

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

SHARON POLLOCK 1973 - 1985

PLAYWRIGHT OF CONSCIENCE AND CONSEQUENCE

by

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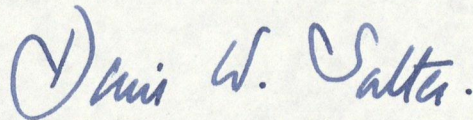
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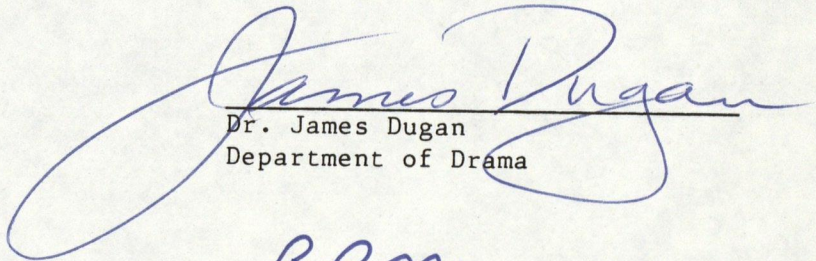
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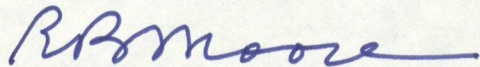
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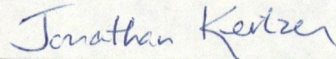
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ABSTRACT

This thesis demonstrates Sharon Pollock's interest in characterization in seven of her major stage plays written and produced from 1973 to 1985. The central character or characters within these plays share a common moral dilemma inherent in reconciling the demands of public position with those of private life.

The first two versions of WALSH present the protagonist amidst real and fictional characters with history merely providing a backdrop. Divided between his loyalty to the North West Mounted Police and his government and his personal responsibility as a man of honour, Walsh's choice results in a loss of his personal integrity and the death of Sitting Bull.

Hopkinson, in THE KOMAGATA MARU INCIDENT, succumbs to similar public pressure. However, his choice brings about his own death and subsequent expiation of his guilt. He is able to retain some degree of personal integrity.

ONE TIGER TO A HILL is structured so that Chalmers' duty is to mediate an explosive hostage episode in a prison. As prison officials consistently withhold information from him, Chalmers is unable to defuse the incident. He mourns both the death of two hostages and the loss of his personal choice.

BLOOD RELATIONS marks a transition from an emphasis on historical and political dialectic to the polemics of family. By using a sophisticated triple reflection of Lizzie Borden, Pollock examines psychological motivations in both the past and present. There is evidence of more insight into the central character and the audience is left to determine who the real Lizzie is - the accused or the acquitted.

GENERATIONS firmly establishes the issue of identity as part of the central conflict of Pollock's plays. In addition, the collective character, in the forms of family and land, provides the background for the individual battles. The family theme is explored further in WHISKEY SIX. The poetic Mr. Big, a dealer in dreams, functions entirely through the whims of his personal, rather romantic view of life. When the family he created and rules, disintegrates, he is left with neither a public nor a private facade. He is only an empty shell of a man.

The exploration of this dilemma ends with DOC, Pollock's most recent play, but only after a brief reworking of the early play, WALSH. A more sinister Major, ruthlessly bound to his duty, foreshadows the complete dedication of Doc (Ev) to his medical practice. A visit to the old man by his daughter sparks a journey into the past for both which ends on a positive note of reconciliation.

Pollock's exploration suggests the public and private aspects of life must co-exist in a delicate balance.

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D E D I C A T I O N

FOR MY MOTHER AND FATHER,
PEGGY AND JERRY MARSHELLO

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INTRODUCTION

Early in her writing career, Sharon Pollock claimed that she wrote in order to explain things to herself. She admitted a desire to teach, to make her countrymen aware of the history of their country. Her play, THE KOMAGATA MARU INCIDENT, she states, is a:

theatrical impression of an historical event seen through the optique of the stage and the mind of the playwright. It is not a documentary account, although much of it is documented.

.....
As a Canadian, I feel that much of our history has been misrepresented and even hidden from us. Until we recognize our past, we cannot change our future.¹

In spite of this remark, Pollock's work has been called documentary.² Such a technique implies a lack of emphasis on characterization. The political issue or historical event being documented is the focus, allowing a distanced and objective evaluation by the audience. The purpose is to make the audience think about a political, moral or social issue. Pollock is certainly interested in the documentary but this thesis will demonstrate that she is much more interested in character.

In the first two versions of WALSH, the title character is clearly in turmoil between his official position and his personal self.³ He is presented in various situations, in scenes with real and fictionalized characters. However, history is used merely as a background. Walsh, finding himself divided between his responsibility to government and his personal responsibility to

Sitting Bull as a man of honour, chooses to follow his duty. As a result, Sitting Bull and the Sioux nation are destroyed and Walsh loses his integrity.

Hopkinson, the main character in *THE KOMAGATA MARU INCIDENT*, undergoes a battle similar to that of Walsh. Pollock creates a character named T.S. who represents the public pressures on Hopkinson. In contrast, a series of episodes staged in a brothel, run by Hopkinson's lover, Evy, portrays the personal aspects of the Immigration Officer's life. By the end of the play, Hopkinson succumbs to public pressure. His subsequent death serves to expiate his guilt and he retains a measure of his personal integrity.

The major character in *ONE TIGER TO A HILL* is Ev Chalmers, a lawyer, suddenly pressed into service as a negotiator in an explosive hostage situation. Pollock has structured this play and this major character in such a way that Chalmers' task is to mediate between prison officials and convicts. Prison officials withhold information from him, preventing him from carrying out his duty. Chalmers is unable to prevent the murder of two people. The ending is bleak as the young lawyer mourns the inability to exercise his personal choice.

BLOOD RELATIONS is a transitional play which shifts Pollock's emphasis from historical and political polemics to those rooted in a family structure. It combines innovations in both characterization and structure to create Pollock's most popular play to date. In earlier plays, Pollock created fictional characters who represented aspects of the major character and in *BLOOD RELATIONS* she expands that technique. There are at least three reflections of Lizzie Borden: Miss Lizzie, the Actress and Bridget, the maid. The character also begins to exhibit more

insight into her behaviour. If Lizzie Borden did murder her parents, was she exercising the only form of choice available to her? Was there room for choice in her world? The question of the play probes deeper, however. Who is the real Lizzie – the Lizzie of public prejudice or the Lizzie acquitted of murder? The audience is left to decide whether or not Lizzie did commit the murders.

With the dual historical family context in BLOOD RELATIONS, the issue of identity within private and public worlds emerges. GENERATIONS develops this further within the framework of one collective character, the Nurlin family. Another unusually strong character within the play is the land, personified and looming in the background. Conflicts exist amongst individuals and between individuals and the land. For example, Bonnie is faced with making a choice whether or not to become a member of the larger family unit (and consequently, part of the land) or to strike out on her own. As in BLOOD RELATIONS, the issue again remains unresolved.

In WHISKEY SIX, the tale of the romantic rumrunner, living by his own rules and giving people what they desire, we see a character, Mr. Big, follow his inner yearnings to the exclusion of all else. He is a poetic figure, living on dreams and thriving on directing the dreams of others. He creates and rules his own world by creating his own family. He rescues an orphan, Leah, from the street and brings her home as a daughter. She becomes his mistress. Mr. Big offers Johnny Farley the choice of joining his family and the two young people fall in love. Mr. Big can no longer control the lives of his "children". The result is the destruction of his entire world. His is the bleakest of Pollock's endings. Mr. Big, by killing Leah, destroys what he loves most. He is left with neither a public nor a private identity: he has come to nothing.

This bleak spirit is carried into the 1983 version of WALSH. In a much more sinister portrayal the major character is inextricably bound to his duty. The pressures of public responsibility are greater than in the earlier versions. Walsh is less free to exercise personal choice. He is both defeated and destroyed.

In DOC, the extreme pressure of public responsibility is also apparent in the medical practice of Ev, the doctor of the title. Ev is visited by his daughter Catherine. Together, they journey back to the past and discover how Ev damaged his personal life through his complete dedication to his medical practice. His wife became an alcoholic and committed suicide, his mother stepped in front of a train, his daughter begged to leave home and he became estranged from his best friend, Oscar. When the play returns to the present, Ev is ready to accept responsibility for the failure within his family. He and Catherine are both able to relinquish the dark horrors of the past. They achieve a hopeful reconciliation.

The character dilemma finally reaches a conclusion: there must be a balance between one's private and public identities.

CHAPTER ONE

WALSH I AND WALSH II

If the early plays are considered alone, they do seem rooted in the "epic-documentary"⁴ style. Certainly, both the 1973 and 1974 versions of WALSH, as well as THE KOMAGATA MARU INCIDENT and ONE TIGER TO A HILL, because they are based in actual historical incidents, comply to a certain extent with a definition of documentary. However, the changes which occur in WALSH between the 1973 and 1974 versions clearly demonstrate that Pollock's emphasis is not on a particular historical incident, subject to commentary, but rather on the effect that incident has had on the lives of the people within it.

WALSH was first produced at Theatre Calgary in 1973. Each scene in that version begins with "voices" emanating from the auditorium, detailing historical information taken from actual documents of the day relating to the presence of the American Sioux in Canada.⁵ Pollock's original idea for the voices in that early version was to use giant puppets of "Uncle Sam", Queen Victoria and Sir John A. MacDonald.⁶ However, that particular idea was never incorporated into the design of the production.

The voices are decidedly distancing: they create a frame through which the audience can objectively consider the content. This technique, coupled with the historical basis, suggests that the play is meant to be a documentary.

However, the remainder of the play focuses on Walsh himself, and especially on how he reacts to the restraints placed upon him by his official position. The struggle within him between the demands of his job and his inner feelings results in strong tension between the public man, the Major in the North West Mounted Police, and the private man, the husband, father, leader and friend, who managed to survive in the Canadian West.

The play changed in preparation for its re-staging as part of the 1974 Stratford Festival Season. The most significant difference, and the one which has the most impact for the present discussion, is the deletion of the clumsy and didactic voices which began each scene. Instead, the 1974 version begins with a prologue.

The prologue is set in the Klondike, in 1898, some ten years after the main action of the play. Walsh is Commissioner of the Yukon, a dead-end job he assumed when his active career with the Mounted Police ended. The play proper flashes back to the events which lead him there. Pollock's manipulation of time between the prologue and the play provides a simple but effective entrance into the world of Walsh's conflict. Actual historical fact remains in the background as the forces of human nature in opposition assume major importance.

These opposing forces are manifest within the prologue's dream-like quality. Pollock allows certain characters within the play to appear as different but parallel characters in the prologue. Walsh and Harry play themselves. Clarence stands outside of the scene as an observer. Louis and MacLeod double as poker-players; Sitting Bull is a Prospector; his son, Crowfoot, is a young orphan, Joeie; and Mrs. Anderson is Jennie, the whore. Pollock points out in her stage directions to this prologue that "the scene is from Walsh's point of view... The impression is

similar to that experienced when one is drunk or under great mental stress." ⁷

The Prospector appeals to Walsh to give some money to the young Joeie. Walsh's reply is: "I can give you nothing"(p.13). He knocks the Prospector down, holding him there with his foot. The gesture symbolically foreshadows for the audience, and recalls for the changed Walsh, the negation of his personal desire to help Sitting Bull and his people. Clarence, viewing this scene, screams in a primitive utterance of frustration: "Nooooooooo"(p.13)!

The audience is immediately introduced to Walsh's conflict, and to the fact that he is now a broken man. He instructs the men of the North West Mounted Police to clean the sidewalks of Jennie's whorehouse and tavern, using the Force for jobs they were not meant to do. He is at the end, a man without self-respect who chooses to ignore his responsibilities. But this is the only overt attention Pollock pays to this aspect of the man. Instead, she turns our focus to the events that turned the man sour. She begins with the public Walsh of 1898. The rest of the play assesses how that man became trapped in that mask.

Early in the play, Pollock establishes Walsh as a leader and a friend of the settlers and the Indians. Although his opinions are deeply rooted and often different from those of his government, Walsh tries to please everyone. He attempts to settle a dispute with Mrs. Anderson, a settler, over a washtub stolen by the Indians. In the 1973 version, Pollock describes only the Major's physical stance with which he meets the woman's fury: ... ERECT, FEET APART, RIDING CROP HELD BEHIND HIM IN BOTH HANDS. HE LOCKS EYES WITH MRS. ANDERSON,⁸ determined to stand his ground. However, in the later version, both the settler and the Major vocalize their fears about the theft and its potential repercussions. The woman

appeals to Walsh, as a public officer of the law, and at the same time challenges his decision as a personal friend: "What will you do when they murder us in our beds?" Walsh sarcastically replies: "We are not going to start an Indian war over it!" Mrs. Anderson exclaims as she leaves that Walsh will "... stand by and let the Sioux do that"(p.32)! The addition of these few lines shows a Walsh more clearly in turmoil. What had been previously suggested by a gesture becomes a powerful, verbalized conflict. As a result, Walsh becomes more forceful. When he does crumble, our reaction is stronger. The scene shows Walsh making a clear choice. While he chastizes the Indians for having stolen the washtub, he will not inflame the situation simply to placate the woman's ire. His attempts at mediation between settlers and Indians are founded on decisiveness, yet tempered with judgment and compassion for the less fortunate.

Pollock deviates from a documentary style by augmenting the historical incident with fictional situations and characters. From her understanding of her research, she devises scenes which might have occurred between people who might have existed. The overall effect of juxtaposing the real with the fictional is a colourful central character, whose life within the context of the play takes on more depth. Often, it is difficult to discern which characters are fictional. Fortunately, in only a few instances is it germane to the discussion. The final result is a clear, dramatically heightened, moral dilemma.

