception. But the conventional order no longer exists, and he refuses to deceive himself about that. Therefore he must undergo the wrenching process of self-evaluation and evaluation of his society, and in the process makes the best choice available, to support Mao against Chiang. In his adaptability he is exemplary of the goodness and good sense of fairly ordinary people. His speech is powerful because he has had to condense his experience to be able to make his decision. From a distance, ideologues normally discount such decisions as opportunism. But he is no opportunist. He wants to live and wants his town and family to live. He is a mature and thoughtful man who has succeeded in evaluating the prospects of his country realistically, and who has shed dogma for good reason.

Though he is opting for revolution, what guides him is actually conservatism. Both sides in a conflict always misunderstand and undervalue such people. The US fiasco in Vietnam was largely caused by the total inability of American officials and military to perceive that communism in Vietnam was supported by essentially conservative community values, as it has been in many places. What American conservatives cannot understand about themselves is that, while they think of themselves as conservatives, to the rest of the world they are anything but conservative, for they insist on transforming the world to make it accommodate itself to private industry and private profit.

iii) Pleas of Victims of Political Oppression: 15 & 9

Both of these people are perpetually threatened with violent death and the death of everyone they love. The first has no escape, and so lives with perpetual dread and sorrow. The second believes she can escape, and is willing to do so with no resources whatsoever but her imagination and her knowledge of nature.

15: The speaker is a 56-year-old Sunni mechanical drawing teacher in a large high school in Baghdad. In his youth he was both more political and more religious than he is now. A fair man, he did not discriminate among his students on the basis of their backgrounds, and had some conflicts with the school administration over this, particularly during the war with Iran. His eldest son was killed in that war. His youngest daughter died of dysentery in 1992. His wife is often sick and has become quite reclusive.

He is now rarely paid and the high school is often closed for lack of funds. He does occasional contract work for architects. He often has to borrow from his elder brother and his uncle. His close friends are other teachers. He visits their families and goes with them and their friends on errands of mutual assistance. A half million Iraqis have died because of US attacks and the embargo. Life has become a routine of finding used spare parts, food, items that doctors need to treat patients in the families of friends, arranging burials and funerals. His daily life has some similarities to Leopold Bloom's.

He sits and drinks spiced tea with four old friends. He is glad to be with them, but not involved in their conversation, which has turned to politics. He is tired. He leans with his back against the wall and the images he has seen in the last few days pass through his mind.

The sort of passivity this speaker has is quite different from that the speakers in 4 and 8 have. The speaker is not intellectually or emotionally passive at all. Instead, he really *is* powerless unless he wants to undertake some kind of suicide mission, either against the US or his own government, and he's neither militant nor religious nor crazy enough to do that. But, except for doing what he's doing, trying to pick up a few of the pieces of the wreck from time to time, there's nothing he *can* do with his perceptions except, if he wishes, turn them into some kind of art. But he feels no inspiration to do that, and why should he? It's only an interesting poem if you're not *there*. Where *he* is, the metaphors are drowned out by reality.

9: The speaker is an Anasazi woman living in what is now called Chaco Canyon, New Mexico. The Anasazis, probably ancestors of the present-day Hopi, were fine architects and built the most extensive irrigation system in the ancient US southwest.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Aztecs were migrating around northern Mexico and the American southwest, eventually to end up in Mexico City. At that time the Aztecs were more closely related to the Anasazi. The poem assumes that the evidence of cannibalism found in Chaco Canyon and carbon-dated to the mid-twelfth century were the work of early Aztecs, but the practice may have been spread among several groups.

The speaker is not accustomed to cannibalism and does not accept it; members of her extended family have been victims of it. She is preparing to leave Chaco Canyon because she anticipates that cannibalistic raids will become more frequent and worse. The Kachinas are the gods of the Hopi and were probably gods of the Anasazi. At night village men dress as the Kachinas and dance before the people, concealing their personal identities. I assume that most of the men of the village attempted to continue as normal even after the cannibalism began to intrude. Before 1200 the Anasazis had collapsed, so the protection of the Kachinas was becoming progressively less effective, either because of attacks of outside groups or because some of the men were converting to cannibalism themselves.

In readying herself to leave the world she knows to rely wholly on nature, she pins her hopes on Kokopelli. Images of Kokopelli are extremely wide-spread, carved on rock from Utah south to Peru, and are used now on pottery and woven goods. The poem presumes that Kokopelli was led people in their escape from the marauding Aztecs, that he was a freedom fighter. He is always drawn with a hunched back and a flute. The hunch is often said to be a bag of provisions. It is always said that women loved him. He may have some similarity to Pan and Osiris. I assume that the reason women loved him was that he would not give in to the Aztec-associated primarily male military religiosity that regarded cannibalism as a rite of holy victory, but that he helped women and children escape from cannibal raids. I conjecture that the rock etchings of Kokopelli may have served a purpose similar to that of symbols used by the Underground Railway in the 1800's to help slaves escape from the American South. The Aztecs were the people of the hummingbird, so her admiration for Kokopelli is that his music travels further than the Aztecs can.

Tzitzimime are skeleton people the Aztec religion held to live to the north and west of them. The guilty blame those they have injured and suspiciously expect retaliation because they know they have given cause to desire to retaliate. They dehumanize those they intend to injure. I assume that the origin of the tzitzimime myth is that before the Aztecs arrived in central Mexico, they cannibalized peoples to the north and west and justified themselves with the story that they had really attacked people who were only skeletons anyway, that is people who did not need their flesh.

Mictlan is the Aztec land of the dead. Aztlan is the Aztec name for the land they came from, an area I assume includes Chaco Canyon. The speaker knows the summer solstice because the north walls of Chaco Canyon are aligned so that the sun only strikes them that one day each year. The Aztec calendar shares many terms and concepts with the calendars of other Meso-American groups, so I assume the speaker probably used the same or related terms for time. As mentioned above, Nemontemi is the Aztec name for the five day intercalary period, the most chaotic and destructive time of year, and One Rabbit was the most terrible year in the 52-year cycle. It was due to arrive in 1142.

I place this woman as a pure victim because all she can do is try to escape. Her spirit isn't broken, but her prospects for life are. She can only hope that her children or grandchildren may someday have some, and try to keep them alive so they can.

iv) Political Oppressors who Attempt to Alter their Roles: 13 & 17

The speaker's representative of those who try to reform their roles as political oppressors are a teacher in a detention center for juvenile delinquents and Ashoka, King of the Maurya. Reform of power is the most complex and delicate process for us because we must alter our relationships in all three dimensions of power, and others assert themselves against change in all three. Ashoka will be famous for millenia because, having been born a prince, he had access to all

the levers of power to exert his changed will. The teacher will remain unknown, yet has embarked on the same project as Ashoka.

13: In the Boston slum of Dorchester, an experienced teacher of juvenile delinquents talks to a new teacher. I chose this teacher to reveal one dimension of political power because her position in the dimension of political power is contradictory. On the one hand her labor is justified on the ground that the inmate students have a right to education, but on the other, her power to cause their restraint prevents the establishment of the social relationship necessary for actual teaching and learning. The two teachers are conscientiously aware of their class differences from most of their students, and the listening teacher has suggested that real teaching only begins when the teacher allows the student to teach the teacher. The speaker confirms this and begins to identify some of the things the students want to teach the teachers that the teachers need to learn. The first is to learn to identify how it feels to need, for that is the feeling that drives the students to their crimes and the teachers to their manipulation of students. She discovered that Carlton, a sixteen-year-old gun seller, had a kind of self-knowledge she lacked. When he saw that she acknowledged his insight, and that they were equals before their need, she stopped condescending maternally to him and their relationship became more genuine. What she understood, of course, was that he knew she had taken advantage of his candor to imagine she could replace his mother, but that his unfulfillable need of his mother was something he confronted consciously in the same way he was suggesting she needed to confront honestly her inability to satisfy both her needs at that moment. This new bit of equality, however, is only the establishment of the mutual respect needed for a tolerable relationship in terms of social power. She necessarily remained, in the eyes of the inmates, a “screw,” that is, an authority empowered to carry keys, but she had ceased to be a wholly alien one. Economically, of course, she also remained superior, for though her income was lower than the income of some of the students when they were on the outside, her income, because legal, was secure, while theirs was not. The humbling move toward equalization in social power in their relationship made her a teacher instead of a guard with teaching credentials—which their institutional power makes all teachers when schooling is compulsory. So she freed herself from her official role sufficiently to become capable of some actual teaching.

17: This section is spoken a year before his death by the monarch I believe the most remarkable in the recorded history I’ve read. The section is my estimate of the source and meaning of the humility, astonishing in a ruler, that the first (historical) sentence conveys. After his victory over the Kalingas, Ashoka’s life seems to have become one of penance. He accepted the truth of the Buddhist doctrines that all life is suffering, that all creatures are indebted to other creatures for their lives, and hence that each has the duty to benefit others in return for life. He felt that he had only been willing to destroy hundreds of thousands of people and cause immense and widespread pain because he had not been taught that relationships among living creatures are real and create a real debt. In spreading Buddhism he hoped to put his successors in the spiritual position he felt he should have been in before he gained power, but he realized he had failed because teaching of doctrine in itself is never enough. He knew that it was only the actual experience of his guilt and remorse that had transformed him, that his openness to experience was far less than Gautama’s, that others were more like him, or even worse, than they were like Gautama, and that he could do nothing more than spread Gautama’s word because he had lacked the earnestness to gain Gautama’s insight on his own prior to injuring others. He tried to pour all his economic and political power into the mold of social power, but he could not change the will of others to subordinate morality and insight to economic and political power, so he left behind only a social institution too weak to withstand the pressures on it. He therefore despaired of repaying his enormous debts to the creatures and believed he would require many incarnations before he would find release from suffering. On his death the Maurya kingdom fell into chaos and Buddhism was gradually extinguished in India over the next 1500 years, yet Ashoka had an effect on institutional religion comparable to Paul’s.

B. The Nature of Economic Oppression: 16, 11; 14, 3; 8, 4; 24, 6

i) Economic Oppressors on their Oppression: 16 & 11

The two representative economic oppressors are an unnamed IBM inventor and Cornelius Driscoll. The inventor is brilliant but, because he lacks accurate self-awareness and tries to succeed solely through his intelligence, he is now failing in his increasingly frantic efforts to exploit others. Driscoll achieves great exploitative success because he is psychopathic and does not value himself enough to be averse to risk. He accounts for his success by the false explanation that he is intelligent.

16: This IBMer is a true technocrat in trouble. He has learned to think of himself as a genius; he has been told his I.Q. is over 180, and he enjoys proving it as well as using it. But he has long been intensely dissatisfied with himself because he believes his accomplishments should be correspondingly great. He finds that the fate of his work always depends on other people and events outside his control. What counts is what project he gets, whom he must work with, and how he presents himself. Even when he believes he has made a great accomplishment, he must share credit for it with others and the esteem he gets for it rapidly fades before the demands of the next project.

He knows that his success in the computer world depends not on his enormous mathematical ability, but on his ability to impress others with the notion that his ideas will pan out. He wants to work for Microsoft because he has concluded that IBM can no longer give scope to his ambition. In adopting the entrepreneurial role, he pushes it too far and ends up parodying it by making his prospects entirely implausible and by half-consciously insulting Gates out of envy. He's uncomfortably aware that something is wrong here, but is not in complete control of it, for it is not an analytical issue, but one of phrasing, style, and feeling. He lacks the necessary self-confidence to pull it off in the slightly subtle way in which it must be done. He's somehow coming off as a rube, and he knows it. That is why he writes to his friend instead of writing directly to Gates.

He feels himself becoming mentally unstable. Paranoia and delusions of grandeur are interfering with his work late at night. He imagines he can get Gates' attention by appealing to pure avarice and lust for power because he is childishly naïve about what is actually involved in entrepreneurship, particularly the amount of cynical insight into character it normally takes. In his grandiosity he imagines that powerful people like Gates feel more in control of their lives than they actually do. He is unwilling to face the fear and depression he feels himself, and so cannot imagine that Gates might feel any, though it ought to occur to him that Hearst, whom he contrasts with Gates, was the Gates of his day, and *Citizen Kane* made Hearst's eventual derangement world-famous. We are seeing the IBMer at his worst, when the fantasy that underlies his ambition is most visible.

