DIDACTICISM IN THE FICTIONAL WORKS OF HAROLD HORWOOD

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BY

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of didactic literature is to instruct rather than to entertain; consequently, the author intrudes upon the reader with his own views. Harold Horwood's view of art has been didactic from the beginning of his writing career. From his earliest years as an editor of a local literary magazine, through his time as a political columnist, he used his writing as a means of expounding on the many controversial topics of concern to him.

When he turned his attention to fictional writing in the 1960's, his adherence to the didactic theory of literature became even more pronounced. His novels abound in expressions of his opinions on moral, social, and political issues. In Tomorrow Will Be Sunday Horwood elaborates on his feelings towards organized fundamentalist religion as it affects the Newfoundland outport. The major criticism levelled against this work is that Horwood forces his negative ideas on a setting with which he is only vaguely familiar. In the

case of White Eskimo, Horwood is using a setting with which, as a member of the House of Assembly for Labrador and as a frequent traveller to the area, he was familiar. But the didacticism is just as distinct, as he clearly uses the novel to attack white colonialism in Labrador. The short stories in Only the Gods Speak and the novel Remembering Summer are vehicles primarily for Horwood's ideas on the counter-culture movement in which he was an active participant.

Political, religious, and social didacticism takes precedence for Horwood in his fiction. The didacticism is often so blatant that readers may be offended and the positive aspects of the works may be overlooked. The didacticism has caused many critics to perceive Horwood's work as flawed, even though there are some admirable qualities in his fiction. Indeed, it can be argued that some of the finest sections of his work -- for example, his descriptions of the natural environment in Tomorrow Will Be Sunday and White Eskimo -- are the least didactic. Yet the lasting impression one receives on reading Horwood's fiction is that of a man whose convictions are so strong that he cannot avoid authorial intrusion. His works are both powerful and revealing, and he has made a significant contribution to the literary history of Newfoundland.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my appreciation to Dr. Elizabeth Miller for her guidance and excellent advice. Without her help this investigation would not have been possible. I would also like to thank the following people: Cathy Murphy, my typist, Des Walsh, Greg Power, and Charlie Horwood for their interviews, and my family and friends for their support and encouragement when it was most needed.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE MAN AND THE WRITER

Harold Horwood was born in St. John's, Newfoundland, to Andrew and Vina (Maidment) Horwood on 2 November 1923. He was born in the house that was built by his grandfather, Captain John Horwood, a house filled with pictures of ships and memorabilia from foreign voyages. Harold did not attend school until he was six and a half years old, having to wait until his younger brother Charlie was old enough to begin.[1] They both attended Holloway School which was considered one of the better schools in St. John's at the time.

The following summer the family went to New Brunswick where Harold's maternal grandfather owned a farm on the St. John river. Here they learned to swim, milk cows and help on the farm. According to Charlie

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[1]Charles Horwood, personal interview, 8 May 1990. Much of the information that follows is from this source.

Horwood, this was a significant experience for both himself and Harold, as it showed them part of the outside world and gave them both a great appreciation for the natural environment. The latter was to be very evident in much of Harold's later work and life.

Young Harold excelled in school. He was extremely competitive and was never satisfied with second place; he did not compete in sports because he could not bear the thought of losing. After grade school, he went on to attend Prince of Wales College, from which he graduated in 1940 with a First Class Honours Scholarship. As a teenager he read voraciously, and was particularly fond of stories of intrigue and mystery; Edgar Allan Poe was one of his favourite authors. Charlie Horwood recalls that he and Harold discussed and argued constantly about metaphysical and philosophical concepts. In these intellectual challenges, they forced each other to ponder every opinion. This was another significant influence in their lives.

While Horwood grew up in the city of St. John's, he did occasionally visit Carbonear, a large fishing and trading settlement in Conception Bay. Horwood recalls visiting his Aunt Kizziah McCarthy there on school holidays. Sometimes he would stay with a cousin of his grandfather's, Captain Winsor, a sailing Captain

who had been around the world. Horwood attributes his great love of ships to these experiences. These visits were quite few in number; it is unlikely, however, that familiarity with Carbonear had any significant influence on his portrayal of outport Newfoundland in his later fiction. In fact, Horwood makes the following comment about this:

> Don't make the mistake of thinking that Tomorrow Will Be Sunday is a biographical novel, or that the outport described in that book bears any resemblance to Carbonear. It does not. . . . It would be hard to imagine any place less like Caplin Bight than the staid, conservative, and utterly respectable settlement of Carbonear in the early years of the twentieth century.[2]

His main inspiration for his outport fiction came from the childhood memories of his father and to an even greater extent, those of his sister-in-law, Ida (Giles) Horwood, who grew up in the remote northern settlement of Rouge Harbour in Green Bay, Newfoundland.

Before becoming a full-time writer, Horwood was engaged in a variety of occupations. As well as being a longshoreman, a surveyor's helper, a biological field research assistant, a labourer, and a mechanics

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[2]Harold Horwood, letter to the author, 3 April 1990.

assistant, he was a union organizer. In the mid-1940's, he met Irving Fogwill who encouraged him to become involved in the union movement. In 1946 Horwood organized and became President of the Labourers' and General Workers' Protective Union which soon became the largest single union in the Newfoundland Federation of Labour.[3] Horwood was asked to attend a meeting of the St. John's Trades and Labour Council, at which he was elected President.[4] He has always been proud of his involvement with the union movement, which helped raise the standard of living of many people. At the age of twenty-two, Horwood was, (as he later considered himself) a "left-wing socialist . . . the boy wonder of the Newfoundland Labour Movement."[5] Political and social motivation was a major factor in his life, as it would continue to be and as it would later reveal itself in much of his writing.

The earliest sign of the influence of political and social views in his writing came in 1945, when

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[3]"Harold Horwood," Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador 2 vols. (St. John's: Newfoundland Book Publishers, 1967) 2: 1038.

[4]Charles Horwood, personal interview, 8 May 1990.

[5]Harold Horwood, Joey: The Life and Political Times of Joey Smallwood (Toronto: Stoddart, 1989) 74.

Horwood began his literary career. He and his brother Charles co-edited and published (and wrote contributions for) an "avant-garde" magazine called Protocol, which appeared in quarterly issues from November 1945 to Fall 1948. The magazine welcomed contributions from "Any serious young writer in English, either of 'leftist' or 'purely artistic' persuasion."[6] The intention of the magazine was not only to encourage new writers, "but also to campaign for a rereading of those who have suffered undue neglect while more fortunate contemporaries set standards of taste."[7] The magazine was a significant part of the Newfoundland literary scene in the 1940's: it became a starting point for many important writers such as Irving Fogwill, Grace Butt, and Gregory Power; it received contributions from mainland Canada, the United States and Europe; and it attracted subscribers from as far away as Australia, Italy, Belgium, and Nepal.[8] But not all the reaction was favourable; Horwood notes that Protocol "was soon banned by the

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[6]Editorial, Protocol 5 (1948): 1. These editorials were co-written by Charles and Harold Horwood.

[7]Editorial, Protocol 5 (1948): 1.

[8]Charles Horwood, personal interview, 8 May 1990.

respectable book stores, vanished from the reading stands of the libraries."[9]

Of special interest to this study are Horwood's editorials which he clearly used as a mouthpiece for his own political and artistic views. This intermingling of literary works and political manifesto is the main characteristic of Protocol; it was a combination that Horwood in his own fiction would never entirely abandon. Even though Horwood states in the first issue of Protocol that its "purpose will be artistic rather than political," in the same issue he contradicts this by presenting the following clearly political message:

> The soul of a nation must be born first, and only then is a healthy political body possible. Otherwise the nation is like a wave of the sea, blown about by every wind and tossed; not knowing what is wrong or what it wants, and hence at the mercy of any professional quack or charlatan who promises to bring in the Millennium by act of Parliament.[10]

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[9]Harold Horwood, "Newfoundland Literature has Vigor, Character," Saturday Night 64 (1 March 1949): 10.

[10]Editorial, Protocol 1 (1945): 1.

Such contradictions are prevalent throughout the issues. Of particular interest, especially in the light of his later involvement with the Confederate Movement are Horwood's comments on Newfoundland self-government:

> Any Newfoundlander with pride of his country must also express his satisfaction that steps have at last been taken to restore to Newfoundland her own government. It is an indignity to any people that strangers should manage their affairs -- but it is much more than an indignity that foreigners should control their foreign policy.[11]

But while he appears incensed at the thought that Newfoundlanders might not be taking a dignified stand, he tends to undercut this statement when he notes that, "Newfoundland is a very backward country culturally . . . we fear that in some circles Bingo is regarded as of much greater importance than the Liberal Arts."[12] He also refers to a story by John Avalon (Irving Fogwill) in the same issue "as a thing possibly too good for Newfoundland."[13] Such perceptions of the lack of

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[11]Editorial, Protocol 2 (1946): 2.

[12]Editorial, Protocol 3 (1946): 2.

[13]Editorial, Protocol 3 (1946): 2.

cultural and literary appreciation in Newfoundland abound in Protocol. They reflect a stance that would become more pronounced later in Horwood's writing career, in both his newspaper columns and his fiction. His ambivalent attitude toward Newfoundland and its people was to be a dominant feature of his work.

Horwood's theory on the function of art has much in common with Marxist criticism. In Marxism and Literary Criticism, contemporary critic Terry Eagleton states that, "the narrative Marxism has to deliver is the story of the struggles of men and women to free themselves from certain forms of exploitation and oppression."[14] These views are similar to those expressed by Horwood in Protocol:

> Art in the twentieth century should be belligerent and assertive, making people think rather than telling them what to believe. Its function is to be the unofficial opposition to the official and current conceits, to attack raised barriers and to provide an opening for the 'long ones and twain ones' -- the oracles of unborn creeds.[15]

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[14]Terry Eagleton, Marxism and Literary Criticism (London: Methuen, 1976) vii.

[15]Editorial, Protocol 3 (1946): 3.

Marxist criticism "calls on the writer to commit his art to the cause of the proletariat."[16] Horwood shares this view:

> Art must not be the hobby of a few over-fed merchants and lawyers in St. John's -- a pass-time to while away leisure hours of people who have nothing better to do. It must be the soul of the people rising up to assert itself as different from the souls of other people.[17]

The function of art as a means of assertion for the people is quite clear in this statement. Yet once again it appears in direct opposition to the somewhat contemptuous attitude towards uncultured and unappreciative Newfoundlanders to be found elsewhere.

It was at the height of his activity with Protocol in 1946 that Horwood met Joseph R. Smallwood and instantly inspired by his enthusiasm, joined Smallwood in his dream to "have a socialist government in Newfoundland once we had won the battle for confederation."[18] In his own reconstruction of that period, Horwood notes that he "was converted to

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[16]Eagleton, 37.

[17]Editorial, Protocol 1 (1945): 1.

[18]Horwood, Joey, 74.

Smallwood before [he] was converted to confederation," and that he was "Joey's first convert . . . in St. John's."[19] Horwood was greatly impressed with Smallwood at the time:

> He had a personal magnetism, a charm, an enthusiasm, that came across even more powerfully person to person than it did on the radio or from the platform.[20]

Horwood played a significant role in Smallwood's Confederate Movement as one of the 'Inner Four' -- the "real heart of the Newfoundland Confederate Association."[21] It is Horwood's contention that he was closest to Smallwood, in that they shared the same Socialist convictions. Gregory Power, however, claims that this is exaggeration on Horwood's part; he contends that while Horwood was important to Smallwood, his own (Power's) presence was of greater value.[22] Horwood was by Smallwood's side throughout the entire campaign, writing articles for "The Confederate,"

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[19]Horwood, Joey, 75.

[20]Horwood, Joey, 74.

[21]Horwood, Joey, 76. The other three were Gregory Power, Philip Forsey, and Smallwood himself.

[22]Gregory Power, personal interview, 9 May 1990.

canvassing, offering advice and planning strategies. Not long after Smallwood led Newfoundland into Confederation, however, Horwood began to see significant changes. Smallwood no longer listened to the "powerful minds like those of Pottle and Forsey . . . the way he had listened to Nimshi Crewe and me."[23] Furthermore, Smallwood's 'Socialism' was not for Horwood:

> his concept of what the toiling masses needed was jobs in factories owned by free enterprise helped out with large government loans if necessary. . . . So much for socialism.[24]

Horwood, as a staunch Socialist who also abhorred industrialization, was beginning to see Smallwood in a different light. Horwood also became very disillusioned when strong anti-confederates came into prominence after the referendum was won.[25] The idealist in Horwood remained strong, however, and he stayed with Smallwood for another two years.