In WALSH, Clarence and Harry are two such fictional characters. S.R.Gilbert suggests that Clarence mirrors Walsh's spiritual decline.⁹ Gilbert's theory can be expanded to consider not just one parallel or symbolical character (Clarence) but three symbolical characters. Pollock creates a triumvirate of characters which signifies different aspects of Walsh's own being. The

triumvirate is composed of a combination of two fictional characters superimposed on the factually based Walsh.

Walsh is autonomous and, as such, rules the triumvirate. Clarence is a young, raw recruit on the Force, depicting what Walsh was probably like in his youth, and, perhaps, what he would have liked to remain. Harry represents Walsh's conscience. He is a kind of chorus character who steps outside of the action and comments objectively. In the prologue, he gives historical background. He is not a member of the Force, but a wagonmaster. He, in no way, shares Walsh's public life. In the play, Walsh discusses his actions with him. As a "third eye of the conscience", Harry provides a symbolic projection which is perhaps most important in manifesting the conflict Walsh suffers.

The members of the triumvirate rarely appear together but scenes occur in which Walsh interacts with Clarence and Harry individually and in which Clarence and Harry appear together.

Walsh and Clarence are inextricably bound together. Both men come from uppoer Canada. Although the younger man is innocent, naive and full of wonder at the life before him, Pollock provides a number of scenes which point out their similarities. Clarence is outraged when he learns that the American government has fired the border in order to keep the buffalo south of the line, providing animals for their own Indians to eat and consequently meeting their treaty requirements to give them food. Clarence reacts strongly to the injustice in a manner that Walsh might use:

CLARENCE: Well, I don't believe it! It ain't fair! And even if it was true, and there were no buffalo, and nothin' for them to eat, well then, the Canadian government, it'd send out food for them. It's got a

responsibility!...(p.74)

Walsh, in the letter scene with his wife comments:

WALSH: ...Jesus Christ, I'm no raw recruit! One thing I know, across the line there's been gross and continual mismanagement of the Sioux. An able and brilliant people have been crushed... And now they hold on here in Canada... and they ask for some sort of justice - which is what I thought I swore an oath to serve!(p.77)

Although they are speaking of different incidents, a strong resemblance exists in the two speeches. The men react in a similar fashion to injustice. But Walsh's maturity and his years as an officer suppress his private ideals and force him to follow the restrictions of his position. Nevertheless, the incident experienced by Clarence echoes Walsh's own sentiment that a government must have a certain degree of responsibility.

Clarence's sense of honour and duty extends into his own dealings with the Indians. When the men watch the Nez Percés cross the border into Canada to seek refuge with their friend, Sitting Bull, Clarence gives up his own greatcoat to two small children and then asks his commanding officer: "Will the government mind about the coat"(p.57)?

In a gesture which closely links Walsh and Clarence, Walsh removes his own coat and tunic and passes them to a woman on a pony holding a child. His action is too late as both are dead. Walsh, dramatically and ritually, attempts to dissociate himself from what has happened:

CLARENCE: It's got a bit of blood on it, sir, just a bit... I didn't notice till I put it round her that she didn't use it.

WALSH SLOWLY TAKES TUNIC... STANDS HOLDING TUNIC. HE EXTENDS ONE ARM, SLOWLY, GENTLY, DELIBERATELY. HE DROPS

THE TUNIC, IGNORES IT AND LOOKS OUTSIDE OF LIGHT.

LOUIS: PICKS UP THE TUNIC BEHIND WALSH, HOLDS IT OUT TO HIM You can't just throw it away, sir. Dat's too easy.

WALSH TURNS, LOOKS AT HIM AND TAKES TUNIC. HE CAREFULLY PUTS IT ON AND BUTTONS IT UP MOST PRECISELY. HE TURNS UPSTAGE, HIS BACK TO THE AUDIENCE, FEET SLIGHTLY APART, HANDS CLASPED BEHIND HIM, STANDING VERY ERECT AND GAZES INTO THE DARKNESS.¹⁰

The red tunic, symbol of law and order in the new frontier, has been bloodied and Walsh is unsure whether to accept it again. By putting his tunic on, Walsh accepts his duty and once again assumes the mantle of an officer. It is noteworthy that while Pollock uses Clarence, a fictional character, to portray Walsh's private urges, the historically factual Metis scout, Louis Leveille, reminds Walsh of his responsibility.

The corresponding scene in the later version of the play casts more doubt on Walsh's intentions. He takes the tunic and slowly exits with it, rather than putting it on again in full view of the audience and buttoning it precisely (p.58). Pollock suspends Walsh's judgment about resuming his duty. His hesitation in both versions betrays his dilemma. He is unsure whether to follow his duty or his instincts.

A further link between Walsh and Clarence is evident in Clarence's scenes with Sitting Bull. The young recruit continues to try to help the Indians by bringing food for the chief's son. Walsh does not openly condone this action, but his lack of attention to such behaviour indicates at least a passive sanctioning of it, especially when it is considered in the light of Walsh's actions with the Nez Perces. Both are attempting to help in some way.

In an earlier scene, Clarence is eavesdropping on a lesson Sitting Bull gives Crowfoot about the importance in Indian

life of the sacred circle. Clarence becomes so caught up in the lesson that he jumps in without thinking about disclosing his presence and answers one of Sitting Bull's questions. The Indian speaks to Clarence as if he were Walsh himself:

SITTING BULL: And I think if you give me nothing, and you will not let me go where I can get something for myself, what is there? I would rather die fighting than die of starvation.(p.95)

In a similar fashion Walsh finds himself involved with Sitting Bull's problems too deeply before he realizes the implications. While Clarence represents Walsh's private desires, he is, at the same time, dissociated from him. Clarence can act this way, but Walsh, as commanding officer, cannot.

However Walsh can, and does, express his inner feelings to Harry. Certainly, Walsh is fully aware of his conflict, but whether he accepts its ramifications is left to the audience to decide:

WALSH: I've always been a man of principles, Harry. I've always thought of myself as a man of principle... honour, truth, the lot... They're just words, Harry. They don't exist... I gave my life to them and they don't exist.

.....
The Sioux have no future here in Canada.

HARRY: They sure as hell don't have none south of the line.

WALSH: The government's concern stops at the border... I see... larger issues at stake.

HARRY: Don't see what's a larger issue than a man's life... No Injun agent's gonna put up with Sitting Bull.

WALSH: You think not?

HARRY: They'll kill him off. Only smart thing to do, ain't it?

WALSH: And how do you feel about that?

HARRY: Ain't nothin' I can do... Good night, Major.
(pp.91-92)

Walsh effectively works out his problem for himself. It would have lacked dramatic intensity for him to stand alone on stage and soliloquize about whether or not to resign. As a public character, Walsh is too strong to allow himself so sensitive an exploration of inner feelings. It would detract from the character's strength as a military man. Harry, however, can safely express them. Walsh's inner strength remains intact. Harry's words are sentiments which the Major himself deeply feels. Yet Walsh is notable to verbalize that the Sioux will be killed in the States and that he can do nothing about it. His decision must be dictated by his position.

Walsh's home life also enlarges our perception of the personal man. Pollock inserts a scene near the beginning of Act II which materializes out of Walsh's imagination as he writes a letter to his wife, Mary, in Brockville. At the same time he reads a letter he has received from her. The implied dialogue between the two produces a scene of double focus as they speak. His words juxtapose his sentiments for his family with the aggravations of his position. The conflict sharpens. Mary is not integrally involved with the action of the play. Yet, she serves a purpose similar to that of Harry. She is a character to whom Walsh can speak his innermost thoughts.

The scene presents the private man who wishes to be at home with his family. He expresses his frustrations with his government. The professional man struggles to understand why that government refuses to help a nation, a people whose only crime was to defend what was theirs in the first place.

The triumvirate, aided by the letter scene with Mary, works to create an overall personal image of Walsh. It is, however, in the scenes with Sitting Bull and with Colonel MacLeod that Walsh's personal dilemma reaches its climax. Doubtless, his developing friendship with Sitting Bull forces the issue.

Sitting Bull has an opportunity to witness Walsh's fairness in his treatment of another Indian, White Dog, who is accused of stealing horses. Walsh begins to expose to the Sioux chief the internal dichotomy between his personal and public selves:

WALSH: I tell you this because I am a soldier, and I must follow orders, but I am a friend also. White Forehead INDICATING HIMSELF does not say this; Major Walsh says this. OFFICIAL... I am your friend.

.....
...I am your friend

SITTING BULL: I have no white friends.

WALSH: ...Aren't there things done in your name that you do not wish? It can be the same way with white men too... I promise you I'll stand by you.

.....
SITTING BULL: I will call you White Sioux and I will trust you.(pp.49-54)

The Indian leader, by accepting Walsh's offer of friendship and by naming him "White Sioux", adds yet another layer to the public Walsh. With the name "White Sioux" go expectations that the lawman will be able to effect a solution for the Indians. He conveys his government's message, but his personal feelings allow him to let Sitting Bull place his trust in him. Walsh seems confident that he will be able to make some sort of difference with his government. In reality, he locks himself into a completely untenable position. He attempts to make a choice, pledging his help, but not completely aware of the strength of the powers which oppose him. He finds that

he is unable to follow that choice.

Walsh's "official" image creates a trap. The only way for him to escape is to compromise either his personal beliefs or his position. As a result of the choice he makes to accept Sitting Bull's trust, their subsequent meetings become confrontations. Walsh must face the consequences. Sitting Bull expects help and Walsh, blocked by his position, is unable to deliver it. He tries to convince Sitting Bull to return to the States. The officer's already tenuous position is weakened. The trap is confining him more closely and he cannot, in good conscience, maintain his friendship with the Sioux without being able to provide some government aid. Yet he continues to pursue a course that will ultimately result in the destruction of his career, his personal life and the life of Sitting Bull. Walsh's frustration at his position is still felt, however.

Colonel MacLeod chastizes Walsh for his kindness to Sitting Bull. The higher ranking officer confronts Walsh with the essential conflict of the play, and in so doing, forces Walsh to face openly his own imbalance:

...Jim, the Americans believe, and they have convinced the Prime Minister, that you are privately urging Sitting Bull to remain in Canada, while publicly stating that he must leave.(p.82)

MacLeod's appearance strengthens the professional pressures of the position. Walsh's choice to try to help Sitting Bull causes further confrontations. MacLeod is obviously aware of Walsh's abilities as a military man, but he is also aware that he at times alters the rules to suit the situation at hand. Pollock explores the issue of manipulation. On a surface level, she suggests that Sitting Bull and the Sioux are pawns in a larger game of Canadian-American relations. Walsh recognizes that he is being used as a pawn just as

much as Sitting Bull. He will not allow himself to be manipulated:

WALSH: What do you think happens to me when I take off my tunic? At night, in my quarters, what do you think happens to me?... Do you think McCutcheon hangs me up from some god damn wooden peg with all my strings dangling?... Do you think I'm a puppet? Manipulate me right and anything is possible. I'm a person, I exist. I think and I feel! And I will not allow you to do this to me...(p.86)

By establishing the conflict on a larger scale, Pollock focuses our attention on the clash of private and public forces. Once again, the red tunic, the symbol of position and authority in the West, becomes a strong image. The scene establishes the choice which will lead Walsh to destruction.

The tension within Walsh builds. MacLeod presents an ultimatum to the Major: he is to follow orders or resign from the Force. MacLeod can manipulate Walsh and springs shut the trap. Walsh, just as quickly, changes his mind. Aware that his future is at stake, he assumes, once again, his public facade. His reply to his commanding officer is terse: "They say one's strongest instinct is for self-preservation - and I've made the Force my life..."(p.89)

Walsh's position is now as clear to himself as it is to his commanding officer. The subsequent meetings with Sitting Bull are more distanced, reflecting Walsh's attempts to avoid his personal responsibility. Walsh detaches himself from Sitting Bull, reacting to the pressures within himself.

The final confrontation between Walsh and Sitting Bull is forced by Louis Leveille, the same Metis scout who earlier reminded Walsh that he could not dismiss his responsibility so easily. This little man ironically mirrors the essence of the

situation by virtue of his half-white, half-Indian heritage and simply insists that Walsh see Sitting Bull one last time:

LOUIS: He wants to see you.

WALSH: I'm busy.

LOUIS: STARES HARD AT WALSH I sent him on in. TURNS TO GO (p.98)

Preparing to meet Sitting Bull in his purely public facade, Walsh buttons the top button of his tunic and remains with his back to Sitting Bull when he enters. This makes it harder for Sitting Bull to approach. Sitting Bull addresses Walsh as "White Sioux". Walsh's responses are terse: - "yes... I'm listening... What is it"(pp.98-99). The gap between the two men has grown wider.

Sitting Bull enters Walsh's office, humbled, wearing an old ragged blanket, appearing gaunt, but with "his personal magnetism still evident"(p.98). Walsh tries to dismiss the Indian. He has made his decision to remain with the Force but the responsibility of the private man remains:

SITTING BULL: ... For three years we have been in the White Mother's land, we have obeyed her laws, and we have kept the peace... I beg the White Mother to ... to...

WALSH: Go on.

SITTING BULL: ... to have... pity.. on us.(p.99)

Pollock's own commentary on the impact of this scene is most illuminating.¹¹ She feels that productions to date have not emphasized clearly enough the aspect of what Sitting Bull actually does. For the Sioux culture, according to Pollock, to ask for pity is tantamount to asking for death. Walsh, she believes, knows this aspect of the culture and in fact, relies on Sitting Bull NOT to

take this action, but to return peacefully to the States. Sitting Bull, however, was able to do something FOR THE SAKE OF HIS PEOPLE which was contrary to his cultural morality. Sitting Bull was able to follow his conscience. The opposition of one public man, Walsh, expecting another public man, Sitting Bull, to act in a specific way, produces a shattering surprise for Walsh who has been battling to control the urges of his own conscience.

When Walsh instructs the Indian to go to the trading post for the small amount of flour he requests, Sitting Bull demeans himself even further by handing over his ragged blanket to the officer. Walsh has increasingly more difficulty in controlling himself:

SITTING BULL: I ask for only a little.