He fully intends to exploit, but does not regard himself as exploitative; he thinks he is simply achieving, which he thinks it is his right to do because he thinks himself superior. It does not occur to him what he actually demands of others, the time and energy and risk he is requiring them to take. Nor does it occur to him that what he regards as enormous intellectual achievement might not have any genuine value to anyone, or that one might charge far more for it than it is actually worth to anyone else. He discounts such practical considerations of other people because he construes them as the resentful backward opinions of stupid people.

The IBMer now wants to jump ship, but he's far too late. Gates would recognize his effort as the belated mid-life crisis of an ex-child prodigy. What the IBMer says about fact, including the calculations, of course, is literally true, but he has deleted the detail Gates can easily discover, that there were six others on the team that made the first nanotechnological electron photomicrograph. The IBMer was 21 at the time and just beginning his post-doctoral work; he got onto the team because of his reputation for his ability to find mathematical shortcuts for lengthy calculations. Tragically, he regards his work then as his greatest accomplishment. An extraordinarily brilliant student, he was too dependent on praise and admiration to become

independent; he stayed with IBM so long because his co-workers were so impressed by him. Gates knows perfectly well that IBM has been stripping the Watson research staff of resources since the mid-80s when he began systematically taking over IBM's market share and IBM responded by shifting resources to sales. By 1990 Gates was becoming suspicious of any researcher who stayed on at Watson because he believed the hangers-on were too dependent and unambitious to do original work, and by 2001 Gates had dismissed them all out of hand. The IBMer wants to impress Gates with his entrepreneurial spirit, but nothing he could say could convince Gates he has it. No one knows better than Bill Gates how the entrepreneurial spirit makes people behave.

Though I find the notion of emotional intelligence a bit unintelligible, it is clear that no amount of intelligence can substitute for emotional maturity because intelligence is wholly in the service of one's motives. Only adversity makes one discover one's motives because it forces one to choose among them. Consequently consistent success keeps people immature—the classic problem of supreme rulers, like Caligula and Commodus—or, in a diminished form, Alexander Haig, notorious for his temper tantrums. Some failure is good for the soul. Though the IBMer has vastly more resources and esteem, the character he is actually most like is the toy salesman in section 4.

11: Driscoll seems to be fairly typical of slave traders once the trade was illegal. He was the Irish immigrant captain of the American brig Hope, one of hundreds of ships that continued the slave trade long after it had become illegal in Britain and the US. In one recorded speech he guaranteed his crew that a thousand dollar bribe would exempt any of them from charges, leaving them a large margin of profit. Here he instructs his new First Mate on how to assist him in bargaining for slaves.

Driscoll appears totally independent and invulnerable in his relationships, as the IBMer wishes he were. Driscoll trusts no one and believes he needs no one. The latter is complete self-deception available to him because of his position; he is totally dependent the collectivity of people he is able to feed on: his crew, who serve him because they're almost as greedy as he is, all his kidnapped passengers, who serve because he leaves them no choice, Aladdin, who in effect serves for prestige, the police, who serve for bribes, and the buyers, who in effect serve for greed and power.

Because Driscoll is successful and everything he does is calculated, he believes himself extremely intelligent. To others he seems intelligent because he picks up fragments of many languages and always knows his way around. But these abilities he has because of a kind of mental economy; he never indulges in considering anything from anyone else's point of view, never considers abstractions, and never examines himself. Because he is calculated, he also assumes he conceals himself. Yet his personality reveals itself everywhere through the assumptions he is oblivious to making. His homophobia, for instance, visible to the observer, merely fuels his misperceptions of his own actions. Many of the mistakes he makes never rebound on him because he's in a unique position: he has the cash and control of the ship, and the people he's enslaving are destitute and in chains. The steep power differential allows him to be an idiot without knowing it: he can actually treat people as things. Everything he says is despicable, and he has no notion of its actual truth, its meaning to other people, its tragic consequences, or its awful incongruity.

Driscoll is the pure type of the exploiter. He thinks there is nothing wrong with what he is doing because that's just how Africa is. He doesn't ask if that is true or by what process it got that way; to him, asking into such matters can only be motivated by idealism, which he considers the mark of the self-deceptive fool. He knows absolutely nothing about the kidnapped people he is buying cheap. He doesn't actually know anything about Aladdin, either: he thinks Aladdin is very canny and is trying to outsmart him, but in fact Aladdin comes from an entirely different set of conventions and perceptions, about which Driscoll has no clue. There is nothing that could happen to Driscoll that could make him change his basic assumptions. He is so whole-heartedly

devoted to greed that he would regard any event solely as it affected his ability to satisfy his greed.

Totally focused on making his deal, he thinks himself a very sharp operator and a fine model for his First Mate. Engaged in a conventional, though illegal activity, Driscoll can charm his First Mate, disarming him with what seems to be occasional candor, and dazzling him with what seems like extensive knowledge in this situation the First Mate has not encountered before.

Driscoll consciously thinks himself a fairly nice fellow. He believes he is being quite magnanimous to his First Mate in giving him a bit of the action. Because he is so self-centered, Driscoll gets into conflicts easily. But because he's so mistrustful, he normally strikes first or secretly and wins, getting away before retaliation can be mounted, scorning and laughing at his defeated enemy. He always has a thousand casual explanations for his aggression, and is good at making the people he momentarily relies on feel that each such act depended on some circumstance not known to the observer, and that Driscoll would never do such a thing to *him*. They always find out too late that they're wrong. Driscoll can pull this off because he *does* think he's a nice fellow. He enjoys acting the part. He is virtually never aware of the self-hatred that feeds his continuous diversion from himself. His actual, unconscious, opinion of himself is that he's slime. That's why he doesn't want to think about himself, but only about what he wants.

The IBMer we see at his worst, but Driscoll we see at his most competent; illegality put a premium on canniness, and at this moment he is able to marshal all his energy to succeed.

ii) Victims of Economic Oppression Resisting their Oppressors: 14 & 3

The victims of economic oppression who describe their oppressors are Papunehang and a peasant follower of Brother Thomas Muntzer. Both try valiantly, but neither will succeed, the first because his tribe is outnumbered and surrounded, the second because peasant life is local and not enough peasants can sufficiently organize themselves to withstand the onslaught of the nobles and the religious establishment. Papunehang will convert to Christianity and become fairly well known as a peace-maker. The peasant will return to farming, relieved he is still alive, but even more destitute than he is now.

14: Papunehang, a Delaware chief, a sachem, born in 1705, summarizes the character of the British colonists. The son of William Penn and other Pennsylvanians defrauded the Delaware by claiming that a fifty-year-old deed gave the British Quakers the right to the land one man could walk around. To mark out this claim, on August 25, 1737, three men with horses went as fast as they could in relay, an act the colonists deceitfully called "The Walking Purchase." Papunehang was a remarkably peaceful and gentle man. When he rises to speak in the Delaware counsel the next week, he does his best to understand how the Delaware could have allowed themselves to be maneuvered into the position they were then in, which made it suicidal for them to resist Pennsylvania's claim because the Delaware's most powerful enemy, the Iroquois, had allied themselves with the colonists to enforce the claim. The Walking Purchase was the most conspicuous breach of Quaker ideals of fair negotiations with indigenous Americans. It exemplifies the limit that possession of economic and political power places on uses of the social power of religion. Papunehang himself converted to Christianity and maintained good relations through his life with Quakers, like John Woolman, who preferred living by Quaker principles to seeking money and power. An introspective man, he told Woolman, "I love to feel where words come from." I chose to examine this type of oppression in this particular situation because, of all Christian groups, the Quakers have been most consistent in their pacifism, respect for conscience and for equity, yet greed and dishonesty ruled in their destruction of the Delaware, the indigenous group that had treated them best. All other groups of colonists were far worse than the Quakers.

With Papunehang's assessment of the colonists, of course, I am in whole-hearted agreement.

3: Followers create leaders. Brother Thomas Muntzer was worth following because he accepted his followers as equals, as Luther did not. Yet this follower, a genuine man, believes he needs Muntzer to speak for him, and in expressing this, uses Luther's line, "I have no other." He

says it because he aspires to the heroism he believes Luther to have in breaking off from Rome, and so to screw up his courage, pictures himself as truly resolved in the way that Luther did. But Luther's resolution arose because he had become so conspicuous that his theological bridges were burnt behind him. The speaker cannot actually be in that position, and to the extent that he is, for he has paid his tithes and his dues to the earl. Under his oppression, the consequence, of course, is his family's starvation, so he believes his resolve is as great, but if he lasts to the next harvest, his emergency will have passed, for he has not actually offended the religious and political powers, but has merely realized that his subservience does not guarantee his life. Because the followers constitute the power of the leaders, to the leaders the followers come to appear to be interchangeable, and so they become willing to violate the will of the minority of them. Muntzer does not intend this, yet his followers are so attuned to this order of human relationships that they hold unconscious reserve in their minds which makes them view their leaders as interchangeable also. Thus Luther, not Muntzer, won even while he betrayed the peasants because Luther stayed closer to the norms of feudal rule to which the peasants were accustomed. Luther demanded less risk of them even while he cooperated in their slaughter.

The position of the peasant is a counterpart of the position of the Canadian poet in 8. The reason I place the peasant here is because, though he feels unable to speak for himself publicly, he does not feel defeated and is not aware of the latent weakness in his position. If the poet had what the peasant has or the peasant what the poet has, that person would be a liberator like Muntzer.

iii) Pleas of Victims of Economic Oppression: 8 & 4

Two men, one deeply rooted, the other entirely rootless, suffer the same kind of problem, but react entirely differently.

8: A local Canadian poet says what has happened to his town at the hands of Brian Mulroney, who was funded to run successfully for Prime Minister because of his willingness to sacrifice his own hometown to the global ambitions of Canadian capital. I chose Canada to examine this aspect of globalization because for the last ten years the UNDP has always listed Canada among the countries highest in "human development," and indeed it deserves to be so listed because only Norway has both a higher per capita income adjusted for purchasing power parity and a more even distribution of income; countries wealthier per capita, like Luxembourg, the US, and Switzerland, have governments less concerned with welfare of citizens. If Brian Mulroney can ruin his hometown, the leadership of every country now has that power. Thus Papunehang has given an adequate description of the personalities of leaders who behave this way, and leaders on the international stage need little further personal description; they behave as they do because such behavior generally succeeds in its goals.

I place the poet here because, though he has the confidence to represent himself, he feels defeated and has given up on representing himself. In person, on the issues of his town, he is quite clear. But he is accustomed to representing himself only in the aestheticized form of verse, which he feels he cannot any longer bend to what he feels because what he feels is not beautiful. He has allowed himself to be defeated by the standards of his childhood love of poetry; he thinks what he has to say is not poetry, but he is wrong. Had he been raised in the Scottish tradition of flychting, he'd feel differently. But his concept of himself is incompatible with his perception of reality, and he blocks his urge to reconcile them because it calls up too much of what he does not like about himself and so can't embody in poetry. If he quit poetry and took to prose with a vengeance, his poetry would come back to him much improved later. But he is addicted to poetry as an escape from the world.

4: The American toy salesman is a common sort in the US now. He is in a position similar to the German peasant in section 3, yet he will not attempt to take a stand. He acknowledges no leader and no genuine community, and he lives in a country so filled with surplus value that he can rely on his retired father to compensate for his mistakes in negotiating the contingencies of his oppression. Unlike the peasant, he assists in the exploitation of others.

His hail-fellow-well-met mask, which cripples him in any effort to deal with the reality of his own or others' problems, comes down in his family, revealing an aging child, presumptuous, envious, and petty. The peasant is a man. This guy is not. The basic reason he is not is that he has no genuine relationships with others because where he lives people do not take responsibility to secure genuine relationships. Whenever one fails to make contact with another, one can always pass on to someone else. There is little need anywhere to develop actuality; one turns the channel, switches jobs, attends a different church, gets new poker buddies, moves to a new neighborhood. The only person he really knows is his father. Only his father has kept with him after seeing through him. He is afraid his wife will leave him. She probably will; their divorce will be his first major public disgrace and his first opportunity to begin to find out what is inside him.