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[23]Horwood, Joey, 142.

[24]Horwood, Joey, 145-6.

[25]Charles Horwood, personal interview, 8 May 1990.

Horwood's association with Smallwood has its ironic side. In one editorial in Protocol in 1946, Horwood had condemned Smallwood for his "numerous and lengthy Confederationist propaganda -- rhapsodies . . . to the general advancement of the point he wishes to elucidate." He also prophesied that Confederation would "be an economic disaster for Newfoundland."[26] Yet within months he joined the Confederate movement, praised Smallwood for his oratorical ability,[27] and also adopted much of his style in his own writing.

In 1949 when Newfoundland joined Confederation, Horwood became a member for Labrador in the first session of the House of Assembly. He entered into the House in a deferred election in July of that year.[28] The two years that Horwood spent as the representative for Labrador exposed him to two matters that would dominate his major novels: life in the outports, and the way of life of the Labrador natives.

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[26]Editorial, Protocol 4 (1946): 1-2.

[27]Horwood, Joey, 75.

[28]The election was deferred until 25 July 1949 because it was the first time Labrador was to be represented in the House. It was contested by a Progressive Conservative, S.D. Grant, who received 133 votes while Horwood received an overwhelming 1,268.

An examination of the records of proceedings of the House of Assembly (Hansard) for the years 1949-51 shows that the majority of Horwood's comments simply echoed support for government policy. But on occasion he displayed passionate outbursts, especially when attacking the merchants whom he called "the scum of the earth" for robbing the fishermen.[29] His fondness for melodrama is evident in the following rhetorical flourish:

> If pointing out that fact that some bloody-handed profiteer charged 16¢ a pound for turnips as they have on the Labrador; if pointing out the fact that some ruthless monopolist charged $18 a barrel for potatoes as they have on the Labrador, if pointing out the fact that some conscienceless crook charged $50 a barrel for flour as they have on the Labrador, if that is socialism then I am a socialist, if that is communism then I am a communist; if that is being an atheist, then I am an atheist; if I have to join the Devil's party to be allowed to stand up and speak the truth, if I have to sell my soul in order to stand up and plead for justice, then the devil can have my application tomorrow, for speak the truth and plead for justice I will, just so long as I have breath and God gives me strength.[30]

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[29]Proceedings of the House of Assembly, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1951, 299.

[30]Proceedings of the House of Assembly, 1951, 299.

In an exchange with fellow member Irving Fogwill, Horwood assumes that Fogwill is calling him a Socialist and a Communist while Fogwill has done neither.[31] Horwood was very sensitive about being called a communist, a label frequently given to anyone who spoke out against the Establishment. This wrongful labelling may very well have cost Horwood a cabinet post. Even though both Smallwood and Gregory Power felt Horwood should have had a cabinet posting because of the part he played in Confederation, Smallwood gave in to pressure from other members of his party.[32]

Evidence of Horwood's views on other social issues can also be found in these records. As the member for Labrador, he felt that it was necessary to come to the defence of native people. He was adamant that the government would not be party to their exploitation: "that attitude is dead and as far as this Government is concerned will remain dead."[33] Such idealism is characteristic of Horwood's political views. The following speech illustrates this idealism quite well:

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[31]Proceedings of the House of Assembly, 1951, 298.

[32]Gregory Power, personal interview, 9 May 1990.

[33]Proceedings of the House of Assembly, 1951, 300.

> the time . . . is coming and which we can hasten if we work for it, a time when all of us can live freely together in a free system, when the voices of poverty and oppression and the voices of greed and degradation and ill-will are heard no more in this land of ours but are memories out of a darker past that has blossomed into a new day.[34]

The failure of Smallwood's policies to live up to such lofty ideals was probably Horwood's main reason for leaving politics in 1951, when he decided not to run for re-election. Horwood has never given a clear explanation for this decision. He seems to have realized that Smallwood was not the socialist he had once thought him to be. He later admits to a degree of naivete: "we were all quite naive. . . . Many of Joe's followers were a bunch of idealists."[35] Richard Gwyn, Smallwood's biographer, has a different theory: "Horwood . . . contributed little. Horwood preferred the emotional excitement of perpetual revolution to the

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[34]Proceedings of the House of Assembly, 1951, 306.

[35]Quoted in Elizabeth Russell Miller, The Life & Times of Ted Russell (St. John's: Jesperson Press, 1981) 112.

dreary grind of trying to implement it."[36] Gwyn also surmises that when Smallwood patronized Horwood in the House by calling him a "bit radical," something to be expected from a man in his twenties, Horwood was "too proud to make allowances and embittered by such patronizing."[37] Consequently, he left. Patrick O'Flaherty is a little kinder about Horwood's departure from politics, suggesting that "possibly he had grown tired of the day-to-day drudgery of political life."[38] Horwood has hinted that he felt at that point in his life that a change was necessary: "everything I've done has been a matter of training myself to be a writer; the next step is to go into journalism."[39] Both Charlie Horwood and Gregory Power suggest that the real reasons for his leaving politics were his disillusionment with Smallwood and the fact that he did not get a cabinet post.

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[36]Richard Gwyn, Smallwood: The Unlikely Revolutionary (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968) 133.

[37]Gwyn, 133.

[38]Patrick O'Flaherty, The Rock Observed (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979) 161.

[39]Donald Cameron, Conversations with Canadian Novelists (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973) 69.

In 1952, Horwood became a political reporter for the Evening Telegram, a St. John's daily newspaper. His column, entitled "Political Notebook," is arguably the best source of information about his political, philosophical, social and artistic views in the years prior to the publication of his works of fiction. O'Flaherty refers to "Political Notebook" as a "highly revealing series of columns, providing a key to the attitudes displayed in Horwood's later important works of fiction."[40] The column first appeared on 1 April 1952 under the pseudonym 'vox'.[41] Referring to his column years later, Horwood made the following assessment:

> [It] just about set everybody on their ear. . . . During that period it was the principal voice of opposition to Smallwood in Newfoundland -- you might say it was the only voice. The opposition in the House of Assembly, in so far as it was effective at all, took its effectiveness from me; I gave them virtually all the material that they used. It was a fighting,

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[40]O'Flaherty, The Rock Observed, 162.

[41]"Political Notebook" ran for six years until 23 June 1958. Horwood abandoned the pseudonym in July 1952.

> campaigning, crusading column -- an opposition column.[42]

It is interesting that Horwood emphasizes the anti-Smallwood focus of his columns, when in fact, he did not start to speak out against Smallwood in any significant way for quite some time. Even as late as 1 April 1954, Horwood was writing:

> we would like once again to assure the Premier that there is no malice toward him or his government. . . . Matter of fact, we like Joey a lot. . . . He's a great little guy in spite of his faults. . . . When we criticize the Premier, we criticize him as a friend.[43]

Equally significant is the fact that as late as the Spring of 1955, Horwood was "convinced [of] how fundamentally decent most men in public life really are."[44] It was not until 3 April 1956, when Horwood came out in support of the Progressive Conservatives and resigned his membership in the Liberal Party, that he did indeed become the 'voice of opposition' to the Smallwood government. From that point on, his

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[42]Cameron, Conversations, 69.

[43]"Political Notebook," Evening Telegram 1 April 1954.

[44]"Political Notebook," 2 April 1955.

criticism of Smallwood was scathing. Smallwood did not appreciate this at all. He called anyone who dared to speak out against him "scallawags," "drunken fools," and "scoundrels." The Evening Telegram was even offered, but refused, $60,000 of government job printing if it would drop Horwood as political columnist.[45] Horwood urged Newfoundlanders to get over their 'leader complex,' that "terrible, primitive attitude toward government which sets the Premier . . . up as a tribal chieftain, endowed with almost supernatural powers."[46]

Horwood denounced Government spending, the number of cabinet members, and the amount of work they actually did. He constantly referred to the Valdmanis Scandal and the Superior Rubber Scandal. Horwood went as far as to say that,

> the effects of Premier Smallwood's one-man rule has [sic] been to drive most of his opponents under cover. He has also managed to make public life so thoroughly unpleasant, with his campaigns of intolerance and his bigotry and villification [sic], that decent people hesitate to step into the mess even as his opponents. It

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[45]Gwyn, 237.

[46]"Political Notebook," 14 April 1956.

> would be like stepping into a pig sty to collar a pig.[47]

"Political Notebook" was not limited to Horwood's political views; indeed, he used his column to expand on his opinions on almost every conceivable aspect of Newfoundland life. Among his favourite issues were the plight of the natives peoples of Labrador, Newfoundland culture and the outports. Horwood used these issues to further his attack on the Smallwood government but their importance goes beyond mere criticism; the columns dealing with these issues provide valuable insight into themes that Horwood would later incorporate into his fiction. Consequently, they are worthy of closer examination.

The plight of the native people of Labrador has always been a subject close to Horwood's heart. In a column devoted to this issue he stated:

> The only Newfoundlanders who ever had a culture of their own were the Indians and Eskimos. That we set out deliberately to destroy. Having exterminated the Beothucks, we proceeded to kill spiritually the Montagnais and the Eskimos. Having turned them into beggars, we for bade them their tribal laws and customs, passed local regulations against their traditional dances, and converted them, wherever

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[47]"Political Notebook," 21 April 1958.

> possible, into imitation white men.[48]

Horwood denounced the Government's Department of Public Welfare as well as the hordes of American and Canadian Servicemen who invaded Labrador in the name of defence. This invasion, according to Horwood, was hastening the disappearance of native culture. Horwood's views on this whole issue were so strong that he devoted three columns to a series entitled "Policy in Labrador." He claimed that the "Government's worst fault in dealing with Northern Labrador has been indecision."[49] Many people in government could see the problems but could not agree on solutions. Horwood called for a closer look at what had transpired in the north. He was particularly concerned that the interbreeding of the Eskimos with white men would inevitably cause the disappearance of what little native culture was left. But Horwood's attitude toward this problem is rather ambivalent, as the following excerpt demonstrates:

> The Eskimos of Southern Labrador who have disappeared into the white stock, have bequeathed to their descendants special characteristics both of mind and body, and have produced what some observers regard

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[48]"Political Notebook," 11 September 1952.

[49]"Political Notebook, " 22 October 1952.

> as a distinctly superior type -- an opinion which is bolstered by the scholastic records of native and halfbreed children attending school in either Newfoundland or Southern Labrador. The fact is that they usually outdo the best efforts of children of undiluted European descent.[50]

He qualifies this statement somewhat by noting many problems associated with the process, especially cultural reorientation:

> The Government still hasn't made up its mind whether it wants to preserve what it can of the Eskimo and the Indian ways of life, or whether it wants to see these two peoples adopt the ordinary habits of Europeans as quickly as possible.

But he concludes that "The shift toward a white culture is something in which the Government need take no hand."[51]

Horwood's presentation of the Labrador Indians reflects an even more desperate situation. While the Eskimos had adapted to some extent, the Indians seemed unable to do so. In Horwood's opinion, the government had succeeded in destroying whatever dignity and

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[50]"Political Notebook," 22 October 1952.

[51]"Political Notebook," 23 October 1952.

cultural heritage the Indians had. Horwood's solution to what he portrayed as a hopeless situation was for the government to return to the Indians a portion of the land originally taken from them. The problems of the Labrador natives continued to interest Horwood; he was to return to them later in his novel White Eskimo, and in some of his short stories.

Horwood was at his most controversial in his views about Newfoundland culture and outport life. Although he prided himself on being a Newfoundlander, Horwood was blatantly negative in his assessment of the province's cultural status:

> The truth is that Newfoundland has no literature, no music, no art, little philosophy and less science. The only culture which we have is the culture of the fish flake, though even that is not our own, having come with our peasant ancestors from England and the Channel Islands.[52]

His contention was that the only culture possessed by the province was that of its natives, a culture rapidly being destroyed.