WALSH: EXPLODES And I can give you nothing!...

SITTING BULL: You are speaking to the Head of the Sioux Nation!

WALSH: I don't give a good god damn who you are! Clear out!

SITTING BULL GOES FOR HIS KNIFE... WALSH... THROWS HIM TO THE FLOOR. AS SITTING BULL GOES TO GET UP, WALSH PLANTS HIS FOOT IN THE MIDDLE OF SITTING BULL'S BACK AND SHOVES HIM SPRAWLING AGAIN. LOUIS AND McCUTCHEON RESTRAIN SITTING BULL... AFTER A BRIEF STRUGGLE, [HE] STOPS. HE AND WALSH STAND STARING AT EACH OTHER, THEN SITTING BULL TURNS AND EXITS.¹²

Walsh has simply exploded under the pressure. Although Sitting Bull is physically subdued by Walsh, there is a growing feeling that Walsh is the beaten man. While Sitting Bull may well have chosen death, he has also chosen honour.

Pollock improves upon this scene in the 1974 version. By allowing Clarence to witness it, the scene holds an even more

exceptional power. In addition, the physical struggle between Walsh and Sitting Bull is significantly different:

SITTING BULL GOES FOR THE KNIFE IN HIS BELT. WALSH GRABS HIM BY THE ARM... AND THROWS HIM TO THE FLOOR. AS SITTING BULL GOES TO GET UP WALSH PLACES HIS FOOT IN THE MIDDLE OF SITTING BULL'S BACK AND SHOVES, SENDING HIM SPRAWLING. WALSH PLACES HIS FOOT ON SITTING BULL'S BACK.

CLARENCE: SCREAMS Noooo!(p.101)

The past and future blend together as the scene recalls the prologue. The image of Walsh as not only a beaten man but also a twisted man, emerges. Clarence's scream of "Noooo!" is the same response to Walsh's action with the Prospector. Walsh tries desperately to salvage what is left of his self-respect by extending his hand to Sitting Bull. It is rejected. The attempt to regain the Indian's friendship is a futile one. He clearly cannot have the best of both worlds.

The remaining scenes of the play stand as an epilogue which bears witness to Walsh's official and private destruction. Walsh is forced to take a leave of absence until Sitting Bull returns to America. Clarence, still hopeful, tries one more time to convince Walsh to help the Sioux leader. He suggests that since he will be in the East anyway, he could visit the Prime Minister in person and intercede for Sitting Bull.

CLARENCE: Sitting Bull still considers you his friend.

WALSH: I would have to deny that. I have my men and my wife and my children; but I have no friends. Friends are a danger. You may not comprehend that statement, Constable, but Sitting Bull would.(p.105)

The reverberation of friendship strikes an uncomfortable chord in Walsh's ears. Walsh dismisses Clarence with a telling comment:

"That young man should never make the Force his life"(p.107). It is an interesting comment for the older Walsh to make, for it indicates regret about his own career. It is, however, too late, for Walsh's own decision to stay with the Force, sentenced to inaction, reverberates in his comment. Walsh recognizes the younger man's idealism, but also realizes the danger of his staying in the position.

Pollock utilizes Walsh's absence to focus on Clarence's reaction. Harry's report that Sitting Bull has returned to the States is delivered in the glib tones of a drunken and remorseful man:

HARRY: I seen a historical sight - I seen the end of the Sioux Nation...
Here's to the Sioux!... They won the battle but lost the war!(p.111)

Harry's method of dealing with what has occurred is, ostensibly, to be drunk. For the character who represents Walsh's conscience, that behaviour is suitable. Clarence's reaction is to throw a drink in Harry's face in a desperate gesture of denial. It is appropriate that these two characters should be in conflict as Walsh's personal values are finally defeated. The only way for the conscience to be at peace is to deny the integrity of youth.

The final scene of the play finds Walsh a defeated, almost foolish, man. Clarence again, but for the last time, intrudes on Walsh's life to report that Sitting Bull is dead. The young man, full of anger, describes the death of Sitting Bull and his son Crowfoot. Walsh sternly dismisses his men:

WALSH WATCHES THEM LEAVE... HE UNDOES HIS LEATHER HOLSTER AND TAKES OUT THE GUN... HE LAYS THE GUN ON THE DESK, AND SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY REMOVES HIS TUNIC AND PUTS IT ON THE DESK. WE HEAR SITTING BULL'S VOICE AS

WALSH SLOWLY LIFTS BOTH HANDS OVER HIS HEAD..

.....
WALSH SLAMS HIS HAND DOWN ON THE DESK. BLACKOUT.(p.116)

Walsh irrevocably surrenders the public image as he removes his tunic and leaves it on the office desk. We have seen him sitting alone in the prologue. He is destroyed with neither a public nor a private facade for consolation. The spirit of the man is dead.

Walsh presents a character in a moral dilemma, caught between the dictates of official action and private conscience. Clearly the public facade triumphs. Since Pollock has fictionalized the historical events which spawned this play, the conflict Walsh experiences becomes universal. The dilemma is not peculiar only to this man in this situation.

Walsh's conflict is more important in the context of Pollock's work. History, in this play, is secondary to character. Pollock continues to explore historical incidents in a bolder and more experimental manner. The theme of public and private identities continues to be treated in later works.

CHAPTER TWO

THE KOMAGATA MARU INCIDENT

THE KOMAGATA MARU INCIDENT, the second of Pollock's "historical plays", is based on the 1914 episode in Vancouver harbour in which three hundred and seventy-six Sikh immigrants were held captive on board the Komagata Maru, a Japanese steamer. Their attempts to gain entry into Canada met with humiliation and deprivation despite the fact that, as British subjects, they had a right to emigrate. The government's legislation disallowing Asian immigration was strengthened by a convoluted set of restrictions placed upon the Sikhs in the harbour. Eventually, on July 16, 1914 the Immigration Department itself ruled that only twenty of the three hundred and seventy-six had a legal right to live in Canada. Some ninety others were deported because of disease and the remainder were refused admittance. Pollock examines this incident through the major character in the play, Inspector William Hopkinson, Head of Intelligence for the Immigration Department. The similarity between this piece and WALSH is readily apparent. Once again, "foreigners" seek refuge in Canada. One man is in a position to help, if it were only up to him. Like Walsh, Hopkinson's position carries with it considerable responsibility and power, yet it prevents humane action.

Hopkinson, however, is a spy. His very job necessitates a duplicity of action which affects every aspect of his life. In discussing Hopkinson, Robert Nunn refers to the "slow return of the

repressed".¹³ The roots of Hopkinson's humanity are more deep and more personal than a simple commitment to justice. Hopkinson's own mother was Indian. However, his "impure" racial background "blocked" his career progress in his homeland, so he emigrated to Canada. His feelings towards these people are understandably ambivalent. While the prospect of the forced return to India of the captives on board the Komagata Maru distresses Hopkinson, he, too, is bound by the confines of his government's position. He is unable, even though he does make some gestures, to provide aid. Any attempts to intercede force him more deeply into a moral quandary, for he has more of himself to deny.

Pollock explains Hopkinson's character by focusing on his personal life. She portrays him against the background of a brothel, where he spends most of his time with Evy, his mistress/lover and madam of the house. The implication is clear. Hopkinson's job is compared to that of a prostitute - he, too, sells his loyalties for a price.

The relationship between Hopkinson and Evy is stormy. Obsessed with his job, he presents her with a gift but immediately has to leave for an appointment. She disapproves of his "rats", his ring of informers, resenting their intrusion: "he's always coming around and when he does, off you go...pouf".¹⁴ He exerts both a physical and psychological control over her:

I'll do just as I please in your house! I'm the one that keeps you open and don't you forget it! A nod from me and you'd be buried under warrants... I get ahead, Evy, do you know how I do that? I look ahead, I'm always thinking...(p.5)

Even in his personal space, his actions can be viewed as corrupt and ruthless. He uses people for what they can do for him. Evy, however, in return, can exert certain control over him

simply by calling him "Billy"(p.3). While Evy is a part of his private life, she is also his antagonist. She reveals certain secrets about the man:

EVY: He's got a thing about race, about colour, haven't you noticed... He goes to the temple... in disguise... he thinks, he looks like a Sikh... I've been thinking... Funny thing, your background...

HOPKINSON: That's enough.

EVY: Birthplace, things like that, where were you born, Bill?

The scene builds in tension as she taunts him so much that he reacts violently:

EVY: ... your mother's eyes, now what were they?

HOPKINSON: My mother's eyes were blue, you bitch! I'll kill you!

EVY:... you're stupid, Bill, you're stupid... They all use you, Bill, yes, they do ... You think that you use me, but you're the one that's being used... they're using you and Billy boy's too dumb to know and stupid dumbo Billy will keep on being used...

HE CATCHES HER, SHE SPEAKS SOFTLY

... and Billy's mother's brown.

HE SLAPS HER AND SHE SPEAKS LOUDER

... and Billy's mother's brown.

HOPKINSON: HE THROWS HER DOWN, KNEELS AND SHAKES HER
Don't say that. Don't say that! I'll kill you if you say that to me! HE SLOWS DOWN HIS ATTACK ON HER Evy, don't say that. Please don't say that... HE STOPS I...
I love you, Evy, don't say that to me...(pp.32-33)

He becomes submissive to her, recognizing that he needs her, loves her. She is his only escape from the trappings of his public office. Evy knows and loves him for what he is. The two are quite similar. However, Evy is fully aware of what she is. She finds his actions, at times, abhorrent: "I'm a whore and what you do is

offensive to me!... I'm a whore and I look at your job and I could vomit"(p.19)! Evy clearly acknowledges their similarity by her continual acceptance of his ambivalent behaviour. She cares sincerely for him, but her self-realization renders her free: "Why don't we go away?... Why can't we?... Bill?... Bill talk to me!... I can leave... SHE EXITS OFFSTAGE(P.45). Her efforts to convince him to go away fail. She realizes what his fate would be if he stays and cannot bear to stand by to witness his destruction.

The world where Hopkinson seeks refuge and love is populated by whores and aliens. His liaison with Evy is mirrored by another couple, Sophie and Georg. They are introduced at the beginning of the play and shed some light on Hopkinson and his relationship with Evy. Both women are whores. Both men are foreign to the country in some way, although they hide that aspect of themselves. Georg does anything which will put him in a good light with the government. He attempts to say things which please Hopkinson. He tries to prostitute himself to gain acceptance into a world on the verge of war with his native country. Just as Hopkinson brings gifts to Evy, Georg brings chocolates to Sophie. Sophie, though, does not accept Georg's gift as graciously and insists on being paid.

Georg is another rendering of the Hopkinson persona, a reminder of the public self within the private world. He needs Hopkinson to accomplish his own goals. His intense desire to be accepted by Hopkinson is evident in his blatant racism: "The European races must administrate..." (P.11). Hopkinson, on the other hand, recognizes Georg's potential usefulness and accepts some of his overtures of friendship. At the same time, the government official must be cautious not to expose too much of himself, for the foreigner's motives are fiercely personal. Hopkinson remarks that a man in his position "has very few

friends"(p.11). The implication that the public mask does not allow the luxury of friendship is a recurrent theme. A similar exchange occurred between Walsh and Sitting Bull.

The immigration officer puts Georg in his place by reminding him of his enemy alien status. However, he decides to "test" Georg's loyalty by manipulating him into carrying a note onto the ship. His assistance, should it be discovered, would implicate him in a trumped-up plot between the Germans and the Sikhs. Evy discloses the plan and vows: "I won't let you do this" (p.29)! Evy betrays Hopkinson by attempting to convince Georg not to take part in the plan. Still eager to please, however, Georg does assist Hopkinson in his attack on the ship.

It is through Georg's reportage of the incident that Hopkinson is reduced to a laughable and despicable figure. Standing on the deck of the launch, the Sikhs recognize the gold braid on his hat and pelt him with pieces of coal, turning his skin black, an ironic image of him in the face of defeat. Nunn's observation on this aspect of Hopkinson's humiliation is astute:

Through a neurotic oversight, the meticulous civil servant has placed himself where he will be overwhelmed by dark-skinned men, in whom he refuses to see himself until his skin is too dark.¹⁵

It is not until Hopkinson's own ritual cleansing that the tone of the play changes. Chastened and cognizant of his actions, Hopkinson seals his fate when he faces his final official duty. As Nunn suggests, his repressed racial origin surfaces when he meets death with as passive an acceptance as the woman on the ship who returns to India.¹⁶ Hopkinson, looking for the woman and the child, cannot issue an order to fire. He is humiliated in Georg's eyes: "There you sit, a servant of Her Majesty's Government, battered and bruised by a bunch of Hindus... Every time

he was hit, they all cheered"(p.38).

Hopkinson's lack of action and subsequent humiliation result in guilt. There must be expiation. Walsh's final confrontation was witnessed only by a few of his men. He was not required to atone publicly. The focus on Hopkinson within his private world, with external pressures impinging, creates a need for direct action on his part.

In addition, WALSH presented two full characters detailing the opposing sides of the dilemma. The polemic in this play is stated differently. Pollock uses a collective character, the Woman, as the sole representative of all three hundred and seventy-six captives on board the ship. The playwright avoids a sentimental treatment of the Sikhs in this manner. While the Woman's position is a strong one, we have no opportunity to become personally involved either with her or with the rest of the group. This method stands in sharp contrast to the treatment of the Indians in WALSH. There is no comparable scene in this play to the retreat of the Nez Perces. The feelings created for the Sikhs are more objective. Certainly they were wronged. The incident was despicable but it was overshadowed by a more urgent problem - the outbreak of World War I.

However, the striking choice of a single female figure who speaks only to her son or the audience paints a sharp image. Hopkinson, who rejects his own heritage by denying his mother, is touched by the Woman. He tries to help her in some way. She reminds him of his mother. When Hopkinson discloses his concern for the Woman to T.S., his downfall is predictable:

HOPKINSON: I saw the mother and child.