The toy salesman really does not know if he is an oppressor or one of the oppressed. He's both. He's a transmission mechanism for oppression, and he doesn't understand either the effects of others on him and his actions or the effects of his own actions on others. He is the most naïve character in the poem. The poet in 8 is defeated; the salesman has never attempted anything. The tragedy of his life is that, compared to the Iraqi teacher in section 15 and the Anasazi woman in section 8, he is almost infinitely free, yet he adopts the role of the victim because he cannot form judgments about his own or others' behavior. He suffers from a socially caused psychological bondage that makes him an economic victim. If he were not such a "materialist," if he weren't so greedy and conventional, he could not have arrived at this condition and would not experience such problems as problems, but merely as the facts of life nearly everyone faces. As the forms of oppression generally interact, the forms of victimization generally cooperate. Perhaps we will see him again as a child experiencing the breed of social oppression that has made him so vulnerable to money. I suspect we'll find him later feeling like the guy in section 24.

iv) People who Attempt to Alleviate Economic Oppression: 24 & 6

Issues of economic reform are similarly raised by an unnamed and unknown Bostonian and a justly famous man, the Anarchist-Marxist Ernst Bloch. Their dissimilarity is in the intellectual and social resources they have to rely on when we meet them, not in their hearts.

24: This section is spoken by a Boston salesman who has lost everything but his desire to live. Once fairly prosperously middle class, he did not wish to return to his former life because of the false social basis he found it had. His was a typical class-bound marriage of shared ambition of the sort the toy salesman in section 4 has and the speaker in section 21 first had. When he failed to fulfill his wife's expectations, she divorced him, leaving him in debt. He tried for some time to put his life back together, then gradually found he preferred his penniless leisure to any work his previous career might make him eligible for. He read in the library and talked to anyone who wanted to talk to him and felt secure enough on minimal welfare not to worry about the future, though he may have lacked foresight in doing so. Street people, whose advisor he became, called him Mr. Coffee because he usually had a styrofoam cup. He earned their respect because he listened openly and responded honestly without thought of gain. His hope was for the world as a whole; he regarded the main source of human misery as disordered affections, and always advised people to think more closely about themselves and other people rather than either to bemoan their state or to pursue ambitions. Social workers regarded him as incorrigible but could not at the time refuse him all benefits because he could always produce some evidence of his unemployability. He was sophisticated enough about business to know that rewards were governed more by the amount of risk employers believed they were taking in hiring any employee than by their actual productivity, and had paid sufficient taxes in the past not to feel any guilt about accepting welfare. He did not regard himself as unproductive; he felt he was as productive as the average teacher or clerk, and he was, so he thought there was poetic justice in allowing tax money to support him. When asked what he did, he sometimes responded, "Oh, I'm another state functionary, like about 15% of the people around here." He knew this would get him an odd look, but was prepared to convert any comeback into the beginning of a conversation. His view concludes the poem thematically because prosperity and power are only minimally

necessary for contentment, technology has advanced so far that productivity can no longer be regarded in material terms, and self-respect and hope must in any case replace dependency on the social good of others' esteem. His level of success in his project is on a rough par with that of the teacher in section 13; in a society that views success in almost purely conventional terms, he freed himself from his formerly manipulative life to do some of what he actually wanted to do.

6: This is Ernst Bloch's speech to his wife. In the Spring of 1953, when Crick and Watson published their discovery of DNA, Bloch was at the University of Leipzig, where he too believed he had discovered the secret ordering principle of life. The East German Communist Party officials were becoming suspicious of his writing and editing while he was preparing to publish the first volume of *The Principle of Hope*, his greatest work. Rejected by both the Western capitalist world and the Communists, he resolved nevertheless to proceed. He starts by reflecting that workers everywhere continue to behave remarkably like the workers Robert Tressell in 1906 so faithfully described in Britain's greatest socialist novel, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*. His basic revision of then current official Marxism was in his insistence that any beneficial revolution could never be a purely economic matter, was never determined by economic forces alone, and had to attend to some of the anarchist principles Marx was then believed by most Marxists to have as thoroughly refuted as he had roundly condemned. Bloch's empathy and social insight was more acute than Marx's. Bloch's Marxist opponents tried to substitute dogmatism for commitment, scholarship, and imagination. It is a tragedy of the last century that Bloch was unable to get a good hearing for his position, but Marxism in power had rapidly become too paranoid and ossified to respond to an honest critique that expanded into the dimensions of political and social power what Marx had begun in the dimension of economic power. The difficulties Bloch faced left Marxists without an adequate response to Freud, Nietzsche, Weber, Russell, and other analyses of society that dodged Marx's most basic insight, that the entire economic order was merely the standard depersonalization of social relationships for the purpose of extracting surplus value. Marx's greatest weaknesses, his general contempt for ethics and aesthetics and for legal and democratic principles to constrain pure political power, Bloch knew were vitiating Marxism in power, and these internal weaknesses have contributed greatly to the movement's now having essentially retreated to the drawing board. In spite of all opposition, Bloch left an analysis as rich in imaginative scholarship as Braudel's, a similar treasure for the future of the matter that has sunk to the bottom in the stream of history, as Francis Bacon once said everything weighty did. That new tradition, which writers like Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, William Faulkner, Noam Chomsky, Eduardo Galeano, John Pilger, and Gene Sharp share in creating, is our strongest hope for the future.

C. The Nature of Social Oppression: 22, 10; 19, 23; 1, 7; 21, 12

i) Social Oppressors on their Oppression: 22 & 10

The two social oppressors are a head weaver in Kanazawa and Jean Galand. Both enjoy humiliating others and making them suffer, but rationalize their enjoyment in entirely different terms.

22: Of the six determined oppressors, this weaver is furthest down in the power hierarchies. He is a very common sort, an authoritarian determined to steer his family to success. Their success depends on the character of the then ten-year-old Tokugawa order. The Tokugawa had used feudal violence to require that all rice be collected as tax and distributed as stipend, thus subordinating the economic hierarchy entirely to the political hierarchy. Then they set up the "five family system" by which all Japanese were organized in groups of five families, and each family was required to help and spy on each other so that strict social rules could be enforced, thereby subordinating the dynamic of the social power hierarchy to the political hierarchy also. With all three forms of power monopolized by daimyos in fealty to the Tokugawas, Japanese society was rigidly stable until Perry's arrival in 1853. The weaver's self-justification shows that those who suffered most in that system were the women. The weaver construes his daughter-in-

law's agony and abandonment as her own fault and his son's heartlessness as his virtue because he is so fearful of the local Maeda daimyo and samurai that his daughter-in-law's spontaneity fills him with the dread that openly expressed vitality must lead to death. He envies vitality.

10: Jean Galand was one of the initiators of what came to be known as the Spanish Inquisition. In 1286 he tortures a Cathar for a confession that the man is in league with the devil. Galand is obsessed and monotonous. He needs the confession because his belief in his own goodness is, quite justifiably, so weak that anyone who does not agree with him represents a genuine threat to his own ability to believe that he knows god and is himself saved. He wants to think his victim possessed because he wants his victim's perception of the theocratic order to which he, Galand, has resentfully subordinated himself, to become literally unthinkable. He kills because he cannot bear freedom; the fear that he devotes his life to something meaningless fills him with such rage at his self-betrayal that he has become addicted to causing agony as the only diversion strong enough to keep his attention away from his self-doubt. Later that year Galand was censured for his excesses.

ii) Victims of Social Oppression on their Oppressors: 19 & 23

The sufferers of social oppression who describe their oppressors are a 15-year-old boy in Pennsylvania and a Black Vietnam veteran in a Veterans Administration hospital. No one cares what the first thinks, so his freedom of thought is untrammelled, but the other becomes the object of intense and hostile scrutiny and reacts aggressively to preserve the integrity of his insight.

19: The boy speaks on the date of J. F. Kennedy's assassination. He finds himself strangely unmoved for several reasons. First, in the previous week he has witnessed the uncovering of a bum's corpse, so he wants to know why, if death is so horribly tragic, as everyone is saying that day, no one was concerned about the bum's death. Second, the previous school assembly was called to lecture the students on the "gang bang" of a student by many members of the football team. The principal used so many euphemisms and circumlocutions that the boy does not know exactly what happened and does not expect honesty from the principal now. Third, the student who is most effusively upset by Kennedy's death is the most snobbish girl in his class, so he can't believe that the displays of emotion around him have unselfish motives. Despite his naivete about sex, the boy is not naïve about human emotion, so to him such public emotion betrays self-deception. The form of the section is the inverse of the sonnet form, for the perception is the inverse of Drake's sonnet, the classical impulse of propriety, which regarded the ruler as the central figure of society, having been destroyed by its heartlessness.

23: The Vietnam veteran took LSD with a friend outside Taos, New Mexico, where he had gone to join the hippie movement to recover from the war and repudiate it. Instead, his White friend started talking about cannibalism. There was a rumor it had once been practiced by the Anasazi Indians in nearby Chaco Canyon. (The rumor, as often happens, we found to be slanderous in section 9.) The killing the two G.I.'s had done in the War makes him attend to the not-so-latent violence in his friend, and he becomes convinced that his friend's conversation is leading up to a desire to kill and eat him. Both are high and confused about the facts. His friend has confused the Anasazis, who were cannibalized, with the Anastazis, who had catacombs (rather like lands of the tzitzimime.) To escape, he hitches a ride home to Watts in Los Angeles, but gets into trouble with racist police in Arizona and is taken to the V.A. Hospital. Here he talks to the psychiatrist about his fixation on teeth. The psychiatrist has been trying to bring him down with thorazine, but it cannot suppress his rage at the circumstances of the whole of his life. He sees that the psychiatrist is still engaged in the same basic project men like Cornelius Driscoll had. Because oppression is a group activity, there is some justification for his generalizations, but people normally do not take responsibility for the injuries their groups inflict on other groups, so the Vet's route to psychological self-liberation the psychiatrist regards as insane, particularly because he's the momentary target and is addicted to "fixing" people. The dread of being consumed is hardly unrealistic; it's just not admitted in US society. In countries like China and India the fear is commonly admitted, though it has no more immediate ground there than in the

US. Europeans, and particularly monarchs, often ate mummy, as Drake instructed. And the psychiatrist certainly is the direct line of descent of the powers that traded slaves, and shares many of their attitudes. He is, in prison parlance, a “screw,” like the teacher in 13, but won’t admit it, and a wage slave too. Some form of bondage has been the typical condition of the majority of humankind for at least 2500 years and probably began to become the typical human condition 10,000 years ago with the first permanent settlements, as the speaker of section 21 knows. Only hunters and gatherers have traditionally been free of it. Yet, because he is so inveterately condescending to his patients, the psychiatrist sees this as bizarre ideation. The primary function of the hospital is to humiliate people into normal behavior, that is, to prevent them from challenging the normal oppression that serves the pillars of society.

iii) Pleas of Victims of Social Oppression for Release: 1 & 7

The power of social oppression is most underestimated. It can obliterate the first because he seeks a better future. Because the second has no ambition, he can withstand it though it makes his life impossibly difficult.

1: I will not say more about this poor young man, but will treat him at a respectful distance.

Because it usually signifies heartbreak, suicide is often the most heartbreaking thing a person can do. There is some reason to call “oppressive” suicides that devastate those who loved the self-murderer, but the reason rarely seems adequate because it is implausible that many people can take such action unless they believe themselves to be in an intolerable position. Usually the intolerability is the result of some form of social oppression so undermines self-esteem that, no matter what the suicide expresses to others, the person believes he or she is literally better off dead. Our capacity to believe such a thing is almost never the result of political oppression, and even economic oppression in itself seems not to be adequate. The relative commonness of suicide compared to other forms of humanly-caused death indicates that we are far more delicate social creatures than we normally understand ourselves to be. Far less is known about how we exert social pressure on each other than about how we exert economic and political pressure. The reason for this is that we all do it, and don’t want to take responsibility for what we do, so we collectively don’t want to know. The ratio of the amount of money spent on researching economic transactions to that spent researching the causes of suicide must be above 10,000:1.