His attitude towards the outport shows a revealing ambivalence. In July 1952 he had expressed concern for

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[52]"Political Notebook," 11 September 1952.

older people who had to come to the city to live with their sons or daughters:

> The problem of old age in St. John's is worse than elsewhere because of the numbers of old people who come to the city to live with their sons or daughters and lose their outport roots -- rising at six in the morning to stare at the brick wall across the yard instead of predicting the day's weather from the way the light lies along the line of the sea.[53]

That he held the outport heritage in high esteem is evident in this statement. Yet by 1958, he was referring to outport residents as "the ignorant, the stupid, the illiterate" who were still blindly following Smallwood.[54] Horwood's change in attitude towards Smallwood is, of course, the cause for the revised view of outport people. Later, in one of his books, he refers to the outport people of Carbonear, a community he loved as a child, as "The Snopses of Conception Bay."[55] Horwood noted with contempt that Smallwood commanded his greatest support in the most

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[53]"Political Notebook," 28 July 1952.

[54]"Political Notebook," 1 April 1958.

[55]Harold Horwood, Newfoundland (Toronto: Macmillan, 1969) 159.

remote and uneducated areas of the province, where people voted for Smallwood because "they still think they are voting for the Baby Bonus, and are under the impression that Joey is Prime Minister of Canada."[56] This ambivalent attitude towards outport Newfoundlanders was to be a central theme of his first novel, Tomorrow Will Be Sunday.

After he left the Evening Telegram in 1958, Horwood wrote several articles for magazines. Two of these are of particular interest, because of the controversial stand taken by Horwood in each: "The People Who were Murdered for Fun" and "Tragedy on the Whelping Ice."[57] "The People Who were Murdered for Fun" is a poignant, yet brutally direct look at the extinction of the Beothucks in Newfoundland. Horwood paints a portrait of a peace-loving group of indigenous people that he claimed had been hunted for sport by the European settlers.

The second article condemns the annual seal hunt, presenting it as a cruel slaughter of "fluffy, white animals which lie helpless on the ice pans . . . young

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[56]"Political Notebook," 2 April 1958.

[57]Harold Horwood, "The People Who were Murdered for Fun," Maclean's 10 October 1959, and "Tragedy on the Whelping Ice," Canadian Audubon 22 (January-February, 1960).

animals . . . often skinned alive . . . flayed carcasses squirming on the ice."[58] Horwood advocated a gradual reduction in the number of seals taken each year, until eventually the hunt would end and the "massacre" would no longer be. Such a position was hardly typical of Newfoundlanders at that time; in fact it can be argued that the seal herds were nowhere near endangered nor was the hunt as cruel as he portrayed it. Quite likely his views were influenced by Farley Mowat, a good friend and mentor who was (and still is) a well-known critic of the seal hunt.

In 1966, Harold Horwood published the novel Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, his first significant piece of fiction. It embodies much of the political, social, and artistic philosophy that found its earliest expression in the editorials of Protocol and was developed more fully in the columns of the Evening Telegram. This novel, along with the other fictional works that followed, demonstrates quite well Horwood's didactic view of literature.

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[58]Horwood, "Tragedy on the Whelping Ice," 37-8.

CHAPTER TWO

THE OUTPORT: TOMORROW WILL BE SUNDAY

In Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, Harold Horwood preaches his social gospel of enlightenment through knowledge and education. This message is conveyed to the reader through several vehicles -- the ambivalent treatment of the outport, the contrasting characters, the handling of folklore -- and reinforced through a distinctively didactic voice. The novel is set in Caplin Bight, a fictitious outport on Newfoundland's northeast coast. It tells the story of Eli Pallisher,a young resident of Caplin Bight who is victimized by the narrow social and moral code, but who eventually finds liberation through the teachings of his friend and mentor, Christopher Simms.

Horwood once stated that he "managed to capture the essential nature of Newfoundland outports" in this

novel.[1] Whether this is so is debatable. What he succeeds in doing is to present an isolated place that breeds conservatism, ignorance, narrowmindedness, bigotry and hypocrisy. Adrian Fowler notes that while Horwood tries to present a balanced view of the outport, it inevitably is seen as "an intellectually and culturally barren environment, helpless against the periodic ravages of famine and disease, and susceptible to the tyranny of religious fanaticism."[2] It is this view of the outport that has prompted criticism. For example, Patrick O'Flaherty in The Rock Observed says that if the book is indeed a realistic portrayal of the pre-confederation outport, then it "surely is a libel upon outport people."[3] While Horwood has insisted that the novel is not autobiographical,[4] many critics have drawn connections between Horwood's own life and that of the main character. One reviewer concludes

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[1]Cameron, Conversations, 66.

[2]Adrian Fowler, "The Literature of Newfoundland: A Roundabout Return to Elemental Matters," The Atlantic Anthology: Volume 3, Critical Essays, ed. Terry Whalen (Charlottetown: Ragweed Press, 1985) 126-7.

[3]O'Flaherty, The Rock Observed, 166.

[4]Harold Horwood, letter to the author, 3 April 1990.

that "The story must surely be somewhat autobiographical in its reflection of and reaction to life in a simple fishing village."[5] Another asserts that "Mr Horwood has given us a thorough account of village ways and superstitions . . . it [Tomorrow Will Be Sunday] has caught the true note of Newfoundland a couple of generations ago."[6] This is the type of reaction that Patrick O'Flaherty feared.

A close examination of the representation of Caplin Bight reveals an ambivalence that is rooted in Horwood's own rather paradoxical views about rural life. There is certainly much evidence in the book of a positive portrayal of the outport, especially with respect to its beauty, its fine traditions, and the innate goodness of many of the residents. Adrian Fowler concedes that the one thing that Horwood does celebrate is the closeness to nature the outport

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[5]Thorpe Menn, "Growing Up in Newfoundland," Saturday Review 29 January 1966: 39.

[6]Walter O'Hearn, "Growing Up in Newfoundland," The New York Times Book Review 6 February 1966: 41.

affords.[7] The observation has been made that the book's major strength is its "persistent lyricism."[8]

In fact, Tomorrow Will Be Sunday does have a strong element of the romantic sense of communion with nature. The following images, for example, are distinctly Wordsworthian:

> there was no surf, only the soundless breath of the Atlantic, swelling from afar, rhythmically, a slow pulse beat, so silent that he could hear the gushing of the mill brook a quarter of a mile away, and the creaking of the great wheel that turns day and night throughout the summer -- a sound that would haunt his sleep forevermore -- mingled with the sputtering of small boat engines muffled in fog and the dry groaning of manila rigging as the mighty ghosts of his childhood ships sailed and rustled behind the world.[9]

Even routine activities such as hauling salmon nets are often presented with romantic flourish:

> The boy went to the nets with his father each day at five o'clock in the morning, when the sky was red

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[7]Fowler, "The Literature of Newfoundland," 126.

[8]O'Hearn, 41.

[9]Harold Horwood, Tomorrow Will Be Sunday (New York: Doubleday, 1966) 370. Subsequent references from this source will henceforth be acknowledged in the text.

> and green and gold. Every dawn Eli saw the sun rise over the sea in a flood of splendor, while they hitched their little punt to one end of the net and hauled the other end in to the big trap boat, seeing, far down in the blue-green water, the silver-blue fish, caught by the gills but struggling nobly to free themselves as they came, arching with great power in their muscular tails over the side of the skiff (51).

Such sentimental descriptions are counterbalanced by a clear awareness on the part of Horwood of the realities of daily outport life. For example, because the coastal steamer, Caplin Bight's regular link with the outside world, calls only once a week, spring through autumn, provisions for winter have to be stored in advance to ensure a winter without hunger. The weekly arrival of the steamer is a social event, an opportunity to get the news, as well as to help unload the barrels of flour, kegs of molasses, chests of tea, and tubs of margarine (8). Incorrect provisions could result in critical shortage, an example of which Horwood recounts as follows:

> Mothers with weaned babies became desperate, for fresh milk was almost unheard of in a Newfoundland outport in winter, and it was very difficult, once the regular freight service stopped in the fall, to get anything in from the outside. Some families mixed flour and water into a thin gruel and put it into the babies' bottles instead of milk.

> The starchy liquid did not satisfy the children. They grew sallow, large-eyed, big bellied, and cried weekly all of the time from hunger. That winter, as Eli saw his own young cousins practically dying a slow death from malnutrition (22-3).

The central focus of life in Caplin Bight, as in all coastal communities in Newfoundland, is fishing. Horwood is careful to present a detailed and accurate account of activities associated with the occupation, such as the following description of jigging:

> You catch the big cod one at a time, on a baited line, or with a jigger, which is really much the same thing as the heavy plug used by surf casters. Then you haul them in to drop them, flopping, into the bottom of your boat. . . . The jiggers they used were made of lead, which they had poured themselves into a wooden mold the shape of a small fish, except that the small fish had two big hooks sticking out of its snout. This they dropped on the end of a heavy line until they felt it hit bottom. Then they hauled in about a fathom of it and worked it up and down through the water to attract the codfish (326-7).

Equally accurate are his descriptions of the catching and cleaning of fish.

Horwood also illustrates the widely acknowledged characteristic of the outport people, their willingness to help others with total selflessness. This is

strongly depicted in one incident in the novel, a rescue of a ship caught in a storm off the coast of Caplin Bight. Without any concern for their own safety, the local residents risk their lives for strangers:

> Every man knew that he was taking his life in his hands, on no more than the off chance that another man's life might be saved. But it never occurred to any of them to draw back (189).

In spite of the presence of such commendation, the overpowering impression of the outport through most of the novel is negative. The physical isolation is an outward manifestation of a deeper malaise: a primarily man-made isolation based on ignorance, narrowmindedness, hypocrisy, and hatred. This is best illustrated by, though not limited to, the religious beliefs of the people. They belong to a strict, fundamentalist sect (a thinly veiled version of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland). Central to this sect is a strict moral code, especially with respect to sex:

> sex was sin (except between husband and wife, in bed with their clothes on, and avoiding anything 'unnatural'). Swearing or using 'vulgar langauge' was sin. Sloth and sensual pleasures were sins. These were all sins against God. . . . This about summed up the

> primitive, negative moral code in which Eli was raised. So long as you didn't kill, steal, lie, or blaspheme, and so long as you kept yourself 'pure' -- that is, sexless -- you walked perfect before the Lord (4).

The community is steeped in religious zealotry with belief totally based on Old Testament teachings of a God of wrath and vengeance. Horwood uses this to present a people that are so blinded by their preoccupation with preparation for the Day of Judgement that they neglect important every-day concerns. For example, several fishermen stop fishing because they are convinced the end is near, thus risking their livelihood and the livelihood of their families. These people believe that "all diseases came from God and could be cured by faith" (25). When the Pike baby gets ill, a special prayer meeting is called to pray her back to health. Though Mrs. Pike is a strong believer, her husband is "something of a backslider, who blew neither hot nor cold" (25). A séance is held to pray for the child's recovery even though Mr. Pike has insisted that a nurse be brought. The child dies anyway and to explain why the praying séance didn't work, the Pastor "pronounced flatly that the child had died because of lack of faith on the part of her father" (28). Horwood creates a poignant scene of the

father taking the child and burying it with only his other children present. The home is now torn by unspoken hostility. This obsessive religious fervour reaches its climax in the gathering at the graveyard, prepared for by marathon prayer meetings where people speak in tongues and faint. This 'mass hallucination' ends in a downpour of rain -- a huge rain storm that dampens the spirits of the congregation, as well as their bodies.

Religious fanaticism, a central theme of Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, finds its most complete expression in the characterization of Brother John McKim. An extreme character in every way, he is "a man with God's hand upon him in a most exceptional way -- a man full of zeal and holy fire, who spoke with tongues and saw visions of spiritual things not given to ordinary mortals to witness" (578). Overzealous and unrelentingly strict, Brother John seduces Eli into a homosexual relationship; not only does he hypocritically never admit his involvement to himself, he incriminates Christopher Simms for the same offence. One reviewer describes Brother John's life as a minister as "one of spiritual torture and emotional ecstasy, beautifully described in a dialect which has

the authentic ring of illiterate prophecy."[10] Horwood sets Brother John up as his 'anti-christ,' a representation of everything Horwood hates about organized religion: ignorance, hypocrisy, and power. Yet Brother John is something of a tragic figure, himself a victim of an impoverished society:

> Brother John had been born with the seeds of greatness; only the invisible walls of the little fishing settlement where he had grown to manhood had turned him inward until he became the leader of a small, fundamentalist congregation in one of the backwaters of civilization (166).

His potential for greatness has turned into corruption and a misuse of his power over others; as Eli comments, "'Tis not evil so much as ignorance'" (264).