T.S.: Now where is that incentive to leave?

HOPKINSON: Their case is still pending.

T.S.: Never initiate action when you haven't got the guts to carry it through. It's a sign of weakness, Hopkinson.

HOPKINSON: Yes sir.

T.S.: You disappoint us.

HOPKINSON: Yes sir.

T.S.: We brought you up. We can put you down.

HOPKINSON: Yes sir.

T.S.: We trust that our own meaning's sufficiently clear?

HOPKINSON: Yes sir. (pp.14-15)

T.S. is also a type of collective character in that he represents the pressures of Hopkinson's position. Strict expectations are placed upon any actions Hopkinson takes. The force of the office is strong. But at least temporarily, he is impassioned to help the Woman and her starving child. Nevertheless, his rationalizations are useless against T.S.

Pollock effects a doubling between T.S. and Hopkinson in a scene in the brothel. Evy speaks to Hopkinson, but it is T.S. who answers. His stance mirrors that of Hopkinson (p.25), though he stands on the arc outside of the brothel. T.S. speaks as if he were a voice inside of Hopkinson's head, arguing the position of the Immigration Department. Evy is unable to reach Hopkinson. The technique is reminiscent of Walsh's conversations with Harry in which he speaks for Walsh as a kind of super-ego.

Besides personifying the government agency which employs Hopkinson, T.S. functions also as a device to introduce and interrupt the action. He re-directs our attention with cinematic

ease, speaking and moving between the two main areas of the set: the brothel and the cage-like structure which represents the ship. His interaction with Hopkinson takes place on the fringes of the two real worlds. He speaks like a voice in a dream. Gradually, he invades Hopkinson's personal world and succeeds in urging his destruction.

Nunn has used the term "montage" to describe the dramatic structure in this play.¹⁷ It is an apt term for it is broad enough to encompass the variety of structural techniques with which Pollock experiments in her early plays. T.S. is essential to the structure for he provides the framework, forming a bridge between the opposing worlds of the play. There are several techniques, however, which fall into the category of montage. Setting, structure and use of time combine and help to create sharply delineated characters.

The clearest example of montage is seen in Pollock's placement of Hopkinson in a three-ring circus atmosphere. He moves between his public and private worlds. Pollock plays with space as freely as she does with time. Characters never leave the stage. When not involved in the action, they sit on benches placed on the extreme Stage Right and Stage Left ends of the arc.

Time is compressed within the play. The piece is played relentlessly, without an intermission. The playwright further suggests that the scenes be played "without blackouts and without regard to time and setting"[p.vii]. The fluidity of the scenes is extremely important. Incidents take place with such rapidity that we are scarcely able to react before the damage is done and the evidence swept from our sight. For example, Georg and Hopkinson discuss an imminent attack. Within a few lines, the attack is over and Georg recounts the events to Evy and Sophie. Pollock recreates

the storming of the ship and the wounding of Hopkinson in two pages of dramatic reportage by four characters. This economy of words within the play strengthens the conflict. Interesting juxtapositions combine elements which further enhance the dramatic effect:

T.S.: ...If we give them access, then a judge or a court or an officer thereof could overthrow our orders-in-council of which we have two denying them entry - and that, my good friends, would open the floodgates!

BANGS HIS CANE.

GEORG: My feelings are this, sir. If you examine the world and its history, you will see that the laws of evolution that have shaped the energy, enterprise and efficiency of the race northwards have left less richly endowed the peoples inhabiting the southern regions... this process is no passing accident, but part of the cosmic order of things which we have no power to alter. The European races must administrate; all that's needed to assure their success is a clearly defined conception of moral necessity. Do you agree, sir?

HOPKINSON: Agreed. It's a pleasure to talk to you, Georg...(p.11)

With the bang of his cane, T.S. shifts our attention to Georg. The alteration of focus jars. This foreigner echoes the sentiments of the government and feeds Hopkinson's tendency to follow its dictates.

Action, too, is compressed into short multi-focus scenes, interrupted with freezes: HOPKINSON BENDS... T.S. BANGS HIS CANE, THEY FREEZE, SPOT ON T.S.(p.2). When T.S. finishes his speech, he bangs his cane once again and the spot on him is removed. Action resumes back in the brothel between Sophie and Georg. Through this fragmentary technique of montage, an atmosphere of a character in conflict is created. We are then allowed to examine Hopkinson's dilemma from a number of perspectives.

Hopkinson is left alone to be murdered by one of the Sikhs he tried to manipulate. We should not feel distress at his death. However, because Pollock presents the argument so well, and gives us Hopkinson's character in more detail than the Woman's, we do. Although both characters are trapped, the collective Woman does not engender the same kind of empathy. The incident leaves us not only with a sense of loss for a wasted life, but also a sense of shame for our government's behaviour.

Hopkinson rejects the memory of the bloody bazaar massacre and that part of his life, but the end of the play forces that image to reappear in the mind of the reader. Snatches of memory have intruded upon his consciousness, indelibly imprinting the marks of his previous life on him. Again, the public self triumphs. However, Hopkinson realizes that his own death is the consequence of his action. The clear issue in these plays is the manner in which specific moral choices lead to irrevocable consequences. In Hopkinson's case he has no other choice but to face his own death.

CHAPTER THREE

ONE TIGER TO A HILL

ONE TIGER TO A HILL also explores the irrevocable consequences of choice in a more recent historical setting. Imprisoned in an outdated penitentiary, two inmates, Tommy Paul and Gillie MacDermott attempt to escape by taking three hostages. A young corporation lawyer, Ev Chalmers, is pressed into acting as mediator in the hostage-taking incident. Chalmers, like Walsh and Hopkinson, is caught in the middle of an explosive situation. The moral dilemma Walsh and Hopkinson faced entailed direct action. However, the exploration within this play is quite different. Chalmers is merely a "middle-man", forced into service because his partner was away. As a negotiator, equal pressure comes from both sides to reach agreement. His role is to try to help. He is an objective voice of reason who suddenly finds himself in the public eye with a number of lives depending on his ability to communicate with both sides. His "public" persona within the play is a temporary mask. Unlike Walsh and Hopkinson, he did not choose his position. However, a dilemma arises for him out of his frustrated attempt to discover the safest solution. He discovers that he cannot sustain even his temporary public role and reacts, on a personal level, to the complaints of each side.

Chalmers is not a special man. Until this incident, he claims he hadn't thought much about the problem of the pen. He is no different from many Canadians who have never had to consider

seriously their feelings about the penal system.

Pollock capitalizes on this from the beginning of the play, establishing an identification between Chalmers and the audience. He says to them:

I did nothing, but when the weather was bad, the traffic slow, I occasionally wondered... And then by accident, because Joe was away, couldn't be reached, I got involved, and two people died to confirm a resolve, a resolve that was slowly, reluctantly growing in me - a resolve to find out what happens to them - and to us - when we condemn men to that wastebasket we call the pen.¹⁸

The emotional content of this speech places the moral dilemma of the play squarely on the audience. Just as he is suddenly given the opportunity to mediate, the playwright assaults the complacency of the audience by forcing them to consider the issue themselves. The insights Pollock gives her audience are from the inside, outside and fringes of the institution. She provides as much information from as many points of view as possible. Once all the evidence is in place, Pollock leaves us to determine for ourselves how each of us would react in a similar situation. The comfortable distance of fifty or one hundred years of historical perspective, present in the two earlier plays, is not here. There is an immediate urgency within the play: the central conflict, whether or not to meet the convicts' demands, must be solved.

In order to solve the conflict, numerous moral views on the subject must be considered. Pollock accomplishes this through the technique of montage. Fragments of conversation, character, structure and setting, when pieced together, reflect the inflammatory and volatile nature of the situation. The montage is enhanced by the presence of peripheral characters who are none the less important, because their dialogue continually restates the

play's dialectic. Prison officials, inmates, social workers and observers all express different degrees of understanding and empathy. For example, Lena Benz, brought in at the request of the inmates to assist Chalmers in the negotiations, states the position of the social reformer.

Two characters represent the major issues of each side - Tommy Paul, a Metis prisoner, and Richard Wallace, the prison warden. The portrait of Tommy Paul is sketchy, yet it is clear that his private urges are uppermost in his mind. He has no inhibition to suppress his private self, to submerge it under a public mask. That would mean not breaking the law. Because of information he has gathered from Walker through his alleged sexual relationship with her, he thinks that his position in the institution is stronger than it is. McGowen suggests that even the demands Paul seeks are really Walker's(p.97). At the same time Paul has a different persona within the prison:

PAUL: You might not... like seeing me like this, but once I'm outa here, I won't have to be what I have to be here... But you gotta understand everything I done makes up me - the good things, the bad things - I done things you wouldn't believe. I don't regret any of 'em. I'm not proud of 'em, but I don't regret 'em... I had nothin' and I made myself somethin'... respected by people I know.(p.113)

He naively thinks that Walker really cares for him and that she will flee the country with him. The system's opinion of Paul is clear from the beginning: "... Tommy Paul will cut her throat"(p.90) and "... you don't make deals with people like that"(p.105).

Richard Wallace, the warden, is dramatically contrasted to Tommy Paul. He is the epitome of the government employee in command, quick to jump to his own defense and trapped by the

confines of his position:

WALLACE: Ev, try to understand my position. If I went around countermanding orders of George, do you know what would happen? Little things would start to go wrong. Minor infractions would grow. More charges written up. If security wants it can even arrange for a riot by doing nothing more than its job. Then administration looks bad. Inefficient. Administration is me. I walk a tightrope balancing security, re-hab, and inmates. It's a tricky act.(p.128)

No matter what action he takes, it will be abhorred by one group or the other. His decisions constantly spark reactions.

Pollock puts Chalmers in a parallel trap similar to Wallace's. As negotiator, his conflict is peculiar. The prison system consistently blocks him in his attempts to be fair. The officials withhold information and dismiss the other negotiator. In spite of all this, Chalmers is able to exert a calming influence. He exposes his frustration only to prison officials:

CHALMERS: Where are they going?

WALLACE: We don't know.

CHALMERS: I can't give them that and you know it!

McGOWEN: All you got to tell them is to start for the yard.

CHALMERS: Is there a plane?

WALLACE: What kind of question is that?

CHALMERS: You're asking too much, too much of me, too much of them! I can't do it!(p.128)

His outrage at the position they have forced upon him is obvious. Pollock has created, in Chalmers, a figure who represents the "civilized" Canadian who has never had to "participate".¹⁹

Pollock embellishes the arguments, exposing increasingly stronger evidence against the government's actions. At the same time, she centers the audience's awareness on the fact that these men are criminals.

In an attempt to present all of the issues, the playwright creates scenes of confrontation which express deep opinions. Frank Soholuk and Dede Walker, both rehabilitation officers, are two of the hostages. They are at opposite poles in their treatment of prisoners and their perception of the incident:

WALKER: We're all scared, Frank.

SOHOLUK: Get out - you don't belong in here.

WALKER: I swear I didn't know anything about this.

SOHOLUK: You sure picked it up fast.

WALKER: We can get changes made. He's drawing attention to things, and when this hits the press -

SOHOLUK: Nobody gives a shit! Who do you think cares about them? And we'll make the headlines at noon, and at night they'll use us for garbage! This won't change a thing. He can't change a thing...

WALKER: Sometimes it's the struggle that counts, to struggle to keep on struggling.

.....
SOHOLUK: Dyin' for causes, that's your ticket, not mine. And not his (Paul's) either. There is an asshole here, Dede, and it's you. Now get out of here before I punch you in the mouth.(pp.117-119)

This interchange is based on personal reactions of the characters. They are not responding publicly. These characters are balanced by those who do react in a public, controlled or civilized manner. All respond as the masks they wear would have them respond. Yet, the audience observes these private and public confrontations in a kaleidoscopic manner.

It seems that as soon as we decide a particular character is a villain, Pollock provides us with a contrast in his character. Gillie, the gunman who shot a man because some children cried, is aware of his inability to inhibit his urges: "...all's I wanted him to do was shut up and give me the money... Why couldn't he do that? Why couldn't he do that?"(p.112). It is obvious that the man is sick. His reaction to frustration is explosive violence. But, when he speaks to Tommy Paul of his mother, another side of his character is presented:

GILLIE: When she took us to welfare, she said it was just for a while, she'd be back. I remember that. And her hair. But she never came back... Jesus you shouldn't do that to poor little kids.(p.114)

This man's path to crime may have been precipitated by events beyond his control.

The montage approach is also seen in the structure of the set. The audience cannot see the actual cells but only the "tier corridor" leading to solitary confinement. In fact, the audience is only allowed to see the public side of the institution: the hidden view is left to the imagination. In addition, the audience, like Chalmers, is provided with Tommy Paul's emotional description of conditions on the inside:

PAUL: ...Eleven by six foot coffin. Four solid walls. Six inch window in a steel door. Light in the ceilin' they never turn off. I shower - wearing steel shackles and cuffs. If I'm lucky I shave twice a week in cold water. My toilet bowl is my sink. That's right, I gotta wash in the crapper. I gotta sleep with my head a foot from the crapper...(p.125)

It is difficult to avoid a sympathetic response to this passage. Who is the audience to believe?

In addition to being specific about the function of her settings, Pollock also insists that emphasis be placed on the flow between scenes. "THERE IS OFTEN ACTIVITY IN BOTH SCENES AS THEY BEGIN OR END, WITH ONE BEGINNING TO SEIZE FOCUS, THE OTHER TO RELEASE IT"(p.75). This cinematic technique is effected through the use of soft freezes. Characters in one scene assume a static position as characters from the following scene take over the action. Thus the audience is deliberately disoriented, finding it hard to come to a clear judgment. They see the complete picture at its different stages of action.

This sets a rapid pace which is most acute at the close of Act I. A series of short scenes cuts from guard to guard and inmate to inmate:

McGOWEN: Six men.