So the poem begins with something of a mystery, one similar to the mystery of why we continue to destroy our sole means of support, the earth.

7: It is Rohini, the last week of May and the first week of June, the hottest two-week period on the east coast of India, just before the Monsoons bring clouds and rain in abundance. Temperatures can reach 50 celsius. There has been no substantial rain since February. People die. Animals die. This is 1943. The Bengal famine rages just to the north; the British government, busy with war, has paid no attention. There is plenty of rice, but its price has been bid up, so wholesalers will not sell to working poor people even when they are starving and will give anything they have, but hoard the grain or ship it to areas with higher prices. Wages are too low for people to survive. But the focus is on social, not economic oppression, because the first facilitates the latter. The problem is why communication is so poor that famine does not lead to corrective action.

The speaker belongs to one of the Shudra castes. He is responsible to keep the cow of a local Brahmin, and to bring milk and ghee. The cow has died from lack of water and food, and from the heat. When he attempts to report this, however, he is continuously interrupted with secondary issues, primarily regarding his tone. Try as he might, he cannot find a way to speak that is not regarded as impolite.

The Laws of Manu held that if a Shudra heard the Vedas recited, molten lead was to be poured into his ears. The punishment is long gone, but the presumptions behind it remain. A Shudra was held to be once-born, that is, not to have a soul, but to be mere matter. He was therefore held not to be capable of speaking properly because he was held not to be capable of

conceptualizing, ideas being spiritual essences outside his realm. So whatever he says, he is held not to know what he is really saying.

To do his duty, he struggles against this presumption in every way he can, but can't succeed. No amount of politeness can overcome the supposed offensiveness of what he has to say. The facts are regarded as insignificant in themselves, and his non-compliance is held not to be beyond his control, but to arise from some intrinsic moral and intellectual inferiority of his. Kept on the defensive, he gives up.

This scene is the essence of social oppression. Continued interminably, as it can be within a home, it can drive one to suicide.

iv) People who attempt to alter or escape from roles of social oppression: 21 & 12

The speakers for reform of social power are an alienated American academic in Glasgow and a Japanese monk in Kyoto. They are socially engaged in different ways because their societies are different; American society is disintegrating under the impact of economic and political manipulation, while Japanese society remains relatively intact. Barred from any appropriate traditional role by powerful Americans' manipulation of traditional roles of social concern, the American must create his own form of engagement to discover himself and the actual meaning of his relationships with others. The Japanese accepts a traditional role that offers inner freedom and insightful action because his society has wisely preserved that role for the benefit of its other members, who share some mutual recognition of the necessary painfulness of their social bonds, and so did not destroy the institution that provided some escape route.

21: The American tries to help people left destitute by Thatcher, Major, and Blair's destruction of the British welfare system. Raised in a suburb, he set out on an academic career but was more interested in women than success. He and his first wife thought themselves fairly radical politically, and so they seemed to be—in comparison to the people they had grown up among. But when his first wife divorced him, he found their reasons for splitting up saturated with class interests and assumptions, so his introspection began in earnest. He began to discover that the pattern of his interest in women had always been governed by the same paternal ambitions he thought he had rebelled against in his choice of profession, that the women who appealed to him were those World War II had made American men feel they had newly earned the right to conquer. Having thought himself uncommitted to his middle class origins, he realized he needed to throw himself into the lower classes to understand himself, for his own family had risen in class in recent generations, and he did not know how or why. In a woman of lower middle class origins he found the realism and directness his own family had always lacked and experienced actual love undistorted by pretence and pride. Caring for her while she died of cancer, he relinquished some of his family's pretentious ambitions. After her death, he sought a woman of lower class origins, but found her blind will to succeed, though virtually futile, as strong as that which had made for his own parents' and grandparents' rise, and just as able to distort her perceptions. Then totally alienated from American society, in which he could find no replacement for his deceased wife's love, and no work that made sense to him, he left for India, where a lower caste family adopted him and he could finally see human society from the bottom that his family and nearly all Americans had spent their lives trying to escape and avoid. There he understood himself and his family and discovered that understanding people was not so difficult as he had thought, for passions and perceptions are largely shared in common once pretence is gone. He then goes back to the "developed" world, now seeing little difference between the US and Britain, and realizes that the re-deteriorating squalor of Glasgow's slums is merely the condition his own family escaped, that the derelicts were his distant relatives, and that the very forces that were destroying them were those he had been raised to learn to exert. Having lost the desire to exert power over others, he is freed to help them as a merely more fortunate equal, and he knows that his apparent superiors are actually his equals too. His independence and good will arise from his knowledge that he has made his own beginning as much as a person can, and so is

potentially free of the impact of others' desires to praise and blame, free to enjoy and examine his actual experience, and to assert his own beliefs as he discovers them.

12: It is 1966; Japan is just beginning to reestablish its independence after its defeat. Kyoto is the storehouse of tradition, the center of resistance to modernity. The old Buddhist temples are the traditional counter-culture of feudal Japan; in them monks seek freedom from family obligations, social and political entanglements, and the need to buy and sell labor and its products. So long as they maintained some monastic discipline, they were freed from all other traditional and modern restraints in the interests of preserving some spontaneity and candor somewhere. The monk presents himself as a gardener because he eschews recognition for spiritual gifts in order to avoid the traps of pride and flattery. For the sake of grace, after the monk's initial tonka, he and an American poet adopt the conventions of renga in English, each linking his haiku or couplet to the couplet or haiku preceding it. The first four lines are modestly charming, but the fifth, contrasting seeing wayside grass with gardening, carries a tacit criticism muted by the allusion to Bashoo's praise of penniless pilgrimage and Natsume Soseki's desire for freedom from family obligation in his autobiographical novel, *Grass on the Wayside*, in which he quietly contrasts Bashoo's life with his own. The poet responds that in his travel he seeks what the monk seeks, detachment from the blinding passions in which our original families enclose us all in the very process by which we learn language. The monk responds with a Japanese version of the understanding of language postmodernism elaborates, an understanding that has long been embodied in Japan in the Zen idealization of wordlessness, which is partly a philosophical response to the extreme sensitivity of Japanese to status, all nouns being capable of bearing honorifics, and all verbs having status indicators, so that it is impossible to speak Japanese without identifying multiple social positions. The monastic tradition aims largely at attacking the alternately servile and arrogant presuppositions of the Japanese social hierarchy until the acolyte can recognize his latent equality with his master; when the acolyte does so, the master traditionally laughs in delight because his authoritarianism has been seen through and he has acquired a friend who is no longer secretly angry at having had his authoritarianism, in effect, beaten out of him. In the exaggeration of the word "war," the monk associates the Japanese tradition of regard for face with responsibility for World War II because he expects the foreigner to hold this opinion, and wishes to disarm it. Neither of them know the extent of US responsibility for Pearl Harbor that Stimson reveals in section 20. The foreigner, however, is more upset by the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki than by Pearl Harbor, particularly because the conversation takes place on the twenty-first anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, because he was keenly aware of the Cuban Missile Crisis, and because he is alarmed by the rapidly escalating American aggression in Vietnam. So in asserting his own innerness he adds, "We hang by a weak thread." The monk, whose life is more stable and concentrated than the poet's, feels less anxiety, so he says the thread is silk, both beautiful and extraordinarily strong despite its delicacy, and that it is care, tacitly the same care he gives his gardening, thus reinforcing his original point that the detachment he honors is not without commitment. The foreigner does not reply as he slowly absorbs the point, that persisting in a place and activity is more important than he had realized. It was some understanding of the implications of the significance the Japanese traditionally attach to locale that made Stimson know he needed to spare Kyoto if Japan was to accept a period of American rule after the war. Had he bombed Kyoto, he sensed that the Japanese would have felt the US sought to destroy the Japanese soul, and so would have fought longer. So the monk was right; it was the traditional commitment to maintaining temple gardens that saved Kyoto, and the foreigner had no equivalent. The healthier religious orders of intentional community are, in effect, social and economic revolutions encased in glass that simultaneously preserve, isolate, and defuse wider revolutions by giving those with the strongest revolutionary impulses a non-political alternative when political revolution is impossible. The monk is free of most of the arbitrary assumptions motivated by conventions and forces of economic, political, and social power, and it is for that freedom that he accepts his

discipline and finds the meaning of his life. He accepts no doctrine that does not emerge from his own experience, but instead finds his experience consonant with the tradition he loves, for his teachers respected the capacity to act independently on insight.

5. Assessing four relationships to power

The designations “oppressors,” “confronters,” “victims,” and “self-reformers” are not designations of persons, but of relationships to uses of power over others. Nor are they social roles in any conventional sense. But they are roles relative to the rest of society that one can take on.

The controlling passion behind oppression is the desire to conquer, to win. The central passion of confrontation is the desire to obtain justice. Victims desire to avert further loss, to conserve what remains. Self-reformers desire to nurture growth, to heal injury, and not to harm.

These central passions take on different forms in different situations and in different persons. The desire to win can focus on exceeding the competition, or can accelerate into the desire to obliterate opposition, or can content itself with maintaining the continued reaping of rewards for secure superiority in power. The desire to obtain justice can contract to concern only for one’s own, expand to the desire for universal justice, degenerate into the desire for mere revenge, or develop into designs for general reforms or utopian order. Acceptance of the role of victimization by the more powerful can be more or less rational, compulsive, or hysterical, can be elevated into asceticism, stoicism, or martyrdom, or can deteriorate into pathetic toadyism or suicide. The desire to promote growth, to heal, and not to harm can crystallize in the roles of the physician, the teacher, the psychoanalyst, or the compassionate judge, can become abstract in the form of general theory, or can deteriorate into obsessive and finicky pietism, quietism, moral superiority, or identification of the self with the imaginary pure observer.

Every person has multiple roles in relation to others. The number of relational roles can be minimized, as they are in the monarch in the prime of life, the perpetual patient, or the eremite. But even the monarch has parents and advisors, and the patient and eremite have had relationships in which they could not function as patients or eremites, could have such relationships again, and can be compelled to treat different people differently because other people will treat them differently. The eremite does not have quite the same relationship to the person who supplies his vegetables that he has to the tax collector, to a wandering mendicant that he has to the chief of police, to an infant that he has to the president of the World Bank. Diogenes can tell Alexander to move his shadow but must pay the bath attendant. One’s governing passion may drive one toward a particular social niche, but the niche does not allow one to express a pure passion continually because, whatever one’s position, different people need different things of one.

Power itself flows through society. The powerful are powerful only because they are obeyed; the obedience of others flows to them, empowering them to magnify their will through the actions of their servants. The rich are rich only because they succeed in marginalizing some in order to exploit others; the labor of those they exploit flows to them, allowing them to expand the range of that to which they have exclusive rights of use, and so to exploit, on terms they set, more labor of those to whom they allow access to it. The famous are only famous because others attend to what they do and say, or to their mere existence; the famous use the flow of attention toward themselves to shape perception of what they want attended to. Interpersonal power is the means by which some people magnify themselves by having the actions of others attributed to themselves while the obedient, the exploited, and the ignored and despised suffer having the substance and credit of their own actions go to others.

Because power is a continuous flow among people, the roles in relation to power actually consist of discrete actions that form a composite because the actors intend their separate actions to have a combined effect and because others perceive the actions as emanating from a conscious unified source. This asserted and assumed source of actions is what we think of as the person.