At the centre of the story is Eli Pallisher. From the beginning of the novel, he is presented as a non-typical child of the outport: "By the time he was ten the people of Caplin Bight had already marked him as an odd child" (1). A child with great potential, Eli is bright and inquisitive, characteristics that alienate him from many of the adults in the community who find his inquiring mind a source of irritation. It is as

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[10]Arnold Edinborough, "New Canadian Fiction," Saturday Night 80 (May 1966): 47.

though Eli does not really belong to the outport, but is rather meant for better things. Even his manner of speech is different: He 'never spoke with a 'bayman's' accent, but always like a school teacher and mostly with the grave manner of an adult" (3).

Eli is clearly delineated as a victim of the narrowness of Caplin Bight:

> He was told that he must love his father and mother and to a lesser extent, his small brother Timmy, but was not shown how to do it, and didn't really know the meaning of love or any of the strong emotions connected with it, until he began to turn, after his twelfth birthday, toward people outside his immediate family (3-4).

He is victimized by the powerful figure of Brother John whose sexual desires for Eli are shrouded in hypocrisy and power. Eli is further alienated from both church and family because of whom he chooses as his closest friends, adults who are clearly regarded as the 'sinners' of the community. It is significant that both Simms (a retired magistrate) and Markady (a retired sea captain) are well read, well travelled and very well educated. Adrian Fowler draws attention to the significance of this:

> Eli gravitates to these two men because they are outsiders themselves, having been educated by books or by travel, far beyond the

> fisher-folk of the village. They are individuals who think for themselves, despising the herd instinct that exercises such a powerful influence over the behaviour of the rest of the community. Eli is drawn to Mr. Simms for his library and to Mr. Markady for his experience of the world and knowledge of manly pursuits.[11]

Horwood presents the traits these men possess as the means of escape from the narrowness and religious restrictiveness that strangles the community. Eli learns much from the two men, both of whom provide emotional as well as intellectual support.

To Harold Horwood, Eli is representative of all young people whose lives are restricted because of the narrow moral codes of family, church, and community. While Eli shows signs of the potential to break away from these restrictions, he would not be able to do so were it not for the influence of Christopher Simms. Christopher is the character who brings out Eli's potential for liberation. In fact, Christopher best represents the social and religious philosophy of the author himself.

Christopher, the 'bearer of the light', is a major vehicle for Horwood's didacticism in Tomorrow Will Be

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[11]Fowler, "The Literature of Newfoundland," 126.

Sunday. He, too, has been living away from the outport, and returns to provide a source of education and enlightenment for its intellectually and spiritually impoverished inhabitants. His chief role is as a teacher for Eli, but eventually through his example, for the community at large.

Christopher is the true romantic hero. He constantly preaches ideals of love and harmony between human beings and between man and nature. In many ways he epitomizes the stock Romantic theme of the book, "the inherent goodness of the human heart and the superiority of youthful instinct and passion over conventional values and restraints."[12] A highly idealized character, Christopher "has all the 'right' ideas. He is a brilliant and innovative teacher, a polymath, an athlete, a morally upright, free-thinking, nigh perfect specimen of humanity."[13] Christopher advises Eli: "'You'll have to get used to belonging to a different order of life from that of your family and friends'" (122), and encourages him to have an inquiring mind because "'asking questions is what makes

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[12]Patrick O'Flaherty, "Harold Horwood," The Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature, ed. William Toye (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1983) 365.

[13]Fowler, "The Literature of Newfoundland," 126.

us human'" (142). Horwood's own view that all hope lies in the young is clear when Christopher muses "'Why in God's name do children's parents have to try their best to cripple them for life'?" (147). Finally, his hatred of hypocrisy and misused power is evident when he defiantly declares, "'If a sexual relationship has no love in it, then it is entirely vicious, and it makes not the slightest difference whether it is blessed by some church or not'" (233).

It is not difficult to note the parallels between Christopher and Christ, so obviously drawn that they must have been intentional. He is the Christ figure who has come to the outport to enlighten the people. Just as Christ was the light to a darkened people, Christopher is a light to Eli, Johnny, Virginia, and eventually the others. He is the master, and they are his disciples. Christopher is wrongly accused of a crime by the essence of evil, Brother John. He is tried by a judge who says,"'I suppose there are times when every judge feels like Pontius Pilate'" (240), while Christopher echoes Christ as he forgives those who condemn him. Christopher is sent to prison but his influence is still felt while he is gone, through letters to Eli. During this time the chief evil presence, Brother John, is seen for what he is and ousted from Caplin Bight. Christopher once again

returns (a 'second coming') to a community on the verge of change. Eli (and, presumably, the reader) has been taught the way of truth and independence and is now ready to be on his own. There is no doubt that for Horwood, Christopher represents a spiritual leader, the spokesman for a New Religion. In fact, Harold Horwood himself drew parallels between Christopher and Joseph (both marrying women already pregnant) and called Tomorrow Will Be Sunday "The New Testament rewritten."[14]

The relationship between Eli and Christopher is portrayed as one of purity, morality, and true love as opposed to the relationship between Eli and Brother John that is completely based on hypocrisy, selfishness and immorality. Christopher is the complete counterbalance to Brother John. Christopher represents a totally different way of thinking and living. He condemns ignorance, hatred and hypocrisy. He tells Eli that, "'A man cannot live one way and believe another'" (241). He continually encourages Eli to use the gifts he possesses.

Christopher is a transmitter of Horwood's own views, serving as a spokesman for Horwood himself. He

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[14]Elizabeth Miller, interview with Harold Horwood, Division of Educational Technology, Memorial University, 16 February 1978.

reflects Horwood's own interest in literature, philosophy, and science. Christopher emphasizes the qualities of life that Horwood holds important: love, freedom, and truth. He rejects those qualities that Horwood perceives as evil: hypocrisy, exploitation, and fanaticism. Christopher is a revolutionary, fighting against the oppressive life in Caplin Bight. Horwood himself feels that,

> We're living in a society in which the Establishment, which includes all the people who control the society, is still nineteenth-century and they're still thinking in nineteenth-century terms. And unless you dissent from this, you're nowhere . . . the only possible hope of rescuing North American society from a total state of decadence and stagnation is the success of the revolution.[15]

What is apparent here is the Horwood of the editorials of Protocol. In Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, Horwood creates his vision of the ideal man -- a romantic and a rebel. What Christopher stands for is victorious and Eli emerges anew, ready to face the world. Many of the previously narrow-minded residents of Caplin Bight begin to view things from a new perspective. The book

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[15]Cameron, Conversations, 71-2.

ends on a positive note, an optimism that is reflected in the title.[16]

Through Christopher one can also note some of Horwood's own ambivalent views about the outport. Even though the outport is portrayed throughout as a primitive, smothering place, steeped in ignorance, Christopher says: "'There's nothing wrong with being a fisherman'" (206). Even though Christopher on the one hand encourages Eli to leave the outport for a better education in the name of progress, he hopes that Eli will come back:

> 'Sooner or later . . . you'll find that life is better and fuller here than in any city. Having grown up here, and lived it, you couldn't forget-you wouldn't . . . you'll be a bayman, to the end of your days' (206).

This advice given to Eli after he has been "set firmly on the path of escape to the outside world . . . represents an attempt Horwood makes in various places to balance the overwhelmingly negative picture of the outport."[17] This ambivalence is due to Horwood's own

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[16]This represents a change from the more negative titles that Horwood rejected, "Day of the Lord" and "Habitation of Dragons."

[17]Fowler, "The Literature of Newfoundland," 125.

dichotomous attitude at the time the novel was written. His resentment of Smallwood during the 1950's carried over into his attitude towards the outports, as he blamed the ignorant, uneducated, and isolated people of the outports for keeping Smallwood in office.

The didactism of Tomorrow Will Be Sunday is further reinforced through Horwood's use of folklore. While most writers use folklore as a means of injecting realistic detail into their works, Horwood uses it as a means of delineating character and theme in a very didactic way. He uses many examples of animal lore, folk medicine and taboos to do this. One of particular interest is the lore associated with the dragonfly, that the 'Horse stinger' could actually sting a person or animal to death.[18] Many of the inhabitants of the village believe this except Eli and the enlightened people. Horwood uses this folk belief to draw an unfavourable contrast between what Christopher teaches and the erroneous superstitions of the less enlightened villagers:

> the uneducated are repositories of false lore; the educated of accurate, scientifically-tested information, derived from books and resting on accurate empirical

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[18]Osmond P. Breland, Animal Life and Lore (New York: Harper and Rowe, 1972) 293.

> observation, rather than from oral sources.[19]

Eli and other enlightened characters are set apart from the ignorant, uneducated people by their refusal to accept such folkloric myths. Eli recites multiplication tables during a séance for a sick child, while Virginia goes out on a fishing boat with the men, whistling on the water; thus two strict taboos are easily broken by the young.

The major example of folk belief that takes on symbolic proportions is the eagle. Here Horwood is using a stock Romantic image, the bird, to symbolize freedom and intellectual enlightenment. But Horwood adds another dimension; characters are delineated in terms of how they respond to the eagle. To the narrow-minded such as Eli's father, the eagles are "Birds of ill omen . . . the devil's birds" (31). But to Eli the eagles are not "birds of ill omen, but free spirits, full of power and glory" (31). Mr. Markady sees the eagles as expressions of immorality:

> 'I always admired the eagles, Eli. . . . 'Tis as though they'd found that immortality ye was told so much about up in the church. In a

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[19]Roberta Buchanan, "Some aspects of the Use of Folklore in Harold Horwood's Tomorrow Will Be Sunday," unpublished manuscript, 1980, Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 5.

> manner o' speakin' I suppose ye might say that they <u>have</u> found it' (252-3).

Christopher notes that,

> 'They [the eagles] stand at the end of their line of evolution, two billion years of life leading up to them . . . eagles rather than men are the noblest work of God' (122).

The positive characters of the novel are lovers of eagles. The eagle symbolizes the individual in a free state, gathering strength from itself, released from a constrictive society:

> And as they stood the eagles came, soaring on motionless wings above the breakers of the Head. They were on their morning patrol from their nest crags far up in the Reach. High in the sky they came, black against the white mare's tails that streaked the vault of blue. . . . The flashing white of their head and tail feathers could be seen as they wheeled against the sky, great wings straight and flat like the arms of crosses in the heavens (252).

Horwood's use of the eagle is in keeping with a long literary tradition. Beryl Rowland notes that the eagle has traditionally been the "symbol of a desire for knowledge" and "a symbol of the poetic mind

contemplating higher truths."[20] Buchanan makes the point that Horwood

> deliberately contrasts two ways of looking at the eagle: the 'folk' see it as evil and negative; the enlightened see it as a symbol of aspiration and a wider vision of the world, soaring above the narrow perspective of the uneducated outporter.[21]

Horwood's projection of himself on to his fiction goes well beyond the presentation of plot and character. The narrative voice in Tomorrow Will Be Sunday clearly identifies with a particular position, that of the author. For example, the narrator refers to Caplin Bight as a 'village' rather than using the more familiar term 'outport.' Here one senses a narrator who is anxious to distance himself from his subject matter. More significant are the examples that show the intrusion of the author in the form of narrator's commentary on events or attitudes being related. Horwood's own views on the backwardness of outport Newfoundland are quite clear in following passage:

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[20]Beryl Rowland, Birds With Human Souls, A Guide to Bird Symbolism (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1975) 54, 55.

[21]Buchanan, 9.

> The belief that children should surpass their parents, should seek higher and nobler ends, the conception that the world's salvation lay in its evolution toward some distant and shining horizon, had not yet touched Caplin Bight. Such beliefs belonged to the cultural pattern of far-off places, where skyscrapers raked the clouds and men dreamed dreams of walking in their carnal bodies across the dust plains of the moon (71-2).

The tone of the narrator is frequently sarcastic such as when he describes the séance to save the Pike baby as an attempt to ask God to "pinch hit for a registered nurse" (27). Even more sarcastic is the description of Jehu Gilmore and the hypocrisy of his religion.

> Meanwhile player meetings were held every night of the week, and almost all day on Sundays. Jehu Gilmore testified from house to house, sometimes in less profane tongues, but in either case made a point of staying for dinner. There hadn't been such an epidemic of general righteousness at Caplin Bight in many a long day, and Jehu, for the nonce, was in his glory (79).