HANZUK: You got'em.

GILLIE: We're gonna get on a plane, fly outa here. It's gonna be one of them silver planes leavin' a white trail across the sky, like you see from the yard.

HANZUK: I'd like to use my own piece, would that be alright?

McGOWEN: Whatever you're comfortable with.

GILLIE: Whoooooshh! And we're gone.(p.115)

This combination of short cuts, alternating with longer scenes, adds to this disorientation: therefore, Pollock simulates the effect of a real hostage incident with split-second shifts of focus from inside to outside. The audience does not know what will happen next but there is a sickening sensation that the outcome will be useless slaughter. The tension increases relentlessly and ends in a sudden blackout.

The audience's confusion reaches a climax in the final scene. Hanzuk shoots Paul and Walker as they enter the yard with Chalmers. This precipitous act robs Chalmers and the audience of any opportunity for choice.

Chalmers is relieved of his responsibility just as rapidly as it was thrust upon him. Has the experience altered the complacency he expressed at the beginning of the play?

I remember I stood there... looking down... and I thought... if Paul doesn't move the blood from his jaw will seep into her hair... but he didn't move and neither did she... What were the lies?... Is everything lies?... tomorrow... I said... I will have breakfast... drop... the kids off at school... on Friday... I'll go to the Y... HE WEEPS.(p.137)

In this epilogue Chalmers is grief-stricken about what has occurred. He is also urging the audience to avoid apathy and complacency. However, for the audience, as for Chalmers, there is little real likelihood that the system can, in fact, be changed. There are, indeed, traps which afford no escape.

CHAPTER FOUR

BLOOD RELATIONS

The three historical plays discussed to this point represent a separate period in Pollock's writing. She explores historical incidents which fascinate her, mining them for reasons which explain government action, individual action and the influence of the former on the latter. The political interest is stated within the polemics of these plays, but the emphasis is clearly on the effect of the situation and the ensuing dilemma on the major character.

Throughout her work Pollock adds to this exploration of the choice between the dictates of the public and private self an element of universality, capable of affecting us all.

In WALSH she began to look at the causes which result in the domination of the public facade over the private. THE KOMAGATA MARU INCIDENT examined those causes more deeply, revealing the influence of past life, experience and one's roots on the dynamics of a particular choice. ONE TIGER TO A HILL introduced the concept of personal domination and focused on the peculiar conflict which arises when one is allowed only to arbitrate. In a very immediate way, Chalmers is placed in a position where his personal choice and direct action are prevented. He can only do what he is told to do. The resultant frustration sets Chalmers outside of the action and aids in direct identification with the audience.

The next play exposes the psychological basis for these kinds of choices. In order to do this, Pollock must take us more deeply into the psyche of the major character.

BLOOD RELATIONS is the fictionalized and complex account of the tale of Lizzie Borden, a young spinster living in an oppressive household in Massachusetts. Borden is represented as a sensitive and intelligent woman who reacts to the confines placed upon her by the society of the time and by the pattern of behaviour established for her by her father. In 1892, Lizzie Borden was accused, tried and acquitted of the axe-murders of her father and step-mother.

Three characters represent Lizzie Borden. Miss Lizzie is Pollock's perception of the 'real' Lizzie Borden. As the play opens she is visited by her friend/lover, The Actress, Nance O'Neil. Bridget, the Borden's Irish maid, also assists in the depiction of Miss Borden.

Pollock places Lizzie Borden in front of a triptych composed of mirrored panels. In the centre panel is the image of the accused murderess; at the sides are the objective reflections of The Actress and the maid. Pollock once again asks her audience to make a decision. We are presented with feelings which might have been experienced by Miss Lizzie, as she is caught in a dimension between what the public expected her to be and what she really is.

The three re-enact the events prior to the murders which took place ten years earlier, by means of a play-within-a-play. Ann Saddlemyer specifies that this is a "psychodramatic game rather than a play-within-a-play".²⁰ This description is probably most apt as it allows for a progressive exposure of the background information. The game is the point of

entry into an exploration of the events which caused the alleged murders.

The Actress assumes the role of Lizzie and Miss Lizzie becomes Bridget. In this guise, Miss Lizzie leads her friend through the ritual of performance. This intricate method of characterization examines the public and private aspects of Lizzie Borden through the personae of the accused and the acquitted.

The private Lizzie Borden is revealed to us in stages. The public mask is removed carefully, as if the writer were stripping bandages from a face disfigured by some terrible catastrophe.

Theatrically and psychodynamically, the game eventually leads The Actress to the point where she, herself, must decide whether or not she is capable of committing murder under similar circumstances.

Using the convention of the game, Pollock begins the play in the present of 1902, and thrusts the audience back to 1892, the year in which the murders occurred. They view what happens as a jury might, privy to a testimonial account of the crime. The audience/jury can identify with The Actress. As they are hypnotically drawn into the inner drama, they, too, are compelled to ask: "Well, did you?"²¹ Indeed, this is the obvious question the play seeks to explore. The underlying question, and by far the more important and more interesting one, is whether any one of us, given that same set of circumstances, could be driven to such desperate action.

So Pollock again violates the immunity of her audience by allowing The Actress to assume the role of the public/accused

woman.

On the surface, Miss Lizzie presents the real, private, acquitted Lizzie Borden. The Actress, however, is a pawn playing out what Miss Lizzie wishes to remember. The Actress at first seems unsure whether to pursue the game:

THE ACTRESS: In the alley, behind the theatre the other day, there were some kids. You know what they were doing?... playing skip rope, and you know what they were singing?...

"Lizzie Borden took an axe
Gave her mother forty whacks,
When the job was nicely done,
She gave her father forty-one."

MISS LIZZIE: Did you stop them?

THE ACTRESS: No.

MISS LIZZIE: Did you tell them I was acquitted?

THE ACTRESS: No.

MISS LIZZIE: What did you do?

THE ACTRESS: I shut the window.

MISS LIZZIE: A noble gesture on my behalf.(pp.16-17)

The Actress indicates that she does not wish to deal with her friend's guilt and she urges that the game continue.

While the shift of the action between the real events of 1902 and the recalled events of 1892 preserves a sense of ambiguity, Pollock sets up specific techniques to signal entrance into the past. The game itself is gradual. As it begins, the two friends slip into the past. Miss Lizzie directs, presenting a subjective voice. When she assumes the role of Bridget, she adds an element of objectivity to the dreamscape. Miss Lizzie seems to have

been fond of Bridget for it is in this guise that she can lead The Actress on her psychological journey and speak the memories which reveal her innermost feelings.

These childhood memories relate to specific, rather painful experiences:

MISS LIZZIE/BRIDGET: I dreamt my name was Lisbeth... and I lived up on a hill in a corner house... and my hair wasn't red. I hate red hair. When I was little, we never stayed in this house for the summer, we'd go to the farm...

I remember... my knees were always covered with scabs, god knows how I got them, but you know what I'd do? I'd sit in the field, and haul up my skirts, and my petticoats and my bloomers and roll down my stockings and I'd pick the scabs on my knees! And Emma would catch me! You know what she'd say? "Nice little girls don't have scabs on their knees!" (p.28)

The paradox of Miss Lizzie is apparent. A small child warmly remembers being teased and spending summers at the farm; that same child displays self-destructive tendencies. Is the real Lizzie what she wanted to be (Lisbeth), what she thought she was (a flawed little girl with scabs on her knees) or what others wanted her to be ("Nice little girls don't have scabs on their knees")? The child is searching for an identity.

The passage provides a clue to the nature of Miss Lizzie's trap. Her confinement is readily apparent as she exposes The Actress to the scenes which have been painful for her. It is important that The Actress play out these scenes, particularly those with the father, for it is essential that she experience the pain. Otherwise, complete identification with the potential murderess is not possible. Unless complete identification can be achieved, she cannot decide whether or not she herself is capable of murder.

Miss Lizzie is also, perhaps, unwilling to expose her inner self so directly for she seems unable to delve that deeply into herself.

The scenes with her father are the most confusing and distant within the play. Their inherent ambiguity reflects the ambiguous nature of the father-daughter relationship. The pain of these scenes is so great that Miss Lizzie can only observe them:

SHE SMILES AT HIM. THERE IS AFFECTION BETWEEN THEM. SHE HAS THE QUALITIES HE WOULD LIKE IN A SON BUT DEPLORES IN A DAUGHTER.

.....
MR. BORDEN: ...Now... in most circumstances... a woman of your age would be married, eh?... Eh, Lizzie?...
.....
I want what's best for you!

LIZZIE: No you don't. 'Cause you don't care what I want!

MR. BORDEN: You don't know what you want!

LIZZIE: But I know what you want! You want me to live my life by the Farmer's Almanac; having everyone over for Christmas dinner; waiting up for my husband; and SERVING AT SOCIALS!(pp.37-39)

Lizzie is strong enough to argue with her father and tells him that she feels trapped by his demands, but she backs down: "...Papa, I love you, I try to be what you want, really I do try, I try, ...but...I don't want to get married"(p.39). Her father tries to make her into what he wants her to be. She taunts him and baits him. He shoves her out of the way, proving his authority. Her retaliation is simple. It expresses her most private fear: that the self which rests underneath the mask is ugly and unlovable, perhaps even a murderer. There is a deeper fear - that the private self might not even exist:

LIZZIE: Why is it when I pretend things I don't feel, that's when you like me? ...I'm supposed to reflect what you want to see, but everyone wants something different. If no one looks in the mirror, I'm not even there. I don't exist.(p.39)

Despite her bravado in standing up to her father, she is unable to extricate herself from the boundaries of his authority.

Each scene with Mr. Borden is prefaced by a memory piece. These become more frequent. By the beginning of Act II, when Miss Lizzie/Bridget remembers her father drowning a sick puppy on the farm, the play is firmly entrenched in the "dream thesis"(p.13). The memory pieces allow the game to progress to a sub-conscious or pre-conscious level. Up until Act II, reality intrudes and both The Actress and Miss Lizzie can bring each other out of the game. However, once Act II begins, the personalities of the two have merged. The playing out of the game allows Miss Lizzie, through The Actress, to realize and understand why she and her father fought, and further, why she might have committed murder. Lizzie sees herself as a small child, in the past. Her guilt and loneliness surface once more when she asks her father whom she resembles:

LIZZIE: You're a very strong-minded person, Papa, do you think I am like you?

MR. BORDEN: In some ways, perhaps.

LIZZIE: I must be like someone.

MR. BORDEN: You resemble your mother.

LIZZIE: I look like my mother?

MR. BORDEN: A bit like your mother.

LIZZIE: But my mother's dead.

.....
LIZZIE: Did you hate me for killing her?(p.57)

Lizzie suspects, or is afraid, that she killed her mother. She is afraid that the one person from whom she needs approval, hates her. She tries desperately to rationalize what happened to her mother:

LIZZIE: Perhaps she just got tired and died. She didn't want to go on, and the chance came up, she took it. I could understand that... Perhaps she was like a bird, she could see all the blue sky and she wanted to fly away but she couldn't. She was caught, Papa, in a horrible snare, and she saw her way out and she took it... Perhaps it was a very brave thing to do, Papa, perhaps it was the only way, and she hated to leave because she loved us so much, but she couldn't breathe, all caught in the snare... Papa!... I'm a very strong person.(p.58)

She absolves herself of the guilt she feels for her mother's death by fantasizing that her mother felt caught in a trap, just as she does. There must also be release for her.

Miss Lizzie's trap is compounded by the presence of her step-mother, Abigail, and Harry Wingate, Abigail's brother. This conspiring pair try to appropriate Andrew Borden's property. Lizzie hates them both. She calls her step-mother "a fat cow"(p.27) and Harry, "a silly ass"(p.24). Abigail, in turn, warns Lizzie that she must face facts and realize that her father is unlikely to leave his money to her. The step-mother suggests that Lizzie not count on her "right" as a daughter and an heir. Harry's shady dealings carry with them the air of a hunter stalking his prey, deeds, houses, accumulating with each visit.

Evidence of the trap also exists in the scenes between Lizzie and Dr Patrick. When he suggests a walk to her, she claims that there is "nowhere to go"(p.60). Dr. Patrick is not a possible release for her. He is married and Miss Lizzie has already indicated that marriage would not be her choice.

However, even after the trial, she remains in the same house with her older sister, Emma, presiding over her. Emma's blind and somewhat stupid faith that their father "will see that they're looked after"(p.52) indicates that she is content to remain trapped, or in a mold that has already been cast for her. Miss Lizzie finds this situation intolerable. Emma warns her sister that they "can't change a thing"(p.53). Emma tries to avoid any confrontations. Miss Lizzie is left alone in her struggle to free herself.

Emma manages to escape frequently. When Miss Lizzie appeals to Emma, telling her that their father had killed her beloved pigeons with an axe, Emma's only reply is that she has a train to catch. The small child again is left alone. "Everyone's leaving. Going away. Everyone's left"(p.58).

The relationship with Emma is puzzling. Pollock places her on the edge of the action. She appears three times in the script. She is transitional, going between the past and present. She leaves the house before the murders are committed, dismissed from the action of the play.

Yet, Emma is no closer to the truth about her sister than is The Actress. However, unlike The Actress, she believes that her sister did commit the crime. She represents public opinion, knowing that her sister has been acquitted, yet fearing that the acquittal is an error. She speaks openly about her fears, as women in the town might gossip about the horror of having a murderer in their midst, yet is still intrigued by the excitement of the idea. The Actress states this clearly in an early scene with Miss Lizzie:

THE ACTRESS: I'll tell you what I think... that you're aware that there is a certain ambiguity... you always paint the background but leave the rest to my

imagination... If you didn't I should be disappointed... and if you did I should be horrified.

MISS LIZZIE: And which is worse?