Power roles are easily confused with persons because taking on such a role conspicuously tends to make others stereotype one and because it takes some effort to exemplify any of the four roles, and the force of a central passion is assumed to be behind the effort. At birth one may be given an oppressive role, but one rarely oppresses others *accidentally*, though child monarchs and bureaucrats can manage to. One rarely just stumbles into confrontation because one receives warnings, sees others injured, and spends energy mustering one's courage selecting words and thinking through possible sequences of events. Self-reform signifies a change of course; one does not do what others expect of one, one turns down possible temptations, takes risks, strikes out on one's own to find a group more worth serving than one's immediate circle. Though getting knocked down by a hit-and-run driver is easy to do, victimization also normally consumes effort; one sees danger, tries to avoid it, tries to accommodate oneself, limits one's expectations, economizes, demonstrates that one does not have hostile intentions. Because there is some effort, there is some intentionality, so the power-role designators can be confused with whatever notions of personal character one has. I don't put much stock in the idea that character is innate, or even that it exists; I think it easier to think of what is called character as a composite of the intentions and effects of taking on different power roles in different situations. But it is conventional to attribute qualities to persons, so we feel we understand more easily what is happening if we do this. In doing this we distract ourselves from the relationships. Power resides in relationships. Actors and recipients of actions appear to have character because they are passional poles of relationships embedded in other relationships. The pole of one relationship must coordinate actions in it with actions in others, and each pole can inquire into the meanings and effects of the actions and expressions of the other and may expect the other to inquire into its own. This interaction and the potential for it creates consciousness and the potential for self-possession that we experience as personality.

Character is a social creation, but one we participate in. The unity of the person is created by memory and anticipation. The stronger memory and anticipation are, the more we experience ourselves and others as persons. We can value this mode of experiencing. I value it. I believe that if you did not, you would not have read the poem. It is because we can experience this mode as valuable that we can experience culture as valuable. The writing and the reading of the poem assert the value of culture. The analysis of culture is not culture itself; the poem precedes the analysis. The poem is more difficult to write than the analysis and, I believe, is worth more. I write the analysis to consolidate the experience of writing the poem; it is helpful for me to clarify what is in *The Seasons of Need* before tackling the more complex *Days of Need*. I write is also an assertion that the light I see the poem in is a light worth having and acting upon. I hope the reading of the analysis helps to consolidate for you the experience of reading the poem. If that consolidation is valuable, it is only because the forms of perception being consolidated are valuable. That can only be so if they are valuable in our everyday lives; otherwise they are useless and should be thrown out to make room for something better. It's best to travel light.

In the following to the oppressors because it is their actions that set off the three types of responses. Here I discuss self-reform the least because I believe that basic issues regarding self-reform have been clarified by the context of the preceding discussion.

A. The Three Oppressive Roles

The consistent success of oppressors depends on superior access to resources and on interactive *social* knowledge, both of themselves and others. *Failure* in an oppressive role is an issue of *continuance*. *Degree of success* in the role is an issue of *extensiveness*. For one's success in oppression to *continue*, one does not need deep knowledge of anyone, but must accurately *perceive* pressure, and must be able to resist and outlast pressure on oneself. Pressure is essentially physical. The fear one feels in one's stomach when another attempts to intimidate one is an electro-chemical force in the body connected to one's anticipation of the exertion of force on oneself. The successfully oppressive *perceive* pressure accurately and are willing and able to

exert and resist it; those who fail at oppressing others fail at that. But *extent* of success in oppression is a more difficult matter. For that one needs to gain superior access to resources and one must understand the *effects* of one's *own* exertion of pressure on those whom one exerts it on. That understanding is necessary to exert power *through* others.

Galand and Driscoll eventually fail because they are wildly wrong about themselves, Galand falsely believing himself moral, Driscoll falsely believing himself intelligent. The IBMer reaches his limit because he does not recognize his emotional dependency on others and so fails to see how it distorts his perception of entrepreneurship. The weaver, though expert in exerting and resisting pressure, never gets beyond oppressing his own family and a small circle around him not only because he doesn't accumulate superior access to resources, but because the ability to exert and resist emotional force does not imply understanding of the *effects* of one's actions on others. Stimson and Drake have supreme success because they know their effects on the people around them and the group they inhabit is so powerful that they only need to know the outlines of their effects on the ultimate recipients of their oppression because those people are in no position to retaliate.

The success of Stimson and Drake derives from their resolute loyalty to their political superiors, their competence, their ability to keep secrets, their ability to assess trustworthiness, and their ability to balance caution and daring. Drake knows, for instance, to destroy his poem; he is not deceived by his vanity in getting the meter, rhyme, and structure right. Stimson knows to leave no coherent record of all he did to provoke the attack on Pearl Harbor other than the note in his own diary.

Driscoll earns loads of money until the Civil War, but then can find no other suitable occupation. He never admits that the reason he became wealthy was simply that the progressive illegalization of the slave trade in the 1800s created a buyer's market. The capturing and selling slaves had become a traditional activity that did not stop when the local demand slowed down. This drastically increased the differential of Driscoll's access to resources relative to Aladdin's. In the form of the high prices paid for slaves in the Americas, Driscoll could draw on the enormous surplus value the slaves produced in the Americas. Essentially he was using the value of the labor of his previous shipments to make his subsequent purchases. But the kidnapped people he was buying were kept sitting in pens where they produced nothing but needed food while Aladdin squandered the labor of his men capturing, feeding, and imprisoning them. Aladdin had to sell to recoup his expenditures; Driscoll could buy for almost any price. Driscoll happily misperceives the facts of the situation to flatter himself. Accustomed to overestimating his intelligence and daring, and never having had to learn how to manage anything in the face of *real* adversity, eventually he gambles it all away. The most conspicuous current versions of this situation, of course, are in organized crime, which selects and creates the same kind of personalities among its leaders.

Organized crime, pimping, and the slave trade, of course, are the purest types of exploitation. The IBMer accurately perceives that the difference between venture capitalism and organized crime often reduces to the directness and explicitness of the associated violence plus some legal technicalities. Since the Civil War, but particularly since 1980, leaders of the US have not been able to create the steep differentials of economic and political power they desire without radically confusing law regarding the issues of the creation of value through increased productivity and its transfer to from one person to another in order to make it possible for some people to become rich without increasing productivity in any way. The IBMer knows value has become detached from price, knows Gates knows it, and knows Gates' goal is profit, not increased productivity. The IBMer is furious about this because he believes, idealistically and mistakenly, that he is capable of genuinely increasing productivity. But no one knows how to assess actual productivity in post-industrial business, particularly in areas like computers, sales, and advertising. With various complications, it's assumed that if the number of units a firm produces increases, its productivity has, but it becomes increasingly impossible to answer the

question, “What’s the relationship between a unit of one product and the unit of another?” this reduces to a mere accounting of costs and prices that bear no relationship to the use value of anything produced. Knowing that Gates makes more of his money from various forms of transfer than from actual increased productivity, the IBMer addresses Gates as a pure exploiter like Driscoll.

To the pure exploiter, the crucial daily issue is cash flow: what matters is the rate at which the *money* goes in and out, not the goods and services. Cash flow problems are destroying Aladdin and IBM while Driscoll and Gates are experiencing none. Because Gates’ profit margins are second only to the Mafia’s, he doesn’t have many cash flow problems, so the IBMer imagines Gates can imagine anything and do anything, and *will* do anything because he wants all the money and power he can get.

The IBMer has come out of his cloud enough to assess Gates’ position in an imaginatively analytical way. But he doesn’t know enough about people to know that Gates has been focused on issues like cash flow and profit margins from childhood, and that’s why he’s in the position he’s in. The IBMer seethes because he believes he is smarter than Gates but Gates succeeds while he feels himself failing. The IBMer wants fame. Few people know him, but everyone knows Gates. The route to fame now is money, not theory, as he’d been raised to believe in the midst of the American glorification of the power of pure science after World War II. He feels betrayed by his parents, by his teachers, by society: no one recognizes his superiority. He thinks he’ll test Gates. If Gates is half as smart as some people think he is, Gates will perceive his genius.

The IBMer can gain no power this way because he lacks both what’s necessary for continuance and what’s necessary for extensiveness. He fails in continuing because he misperceives the pressure he exerts and misperceives the pressure exerted upon him. He fails to extend his power because he fails to perceive the effects his farrago will have on Gates. That is, he wants to extend his power through Gates and recognizes that Gates will only let him do this if Gates believes he can extend his own power through the IBMer. But Gates, knowing his own desire for power, will never believe that someone more intelligent than himself and claiming to be potentially more powerful than himself will come to him like a genie offering to extend Gates’ power but not his own. That kind of display Gates will regard as pathetic. The IBMer totally misunderstands how to exert power through a powerful person.

The IBMer has a bit of a breakdown but recovers quickly. He was made for research and invention, not for business. Like Driscoll, he overreaches himself. His insensitivity is visible in what he doesn’t mention: at the time he is writing, the World Trade Center is attacked.

Galand overreaches himself even more. He is the first Inquisitor to be condemned. He has so little realism that fails to see that his matching of piety and sadism may offend the religious sense of other powerful churchmen. He has been so pietistic through his life that he held their values in contempt and didn’t realize they’d eventually act on them.

The weaver experiences what he regards as success. His daughter-in-law has more children, his son circumspetly follows him, and his grandson in turn. But his son and daughter-in-law are always miserable with each other, so his grandchildren are miserable too, and his family become nasty, petty, self-righteous people, quick to inform on others for minor infractions of rules.

Galand and Driscoll turn everything the personally touch into a hell. People are terrified of them until they lose their power. They do enormous damage. Even more than the weaver, neither ever experiences any genuine interpersonal happiness.

The IBMer’s personal relationships are cold. Everyone around him feels inferior, ill-at-ease, and vulnerable to embarrassment. He becomes fairly prosperous and is highly respected by other experts, publishes some elegant and inventive articles and gets a number of patents. Yet he has no lasting satisfaction; all his patents are superseded within five years to a decade, his renown does not spread beyond expert circles, he never approaches the significance of the men, like

Einstein and Hilbert, whom he admires, and he's never too clear about what has actually happened to his work or why. IBM makes forty times as much money from his work as he does. Despite his intelligence and originality, he's part of a well-oiled anonymous machine. His personal relationships have no more flavor to them than his work. Millions of people pay exorbitant prices for his inventions without knowing it because the inventions are embedded in other inventions. So IBM's exploitation of him is far more successful than his own exploitation of others. Much as he wants to exploit, he remains an extraordinarily exploitable servant of other exploiters.

Drake and Stimson can't be called unhappy. They're both so competitive that they have subordinated every other aspect of their lives to the desire to win, and the world has paid the price for this. Though they might not get what they need, they certainly get what they want. Both experience whatever amount of public praise and priority will not overshadow the Queen and President, far more money than they can do anything sensible with, and immense political power as long as they want it and keep their essential loyalties intact. Both are responsible for constructing major empires. Drake leaves behind tens of thousands of corpses for which he is fairly directly responsible, and establishes the ground rules for the British Navy, which will come to rule the world for three hundred years, at enormous cost of life and rape of the resources of much of the world. Stimson, in cooperation with a far larger and more powerful group, leaves behind millions of corpses, some of them vaporized, and helps lay the groundwork for the institutions that are now on the brink of destroying the world by exploitation, pollution, rape of resources, marginalization, manipulation of currency values, treachery, astonishing and intricate violence and threat, and vast public deception. But he and Drake have no doubt they've done the right thing. Their thesis is not actually quite that might makes right, but that capacity and competence do: those who can "achieve" should achieve, no matter what the cost to others. They ignore the cost because it falls to the lot of people they neither know nor care to know. Their consciences are clean because, no matter how worldly, they are mentally provincial, perfectly content with their own social group because they believe it the best there is, probably because it contains *them*.

The resulting overall picture of oppressors is dismal. Nothing can improve them but failure, and even that is a long shot. The IBMer may improve a bit because of the small failure of his breakdown. To recover he has to get more realistic about himself; he experiences a little warmth with his psychoanalyst in confessing some of his problems, and that keeps his marriage and job together. But his major effect on others changes little, for most of it is at a distance, mediated by many people, and diffused through many actions. His primary economic effect is to increase the rate of profit, by which the rich get richer while the poor get poorer, without actually increasing productivity much. So the wealth of the world stays pretty much the same because of him, while its economic power differential grows, leading to increased wastefulness and arbitrariness among decision-makers. While his personal life recovers a bit from his failure, his overall effects on others don't.