It can be argued that Tomorrow Will Be Sunday is a flawed novel. Perhaps its central weakness is that it violates one of its author's own rules of writing: "to really write effectively about anything, you have to be

there."[22] In spite of this comment, Horwood has admitted that he,

> did not grow up in a Newfoundland outport, or, in fact, even live through any of the experiences outlined in the book except, in a very general sense, the sexual experiences, which were, in fact, developed in a very different context from that given here.[23]

Horwood's main reason for writing Tomorrow Will Be Sunday was to preach to his readers his own strongly held views about religion and society. It is certainly true that "few authors of fiction so persistently editorialize about their material as Horwood."[24] And nowhere is this any more evident than in Tomorrow Will Be Sunday.

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[22]Cameron, Conversations, 72.

[23]Quoted in O'Flaherty, The Rock Observed, 165.

[24]O'Flaherty, "Harold Horwood," 365.

CHAPTER THREE

LABRADOR: WHITE ESKIMO

White Eskimo, Horwood's second novel, was published in 1972. It is the story of Esau Gillingham, a white man who has chosen to live in northern Labrador with the Eskimos. He encourages them to go back to the original ways of their people and to throw off the influence of the white men. The purpose of White Eskimo is to show the exploitation of the Eskimos by the white men; this message is conveyed through a didactic presentation of characters and reinforced through various levels of narrative voice.

Horwood's interest in the Eskimos (Inuit) of Labrador goes back to his years with the Evening Telegram when he wrote about the loss of Eskimo culture and the contamination of their way of life by the white men. In his view, the chief responsibility for this state of affairs rested with the Moravian

missionaries[1] who had moved in and forced Christianity on the people, reducing them to "beggars" who were forbidden "tribal laws and customs."[2] It was Horwood's opinion that the Government was essentially wrong in interfering with the Eskimos and that what these people really needed was to be taught to return to the land, to return to their heritage. This conviction forms the thematic focal point of White Eskimo.

The novel is dominated by the character of Esau Gillingham, Horwood's fictional representation of the vision he has for the Eskimo population. Gillingham shows them how to "reclaim ancestral regions away from the reach of alien, dismal twentieth-century relics of Christian missionary and medical tyranny as Gillingham and they view it."[3] As with Christopher Simms in Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, Gillingham is a larger-than-life character, a savior whose function is to rescue his people from a catastrophe brought upon them by the

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[1]The Moravian Missionaries arrived on the coast of Labrador in 1752, and set up their first mission in Nain in 1771. The missions are still present in many communities in Labrador today.

[2]"Political Notebook," 11 September 1952.

[3]"White Eskimo," Booklist 69 (15 November 1972): 275.

outside world. Gillingham is a heroic character, drawn in mythic terms. Horwood notes that "The book is consciously into the mythological in the sense that it goes back to the old hero epic."[4] Gillingham is of "epic dimensions, physically and otherwise."[5] His mysterious appearance on the scene prepares the reader for a "real hero,"[6] a hero of god-like dimensions:

> He descended upon Labrador as through from heaven. The Eskimos still talk of the morning the giant stranger came down out of the hills in the dead of winter dressed in the skin of a white bear, driving a team of white dogs with a long sled on the Eskimo pattern -- a komatik as we call it -- and bringing the biggest single load of white fox pelts anyone had ever seen.[7]

The immediate impression created by Gillingham is that of a god-like figure, set aside from the rest of the world by a ghostly mysticism combined with physical

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[4]Cameron, Conversations, 78.

[5]W.H. New, "Harold Horwood," Dictionary of Literary Biography: Canadian Writers since 1960, ed. W.H. New (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1987) 137.

[6]Cameron, Conversations, 78.

[7]Harold Horwood, White Eskimo (New York: Doubleday, 1972) 8. Subsequent references from this source will henceforth be acknowledged in the text.

prowess. Though he is a white man, he is closely associated with the Eskimos, sharing their knowledge and respect for their customs and language. He even becomes a 'song brother' of one of the Eskimos, a relationship that has special meaning:

> When Abel Shiwak offered to share songs with Esau Gillingham, and the offer was accepted and ratified in a ceremony, it gave them the strongest kind of claim upon each other: it was sharing of everything -- henceforth each would have permanent right to the other's house, to his hunting gear, his boat, his canoe, even, within limits, to his wife, who might be expected to offer her husband's song brother the comfort of her bed on certain occasions, and to perform for him the even more intimate personal service of sewing his skin clothing, and his kamiks, or sealskin boots (19).

The very size of Gillingham (he was six and a half feet tall and weighed over two hundred fifty pounds) makes him an imposing character but his reported feats make him even more so: he has always trapped the best and most animals, he has travelled areas previously untravelled by man, and he has escaped death on numerous occasions. Gillingham is, as Alison Mitcham notes, Horwood's contribution to the myth of the utopian north. He is a

> legendary figure who stands out in stark contrast to the usual non-

> heroes of contemporary western fiction. [Horwood] works toward achieving an ideal which is at once physical and spiritual. Physically [Gillingham] is of exceptional strength, with an ability to survive in the world's harshest climate. Spiritually, they are committed to an ideal . . . restoring to the Eskimo the past traditions which the white man, whether missionary or trader, has in his meddling intrusions into the Arctic almost succeeded in destroying.[8]

The distinctive heroism of Gillingham is reinforced through allusions to archetypal heroes such as Moses and Eric the Red. During the course of the novel, he becomes a legend in his own time. Hugh Richardson, one of the 'enlightened' white men in the novel, describes Gillingham as

> the Eskimo Messiah. . . . He has many of the qualities that the romantic writers would have called great-others, such as gentleness . . . and he hopes to leave a legend behind him -- you might call it the search for immortality. . . . He belongs with the epic heroes (157).

Gillingham is indeed presented as a savior. For Horwood,

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[8]Alison Mitcham, The Northern Imagination: A Study of Northern Canadian Literature (Moonbeam: Penumbra Press, 1983) 19.

> the northern wilderness is a place where men and women in flight from what they feel are the decadent and sterile values of the 'South' may seek a heightened self-awareness -- perhaps ever [sic] perceptions so transcendental as to be termed 'salvation.'[9]

Furthermore, Gillingham is a hero who,

> set himself against: all the professional do-gooders who were taking away the trapping grounds and the seal hunting and giving, in their place, jelly-roll wrapped in cellophane, made in Montreal and brought with government welfare cheques (75).

The function of the character Gillingham is clearly didactic. Horwood has created a hero of romantic proportions who presents a clear moral message to the reader. He combines "a celebration of the life of the 'noble savage' and a denunciation of 'the sickness of Western society'."[10] As an opponent of white colonialism in Labrador and as a strong advocate of Eskimo self-reliance and pride, Gillingham is intended to instil these same sentiments in the reader who cannot help but admire him. But Gillingham is not the only character who manifests this point of view.

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[9]Mitcham, 17.

[10]O'Flaherty, The Rock Observed, 170.

Horwood's own views are presented through other characters, both white and Eskimo. They are reiterated through contrast in the 'villains' of the novel and they are further strengthened through the use of multiple narrators.

Laverne Hamilton is one character who echoes Gillingham's (and Horwood's) anti-colonial stance:

> 'They've [the government] taken the Indians and Eskimos out of the woods and off the sea and planted them on garbage dumps at the edges of the white settlements, where they do a little fetching and carrying when it's needed. They're being turned into the niggers of the north' (75-6).

These words clearly echo Horwood's sentiments as expressed in his "Political Notebook" articles. Laverne Hamilton is an interesting character for another reason. The fact that her anti-establishment views come from a woman reflects Horwood's strong opinion on the equality of the sexes; as a matter of fact, one of Horwood's narrators presents his somewhat romantic view that "Women are perhaps more fundamentally human than men, and the question of race never really bothers them at all" (133).

Another character whose primary function is to expose the colonialism of the whites is Hugh Richardson, a trader who continuously feuded with

merchant and missionaries alike. He serves as a mouthpiece for much of Horwood's own opinions, such as when he (Richardson) comments that "'the supreme evil . . . is trying to make people over into what you think they ought to be'" (86), and "'where there is no law between people there can be no rebellion and no hatred'" (88). He sounds very much like a transplanted Christopher Simms.

Opposition to these views comes from the representatives of organized religion who are portrayed more negatively than they are in Tomorrow Will Be Sunday. The specific targets are the Moravian missions and the Grenfell Association, personified in the characters of Manfred Kosh and William Tocsin respectively.

The primary target and chief villain of the novel is Manfred Kosh, presented contemptuously as representative of all those who would impose on the Eskimos a "cold inhuman version of Christianity,"[11] a fearsome religion devoid of love or compassion for the Eskimo way of life. Kosh represents everything that Gillingham (and Horwood) loathe. The author's contempt is made clear in the first introduction of Kosh to the reader:

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[11]Mitcham, 35.

> Manfred Kosh, the missionary, lived in a huge white house that had been a fort, built by the founders of his mission two hundred years before and that was still surrounded by a stockade. No pioneer, no devotee of the hard life, but rather a lover of luxury, he nevertheless ruled the natives, and especially the younger ones, like an eighteenth-century schoolmaster (10).

The mission becomes the chief focus for Horwood's view that it is responsible for "a two-fold robbery of the North -- a spiritual robbery on one hand, a material one on the other."[12] In an argument with Kosh, Gillingham makes the following point:

> 'Your church histories conveniently neglect to mention the ship-loads of furs and caribou hides that you sent back to Europe year after year, or that the herds of deer have never recovered from the massacre you started by sending the Eskimos into the country with guns to slaughter the meat animals for their skins' (65-6).

The church, to Horwood, is a narrow-minded institution which believes that, "They [the Eskimos] will always need the help of our more advanced race" (68). Horwood, through Gillingham, sees as the only salvation for the Eskimos, a return to the land and the ancient

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[12]Mitcham, 35.

ways. The missions have forced Christianity and its celebrations on the Eskimos. The people are held in virtual poverty partly because during the best hunting time, they are confined to the church for feasts:

> 'The land is rich, but the people are poor. They are poor because they follow the ways of the white men, who do not understand this land or the needs of the people. They are poor because they have been taught to sing hymns at times when they should be hunting, and to wail and recite prayers when they should be out upon the mountains' (50).

Gillingham's suggestion that the celebration be moved to either before or after the trapping season, is not kindly received by the over-jealous Christians.

Horwood sees these missionaries as "parasite[s] . . . with soft, contemptible job[s], living at other people's expense" (69). If they are to survive, the Eskimos must reject the church's intrusion; they must return to their ancient pagan beliefs. Pagan dances and rituals, combined with a belief in the gods manifested in nature, play an important part in the novel and offer what is for Horwood, a positive alternative to the white man's Christianity. Horwood is especially hard on Protestantism, labelling it, a "terrible creed -- ruthless, sick and sentimental, all at once. Christianity was always the religion of the

illiterate. But Protestantism was its sickest expression" (89). Horwood sees as a chief tenet of Protestantism, the denial of love. By contrast, the Eskimos are a race who truly know how to love freely, in spite of the efforts of the mission to inflict its views on them. Particularly harmful have been the attempts of the Christian missionaries to inoculate the mission Eskimos "with their own feelings of guilt and taboo" (119). Such attempts run counter to the attitude among the Eskimos, towards sex and marriage that Gillingham finds much more wholesome. One such example is that girls enjoy sexual experiences from childhood with the parents' approval: "there is no taboo even against a ten-year-old girl sharing a bed with a man" (80). Horwood seems to take delight in pointing out this central contrast between Eskimo and white culture, much in favour of the former:

> Eskimos are not much impressed . . . with the idea of sin. It is a concept foreign to their culture. About the nearest the pagan Eskimo can get to this concept is the fear that he may make the spirit of the seal angry by hunting seals in the wrong way, or the fear that he might drive off the caribou from the coastal plain by showing disrespect for the animal he had killed. No feelings of guilt are ever instilled in Eskimo babies or children. Girls are expected to be pregnant, or even to give birth, before marriage. And friends who never swapped husbands and wives

> would be looked upon as a little odd (63).

The second villain of the novel, another enemy of Gillingham's (and Horwood's) vision is Dr. William Tocsin who is obviously modelled on the famous northern medical missionary, Wilfred Grenfell.[13] Horwood's contempt for Grenfell is evident in his comment that he was "fanatic, a compassionate dictator, a . . . publicity hound" who "trumpeted his own name around the world."[14] Horwood introduces Tocsin as a

> doctor of indifferent ability and little surgical training, but unlimited ambition, [who] had arrived in Labrador as a young man many years before . . . he had set out to build himself a private empire [and] billed himself as the savior of Labrador (108).