THE ACTRESS: To have murdered one's parents, or to be a pretentious, small town spinster? I don't know.(pp.19-20)

The question of Miss Lizzie's guilt is continually posed through the convention of the game. As the primary structural component of the piece, the game is subservient to characterization. The free-flowing action between the real events of 1902 and the recalled events of 1892 preserves the sense of ambiguity. The nightmarish world to which we are admitted defies logical judgment. It is only when Pollock jolts us back into reality that judgment is possible.

It was made clear in the first chapter that Pollock's examination of a subject within the context of a play includes "fictionalization", both in the nature of speculation about events which might have occurred and characters who might have been there. BLOOD RELATIONS is no different. Certainly we know that Lizzie, The Actress, Andrew and Abigail Borden, Emma and Bridget did exist.

BLOOD RELATIONS presents Pollock's dramatic interpretation of these people. With Harry, Dr. Patrick and the Defense, Pollock takes her dramatic extension further. She claims that Harry Wingate is an "amalgam" of an uncle of Lizzie's real mother.²² It is doubtful that there is any attempt in the Defense to make this lawyer appear as in the trial transcripts. Similarly, there is no evidence that Lizzie had any kind of special relationship with the doctor, though indeed there was a family doctor.

Within the dream thesis, Pollock clearly denotes who

will portray whom, who is real and who is imaginary:

... WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE ACTRESS AND MISS LIZZIE (AND EMMA IN THE FINAL SCENE), ALL CHARACTERS ARE IMAGINARY, AND ALL ACTIONS IN REALITY WOULD BE TAKING PLACE BETWEEN MISS LIZZIE AND THE ACTRESS...(p.13)

The imaginary characters are necessary to create the dream thesis. They forcefully maintain the ambiguities yet also function to present the polemics of the story, keeping the dialectic in a fine balance. Once the game is underway, we are unsure whether the reflections given by Miss Lizzie and the Actress are the "public version", which was common knowledge at the time. We are also uncertain whether the play Miss Lizzie directs is manufactured from censored or uncensored remembrances. Are the images which she conjures to psychic life those which she fears or cherishes? The ambiguity remains throughout.

Ambiguity is also achieved through doubling that occurs between Dr. Patrick and the Defense Lawyer. The Defense's job is to prove that Miss Lizzie is neither guilty nor mad:

... I ask you - do you believe Miss Borden, the youngest daughter of a scion of our community, a recipient of the fullest amenities our society can bestow upon its most fortunate members, do you believe Miss Lizzie Borden capable of wielding the murder weapon... Do you believe Miss Lizzie Borden capable of these acts... these acts of violence are acts of madness... If this gentlewoman is capable of such an act...(p.36)

Within the doubling of this character, she is able to emphasize the dialectic. In Act II, she uses Dr. Patrick in a manner similar to Harry in WALSH. The scene is reminiscent of the scene between Harry and Walsh outside of the barracks:

LIZZIE: Would you... help someone die?... Some people

are better off dead. I might be better off dead.

DR. PATRICK: You're a precious and unique person, Lizzie, and you shouldn't think things like that... All life is precious and unique.

LIZZIE: I am precious and unique?... I AM precious and unique. You said that...

DR. PATRICK: Sure you are.

LIZZIE: Not like that fat cow in there.

DR. PATRICK: Her life too is - ...

.....
LIZZIE: Everything's clear. I've lived all of my life for this one moment of absolute clarity!... MY LIFE IS PRECIOUS!!...

DR. PATRICK: And hers is to her.

LIZZIE: I don't care about her! PAUSE. I'm glad you're not my doctor...(pp.60-62)

Lizzie shares some rather disturbing, decidedly mad ideas with Dr. Patrick providing an opposing view of the character. Even though Dr. Patrick is sympathetic to Lizzie, the playwright leaves us steeped in uncertainty. On the one hand the Defense Counsel says that it is unthinkable that she could commit such a crime; on the other hand, the psychodramatic double of Miss Lizzie indicates that she could contemplate murder and, further, fails to understand why someone else would not support her in her actions.

The encounters which Miss Lizzie sets up between Abigail and Lizzie are chilling and add to the interpretation that Miss Lizzie is indeed mad and guilty. Any intercourse with her step-mother is infused with hatred:

LIZZIE: Yes, when a person dies, retained on her eye is the image of the last thing she saw. Isn't that interesting?... Do you know something? If I were to kill someone, I would come up behind them very slowly

and quietly. They would never even hear me, they would never turn around... They would be too frightened to turn around even if they heard me. They'd be so afraid they'd see what they feared... And then, I would strike them down. With them not turning around, they would retain no image of me on their eye. It would be better that way.(p.64)

It is clear in this exchange that "Lizzie" (the accused) is coldly and calculatingly capable of murdering someone she hates. The dialogue in itself is frightening. Pollock juxtaposes her stage directions. As Lizzie follows the step-mother up the stairs with the axe hidden in a pile of laundry, the answer to her guilt seems clear. For this woman, Abigail, to have replaced Lizzie's own mother is severe and unjust. It is presented as a motive for murder.

The absence of a real mother and the consequent feelings of anger and guilt are related to Lizzie Borden's actions. In BLOOD RELATIONS, the real mother plays an important role in the child Lizzie's search for identity. That search is disclosed in both a profound and practical manner as this penultimate memory piece thrusts the characters into the game more deeply:

MISS LIZZIE/BRIDGET: You dream... of a carousel... you see a carousel... you see lights that go on and off... you see yourself on a carousel horse, a red-painted horse with its head in the air, and green, staring eyes, and a white flowing mane, it looks wild!... It goes up and comes down, and the carousel whirls round... and you watch... watch yourself on the horse. You're wearing a mask, a white mask like the mane of the horse, it looks like your face except that it's rigid and white... and it changes! With each flick of the lights, the expression, it changes, but always so rigid and hard, like the flesh of the horse that is red that you ride. You ride with no hands! No hands on this petrified horse, its head flung in the air, its wide staring eyes like those of a doe run down by dogs!... And each time you go round, your hands rise a fraction nearer the mask... and the music and the carousel and

the horse... they all three slow down and stop... You can reach out and touch... you... you on the horse... with your hands so at the eyes... You look into the eyes! A SOUND FROM LIZZIE, SHE IS HORRIFIED AND FRIGHTENED. SHE COVERS HER EYES. There are none! None! Just black holes in a white mask...(pp.43-44)

The Actress is horrified and frightened by this speech, indicating her fear at what is occurring. She realizes that she is now committed to play the game out to the end. She has assumed the mask and fallen into the trap. Mask and trap are inextricably bound together.

Miss Lizzie's mask, created by the trauma of her early life protects her. The ordeal of the trial and her acquittal solidify the mask. The facade of an accused murderess is added to an already disguised face. There is a series of masks. Removing one simply exposes another.

Lizzie/The Actress realizes the masks can be removed but she is unsure whether she wishes to see what is revealed either in herself or in her friend. An important issue is at stake here. The play extends beyond examining the interaction of public and private facades and questions whether the character bound by societal pressures is capable of developing a private identity at all. Pollock's method of posing this question, through the convention of the game, puts The Actress and the audience in the position of jury, forced to decide what they would do in a similar situation.

The final scene of the play is a direct address to the audience through The Actress:

THE ACTRESS: Lizzie. SHE TAKES THE HATCHET FROM MISS LIZZIE. Lizzie, you did.

MISS LIZZIE: I didn't. THE ACTRESS LOOKS TO THE HATCHET
- THEN TO THE AUDIENCE. You did.(p.70)

The Actress, in a moment of profound realization, looks to the audience as Miss Lizzie accuses everyone of the potential for murder. In creating a real Lizzie and an imaginary Lizzie, Pollock also creates a reflection of the private/public self dichotomy. Pollock maintains that duality throughout the play. The Actress voices the ambiguities of the story. Whether she finds Miss Lizzie guilty is never answered. The ending is left up to the audience's individual judgment.

The reflections in this play continue. The deeper we look for answers, the more the questions proliferate. The audience is left with a struggle to decide whether or not Lizzie committed the murders. But that is not the only question left unanswered. In addition, the question remains whether each one of us is capable of similar actions in similar circumstances.

The context of the public/private self in this play is not as closely aligned with external pressures as in the three earlier plays discussed. Societal pressures cause Miss Lizzie to react. These affect her at a deeply personal level. The character's search for her true self is of utmost importance. The play does reflect, as Anne Saddlemeyer points out in her survey article, "women imprisoned in a man-ordered universe, while at the same time speaking beyond this framework to explore even more far-reaching concerns of time and spirit."²³ Pollock may appear to be concerned with making a feminist statement in this play. Certainly, one cannot dismiss its feminist polemic. The central character is a woman. But, a most important statement about Pollock's own writing, that she writes to explain things to herself,²⁴ warrants consideration here. Pollock discusses political ideas and historical incidents. She may also discuss feminist issues. But,

she discusses them in order to gain insight into the matters which concern her most deeply. To my mind, those matters are human rather than feminine. They revolve around the search for self and its integration within a world of constantly changing pressures.

The exploration of self which occurs within BLOOD RELATIONS marks a significant change in Pollock's work. While the play itself is rooted in historical fact as are the three earlier plays, there is a new twist. Pollock has delved into the psyche of the trapped character, battling the confines of an imposed facade. However, she also has opened up the well of the unconscious created not only by pressures imposed by society or position, but also by family.

The title of the play is important in its own right. BLOOD RELATIONS implies family ties which are stronger and more confining than any forces which have been discussed so far. The purgation and blood-letting of the murders cannot erase the memories from Miss Lizzie's mind. The ordeal she has experienced, whether she is guilty or not, is monumental. Nevertheless, Miss Lizzie does not leave. She stays in the same house, surrounded by part of that family. She does not escape. Her trap is still intact.

BLOOD RELATIONS is a pivotal and important piece in the framework of Sharon Pollock's writing. It represents a transition from the "historical" plays to the "family" plays. In the subsequent major stage works, the playwright continues to explore the dynamics of self. As she steers her own writing closer to her own experience, the humanism and universality of her work are more apparent.

CHAPTER FIVE

GENERATIONS

GENERATIONS continues to explore the nature of family bonds which Pollock introduced in BLOOD RELATIONS. The third of Pollock's plays to appear in 1980,²⁵ this piece focuses on the struggle fought by three generations of the Nurlin family against the land. Pollock does not create a single major character in this play. Rather, she allows both the land and the family to assume the status of collective characters. Through the discussion of each family member's personal relationship with the land, Pollock presents a general statement about family pressures. The choices each character makes during the course of the play or has made in the past are determined by individual interaction with land and family. Whether the decision is to live with the land, supported and nurtured by it yet in constant opposition to it, or to seek one's livelihood elsewhere, that decision is dictated by previous experience with both land and family.

The treatment of the land creates a strong image, as imposing as the prison in ONE TIGER TO A HILL, as oppressive as the Victorian milieu which forced Lizzie Borden's hand and as hostile as the Pacific shores which rejected the Komagata Maru.

Pollock describes this land as having a sense of "OMNISCIENT PRESENCE AND MYTHIC PROPORTION".²⁶ The land stands as an immense spectre, alternately nourishing and destroying whoever has

the temerity to struggle with it. As the play opens, its fury lies dormant, apparent only in the rumbling rolls of distant thunder and the humming of power lines vibrating with intense heat.

To emphasize the constancy of the land, the playwright juxtaposes the Old and New places. The New Place, consisting of an interior, naturalistic kitchen and a back porch, is practical and convenient. There is no evidence of death. However, the pump, representing the family's desire to control the forces of the land, is almost dry with the impending drought which threatens to ruin the year's work. This machine to extract water, so necessary for life from the land, is a symbol that all their toil is dependent upon the whim of the land.

The mythic quality of the land is seen in the Old Place. Removed from the modern and organized kitchen, it stands as a decaying monument. It is sacred in nature, a sanctuary used by the eldest Nurlin, Old Eddy, to commune with his land.

The old farmer has fought many battles with the land and is close to it, but not as close as Pollock's curious old Indian, Charlie Running-Dog. It is through this character that Pollock treats the land most clearly. She not only refers to the land with personal pronouns but also paints Charlie as if he actually represented it. She describes him as "less like a Native Canadian and more like some outcropping of arid land"(p.141). His skin is "eroded" like worn away earth. Charlie exhibits a profound acceptance of the land, understanding how it works. His union with it is almost conjugal; the land is a woman who needs to be "wooed"(p.163). He is so close to the land that he scarcely responds to Old Eddy. Charlie's comments are infrequent and taciturn. He is like a mute presence holding some fearsome power. Since Pollock specifies that he is a Native, an Indian, a special

congruity with the land is implied. Were Charlie another farmer like Eddy, his views would not be as important.

He is set up as a shaman, a kind of deity from whom Eddy seeks intercession with the Indian Council, which controls the flow of water to the land. It is almost as if he controls the life which is supported by this land.

It is to Charlie that the old patriarch of the Nurlin family reveals his inner thoughts and feelings. Although the farmer claims that the two are not friends, there is a strange kinship between them, apparently borne of suffering:

OLD EDDY: Yuh and me has stood and watched the top soil far as yuh can see lift off in one big cloud and blow ten miles east. Don't that make us somethin'? Yuh and me, we killed a bottle in Medicine Hat the night the war was ended, eh? Eh? Yuh seen me bury my wife and one of my boys, no doctor, no money, nothin' but guts and gumption to get through the winter, and there's nothin' as cold as a prairie winter.

CHARLIE: I hear yuh.(p. 148-9)

The two old men share a mutual respect for the land. Through each other they communicate with the land (or through the land they communicate with each other). When they talk, they discuss the land's propensity for giving life and taking it away; both are aware that their personal battles with the land have exacted a dear price.