The weaver has little real power, so most of his bad effects are confined to his family. He believes his exertion of social power beneficial because his family survives, but it's immensely hurtful. Perhaps in old age he perceives this, but again, only because the gradual failure of his body makes him more dependent on others while depriving him of some of his preoccupation with advancement so that he is better able to better able to observe the effects of people's actions on each other.

Nothing can improve Drake or Stimson because their success is witnessed from all sides. Nothing can improve Driscoll or Galand because they are so inhuman that one can only try to get people out of their clutches.

To improve an oppressor takes the patience of a saint. The rest of us are incapable of it unless we have a privileged relationship of mutual consent with them, as the IBMer's wife and psychoanalyst do, and as the people who care for the old weaver will when he becomes

dependent on them. But that's not enough. The oppressor has to be willing to experience genuine anxiety. That can only happen if he actually recognizes his life is failing and the prospect of failure actually means something to him because he has actual hope for more satisfying life. Driscoll and Galand are incapable of such hope because they have resolutely oppsed themselves to what makes for a satisfying life. The IBMer is capable of it because he has a source of enormous self-confidence, though he's invested it narrowly. The weaver marginally capable of it, but his impact on his own family is so tyrannical that he will not be open to experiencing it until he has lost social power in his family, by which time it will be too late.

B. The Three Roles of Confrontation

The six roles I call confrontational are those of the Gujarati activist in 2 and the Manchurian official in 5; Papunehang in 14 and the German peasant in 3; and the student in 19 and the G.I. in 23. At the moments we meet them, the foremost issues for the first pair are political, of the second, economic, and of the third, social, but the focus of these issues depends on the immediate situation and the consciousness of the speakers. Other issues stand at different distances in the background. I picture them in different kinds of societies at different points in their roles. The student, at 15, the peasant, in his late 20s, and the official, nearing 50, are making the decisions to enter their oppositional roles in their larger societies. The G.I., in the same society as the student, but at its bottom, is struggling to acquire integrity in a life desperately compromised by his role in war. The activist and Papunehang are in the midst of their careers, clear but against opposition so immense that the activist at this moment cannot act and Papunehang, trapped between the British and the Iroquois, will be unable to mobilize the Delaware, will convert to Christianity, and will conclude his life doing his best to make peace but unable to salvage his people's way of life.

The distinction I make between confrontation and self-reform is weak; confronters and self-reformers learn from each other and, as they age and grow, in different situations and roles, are more likely to adopt the positions of the other than to adopt the positions of oppressors or victims. I distinction I draw depends on one's original position in society, but the structures of societies vary depending on the relationships they create between political, economic, and social power, the changes they go through, their material basis, and their fragmentation along lines of division of labor and subordinated groups. With growth, one's understanding of problems changes, so one focuses on different issues and seeks different types of changes.

The lives of the people who habitually take on confrontational roles often have times of alienation more typical of self-reformers. This usually occurs because many of the battles they engage in cannot be won because the necessary support cannot be mobilized, so the losing groups disband in various ways. The lives of people committed to reforming themselves often have episodes of confrontation based on their bonding with those originally poorer, less powerful, and less esteemed than themselves. This occurs because there is no other way that self-reform can be actual; it must be actualized in behavior to which others respond. Without risk and loss, the "self-reformer" is merely fantasizing self-reform, like "sinners" who go to evangelists' meetings and get "saved" over and over again.

In drawing the distinction I'm primarily focusing on the origin of the speaker and the meaning he or she attributes to the situation addressed. I identify the student as a confronter because, on the day when Kennedy is shot and everyone rallies around their fallen leader, his concern goes instead to the dead "bum," thus putting himself in a position in which he confronts the whole of American society. He has no thought yet of reforming himself because he is not yet conscious of any way in which he is involved in the collective oppression of the "bum." I consider Bloch a self-reformer because he came from a middle class family and devoted his life to academic research, not direct agitation. But he didn't shy away from confrontation and often bore heavy penalties for it. In calling Bloch a self-reformer, I'm pointing to his quiet, long-term self-discipline. In calling the boy a "confronter" I'm pointing to the potential for confrontation in

his emerging perception that the most assiduous social climber in his class purports to belong to the social clique of the Kennedys—to which the school principal and the Japanese also futilely aspire—and that aspiration of that kind is related somehow to the football team’s “gang bang” and the bum’s death. He is, nevertheless, quite confused; he’s largely deceived by Beth’s presumption, bewildered about the principal’s speech, and unclear about his own position. But he has all the necessary elements of a strong perception of social structure in his speech and he’s identified the key to assembling their meaning, that people generally care not about other people in and for themselves, but about those who appear to offer them a future; hence the organization of power relationships is egocentric. This perception results in extreme alienation that increases the difficulty of his maturation.

People who take on the role of confronting some substantial part of the reality of oppression, finding it intolerable, and seeking some way to change it, have accurate perception of at least those power relationships bearing on themselves in the relevant area. To accomplish this, they must respect themselves. The talk of their superiors cannot overawe them. If they are at all unusual in this, they tend to regard many people around them as weak, gullible, self-deceptive, and sometimes deceitful, but they do not, like the oppressors, seek to take advantage of others’ weaknesses. If they do, they shift toward the oppressor’s role. That shift is relatively common because the form of perception that qualifies one in confrontation disqualifies one for victimization, because oppressors perceive opportunities to co-opt their opposition, and because victims, out of fear, frequently abandon or betray those who represent them.

Willingness to confront one’s superiors in power, unfortunately, does not guarantee in itself idealism, competence, honesty about oneself, unselfishness, cooperativeness, or self-knowledge. It does facilitate their development, however, because the basic posture of confrontation is egalitarian, so it makes one open to considering information coming from people below one’s own position in economic, political, and social status. Openness to information from diverse sources gives one better abilities to assess reality than either oppressors or victims have. Oppressors overlook information coming from below, only attending to information they receive from their near equals and superiors. Victims overlook their own potential. Confronters make neither of those mistakes. Their weakness tends to be some lack of inwardness and self-discipline, a failure to compare themselves to others objectively.

The Manchurian official, earlier in his life, might easily have become quite oppressive, but the Japanese invasion interrupted that conventional sequence. In the subsequent years he and his family have suffered enormously; having become a more practical and less doctrinaire man, he has lost his desire to progress by the conventional route. He sees now that, in the long run, injury to this country is far more serious than injury to himself; if his country is destroyed while he is “spared,” there is little to look forward to, but if his country prospers communally, though he is injured, it may nevertheless seek to care for him, and his family may prosper. The link between this perception and his scholarly training he finds in the concept of “modesty” in the *I Ching*; that provides the last step in the process of his transformation. He can no longer aspire to being an oppressor; he will oppose Chiang and assist Mao. What he will do once Mao’s power is secure is still uncertain, but his basic decision has been made.

The Confucianism in which the official has been trained is a doctrine of self-reform. Its conservatism, however, made it fairly easy for oppressors to seduce Confucianists into facilitating oppression. The official recognizes that this has occurred all around him and that to continue in the political commitments of his role would make him a pure instrument of oppression. He has long resisted taking on the role of confrontation against Chinese officialdom because he thought that the primary evil of the life around him was Japanese oppression. But now accustomed to resisting Japanese oppression as he can, he sees little difference between the Japanese troops and Chiang’s troops. The Communists, though untraditionally confrontational, bear the marks of self-reform that Chiang offends. The official’s monologue shows the circumstances in which the rare event of initially adopting the role of confrontation in middle age can occur.

Papunehang speaks in council as a sachem, not a war chief. He is a resolutely honest man. He makes no effort to spare himself; he, like the other Delaware, were too hasty in deciding to trust the British. His peacefulness is just as resolute. By the time he speaks, the position of the Delaware is already irretrievably lost because the Iroquois, a far larger group, has already sided against them. The "Walking Purchase" completed the demise of the Delaware's ability to live as they originally had; the Delaware had been too few people spread over too much land to be able to organize themselves against the highly coordinated avarice of the colonists and the aggressive maneuvering of the Iroquois. Papunehang will later convert to pacifistic Christianity, but not to emulate the colonists, whom he regards as hypocrites, or to assimilate himself to them. He forms alliances with people like John Woolman, the most earnest and successful early Abolitionist, who seek to reform the behavior of the British; Woolman took great pains and risks walking for months through the forests to find the beleaguered Delaware and negotiate peace with Iroquois war parties. Papunehang knows the Delaware have lost but wants to make the best of a bad lot, and his first step is clarity of statement. Because, in defeat, Papunehang neither adopts the role of a victim nor joins the oppressive colonists to oppress his own people, I regard his basic position as confrontational. His origin is in confrontation, not oppression; he is at the point at which he is about to pass over into patterns more typical of self-reform.

The perceptions of Papunehang, the Manchurian official, and the Gujarati activist are fairly fully formed, those of the peasant, the student, and the G.I. unformed in different ways. The peasant's perception emerges on an economic basis, the student's and the G.I.'s arise on the far more confusing basis of social power. The peasant is perfectly clear about the economic facts of his own life, but is unclear about the structure of his society as a whole. The conflict in his society is crystallizing on a theological basis. Local people are now polarizing around Muntzer, a theologian daring to form bonds strong enough with his congregation to break his bonds with the church hierarchy, but in the background stands Luther. Luther first encouraged the peasants to free themselves of the church hierarchy, then betrayed them when they did. A cloistered theologian, Luther entirely lacked the economic common sense of the peasant, and so refused to see that the church hierarchy had for 1300 years stood on the side of political and economic power. Luther could not distinguish between the violence of the peasants and that of the nobles and their troops, and so triggered the nightmare of political power in which Muntzer lost his life and the peasant his hope. Muntzer was more honest than Luther and had a better heart, and so did not make Luther's mistake. But the peasant is unclear about the actual relationship between Luther and Muntzer. Because both are theologians and theology has become the language of revolt, the peasant assumes that Luther is as good a man as Muntzer and phrases his own rebellion in Luther's words. This is the heritage of feudalism; the central social issue in feudal society is loyalty, so the peasant assumes that what matters is to whom he gives his loyalty. In pledging his loyalty to Muntzer, the peasant's perception that Muntzer is on his side is accurate, but the necessary political and economic support for revolution cannot then be mustered on a theological basis because theology contains both so much of the original pacifism of Jesus and so many rules of ritual subordination created in the subsequent 1500 years. Issues of subordination had so thoroughly obscured and confused issues of pacifist reconstruction of society that theology, though it remained some guide to communal living, had become an impediment to any kind of societal improvement.

The G.I. is in the worst personal position. Coming from the most thoroughly oppressed group in his country, he committed himself to the overwhelming political and economic force of his country's elite. In doing that, he relied on their specious offers of loyalty but in Vietnam was quickly disabused of them. With other Black G.I.'s, his self-education began. Eventually released from his oppressive service to his oppressors, he sought to reform himself in the hippie milieu, but there confusion reigns. He and his White ex-G.I. friend are still enmeshed in military psychology and, attempting to free themselves, find radically different social experience beneath it, the Black G.I. finding much deeper identification with victims than the White finds, and the

Black seeing far more oppressiveness in the White than the White finds in the Black. LSD gives all this a psychedelic dimension that calls the Black, but not the White, back into the times of Driscoll and the Anasazi woman. The Black G.I. does not want to let go of his insight, but it terrorizes him because it is in fact terrifying. Trained to suppress fear, he now feels the rage appropriate to his position in life, but not the sorrow. Evidence of his rage puts him in the grip of White social power serving the economic and political power of his country. He is treated for what will come to be called "post-traumatic stress syndrome." This diagnosis allows the psychiatrist conveniently to ignore the systematic oppression that suffuses the G.I.'s life and to discount the rage as an irrational response to his war experience. The "Later Heaven" arrangement of the poem begins and ends with the G.I.'s response to the psychiatrist's efforts at mystification because that response is, in its most extreme form, the emergence of the impulse behind "slow news" from beneath the hardened crust of the "fast news" imposture of the public world. It is the unwillingness of the powerful, in interests of the maintenance of their oppressiveness, even to acknowledge the justice of the testimony of the oppressed, that makes history continue its cycles of prolonged routine oppression punctuated by periodic rebellion.