Constantly involved in the lives of the Eskimos, Tocsin appoints councils, tells people what to do and tries to force as many children as possible into his boarding schools so that he can mold their characters. Although

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[13]Wilfred Grenfell, a British medical missionary, went to Labrador in 1892. He helped establish hospitals, orphanages, nursing stations, schools and cooperative stores. He stayed in Labrador for forty years. His work is still carried on through the International Grenfell Association.

[14]Horwood, Newfoundland, 51.

he had never spent a winter in Labrador in his life, Tocsin takes great delight in being photographed aboard his ship dressed in the furs of an arctic explorer. He is depicted throughout the novel as a cruel, self-serving man. Echoes of Grenfell are quite clear when Tocsin is described as a person who "even invented stories about his adventures of the ice that have since passed into folklore and have been accepted as fact around the world" (19). The chase that leads to Gillingham's daughter's death shows Tocsin as ruthless, heartless and self-centered. He represents the epitome of the white man's cruelty and destructiveness.

The method of narration in White Eskimo, though quite different from that of Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, is certainly used by Horwood to further his didactic purpose. The story of Esau Gillingham is told to a group of listeners on the coastal steamer S.S. Kyle; one of these listeners is identified as Horwood himself, "the writer from St. John's" (276). There are two narrators, the chief one being Ed Hamilton whose observations, interspersed throughout his narrative, are obviously favourable to Gillingham and what he represents.

One section of the story, the killing of Abel Shiwak and the subsequent arrest of Gillingham, is told by Julias Finnan whom Horwood introduces as a 'reformed

cop.' The fact that Finnan is a policeman is necessary so that the reader can share events involved in the investigation of Shiwak's death. But it also serves a more didactic function, as it gives Horwood an opportunity to express through Finnan, his own views about the police. Finnan explains why he became disenchanted with his occupation:

> 'I got fed up with serving the whims of missionaries and politicians, for one thing. I couldn't stand all those parasites who couldn't fight their own battles without the help of what they called 'law'. . . . A cop is a hired bruiser, just a thug like one of the gangsters in the lowest rank of the Mafia, too stupid to make it anywhere near the top. Only he's on the otherside, of course -- it's the establishment that hires him, not the Mafia' (5-6).

It is quite obvious that the anti-establishment rhetoric is Horwood's.

As was the case with Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, one can find in White Eskimo, a certain degree of ambivalence. On the one hand Horwood seems to be clearly projecting a certain position; however, he sometimes undercuts his own stand. For example, throughout the novel the virtues of free love are expressed, yet Ed Hamilton, one of the characters used to express the author's viewpoint, concedes that

"There've been some pretty violent quarrels over women around Nain" (119). Again, the message of the novel seems to be in opposition to white intervention in the north. But it is clear that Horwood is supporting interbreeding, as best demonstrated in the child Halfbreed whom he calls a "child of the universe" (135). Even in the portrayal of Dr. Tocsin, there is some ambivalence. While he is clearly delineated as a self-serving, power-hungry meddler, Hamilton defends his behavior and says of him: "'I'll try to be fair. . . . What he did was done for the child, as he saw it. That is the way it is with the world's greatest meddlers. . . . Let's give him the benefit of the doubt'" (246). Even Hugh Richardson, presented as a enlightened critic of white colonialism, is not above using Gillingham's influence with the Eskimos for his own monetary advantage.

A significant ambiguity exists in the ending of the novel which, as with the foregoing examples, tends to modify the didacticism of the book. After speaking out against the government and what it has done to the native people, at the end of the novel, Ed Hamilton obtains a post with the government. In addition, Nootka becomes the new Head of the Division of Labrador Services. These new positions seem to represent

everything Gillingham had tried to fight against as expressed in these comments by Nootka himself:

> He [Gillingham] freed us from the past -- not from our own past . . . that was the last thing he would have wanted to do. He showed us how to shake off the past that had been inflicted upon us, the two hundred years of the scientific myth and the Christian superstition and the other trappings of colonialism (276).

It is not clear what conclusion Horwood intends to reach at the end of the novel. Gillingham has returned to the hinterland from which he emerged at the outset; he thus retains his mystical and even mythological heroism. He has left his people more enlightened. But there is no going back to a romanticized past. Life, including the government and the missions, must go on. It can thus be argued that the book, while it highlights the problem, offers no solutions. It would seem that Horwood has partially accepted government intrusion, but yet has failed to prepare the reader for any such change in stance.

One of the themes of White Eskimo is an idealization of the north, the utopianism discussed by Alison Mitcham:

> The north thus represents a vast and pure, though at the same time a terrible and cold, reservoir of enchantment, where the disenchanted

> individual can hope to escape from the false utopia in which he feels trapped . . . Horwood maintain[s] an idea of excellence divorced from materialism. Thus if an ideal society is to exist anywhere [he] see[s] the Far North -- the North well beyond the greedy reaches and the endurance of the men from the South.[15]

This utopian view is mainly seen in the romanticism of the hero, Esau Gillingham, in his journey to get back to nature and the primitive virtues. This is reinforced through descriptions of the idyllic (though frozen) landscape. One significant example is the following description of the aurora borealis:

> The only color in that black and white wilderness was the color of the spirit fires that danced nightly in the sky. No one can live under the aurora borealis without being awed by its displays. Flickering from all points of the horizon they came, pouring up along the dome of the sky from the peaks to the north and the east and the south and the west, meeting overhead in pools of fire, blue and rose-red and ice-green. And the dry spirit voices came down from them, rustling, crackling, with the pulsing rhythm of the spirit fires, faint but clear in the absolute silence of a world engulfed in death (43).

Equally effective are descriptions of the animal life:

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[15]Mitcham, 17, 19.

> Wild geese came winging in wedges
> from the south, and long, ragged
> lines of ducks glided down,
> settling and mottling the bays.
> The sea hawks -- skuas and jaejers
> -- dived overhead and went
> screaming northward toward their
> nesting ground. Whales cruised
> into the runs, rising and falling
> in slow motion. Seals blabbed like
> gnomes in the water-round,
> whiskered heads thrust upward,
> gazing pensively at passing boats
> or at the slow progress of
> castellated ice-bergs moving toward
> their appointed end in the warm
> Gulf Stream a thousand miles to the
> south (78).

One critic says that through such images, "Mr. Horwood thaws the image of 'the frozen North' into a habitable state of nature."[16] Such descriptive passages are more powerful, and consequently more enduring, than the didactic portrayals of character and event.

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[16]"White Eskimos [sic]," New York Times Book Review 5 November 1972: 40.

CHAPTER 4

THE COUNTER-CULTURE: ONLY THE GODS SPEAK AND REMEMBERING SUMMER

Harold Horwood contends he has "always been part of the subculture, the subculture that surfaced with the beatniks and subsequently with the hippies."[1] By the late 1960s, he was identifying himself quite closely with the counter-culture movement that was sweeping North America. The counter-culture was a social movement, "a collective enterprise to establish a new order of life."[2] It attracted,

> generally dissatisfied, alienated, and frustrated participants in the formal society looking for a change. . . . [The movement] attracts and holds a following not by its doctrine and promises but by a refuge it offers from the

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[1]Colin Henderson, "An Ego as Invulnerable as the Rock," Atlantic Insight 10 (July 1988): 14.

[2]Herbert Blumer, "Social Movements," Principles of Sociology, ed. A.M. Lee (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1951) 199.

> anxieties, barrenness, and meaninglessness of an individual existence . . . it enfolds them into a closely knit whole.[3]

In an article published in 1969, Horwood welcomed the hippies to eastern Canada, expressing the hope that they would "succeed in tearing down at least a good part of the filthy, fart-ridden mess that we were brought up to regard as man's highest achievement."[4] In the same article he pays tribute to these 'turned-on' Canadians whom he met on a trip across Canada in the summer of 1968. He admired them because they "had a sort of remote and untouchable splendor beyond mere physical beauty, proceeding from the kind of inner radiance that has been missing from humanity since the Romans buried Greece."[5]

It is not surprising that Horwood was attracted to this movement. Although he was "adamant that he liberated himself before the psychedelic revolution and the arrival of the flower children," it is clear that

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[3]Eric Hoffer, The True Believer (New York: Harper and Row, 1951) 44.

[4]Harold Horwood, "The New Human Species," Notes for a Native Land, ed. Andy Wainwright (Toronto: Oberon Press, 1969) 108-9.

[5]Horwood, "The New Human Species," 108.

the decade of the 1960s was "a watershed in his life."[6] He found in the Newfoundland adherents to the counter-culture movement, a group of kindred spirits who shared his own radical views.

It was his nephew John who was chiefly responsible for bringing Harold Horwood into the movement. John first introduced Harold to the world of rock music. Horwood reflects upon this time as significantly affecting his life by reinforcing many of his previously held ideas:

> All of a sudden I found myself wrapped up very deeply in it indeed -- you know, suddenly I could <u>hear</u> rock music and I could understand the way these people were thinking and began thinking the way they did. All the ethics, all the value of the square society that I had always been in sort of unconscious revolt against -- all of a sudden the whole thing crystallized. You don't just stay there and fight it from the inside. You get out. . . . You can't oppose anything at all if you're part of it. You get out and you go your way.[7]

Horwood's interest in the counter-culture corresponds to a change of residence to Beachy Cove, a small community near St. John's. He had moved there in

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[6]Henderson, 14.

[7]Cameron, <u>Conversations</u>, 72-3.

1961 after he had left the Evening Telegram, a move motivated primarily by his growing disillusionment with industrialization and his desire to go back to the land. Horwood is quick to point out that he was "a good 10 years ahead of the back-to-the-land movement."[8]

In the late 1960s, his home in Beachy Cove became a meeting place for various people. It was "open to anybody who wanted to open the door and come in."[9] People dropped by , 'crashed,' moved in, and stayed at Beachy Cove. Well-known Newfoundland poet, Des Walsh, who lived there in his teen years, remarks that Horwood was "the guru figure for these commune types who did not fit into the system and were looking for an alternative existence."[10] Beachy Cove was a haven for people, especially young runaways, dropouts from school and society, who were part of the counter-culture movement in terms of music, food, drugs, and lifestyle. Horwood's Beachy Cove home became a miniature hippie commune. Like its counterparts in other parts of North America, it attracted many who, like Horwood, felt alienated from, and disillusioned with contemporary

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[8]Henderson, 14.

[9]Cameron, Conversations, 72.

[10]Des Walsh, personal interview, 18 April 1990.

society. Like hippies elsewhere, the residents of Beachy Cove had a strong idealistic faith in the new order, "an unshakable belief in the correctness and perfection of their new lifestyle."[11] Des Walsh notes that Horwood had such strong convictions. He believed truly in his work and that his way was the correct way. His beliefs about social change and the corrupt system were encouraged and confirmed by the others at Beachy Cove.[12]

In 1969, Horwood established the first free school in Newfoundland called "Animal Farm." It was intended to provide an alternative to the traditional established school system. Horwood's own views on education had undergone a significant transition over the years. During the 1950s when he was writing his columns in the Evening Telegram, he had spoken out on educational issues. In one column he noted that the quality of education "has sunk very low, and is sinking lower year by year."[13] He placed the blame for this failure on three components: the students themselves,

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[11]Lewis Yablonsky, The Hippie Trip (New York: Pegasus, 1968) 291.

[12]Des Walsh, personal interview, 18 April 1990.

[13]"Political Notebook," 15 January 1958.

the schools, and the university. He claimed that students were not working hard enough, partly because of a lack of challenge provided by the system. The examinations were too easy, and the students were not being adequately prepared for university. He offered a number of suggestions for improvement, including the raising of university entrance requirements, a de-emphasis on 'extra-curricular' activities in the schools, and a more stringent marking standard for examinations.

His stance in his Evening Telegram columns reflects support for formal education, with an emphasis on text books and examinations. Such a view is still evident in Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, as Christopher as a teacher, reflects many of the ideas expanded by Horwood himself in his newspaper articles. But by the late 1960s, Horwood's approach had radically changed, and he was declaring himself "an enemy of the dehumanized school system."[14] The change of attitude is evident in some of the references to education in White Eskimo. For example, the narrator notes that Ed Hamilton arrived in Labrador with "his two useless degrees and

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[14]K.A. Hamilton, ed. Canada Writes: The Writer's Union of Canada Member's Book (Toronto: Writer's Union of Canada, 1977) 179.

his packing cases full of books," and Richardson refers to college education as "poison."