Old Eddy Nurlin is determined and tenacious in his intent to keep his family together on the land. As patriarch, his personal struggle with his land has shaped his family. There is a strange power which identifies him with the land. His connection with it has set up expectations that all who are connected with him as a family, all of his sons and grandsons, will form and maintain

a similar attachment to the land. It is almost as if this land cannot exist without this family and this family cannot exist without this land:

OLD EDDY: I'd walk out on that bit of rise, look around, I'd say - Eddy Nurlin, she's all yours, if yuh can keep her...and I ain't losin' her now...She's all yours...and your father's... and Young Eddy's, it's a legacy.(p.157)

The rights of succession are most important. This land must be inherited.

The threat to the integrity of the land and its family comes in two forms in this play: the drought, complicated by the stubbornness of the native people in refusing to release water from the dam, and Young Eddy's bid for his portion of his inheritance now, in cash.

Pollock has chosen to portray the Nurlins as an extended family of three generations. Each person is at a different stage in his or her personal battle with the land. There are some who cannot find the peace of a private identity and still remain part of the larger whole. The strength of the family lies within its connection with the land, and the land's force to hold all subsequent generations to it. The core of the family is Old Eddy. He accepts its power, yet tenaciously seeks to control it. His claim on the land is mirrored by his claim on his family. Surrounding him are the other members of the family, occupying positions which reflect their personal proximity to Old Eddy's scheme of things. Their private identities are apparent only within the context of the whole or the public identity of the family.

Old Eddy and his youngest grandson, David, share a love for the land. The old man has transferred his hopes for the

progress of the farm to David. Their kinship is deep. They both know the toil involved in farming, yet they protect it and are committed to it:

DAVID: Some people say there ain't no hell. If they've never farmed, how can they tell? PAUSE.

OLD EDDY: What's that supposed to be?

DAVID: It's a quotation from READER'S DIGEST.

OLD EDDY: Who said it?

DAVID: Anonymous.

OLD EDDY: They quote him a lot.(pp 184-5)

Their relationship is easy, and to a great extent, playful. David is relatively sure of his directions. He knows that he wants to be a farmer. It is apparent that David has already made a choice. He is content to follow the expectations Old Eddy has set down for him, seeing the land as the driving force behind the family. He will allow no one or no thing to stand between him and his land. Old Eddy's love for the land has been tested by years of work and by the loss of a wife and a son. David's love for the land is tested by three elements within the play: the drought, Bonnie's challenge that his choice to be a farmer is not a free one, and his older brother's desire to sell a portion of the land. The drought remains in the background with references made to it until the climactic fire and storm mark the end of the play. David's ability to deal with these two challenges aid him in maintaining his tie with both land and family. Bonnie, his fiancée, is not convinced that farming is what David should do. Bonnie's own insecurities surface as a result of Young Eddy's re-appearance, forcing her to question David's decision to be a farmer.

DAVID: This is my place, I belong here.

BONNIE: Only if you choose, David. It's not yours if someone else chooses for you.

DAVID: Well, maybe I chose it!

BONNIE: You should know if that's so.(p.170)

Although David seems convinced that his destiny lies in being a farmer, he is faced with a choice. Bonnie has made it clear to him that she questions this kind of life. He can choose her or his land.

She tries to make David reconsider his choice. David, torn between his love for her and his love for the land, reacts with some uncertainty. He discusses this with his father, Alfred. The conversation with Alfred reaffirms David's tie to the land:

DAVID: ...we gotta remember one thing... my grampa came over in the hold of a ship in 1908... and he worked his butt off from the time he was seven... and we got something worthwhile here!(p.182)

David is content to accept his right and duty to the land. The next assault to his peace comes in his older brother's return from the city. The elder son and namesake of the family patriarch, Young Eddy Nurlin, made his choice to leave the farm and become a lawyer.

Young Eddy's willingness to sacrifice his portion of the land for cash is as clear a choice as David's is to stay with the land. Young Eddy, although he is still part of the family, rejects the land and thus poses a threat to the integrity of the family:

DAVID: I want you to listen and I want you to listen real good! See! I'm here! I'm stayin' here! And you can take your goddamn law firm and shove it!...You got that!

YOUNG EDDY: Hey look Dave-

DAVID: You got it? I don't wanna hear any more of this maybe Davey wants to do that, maybe Davey wants to do this shit - I don't want you talkin' to no one about that!

YOUNG EDDY: I was only tryin' to -

OLD EDDY ENTERS THE KITCHEN.

DAVID: It'd work out just fine for you, wouldn't it?

YOUNG EDDY: Look, I -

DAVID: You don't give a shit for this place!

YOUNG EDDY: That's not true!

DAVID: Sure, sell a piece here, sell a piece there!

OLD EDDY: Nobody's sellin' nothin'! What the hell're yuh talkin' 'bout?

DAVID: That's right! Nobody's sellin' nothin'!
(p.183-84)

The youngest generation of this family has come to an impasse. David, supported by his grandfather, will not allow the land to be sold. Until his return, Old Eddy seems to have treated his young namesake with good-natured acceptance. He tolerated the choice he made. Since he expects that a portion of the land will be inherited by Young Eddy in due course, it would appear that the older man thinks his grandson's folly to be temporary:

OLD EDDY: Say Eddy, you like doin' this lawyer bit?

YOUNG EDDY: Yes, I do, Grampa.

OLD EDDY: Well, yuh know what I always say...a family can't accommodate one foolish bastard in it ain't worth a pinch a coon shit...Long as the centre holds. And this here's the centre. Right here.(p.173)

Young Eddy sparks the central conflict of the play and

forces a realignment of the dynamics and loyalties within the family. Alfred, Old Eddy's son, lacks a passion for the land. He can identify with Young Eddy's desire to do something different. Alfred has seen his mother and brother taken by the cruelties of the land. When his son asks that a portion of the land be sold, he is willing to entertain the notion. He left the land himself to go to fight in the war. Old Eddy has never come to terms with his son's desire to leave the land. Considerable conflict between the two remains. Margaret, Alfred's wife, often must act as mediator:

OLD EDDY: ...your heart was never in this... I can remember, always at me he was, he was gonna do this, he was gonna do that - the only thing he was never gonna do was carry on what I started.

MARGARET: He's here, isn't he?

OLD EDDY: Not by choice.

MARGARET: How can you say that?

OLD EDDY: It was the war - it was the killin' kept him here!

ALFRED: Papa, I -

OLD EDDY: Yuh think I'm old! Yuh think I forget! Always talkin' 'bout places, goin' to the coast, goin' to Calgary, goin' to University - what yuh did was go to war, and yuh come back and yuh never talked 'bout goin' nowheres again!

ALFRED: I was a kid! I grew up!

OLD EDDY: Thank God for Davey! That's all I got to say. Thank God for Davey! HE EXITS TO THE PORCH WHERE HE SITS.

MARGARET: Alfred?... Alfred?... He's worried and he's old, that's all.

ALFRED: HITS THE TABLE. Goddamn! HIS COFFEE SPILLS... SOFTLY. Goddamn... Goddamn place. I sometimes wonder who owns who.(pp.154-155)

Alfred has not met Old Eddy's expectations. Even though he returned to the farm, his present concern with the land arises out of a sense of duty. He once had a dream to see the world and seized the opportunity afforded by war to follow that dream. He returned shattered and frightened:

ALFRED: Oh yes... seen a bit a things there... signed up in '42. Alls I wanted to do was see the world and Germans... Was a crack shot. SMILES. Shootin' gophers probably did it. Had those little crossed rifles on my shoulder, yellow they was... maybe not... I remember the first man I seen wearin' a chain round his neck with all these here gold rings he took off the dead... I remember... a Dutch girl they had in a shack... and my sergeant said come on Al, what the hell, may be the last piece a tail you ever get... I shouldn't be tellin' you that... I come home in '45, fall it was... the place seemed different. Didn't seem such a bad place to be at all. I'd seen enough.(p.192)

Alfred shares this gut-wrenching memory with Bonnie. She, too, seeks a similar kind of freedom. The fact that he mentions it to Bonnie, even though he previously commented that he "didn't sit easy with her"(p.151), indicates a recognition of the similarity. However, his is the choice that was never freely made. When he fled to war, he found only a more confining trap than land or family. That reality put the prospect of farm and family into a more positive light. He resigned himself to a life on the farm and set about finding himself a wife and settling in to the position his father designed for him. Alfred, to some extent, represents the loneliness and bitterness of a failed romantic. He left with a desire to be a hero, to fight for his country, but met only with the stark horror of war.

Bonnie, too, has a romantic vision of life and love. But she refuses to be ruled either by family or by land. She admits to Alfred that she is afraid of the openness and vastness of the

prairie:

BONNIE: ...I mean here, I've always been afraid of the spaces. How can one person relate to the prairies? Maybe that's the trouble.

ALFRED: They make you feel small alright.

BONNIE: Useless.

ALFRED: Not useless... unimportant maybe.(p.191)

Bonnie's fear of the open spaces suggests a deeper one. She is afraid of losing her identity. If she remains with David, on the land, she will become part of this consuming family tied to this consuming land. She is the only character in the play who is faced with making an active choice. Her dilemma lies between what she privately wants and what she is expected to do. She is engaged to David, but is uncomfortable with his choice to be a farmer. Bonnie's conversation with Margaret brings her conflict to a climax.

Pollock creates in this play two very strong women and sets them against each other. Margaret, a kind of earth mother, is a foil for Bonnie's impetuous naiveté. Bonnie tries to project her dissatisfaction on to Margaret. She implies that Margaret has no say in the events of her life, that she simply lives from day to day, agreeing with whatever the men decide is appropriate. Bonnie expects that all women are unhappy, submerged within the larger identity of a family. However, Margaret firmly believes that she has her own identity:

MARGARET:... When I met Alfred Nurlin, and he asked me to marry him, I knew I had a chance to be part of something again... And you talk about losin' yourself? Are you so special, so fine, so wonderful, there's nothin' bigger worth bein' a part of?... Good... You be whole then, be complete, be self-sufficient. And you'll

be alone. And in the end, you'll be lonely.

BONNIE: There's worse things than lonely.

MARGARET: Are there?

BONNIE: Yes.

MARGARET: I don't know what THEY are.(p.189)

Margaret is emphatic that she chose her life. Her determination to avoid the trap of loneliness was as strong as Bonnie's fear of being lost in the larger scheme of the family. Margaret's choice establishes her with those characters who have decided to remain with the land. She is quite a different woman from Bonnie, and may, in a sense, be stronger. She actively sought what she wanted, selecting a life that was difficult but which provided her with love and security within a larger context.

Bonnie, on the other hand, looks to others to help her make her decision. She even challenges Old Eddy's authority on the question of selling the section of land:

BONNIE: ...Mr. Nurlin... are you going to sell Eddy's section?

OLD EDDY: What section?

BONNIE: ... What... what would come down to Eddy?

OLD EDDY: Yuh mean when I'm dead.

BONNIE: A BIT AWKWARD Yes.

OLD EDDY: Yuh might not've noticed. I ain't dead yet.

BONNIE: Maybe I spoke out of turn.

OLD EDDY: And when I do, what I'm leavin' is land, not money.

BONNIE: What about Eddy?

OLD EDDY: He's a smart fella. A smart fella can always make money, and a helluva lot easier than I come by this place.(pp.193-194)

In the face of Bonnie's challenge, Old Eddy remains insistent that the land stays with the family and that he remains in control of both.

The land, however, makes its own power visible at the end as Pollock stages the climax of the play in the ultimate confrontation between David and his grandfather. In deciding to join the other young men in firing the fields, David attempts to destroy part of what he loves most. He tries to conquer the land. Neither the land nor Old Eddy will allow him to do it. Old Eddy forces him to fight in a rite of passage which allows David to atone for his "mistake". Old Eddy cautions him: "Don't do it again"(p.196). The land effects its own solution to both the fire and the drought with a rainstorm.

The imagery at the end of the fight as Old Eddy falls to the ground and David remains standing, but swaying, suggests that David is now the rightful heir to Old Eddy's land. These encounters give him the strength to face Bonnie in their final confrontation.

Bonnie, as Pollock has pointed out in an interview in *THE WORK*, is a character "in the process of change".²⁷ David has gone through his process of change and is irrevocably tied to the land. Bonnie is still faced with making a choice. In referring to the end of the play, Richard Perkyns suggests that Bonnie makes a final choice by leaving David:²⁸

BONNIE: Do you think Eddy'll give up?

DAVID: I can handle Eddy.

BONNIE: Who do you think you are?

DAVID: HE SMILES. I'm the fuckin' salt of the earth.
Who are you?

BONNIE: You're crazy.

DAVID: Who are you?

BONNIE: You make me laugh.

DAVID: Who are you?

BONNIE: I don't know!

DAVID: Well if you find out - you let me know.

BONNIE EXITS...(p.196-197)

However, the exchange between the two does not indicate such a clear resolution. Before Bonnie can choose what she will do, she must first decide who she is. Then, she can be free to make a choice. Pollock leaves the issue unsettled. Bonnie cannot answer David's question. He does love her and he leaves her the option of returning. Although she leaves, there is a chance that she will return. What is more clear, however, is that David wants her only if she will be satisfied and content with his life as a farmer.

The family has withstood the threat of Young Eddy's desire to sell off a portion of the land, David has reaffirmed his alliance with the land and the land has confirmed her control of the family. The play has come full circle. In leaving the ending open for Bonnie to return, Pollock underscores the cyclical nature of land and family.

The alliance of family and land provides a useful background against which to examine the connection between personal identity and public image. The particular choice of a farm family creates a group of characters who actively and collectively fight

for their livelihood as well as for their identities. Bonnie is in the process of change and can take the time to explore her choices. Although there are pressures on her, she is not forced to act in a particular way.

GENERATIONS differs from Pollock's earlier plays in its naturalistic narrative style. Characters share the stage in the present. There are no flash-backs or dream theses. However, Pollock does maintain a double-focus between the Old and New places. The whole piece is steeped in realism. The prologue and epilogue, effected by the scenes between Old Eddy and Charlie at the Old Place, frame the action. These aspects, combined with the experimentation with as strong a collective character as the family, suggests a logical development from the earlier works. Pollock seems to be narrowing the focus of the central character. Here it is clear that public pressures are equated with the expectations of family. This allows the dilemma to be explored on a smaller scale. Pollock's examination of character is accessible in a different way.