C. The Three Roles of Victimization

The victims of political oppression are the Iraqi teacher and the Anasazi mother; of economic oppression the toy salesman and the Canadian poet; and of social oppression the examinee and the cowherd, both Indian. All presently feel unable to confront their oppressors, but the character of their inability differs. The teacher and the mother truly have no alternative; they are oppressed by overwhelming violence. The salesman and the poet have alternatives, but cannot find them because they don't know how to take an active role on the relevant issues in their societies. The examinee and the cowherd are mystified; they don't know how to share their experience with those who have similar experience, and cannot untangle the emotionality of their dependent relationships to express what concerns them directly. Physically, the first two are in the worst predicament, but psychologically, the last two are. The two economic victims happen to be in better conditions, but for very different reasons. The poet is in the best position because he is not mystified. The salesman shares the mystification of the victims of social oppression though he has economic resources he squanders.

The Iraqi teacher cannot confront his ultimate oppressors because they are at a distance and deaf to him and his leaders, and because his leaders form a barrier. His ultimate oppressors, the American elite, of course claim that they are his liberators and the Saddam Hussein is his oppressor, but American promises of liberation since World War II have never been fulfilled and are clearly false. American violence, threat, and embargo merely makes Hussein worse. Saddam Hussein is certainly oppressive, but the actual issues are access to oil and control of the Persian Gulf, and the Americans, being vastly more powerful, are ultimately more oppressive in their pursuit of those prizes than Hussein is. Trapped between the warring dinosaurs, the teacher can do nothing but scurry between their feet like a small mammal, trying to save his family.

Saving her family is also the goal of the Anasazi woman, but she has different dinosaurs to contend with. It is not that they are so much larger or more powerful than she is, but that they are so vicious and utterly unpredictable that their raids make the continuance of civilized life impossible. The Anasazis are demoralized in their efforts to maintain themselves as a settled agrarian culture, and so prepare to disband to become hunters and gatherers again.

The economic oppression of the salesman and the poet leave far more hope, but only the poet now has the potential to respond productively. The salesman has always been dependent on others, and because the people he depends upon are part of the middle class transmission of oppression from the powerful to the most oppressed, he cannot begin to see clearly the situation he is in. To the salesman, wealth is entirely a matter of convention and the market; one person makes a sharp deal, so he is wealthy; another is deceived, so he is poor. To him, productivity does not exist and is not an issue. He has never produced anything.

He shares with his exploitative superiors a convention that counts the dramaturgy of salesmanship as productive, but all salesmanship can effectuate is an increase in the differential between the rich and the poor. His gullibility and his deceitfulness are wedded; he is a dupe of what he purveys. He thinks he is in league with his fellow salesmen against his employers and the government, but it is a shallow conspiracy. He believes the nonsense he is fed by the mass media; he is a media mushroom, fed shit, kept in the dark, and shipped to supermarkets. Perfectly delighted to exploit children and their parents, he continuously pulls from under his own feet the possibility of sharing genuine human concern, and so cannot learn to perceive the structure above him that unites the interests of the media, the corporations, and the politicians against workers and consumers. He thinks he “works like a dog” but his “work” is driven solely by his desire to consume, so the gravamen of his phrase is that he *feels* like a dog in his subordination to his masters. His life is comfortably sub-human, but he is now about to lose his comfort. He looks enviously to his father’s comfort to rescue himself. Because, though a victim, he is caught up in the mind-set of oppressors, only personal disaster can bring him to his senses so that he can begin to discover the humanity he shares with others.

The Canadian poet is not addicted to comfort and is capable of actual productivity; he has always been willing to work hard and feels close to the people of Sept Iles, to the St. Lawrence, and to the forests that begin on the edge of town and extend for thousands of miles. In his youth he spent summers in the cod fisheries along the coast to the east and in Newfoundland and Labrador. He’s worked as a trapper, a bush pilot, a miner, a truck driver, and on construction crews. In the winter he reads widely. Because he’s accustomed to cycles of boom and bust, and was always willing to try his hand at anything, he fared better than the newer townspeople who arrived as the town grew with the Knob Hill Mine and then collapsed when Mulronee closed the mine. He’s read all the poetry in the Sept Iles library and most of its fiction and history. His favorites are Robert Service and Jack London. Victimization is an alien sensation to him, but Sept Iles is so badly hit that its population is rapidly declining by 50% in a couple of years and no one knows what to do about it except move out. He could find more and better paid work if he left, but he’s never earned or spent more than he needed and he loves the town, even in its demoralization. He dislikes the shallow and fleeting relationships of city life and is not upset to return to the income level he had when he first left high school. So his personal sense of victimization and abandonment is less than what the majority in the town experience, but he’s now unemployed and on welfare and feeling pretty low. Even the cod fisheries have closed down, so he’s spending his summer camping with his wife and two children in a campground ten miles east of town.

Middle-aged, he wants to do something for his town but doesn’t know what to do. Self-taught, his education is actually more extensive than that of most of the public people in his area, but he has no training in the white-collar skills of manipulating people and can’t get white-collar work because there are a hundred applications for every such job and 50% of the resumes show more formal education. When he speaks in town meetings politicians who spend their lives studying obscurantist rhetoric can always find a way to circumvent whatever points he makes, and he has become resigned to this. He and the town are both demoralized; the closing of the mine was presented to them as a *fait accompli*, so there was nothing they could do without taking matters to a national forum. Not being a lawyer or politician, and having no corporate resources to draw on, he is stymied in his contemplation of this. He speaks powerfully but is not accustomed to writing as he speaks. In a few years, though, he’ll cooperate with a few friends to set up a little newspaper, then will begin running for various offices on the ticket of the Rhinoceros Party, Canada’s quixotic anarchist party that opposes all bills because it opposes political organization. That effort will make him something of a political and economic scholar. Today he’s a member of the Green Party. Had we met him later on, I’d have discussed him as a late-blooming confronter.

The examinee and the cowherd are in the worst psychological condition of the six, but for different reasons. The examinee is the kind of young man on whom people pin their hopes but do not realize how that pressure affects him. An only son, his family was extremely ambitious for him. He was Mala, the more forward of the two largest Scheduled Castes in Andhra, but rather than allowing his family to arrange his marriage, he eloped with a Madiga woman from a family with less money, power, and prestige than his own. As the Mala feel superior to the Madiga in Andhra, in the USA, house slaves felt superior to field slaves, northern Blacks to southern Blacks, established Blacks to Blacks recently arrived from the Caribbean, and so on. So his father punishes him for his independence. He defiantly tries to prove himself, but the examiners are corrupt, so only examinees with the financial backing to make them capable of offering bribes can gain positions. He tries everything. But he goes too far when he tries to compel his wife to beg from her father. She thinks she will teach him a lesson by walking out on him for the night, but then finds tragically that she too has gone too far, for he has taken her too seriously. Isolation, in India, is an unbearable penalty; no one wants to be alone, and no one is prepared to be. Ultimately he believes the only way to assert himself is against himself: in attacking himself he will make it clear to his father, his mother, his wife, and perhaps the civil service board that, though they all have the power to reject him, he has the power to terminate the relationship. He kills himself to assert his sole prerogative, to tell everyone, "You see what you drove me to. Think again on your demands." Only to the civil service board is the matter easily dealt with: when they hear of it, they send an acceptance letter so no one can challenge them. To everyone else, his self-victimization is victimization of them for their oppression of him; his dependency issues its ultimate rebuke: "I can't live with you. I can't live without you. I can't live."

The cowherd has adapted to being beneath notice. To escape rebuke and heartbreak, he is used to asking for nothing, and seeking virtually nothing. In his normal dealings with the Brahmin, he says no more than "Yes, Sahr," but this time he must say more. We witness the reason he normally says no more: whatever he says is treated as an outrageously presumptuous insult. But he, like the examinee, is at the end of his rope; he has done all he can, he has no resources left, and all he can do is report the fact. He does; his report is unsatisfactory. All he can do is hope that the Brahmin does not seek revenge. He goes home to worry what the consequences will be. He can find nothing to do to counter them. All he can do is worry.

The examinee had aspirations but not the confidence or resources to fulfill them. The cowherd has no aspirations. But even limiting one's aspirations to the vanishing point provides no salvation. One can try to be a cipher, but others will not allow it. Always someone believes one is obligated to him, so rather than being a nothing, one becomes a negative quantity; never showing dissatisfaction oneself, yet one is the object of someone else's dissatisfaction. There is no absolute minimum in human life but death itself. The cowherd must confront the fact that being a victim does not even satisfy the one who victimizes one. To be a victim is an unviable role. Many cultures do their best to conceal this fact; fatalism, self-negation, asceticism, withdrawal, self-denial, self-effacement can be idealized, preached, modeled, and enforced, but cannot provide the security they purport to offer. The cowherd is free to believe his actions are saintly, but the Brahmin, who preaches saintliness, will never agree. The cowherd can know he has done all he can do, but the Brahmin need not agree. However the cowherd perfects his humility, his subservience, his performance will be condemned. Verbally, he can try to adopt his oppressor's viewpoint, but his oppressor will rebuke him for his insincerity; or he can deny it, but will be rebuked for brazenness. He can only escape by ceasing to be an object for his oppressor's perception; he feels the obverse of what the enraged four-year-old feels when he wills the one he hates to no longer exist. The cowherd could kill himself, but his tacit rebuke would not reach the Brahmin, so he has less temptation to suicide than the examinee has. His defense is simply to become a defenseless thing. When he gives up on speaking, he becomes like a man playing dead while a grizzly bear sniffs him.

The nadir of victimization is self-exertion in the interests of one's non-existence.

D. The Three Roles of Self-Reform

The self-reform of the teacher in 13 and Ashoka in 17 focus on political power, of Bloch in 6 and the homeless man in 24 on economic power, and of the academic in 21 and the monk in 12 on social power. The self-reformers vary enormously in their positions, effect, and the junctures in their lives where they altered their courses, but not in their basic competence.

Self-reformers steer a course against prevailing conventions of interpersonal power use. This requires ego strength and insight into oneself and others, and hence some marked competence. Bloch handles an enormous range of intellectual materials from a unique standpoint. Ashoka seems to have been enormously competent also, able first to conquer, then to rule by inimitable methods. But in the midst of a violent tradition and environment, no successor had any hope of continuing his initiative. The monk is thoroughly competent in his role. Word of his insight spreads solely by word of mouth; he never displays it, but only says what he knows can be heard and understood by the individual he speaks to. To survive in a hostile institutional environment, the teacher intentionally limits her scope. Her students love and respect the teacher, but she receives little recognition from her superiors, or even her peers. She tells her students not to tell other staff that she does things differently than they do. The academic had similar responses from students, but administrators and many co-workers considered him threateningly unconventional and sought to undercut his position. He's no longer interested in institutions. The homeless man, in his candor and directness, has an impact like the monk's on the street people around him, but has no interest in translating his interpersonal competence into paid work because, like the academic, he now values his freedom more than anything he can get from employment.

Ashoka is in the best position to affect others, yet feels his success devastatingly insufficient in proportion to the injury he has caused in the past. Bloch is sometimes in a position to earn some intellectual prestige, but neither money nor power nor fame, and relies almost wholly on whatever effect his writing can have. The teacher is in a position to make a little small-scale change within the institution where she works. The monk is secure in a disciplined institution and seeks no institutional change that does not come from his direct impact on other individuals. The academic gives up his security and has only his own initiative. The homeless man has a little social security and the community support of the street people he has befriended.

Bloch and the monk are prodigies of self-reform who chose their basic courses in adolescence. The homeless man changed after disaster struck him, Ashoka after what everyone around him interpreted as supreme success, but he as moral disaster. The teacher was open to influence by her supposed subordinates. The academic began to change his course intentionally after the disaster of his divorce, then more systematically after the death of his wife, intentionally making himself absorb what was alien to him.