The opening of "Animal Farm" in St. John's in October 1969 was a clear attempt on the part of Horwood to put his revised educational theories into practice. The free school offered an alternative method of education to students, most of whom came from troubled backgrounds and did not fit into conventional society. Modelled after a revolutionary free school in England called "Summerhill," Horwood's "Animal Farm" attracted approximately 120 students, though no more than 30 or 40 attended at any one time. Attendance was not compulsory but there was a schedule of classes for those who wished to attend. As one might expect, the school produced controversy from the day it opened. Under constant surveillance by the police who regularly visited the premises, it was also opposed by the Department of Education,[15] along with various vigilante groups whom Horwood referred to as "sexually-repressed women of middle age, and one emotionally disturbed radio journalist."[16] According to Horwood, "Animal

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[15]Des Walsh, personal interview, 18 April 1990.

[16]Harold Horwood, "Education Be Damned We Taught Them to Live," The Mysterious East (March-April 1971): 19.

Farm" was a "hippie haven."[17] Many of the students used drugs but drugs were never allowed on the premises. All of the 'teaching' was done by volunteers and the students respected them for this. They were not boisterous or ever disrespectful.[18] Teaching in the traditional sense did not really exist. Students who wanted to write public examinations studied on their own; incredibly most of them passed. Even though "Animal Farm" was a free school, Horwood still encouraged the students to write these examinations because "the certificate still carries a premium."[19] It is interesting that even though Horwood was committed to a more free form of education, he still conformed to a certain extent to conventional practices such as examinations. This, he conceded later, was a major flaw in the set up: "Ideally, a free school should have its own very broad curriculum from which students could choose anything they liked."[20] Not only was the school a place of education, it became a home

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[17]Horwood, "Education Be Damned," 18.

[18]Des Walsh, personal interview, 18 April 1990.

[19]Horwood, "Education Be Damned," 20.

[20]Horwood, "Education Be Damned," 20.

for many of the students. According to Des Walsh, one of the students at the school, Horwood used to feed and clothe many of the students, allowing those with no place to go, to stay in the school.

Contrary to popular opinion that "Animal Farm" was nothing more than a haven for drugs and sex, many of the students went on to become very successful later in life. "We were," notes Horwood, "the only institution of any kind in Newfoundland that had any success whatever in dealing with drug use and its dangers."[21] "Animal Farm" lasted for only one school year; it closed down because of the non-renewal of the lease and the general financial strain. In retrospect, Horwood considers that the experiment was a success:

> There is no doubt in my mind, however, that this sort of school should be continued and expanded, and similar schools opened in every city and large town in Canada. Free schools and cooperative schools for little kids are fine things in themselves, but it is the alienated youth between fourteen and twenty that are most desperately in need of a place to go, a place to study, a place to work, and a social context that will not threaten them daily with destruction.[22]

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[21]Horwood, "Education Be Damned," 20.

[22]Horwood, "Education Be Damned," 20.

In addition to providing the students with an education in Mathematics and Physics, Horwood encouraged them to read literature, exposing them to numerous books from the school's vast library. It is not surprising that his beliefs influenced the students, in particular his views about the establishment, religion and social causes such as the rights of the poor and the natives. The students were being taught a 'way to live.'

Many themes of the counter-culture movement can be found in the two novels, Tomorrow Will Be Sunday and White Eskimo. Horwood uses both Christopher Simms and Esau Gillingham as spokesmen for focusing his opposition to the contemporary establishment. In Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, Horwood preaches his gospel of free love, of uninhibited sex between consenting adults, of spiritual communion between man and nature; the book is a strong indictment of the restrictions imposed on man's free spirit by a society dominated by a narrow-minded religion; the novel is no less than Horwood's call for the liberation of mankind. While White Eskimo has a very different setting, personal liberation from the bonds of society, this time that of the white missionaries of the north, forms the central theme. Again a more liberated attitude towards sex and

a strong sense of the bond between man and nature form the thematic focus.

Horwood's projection of his counter-culture views on to his fiction reaches its fullest dimension in a collection of short stories, Only the Gods Speak (1979) and a third novel, Remembering Summer (1987). Both books centre on the contrast between a decadent society and the enlightened counter-culture. Only the Gods Speak, a collection of seventeen short stories, is divided into two parts: "Ten Tales form the Tropics" and "Seven Pieces form the North." In the foreword to the book, Horwood explains the motivation behind the stories:

> These stories . . . are freighted with many of my deepest concerns, from the need for closer communion between people to the fear that white civilization has shot its bolt. Behind them is an anxiety for social and sexual morality, a profound rejection of what I regard as the anti-humanism of the 1950s and 60s. The Other as Thou (in sexual and non-sexual relationships) is central to them all. . . . These stories, then, are about people seeking salvation.[23]

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[23]Harold Horwood, Only the Gods Speak (St. John's: Breakwater, 1979) viii-ix. Subsequent references from this source will henceforth be acknowledged in the text.

Two of the stories, "Men Like Summer Snow" and "Love in a Very Cold Climate" are thematically similar to White Eskimo in that they convey the distinct message that the Inuit have been wronged by the white men and have suffered greatly at their hands. The loss of the traditional Inuit way of life is reflected in the fact that the young girls of the village are only impressed by boys who speak English and own outboard boats and snowmobiles. Atka, the main character in both stories is worried by this:

> He [Atka] had made a name as a promising hunter, it was true. Hunting skill, like a reputation for dreaming, was still one way to acquire status. But both now seemed to be inferior to owning your own skidoo (81).

The importance of hunting is being replaced by the desire to impress.

Even though the missionaries in these stories are less harsh and bigoted than those in White Eskimo, they still insist on distancing themselves from the natives. They are convinced that they are the superior race with a "duty to protect the weaker, less developed races from its evils" (90). Consequently, fraternizing between the Eskimos and the white men is highly disapproved of. The Eskimos, by contrast, are presented by Horwood as peace-loving, kind, and

essentially superior to the white race. Atka claims that the Inuit "have always been truly men, not dogs who enjoy fighting" (84). The fact that the white men insist on inflicting their own moral code on the Inuit is seen by Horwood as negative. By contrast, and in keeping with the attitudes of the counter-culture movement, Horwood preaches free love and absence of inhibitions about sex, qualities that he finds deeply embedded in traditional Inuit social mores. These themes are particularly dominant in "Love in a Very Cold Climate," the story of a love affair between a teacher and her fifteen year old student. The story presents a sympathetic portrayal of a situation that in the eyes of the local missionaries is absolutely intolerable. The reader is expected to view the departure of the teacher at the end of the story as the tragic consequence of a distorted view of human relationships. Not only have the missionaries stifled the Inuit culture, they have inflicted their own moral code on the native population; this is to Horwood, a travesty.

As was the case with White Eskimo, there is in a sense a partial capitulation on the part of Horwood in the Inuit stories of this volume. For example, Innuk clearly vehemently defends the positive influence of the white man:

> 'The white men are not feeble-minded, Atka. They have taken this land, like all the others they have gone to, because they are clever. They know how to make machines like those airplanes. The engine in your boat, my skidoo, the freezer where we store our fish, this fine rifle that you carry, worthy of so great a hunter as you, this rifle that enables you to kill ten seals for every one you might get with a harpoon -- those are all made by the white men. Doesn't this prove that they, too, are masters of our land?' (84).

Horwood has not yet entirely abandoned the notion that it is possible to work within the system.

The influence of the counter-culture is evident in these stories by the frequent use of hippie jargon. Phrases such as "get off," "uptight," and "come on heavy" abound throughout. The use of such terms in the stories of the Inuit introduces an element of incredibility. Having local Inuit boys using such expressions, while not beyond the realm of possibility, appears forced. Even more forced is the discussion between Atka and Innuk about the intricacies of various kinds of drugs, or the possibility of growing marijuana in a "geodesic dome, covered with construction plastic" (85). This determination on the part of Horwood to incorporate his own experiences into a somewhat alien environment weakens the credibility of his fiction.

There is also another important contradiction in Horwood's view. While drugs and the philosophies of the counter-culture are the main way of life for Horwood, they are shown in a negative way when, after smoking a joint, Atka and Innuk are too 'stoned' to kill the seal in front of them. Drugs have hampered the natural way of life for the Inuit in this case. Horwood never seems to settle this.

Another story, "Iniquities of the Fathers," is interesting in that it expands on a minor story line found in Tomorrow Will Be Sunday. It deals,

> not only with ignorance as one important aspect of the problem of evil . . . but also with a very immoral relationship between a woman and her husband (viii).

A child's death causes a rift between the fanatically religious wife and the more sceptical husband.

A different approach to the counter-culture is used in the story "Look Man I Love You." Here Horwood employs, as narrator, a professor at a university where the movement is quite strong. Even though the narrator is a sceptical outsider, his very scepticism becomes a means through which Horwood preaches the merits of the youth culture:

> Sanderson professes to understand them, too. He meets them on a spiritual level where the divisions

> between man and woman and boy and girl have ceased to matter -- such are the wonders of the Aquarians (115).

It is through the references to Sanderson's views that Horwood conveys his message. It is Sanderson who says, "There is a new light in the world . . . they will make love, not war, these children who have never felt the touch of want -- or the sting of discipline" (116). Horwood's intention is that the reader identify with Sanderson rather than the narrator. The pessimism of the narrator expressed in his final statement that "the gap widens, and continues to widen" (117) reflects Horwood's realization that the older generation (except a few enlightened "freaks" like himself) are too enslaved to their own narrow thinking to accept the liberating potential of the counter-culture.

"The Acid is Lousy in Van" is a significant story because it reveals the paradox of drug use. While the drug scene was an essential part of the hippie movement, Horwood was well aware of the negative effects of drug abuse. This story presents extremes of the drug life in the city of Vancouver, a very negative portrayal of lost people. The narrator and his young hippie companion are constantly bombarded with offers of drugs as they walk around the city. The story attests to the futility of life for a lost generation.

At one point during the walk, they come to a crack in a wall. There are cracks in all of the walls, symbolizing a crumbling society. There are many homeless beggars and drug addicts crowding the streets. Perhaps the most lost are the Indians. As in his "Political Notebook" days, Horwood feels that the white society has robbed them of their heritage and their dignity. The sidewalks are full of Indians sniffing glue and looking for handouts. It has gone so far that, "For an Indian there ain't no 'later'" (123). Drug use in this story is a sad, horrible experience. But the real failure is the society that has brought these young people to this hopeless state of affairs:

> Sewers rise up and blossom between black skeletons of buildings in the thick air, and over them the eagle and the cormorant gathered together. There are cobbles where the asphalt used to be. Soot drifts down between the heaps of smoking rubble, standing in ragged lines, still marking the main streets and the back alleys where the dogs and cats died of starvation foraging in empty garbage pails (127).

There is no hope for salvation here.

The final story in the collection is entitled "A Chant for One Voice," a celebration of nature. In direct contrast to the hell of the Vancouver streets,

here the natural descriptions evoke a sense of peace and tranquillity:

> Then with dusk the magic ground
> returned to its true vocation.
> Weasels came out of thickets and
> began to hunt with ruthless hunger
> the song birds and the meadow mice.
> The almost silent dance of life and
> death that wove its intricate
> pattern above the magic ground
> resumed its course, punctuated by
> night and day, summer and winter,
> but single and whole for all that.
> The fox paced the trails that he
> knew (128).

The ghosts that Horwood feels in the woods, the spirits, are the only other presences. Nature provides the ultimate salvation. Society has done such damage to its people that Horwood sees going back to the land as the only answer.

Horwood's most sustained treatment of the counter-culture is his novel, Remembering Summer, published in 1987. He began the book in 1969 when he himself was at the height of his personal involvement with the hippie subculture. The book is actually the result of a journal that Horwood kept while living at Beachy Cove. It is, according to Des Walsh, as accurate an account of the experience there as possible.[24] The main character of the novel is Eli Pallisher, the

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[24]Des Walsh, personal interview, 18 April 1990.

protagonist of Tomorrow Will Be Sunday. It is interesting that Horwood decided to continue the story of the young outport boy who had been liberated through his Horwood-like mentor, Christopher Simms. Horwood had hinted in Tomorrow Will Be Sunday (through Christopher) that Eli would "make a pretty big noise in the world." He also claimed at one point that he wanted to make Eli "just a drifter." He finally resolved that Eli Pallisher would become a freak, "which is exactly what he should have become, after having become various other things first."[25] As Horwood himself admits, the novel is based on his life at Beachy Cove: "I'm Eli. . . . Between the two novels Eli has become me."[26] In fact, there are numerous biographical references in the novel that draw attention to the merging of the character and his creator: Eli was "a labour organizer, longshoreman once"; he "got elected to the legislature"; he had "connections -- newspapers, Cabinet ministers"; and he

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[25]Cameron, Conversations, 74.