The clarity he sought only came to him when he allied himself with the people at the bottom of the world's pecking order; there he was able to learn to distinguish between his own oppressiveness and the oppressiveness of others.

The basic impulse of oppression is to win. The basic impulse behind victimization is to limit loss. Self-reform is not possible without siding with the victims of interpersonal power flow, for one sees that they need to limit loss to survive, but that conventional practice, which legitimizes oppression, condemns them to loss. Because one always grows up with some unconscious acceptance of convention, the self-reformer always finds, with the increasing acuity of growth, that accepted practices must be abandoned for victims to survive. The primary impulse behind self-reform is the desire not to injure, but to assist in growth. The sympathy, empathy, and respect for victims that this impulse generates in the self-reformer therefore generates skepticism and resistance toward oppressors, and receptivity toward and cooperation with the confrontational. This pattern is somewhat different from the basic desire of the confrontational, which is to obtain justice, but is congruent with it.

E. Summary

The world's most socially destructive people, such as Hitler and Nero, are childish bullies at heart. They insist on being treated with the respect accorded distant parents, plot revenge when they meet resistance, and fall into infantile rage when they fail. They fuse the passion to dominate and the conviction that they are innocent victims, and unravel into rage and self-pity when, under pressure, the turns to alternation. Those most oppressive to others are internally polarized into oppressor and victim, are cowardly because they lack the courage to confront the more powerful and childish because they lack the self-reforming ability to be responsive to and responsible toward others.

Productive people, rather than attempting to cover infantile feeling in the commanding parental role, seek to fuse and modulate the roles of siblings, friends, and work-mates, confronting arrogant and irresponsible power when necessary, aiding and protecting the younger and weaker when possible. The world's most socially beneficial people are those who seek to fuse the passions for nurturance and justice as, ironically, Gandhi and Ambedkar obviously both did their best⁹ to do, though they were always at loggerheads because their backgrounds, their perceptions, their thought patterns, their methods, their constituencies, and their opposition were polarized.

The rest of us are scattered between and around those poles, more varied in our choices of which roles to adopt from situation to situation. Most of us adopt all four roles in different contexts; it is disabling to be *incapable* of any of the four. To *improve* society in any way, however, one must become competent in both confrontation and self-reform and must eschew both oppression and victimization. Others, however, do not freely allow us to relieve ourselves of oppressing or accepting victimization. All but the elite are expected to accept multiple forms of victimization of ourselves and others without question. And everyone with any responsibility has dependents who expect to be oppressed in various ways, normally calling it leadership because, being taking the consequences of making their own decisions, they want to follow. Consequently discovering and devising ways to convert one's own and others' oppressiveness and dependent victimization into mutually beneficial productive independence is a continual struggle and education.

We all need to initiate cultural revolution daily, and to welcome it whenever anyone else does, or we'll certainly all be dead, together or alone, for we're running our lives on the basis of ethical norms wildly inadequate to the modern world's reality, where the majority of our effects occur at a distance, by proxy. In the most literal sense, we don't know what we're doing.

6. Primary Counterparts of Roles:

The basic structure of *The Days of Need* is designed to allow the counterparts of the roles of the speakers of *The Seasons of Need* to speak. To do this *The Days of Need* traces causal chains between the speakers of *The Seasons of Need* and their various respective victims and oppressors. Oppressors and self-reformers in turn have oppressors and instructors in oppression and its relinquishment; confronters, self-reformers, and victims can have victims in turn and instructors and assistants in liberation from oppression. All four roles also have joint members, analogues, predecessors, and successors.

In *The Days of Need*, the monologues come from six roles of speakers, the two newly introduced being those of middle-persons who transmit oppression and poets, observers, or theorists who describe acts of oppression in which they have no direct involvement. Selection of

⁹ Gandhi's immense dependent following gradually pushed him into adopting a purely parental role (both paternal and maternal.) Ambedkar's extreme political isolation pushed him into a purely confrontational public role for he had no resources to nurture others with and those who needed him most had no other representative.

events for particular days can be on the basis of events that actually occurred on the designated day, analogy, precedence or succession, cause and effect relationships, and the presentation of views of other persons involved in or affected by the actions and sufferings of the original 24 speakers.

The following table gives the obverse of table of power roles on 18. This table forms the basic structure of the counterparts who form the core of *The Days of Need*, that is, the victims the oppressive speakers act upon and the oppressors the victimized speakers perceive acting on themselves and others. The persons, groups, and organizations whose names come first are mentioned in some form in the text of *The Seasons of Need*; those named after the semicolon are implied. (Figures mentioned in parentheses play complex roles as transmitters of oppression, as unintentional oppressors, or as fellow victims the speaker in *The Seasons of Need* does not succeed in transmitting oppression through):

Victims of Oppressors: in sections 10, 11, 16, 18, 20, 22

Victims of Political Oppressors:

in section 20, Henry Stimson, USA, 1949:

Those oppressed by Churchill and Roosevelt, the passengers on the Lusitania, those who wanted the 1937 Neutrality Act, those killed and injured in Pearl Harbor and their families, (residents of Kyoto), those oppressed by Stalin, residents of Hiroshima, all citizens of countries with currencies devalued because of the actions of the Bretton Woods Institutions, all those deceived into believing the UN represents them or international democracy, the victims of Nixon, “commies from Manila to Managua;” all non-investors, including narrators of 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21, 23, 24 in varying degrees and ways.

In section 18 Francis Drake, U.K., 1588:

All subjects of the Queen, men of sundry deeds, philosophers, poets, groundlings, armless men, the legless, the dull, the blind, the mad, “sinners”, “villains;” all future British subjects, the Spanish, the subjects of the nascent British empire and its successor states, including the speakers of 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 21, 23.

Victims of Economic Oppressors:

in section 16, IBMer, USA, 2001:

(Big Blue), (PhDs), (support staff), (secretaries), (the speaker), the world, (Wang), Roman subjects, (competitors), all computer users, (William Randolph Hearst); all consumers, employees, and persons upon whom information is collected and, through information gathering, oppression is exerted, speakers similar to the speakers of 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 15, 19, 23, and 24.

In section 11 Cornelius Driscoll, Nigeria 1848:

(Filatah), those oppressed by beliefs in slavery encouraged by Aristotle, Averroes, and Grotius, Azanaghi, Ibo, Yoruba, “Ham’s poor bastards,” kidnapped and captured people “of a dozen tongues” and their families, Kabbazahs, homosexuals, (Aladdin), Aladdin’s village; generations to come of slaves, sharecroppers, and ghetto-dwellers, including the G.I. in 23.

Victims of Social Oppressors:

in section 22, weaver, Japan 1613:

(Fearful daimyos), farmers, (five families), (weavers), women, son’s wife, the Eta; grandchildren, wife, community members, apprentices, etc. The monestery in section 12 is a refuge from this social climate.

In section 10, Jean Galand, France, 1286:

The Cathari; all communicants; all “heretics,” “infidels,” and “heathens.” Galand uses the names of God, Jesus, and Satan as instruments of oppression. By spreading such usage, he has contributed indirectly to the situations in 2, 11, 14, 15, 18, 20, and 23.

Oppressors of Confronters: in sections 2, 3, 5, 14, 19, 23

Oppressors of Political Confronters:

in section 2, activist, India 2002:

Inquisitors, French Catholics, Nazis, “heathens” and “infidels”, self-righteous self-hateful Christians identifying with Jehovah, Babur, (Ashoka), (Ram), (Valmiki), RSS, right-wing Hindus, Gujarati police; Gujarati officials, the BJP, the US pursuing its “War on Terror”, the Bretton Woods Institutions, “Born-Again Christians.”

In section 5, official, China 1948:

Britain, Japan, the USA, (Mao), (Confucius), Chiang Kai-shek, (authors of the *I Ching*), local merchants, landlords, warlords & their armies.

Oppressors of Economic Confronters:

in section 14, Papunehang, colonial USA, 1737:

The British, Fenwick, William Penn, Admiral Penn, James II, Charles II, Cromwell, Penn’s men, Hannah Penn, Thomas Penn, Logan, colonists in general; British government & corporations, the Iroquois

In section 3, peasant, Germany, 1523:

The Earl, the Bishop, (the wife’s folk), the bailiff of the local nobility; German nobility as a whole & their armies, the Catholic church as a whole, Luther and his allies

Oppressors of Social Confronters:

in section 19, junior high student, 1963:

Principal Marlowe, the football team, (Dale’s father), (Kennedy), Johnson, Beth, (Jackie Kennedy), Beth’s mother, (“all Tokyo”); US government & corporations, the unknown assassins of Kennedy, school administration & teachers, US middle class parents & US middle class as a whole, potentially the Japanese.

In 23 G.I., Phoenix 1st modern USA 1972:

Psychiatrist, (fellow G.I.), Nixon, (fellow inmates), Aztecs, French colonials in Vietnam, slavers, slave owners, dominant groups in slave-owning society and, by extension, employers of wage slaves, (G.I.s); police, US military, government, and corporations.

Oppressors of Victims: in sections 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 15

Oppressors of Political Victims:

in section 15, teacher, Iraq 2002:

The US government; the British governments, NATO, the “Seven Sister” oil companies, the Iraqi government, the G7, the UN & the Bretton Woods Institutions

In section 9, mother, Aztlan, 1141:

The early wandering Aztecs; men.

Oppressors of Economic Victims:

in section 4, toy salesman’s monologue, US 2002:

(Dad), (Marge), (the salesman himself), (Marge’s folks), the commercializers of Christmas, employer, Microsoft, (the Accounts office), (the guys (other salesmen)), “the Feds,” i.e., Internal Revenue Service, the banks, prospective employers; investors, US government, lobbyists.

In section 8, poet’s monologue, Canada 1984:

British rulers of the French in Nova Scotia and Quebec, successive elites of Louisiana, Brian Mulroney, owners of and investors in Knob Lake Mine, iron ore and steel companies, owners of Rio Doce mines in Brazil; Canadian & US corporations, Canadian government, US government, international financiers.

Oppressors of Social Victims:

in section 1, examinee & suicide’s monologue, India 1988:

(Beauty), parents, civil service board, (friend), father, (Beauty’s father), (landlord); Indian Administrative Service, British creators of the IAS, Indian government, the Mala, international political & economic actors such as Stimson and the Rockefellers

In section 7, cowherd’s monologue, India, 1943:

Brahmin, upper castes, Krishna, property owners, writers of slokas; landlords, wholesalers, British colonial government, East India Company.

Ex-Victims and Beneficiaries of Self-reformers: in sections 6, 12, 13, 17, 21, 24

Ex-Victims and beneficiaries of Political Self-Reformers:

in section 13, teacher, USA 1984:

Juvenile delinquent students, particularly Carlton.

In section 17, Ashoka, Pataliputra 3rd world ancient India 237 BC:

(Kalingas), subjects of the Mauryan Empire, (“lakhs of innocents”), Mauryas; nearly all of South Asia.

Ex-Victims and beneficiaries of Economic Self-Reformers:

in section 24, homeless man, USA, 1985:

Listener, (cabbies), (wife), (children), dog, the people we fail to love; employees, co-workers, customers, street people.

In section 6, Bloch, East Germany, 1953:

(philanthropists in ragged trousers, i.e., workers), children; subjects & citizens, congregations of believers, benighted intellectuals, students

Ex-Victims and beneficiaries of Social Self-Reformers:

in section 21 academic, UK, 2002:

Wage slaves serving the “grey-suited horde,” (girl affecting a British accent), (woman from Samurai family), (genius from Vienna), women visited on the Tour of Weiblichkeit, objects of paternal will to conquer, Rednecks, Canuck, Kraut, Mick forbears, (Polish French Midwesterner), Italian love, Latino woman, Madiga home, Sutpen, Snopes, McCaslin cousins, those cut out of the competition by the likes of his family, those cut out of Europe, those cut out by Wallstreet, those who suffer to make investors fat, the vast majority since “Ithaca” 10,000 years ago, his Penelope, the reader; women, students.

In section 12, monk, Japan, 1966:

The woman he would have married, children, employees & co-workers he would have had, Buddhists, the American poet; everyone who meets him.