[26]Cameron, Conversations, 74.

founded "the only real free school that ever existed in the province."[27]

The book was met with mixed reviews by the critics. Adrian Fowler says that while the book has some good qualities, it is essentially preaching something "silly";[28] however, another critic says that the book's "celebration of the new consciousness remains inspiring."[29] But Horwood enjoyed writing it, and considered it the type of book best suited to his talents. Speaking of Remembering Summer (along with The Foxes of Beach Cove and Dancing on the Shore) he makes this comment:

> These books are important to me. I write them because I want people to read them. I don't care if they never make any money. They are my testament to the world."[30]

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[27]Harold Horwood, Remembering Summer (Porter's Lake: Pottersfield Press, 1987) 11, 112, 140, 172. Subsequent references from this source will henceforth be acknowledged in the text.

[28]Adrian Fowler, "New Novel by Harold Horwood," Atlantic Provinces Book Review 14 (May-June, 1987): 8.

[29]Gideon Forman, "Where it's Near," Books in Canada 16 (April 1987): 22.

[30]Henderson, 13.

Once again, Horwood sees his art primarily as a means of promoting his own ideas.

The novel is a culmination of the romantic idealism that was the essence of the counter-culture:

> In the years when we waited for the sun and saw fire come down from heaven, summer was not a season of the year but a landscape of the soul. Our parents who sat by the roadside waiting for Godot did not believe that the sun would rise. We believed. We were sure (7).

Central to the movement was the hope for a better way of life. Lewis Yablonsky, in his book entitled The Hippie Trip, says that the people who joined the movement were rejecting the institutionalized system that held no promise of fulfillment for them. Now these young people, represented by the "freaks" in Remembering Summer have, "fantastic visions of a beautiful life in the future . . . they felt they were escaping from a decadent society into a new community."[31] The "magic decade" of the 1960s dominates the book:

> There was a time when magic returned to the earth, and God rose from the dead, when the old dreamed dreams and the young saw visions. There was a time when millions believed in miracles: that soon

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[31]Yablonsky, 291-2.

> empire would be no more, and the
> lion and the wolf would cease (7).

The qualities of love, gentleness, togetherness and individual freedom that Horwood explored in Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, White Eskimo and Only the Gods Speak, reach their culmination in Remembering Summer. The messages of the counter-culture dominate throughout the book. Stock psychedelic images abound, the beat of rock music pounds incessantly, and most important of all, the characters under Eli's tutelage reach new heights of sensual awareness through the use of hallucinatory drugs. Heightened consciousness is explored frequently in passages such as the following:

> Shanta came to me bringing a
> flower, pink with shades of apricot
> and shell-white. It grew
> imperceptibly until I was enfolded,
> bee-like, in its heart, its walls
> rising around me in velvet curves,
> pistil and stamens a forest, heavy
> with bright globes of yellow
> pollen, while the stigma rose an
> altar laden with myrrh (125-6).

The message that comes through is that the wise use of drugs is the key that unlocks the mysteries of the universe:

> We experience eternity in the state
> of vision -- there we meet and are
> part of the eternal order of which
> this vegetable universe is but a
> shadow; there, truly, we pass
> beyond morality to an eternal

> plane, but mortality returns, just the same. It is the other part of us. It returns to our mortal part, the part that cannot be redeemed out of its dust (127).

The book celebrates free love and unbridled sexuality, while condemning the taboos and "guilt trips" that are part of the "square" world. Gazelle exudes the concept of love as Horwood believes it:

> That was Gazelle: simple and pure, almost old fashioned in her gentleness. It all would have been so different a generation earlier when sex was anything but pure and gentle -- an unresolved patchwork of black and white, animal and spirit, evil to be denied and forbidden delights to be enjoyed in darkness and guilt, mixed up with fear and loneliness and fantasies of whips and rape, ecstasies snatched from the brink of insanity and hell fire (12).

Love and kindness are very important qualities for Horwood. Des Walsh points out that Horwood possessed incredible kindness for others especially at Beachy Cove. He fed, clothed, looked after, and cared for everyone including the local people. In the house at Beachy Cove,

> the main taboo was against hurting other people. . . . Love was expressed easily, by word, by gesture, by touch, without embarrassment, and was not an overture to copulation . . but to some of them love was new. Food

> was free here, available to everybody, like water or air, not something you hoarded or begged for or asked permission to use. The body was an object of joy and admiration, not shame (45).

He preaches against the view that dominates the previous generation: "Love meant just one thing: getting laid, getting your tail, getting your oil changed. How brutal it all was!" (69).

While Horwood embraced the counter-culture movement wholeheartedly, one senses in the novel that he still felt the effects of earlier taboos. He longed to be free like the children in the novel but was held back, always having to, "measure everything and weigh alternatives, cursed with uncertainties from the Age of Reason" (20). There is hesitation on the narrator's part to endorse unlimited drug use. Margo, for example, is doomed by her over-dependence on prescription drugs. Drugs taken excessively for the wrong reason can lead to disaster. What Eli (and Horwood) preaches to the reader is that the use of hallucinatory drugs opens up to the individual a level of awareness not accessible otherwise.

There are also signs of disillusionment in the narrator's account. As the narrative is being reconstructed in retrospect, it is not surprising that the presentation of events is tempered by the passage

of time. As Eli notes at one point, you "'Can't spend all your time fighting the revolution'" (62). The individual has an obligation to himself to seek spiritual solace. This is ultimately found by Eli in the beauties of nature, a not surprising discovery when one considers the role of nature in Horwood's earlier fiction. The hope lay in maintaining the positive values of the 1960s while living as close as possible to the land. In fact, his celebration of such a way of life is the main subject of a recent work of non-fiction, Dancing on the Shore (1987), an account of life in Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia, where Horwood now resides.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of didactic literature is to teach rather than to delight; intrusion by the author is a primary goal. The author of a didactic work deliberately chooses situations and characters to present a pre-determined message.

Horwood's view of art has been didactic from the outset since his days of Protocol. At that time he stated:

> The purpose of art is not to 'instruct' in the ordinary sense, not to give people live reading matter that they will 'get something out of,' above all not to entertain their leisure. Art in the twentieth century should be belligerent and assertive.[1]

He values the work of artists who are "part of a great social and artistic ferment now going on in

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[1]Editorial, Protocol 3 (March 1946): 3.

Newfoundland . . . part of the electronic revolution that is happening everywhere in North America."[2] It is his contention that "The artist has always been the dirty-water walker -- the fellow that is hated and outcast and despised by society."[3] Horwood's didactiasm is clearly revolutionary, in keeping with his assertion that "artists have always been revolutionaries."[4] A recent critic contends that Horwood is still fighting for the social revolution and attacking what he regards as the sickness of western culture. This is clearly evident in Horwood's following statement:

> 'I regard the artist, as the person who has to be on the leading edge of social change. He has to have attitudes that the majority of people don't have.'[5]

Horwood's fiction is expressionist in that he views the object of the writer as the expression of his beliefs. He shares this view with the Romantic poets

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[2]Harold Horwood, Introduction, Voices Underground (Toronto: New Press, 1972) 1.

[3]Cameron, Conversations, 72.

[4]Cameron, Conversations, 72.

[5]Henderson, 15.

who saw literature as the expression of the unique and particular visions of the individual artist. This is certainly the case with Harold Horwood. Presenting his opinions to the reader is more important to him than adhering to the rules of the genre. This has resulted in what many critics and readers perceive as a central flaw in his fiction:

> in the case with all of his fiction so far he is too interested in sounding off about this and about that. . . . He is a born teacher and this is one of his major flaws as a novelist. He thinks he has the answers, or appears to think he has. He does not really explore therefore -- he preaches.[6]

There are dangers associated with being a didactic writer, the most important being the potential alienation of the reader. For example, Patrick O'Flaherty claims that Tomorrow Will Be Sunday "is a beautifully written book spoiled for many readers by humourless sermonizing."[7] Horwood, like many didactic writers, tends to preach incessantly and the message he is preaching reveals itself in multiple forms -- plot, setting, characterization, symbolism, and narrative

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[6]Fowler, "New Novel by Harold Horwood," 8.

[7]Patrick O'Flaherty, "Harold Horwood," 364.

voice. Themes are explicitly presented rather than implicitly developed through plot and character. The presentation of Horwood's ideas are "sensed as intrusions, as expressions of authorial opinion and experience, rather than as ideas emerging from the action itself."[8]

There is a distinct intolerance in Horwood towards those who do not readily accept his views. He feels that either "you're born with genius or not."[9] Commenting on readers who may not appreciate his work, Horwood notes that they are "too intellectually impoverished to understand it, or too emotionally and spiritually impoverished to appreciate it."[10] In the same vein, he feels that people who do not share his view of the world as a holistic unit "have the wrong attitude. . . . They simply haven't learned to accept the world the way they should."[11] For example, when he was asked what religious fundamentalists in Newfoundland thought of the portrayal of evangelical

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[8]Herbert Rosengarten, "Survival of the Fittest," Canadian Literature 58 (Autumn 1973): 93.

[9]Cameron, Conversations, 67.

[10]Henderson, 13.

[11]Henderson, 15.

faith in Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, Horwood replied "fundamentalist groups don't read, at least to any extent."[12] In the same conversation he said that White Eskimo needed no improvements as it was "perfect." Distinct characteristics of Horwood are an egotistical self-confidence coupled with a condescending attitude toward those who hold opposing views. This is such an innate part of his character that even when criticized by critics he becomes "merely vexed by their incompetence."[13]

Harold Horwood is a writer whose art is distinctly fused with his life. He creates his fiction out of the raw material of his own assertive opinions on social, political, and moral issues. In Tomorrow Will Be Sunday, he forces these opinions on a setting with which he was only vaguely familiar. Even though he did succeed in capturing some of the positive feature of Newfoundland outport life, the portrayal is distinctly negative. He is more open to criticism on this point because of his lack of first-hand information about the type of setting and characters he creates.

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[12]Elizabeth Miller, interview with Harold Horwood, 16 February 1978.

[13]Henderson, 13.

This problem is not as great in White Eskimo. Evidence shows that Horwood was quite familiar with coastal Labrador, having visited the region several times. These visits included one to northern Labrador, which inspired him to make the following comment: "I have never felt so insignificant as when sailing along the foot of the northern Labrador cliffs in a small boat."[14] The experiences presented in White Eskimo are consequently more direct; but the didacticism is just as pronounced.

The work of fiction which is the most intimately connected with his life is clearly Remembering Summer. Here, Horwood is writing directly from personal experience. While the novel is as didactic as the earlier fiction, it does have a stronger lyrical and poetic quality than the other two. It is his attempt to present his inner vision of the ultimate meaning of life.

Harold Horwood has been, and will likely continue to be, a successful writer. In spite of the limitations of his fiction, resulting from his overtly didactic stance, the books are powerful and revealing. Horwood has received recognition for his work: in 1966 he was recipient of the Beta Sigma Phi First Novel

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[14]Horwood, Newfoundland, 198.

Award, and in 1980 he was made a member of the Order of Canada in recognition of his contributions to Canadian writing. He has also worked with other writers as well as being writer-in-residence at both the University of Western Ontario (1976-7) and the University of Waterloo (1980-1). He is founding editor of a literary magazine, The New Quarterly. Most significantly, he encouraged Cassie Brown, one of Newfoundland's best writers of non-fiction, to publish Death on the Ice in 1972.

Horwood has also gained recognition as a writer of non-fiction. In fact, a case can be made that these works are superior because for the most part they are free of didacticism and moral indignation that characterize the short stories and novels. Works such as The Foxes of Beach Cove (1967), Newfoundland (1969) and most recently Dancing on the Shore (1987), are among the best non-fiction produced by Newfoundland writers. Ultimately, these works might be the ones by which he is remembered. But his novels, for all their flaws, are the representation of an animated and vigorous literary mind that cannot be ignored.

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