In the next play, Pollock speculates more deeply on the effect of family on personal identity by examining the differences between natural and chosen families.

CHAPTER SIX

WHISKEY SIX

WHISKEY SIX, set in Blairmore, a mining town in the Crowsnest Pass during the Prohibition era, is the romanticized tale of an immigrant rumrunner/hotel-keeper. The play takes the exploration of identity into another dimension in which a character is allowed to decide between his real, biological family and a "chosen" family.

Based on a real-life character Pollock read about in a tourist pamphlet, Mr. Big, the central character of WHISKEY SIX is a curious blend of poetry and pure gall. He is a romantic, seeking to live by his own rules. The man is a giant, not only in physical stature, but also in the community. He controls his world and all associated with it. In contrast with the majority of Pollock's earlier characters, Mr. Big functions entirely through the whims and motivations of his private self. In this respect he is similar to Tommy Paul. There is no position which causes him to vacillate in a dilemma of possible actions. His private self has built the framework of the world which we see in WHISKEY SIX.

Mr. Big, we presume, is a self-made man. The character reveals himself to those who share his world, but it is only to Mama George, his wife, that Mr. Big discloses any truly private information: "I...was erectin' canvas, two by fours, and papier maché worlds, barkin' on a midway - but just behind the eyes, that

frightened little boy peeked out."²⁹ Perhaps it was this fear of the young boy which sparked the creation of the man's own world. Whether in response to fear or in a desire simply to control the environment, the boy has grown up to create an empire which the man now rules with a benign but mysterious authority. A private inner life has dictated a public outer life.

The play does not allow us to discern his origins nor to determine how he created his world:

JOHNNY: That ain't his real name, Mr. Big.

MAMA: His Chosen name, that's what it is.

JOHNNY: Mr. George, is that his real name?

MAMA: Glasses, glasses, more glasses...(p.63)

Mama gives no clues to the true identity of Mr. Big. Everyone, simply, must accept the mystery. Mr. Big will allow all who share his mocking disregard for the law to join his company. Few, however, are actually chosen to become part of his inner world.

Pollock presents Mr. Big's public life within the domain of the Alberta Hotel. Its hospitality provides a haven for the townspeople from the dark shafts of the mine. Their lives are controlled by the company which owns the mine, by the earth itself which periodically and randomly takes life away, and by the laws prohibiting the sale of liquor. Mr. Big's world, ridiculing the pomposity of Prohibition, provides a physical, though temporary, escape.

However, there is still a duplicity to Mr. Big. He manipulates the reality around him, as evidenced by the duality of the Alberta Hotel. The saloon can be what he desires it to be, when he desires it. At times, it is a bar where townsfolk can consume

illegal drink. However, when Bill the Brit, the local enforcer of prohibition enters, it becomes a law-abiding establishment.

All is not what it appears to be. Mr. Big is able, by simply switching a tap beneath the bar, to alternate the flow of liquid between legal and illegal concentrations. He can almost control the perceptions of those who live within his sphere.

The contrast between Mr. Big and Sergeant Windsor is acute. As a completely public figure who reveals no private self, Bill is the antithesis of Mr. Big. As such he is a prime target for ridicule:

MR. BIG: But to return to the question at hand - of course you voted! It would be Unbritish not to! How did you vote - and that's the question... I extrapolate, you're British therefore you voted and being British, you voted NO. No to Prohibition!

BILL: You don't know what I voted.

MR. BIG: The slogan Sergeant Windsor. "BE BRITISH AND VOTE NO". Would you cast aside your heritage for YES?... Could the slogan be erroneous in its assumption of the British character?... Did you vote dry to preserve your job William Windsor, or did you vote wet - and even now as you sit here sippin' my 2% legal draft are you engaged in the activity a policin' an unjust and damnable law that you yourself voted against!?

PAUSE

Aaaaahhhh... what it must do to your soul, William Windsor.(pp.30-32)

The character is rigid and at the mercy of Mr. Big. By holding the officer's public self up to ridicule, Mr. Big implies that his position is in conflict with his heritage. While his treatment of the officer is comical, it verges on ruthless, public humiliation. The dilemma he places Windsor in, calls to mind the dilemma faced by Walsh, Hopkinson and Chalmers. It is natural for the man who harbours a blatant disregard for the laws of Prohibition to feel the same

disregard for the officer who enforces these laws. Bill is easily manipulated, responding only to the external situation.

The grandiosity of Mr. Big is overwhelming. He acts as if he were a god, selfishly turning everything to his own interpretation. He claims that he has a great capacity for judging character.

In addition to creating an environment in which to live and controlling it, Mr. Big also creates a family for himself. Mama, through her own admission, was unable to give him a child. The reaction of the man turned god was to create a child for himself. Leah, Mr. Big's "adopted" daughter, is the star upon whom all of his romantic visions depend. She is innocence and sexuality combined, an ephemeral being, whose identity is defined solely by Mr. Big. Called, "LEAH LAST NAME UNKNOWN", she was plucked from an unhappy existence as a street child by Mr. Big when she was merely eleven years old. When Mr. Big "chose" Leah as his daughter, he immediately set up a fantasy around her which continues through the action of this play:

...For me there was radiance all around you, and it was comin' from you. From you, Leah. And I didn't stop for more than a - it coulda been a hundred years, or a second, or no time at all! Like an instantaneous gatherin' up, like God descendin' to take his Chosen up into Heaven in a fiery chariot!(p.24)

He has swept this child away from certain destruction and brought her to live safely with him. She belongs to him. This unknown child with no background is similar to the mysterious Mr. Big. Leah does not question her membership in Mr. Big's family. She is satisfied with her position and has no reason to question it until that family structure is altered by Johnny Farley.

Mr. Big's family stands as a strong counterpoint to the

Farleys. There is a sharp contrast between the polarities of religious extremism of the Farleys and existential freedom of Mr. Big's world. Pollock presents these polarities through the characters who rule these families.

The Farleys are a darkly desperate group, caught and held by the mines. Their fortunes are ill-fated, already having lost two sons to the coal-shafts. During the course of the play a third son, Will, dies, on the eve of finding his own personal happiness in sharing his life with Dolly.

The Farleys are ruled by a matriarch, Mrs. Farley. She is the archetype of a bible-thumping, teetotalling preacher^e of temperance and moderation. She virtually ignores her husband, Cec, even when both are grief-stricken about the death of Will. Mrs. Farley clings to her religiosity. We never know her first name. She seems only to exist as the ruling force of the mining family, without a full identity of her own.

It appears that she has placed all the love that she was capable of giving upon Johnny, her youngest son. He left home to seek his fortunes in the East, and to escape the mines and his mother.

A strained relationship exists between the two. Mrs. Farley has even bargained with the Lord to spare her favourite from harm. Her expectations of him are high. Her blind faith allows her to believe that he has been spared. Johnny's return is a source of both joy and anxiety to her. On the one hand she is glad to see him, yet her manipulation of Johnny and her intense desire for him to be what she wants him to be force him to seek a home elsewhere and a job with Mr. Big.

In the characters of Mrs. Farley and Mr. Big, Pollock has

personified the two poles of her argument. Both are manipulators, each possessing power over others in their worlds. The two compete over who will possess Johnny.

When Mr. Big attempts to "choose" Johnny as another child, the integrity of both families is in danger. Now, Mr. Big's scheme of life is altered; the play chronicles his loss of control and his subsequent failure in his quest to create his own perfect universe.

Johnny resembles Mr. Big. He is a questing figure, returned home after trying to make a living for himself in Toronto. He has failed in an attempt to create a better life for himself. His return signifies a return to a trap, a sentence to a life in the mine.

Mr. Big sees an aura around certain people. It is this transcendence which brings Johnny to his attention. Perhaps, it is simply Johnny's moxy in averting the robbery which appeals to Mr. Big. Nevertheless, Mr. Big clearly compares Johnny to Leah, recognizing Johnny's "transcendence" as similar to Leah's and chooses him as well:

...Same thing with him. And that's why I passed him my wallet. You see I could tell just by lookin' at him - as soon as I looked at him - somethin' like you, the first time I laid eyes on you.(p.21)

He wishes to take him as a son and offers him a job. To Johnny, the offer is a second chance, sparing him from a sentence in the mine. Johnny succumbs readily to the appeal of the rumrunner's "kaleidoscopic" world. Seeing only fragments of a world and shifting them to reorganize their perception is a style of character which intrigues Johnny. His own innocence makes him an easy target. He realizes that with Mr. Big he can free himself from a life in the

mines. Rather than resume old family quarrels, Johnny prefers to escape to the new family offered him. It seems an easy choice for him to make.

The relationship which develops between Johnny and Leah, however, creates a tension which ultimately causes Mr. Big's world to collapse.

Johnny and Leah fall in love. Leah's innocence and naiveté have kept her sheltered from the public perception of her attachment to Mr. Big. There are, however, two sides to Leah. She is what she believes herself to be, Mr. Big's chosen daughter - a very fortunate young lady to be rescued by such generosity. Since she is part of a family, she sees nothing unusual about her relationship with the older man.

On the other hand, she is what others perceive her to be. Johnny's mother considers her to be a whore and manages to infect Johnny with that suspicion. He becomes obsessed with the idea that she is impure and that she loves Mr. Big in an unwholesome way. Johnny resents her attachment to Mr. Big.

What she represents to Mr. Big is what he wants her to be, an image, an idol. His love for Leah is founded on the creation of an ideal. She has been so closely aligned with Mr. Big that she takes his characteristic of choosing people for granted, accepting it as if he were, in fact, a god. She is too naive to realize that her relationship with her adopted father could be construed as wrong. She acts the way he expects her to act.

Johnny, however, needs to know the truth about her. He needs to determine her origins:

JOHNNY: So... is it George?

LEAH: What does it matter?

JOHNNY: No. - What's your last name then?

LEAH: Unknown.

JOHNNY: What?

LEAH: Last name unknown.

JOHNNY: I thought you was their daughter.

LEAH: Their -

JOHNNY: Chosen daughter, ah-huh...(p.63)

Leah is unconcerned with identities beyond that of being a chosen daughter. She is well-cared for and needs nothing more than that. She is at peace within her world. However, Johnny's presence begins to upset the balance and awakens new feelings. Ultimately, Leah must choose between Johnny and Mr. Big. The results of that choice are tragic.

Johnny shatters the perception of her as an idol but at the same time fears that what his mother has said about her is true. Leah's reaction is to withdraw from Mr. Big and gradually to assert her independence. She begins to explore her own identity, refusing to go in the car with Mr. Big. The security of her world starts to disintegrate.

Pollock illuminates Leah through her interaction with a contrasting character named Dolly Danielle. Dolly did leave Blairmore to seek a personal identity, even changing her name from Polly Yakimchuk to Dolly Danielle. When she returned from the East, she was able to do so by choice. Although the outcome of her return to Blairmore is marred by tragedy, she remains optimistic. While she clings to her past through Will's photograph, it is not a trap for

her. Will is still very much a part of Dolly. She relives times with him, talks with him, dances with him. Her closeness to him is touching and represents a contentment that Leah is unable to understand.

Leah, on the other hand, is incapable of incorporating her past into her present or future:

LEAH: All a that is over Dolly... It's past... You gotta forget about Will... You gotta start fresh.

DOLLY: But you're who you are and who you were and who you met and what you did and -

LEAH: Will - Is - Dead... Why can't you just leave him?

DOLLY: That's what you wanta do, leave everything behind, pretend things never happened, but I don't wanta do that - and you can't do it either!(pp.111-113)

Leah seizes the opportunity to sort out her own feelings and to try to rid herself of her past. In a defiant gesture, Leah grabs Will's photo and tears it to pieces. Dolly realizes that the past cannot be obliterated. Leah had been rescued from her past and wishes never to return to it.

In a similar fashion, the two mothers in the play, Mama George and Mrs. Farley, can be compared in the effect they have on Mr. Big's downfall.

Mrs. Farley's prejudice against Mr. Big and Leah and her favouritism for Johnny have left her alone. When she decides to help Bill the Brit, she turns a blind eye to the beating of her own husband. Her only desire is to bring the renegade Mr. Big to justice. He has deprived her of her son and she will have him back. With her assistance, the lawman is successful in effecting the end of the rumrunner's business. She also shatters her son's world.

Similarly, Mama George triggers Mr. Big's collapse. She has been an accomplice both in the supposed affair with Leah and also in the illegal trafficking of bootleg booze in order to maintain her world as she wanted it. Realizing that Mr. Big must now relinquish his claim on Leah, she forces a confrontation with him. She tells him that she is aware of the liaison with Leah, but that Leah now loves Johnny. She points out to him that he needs HER now and attempts to regain what is rightfully hers, but in so doing causes the "colossus of Blairmore" to collapse.

It is not until we see Mr. Big's world crumbling that we become truly aware of the fragility with which that world was erected. His world has not been real and Mr. Big discovers this, not in the confrontation with Mama, but in a discussion with Johnny:-

JOHNNY: I want you to tell me... What was it that killed William.

MR. BIG: SEARCHING, NOT HIS USUAL SELF. ... A ... coming together... of random... incident - timber spongy from some rot within, pressure from above, then, from below, The Earth sighed, a tiny tremour, not even one you'd notice...

JOHNNY: Why?

MR. BIG: Perhaps she's angry at the violation.

JOHNNY: Whyn't he move, jump clear?

MR. BIG: Perhaps

JOHNNY: Whyn't he move!?

MR. BIG: He chose not to.(p.133)

Pollock uses the collapse of the mine shaft on Will Farley to examine the implications of the destruction of Mr. Big's romantic world. The term of Mr. Big's control is almost over. Man must be allowed free will. One man cannot control the lives of others. He no longer rules

the people who populate his world. He can no longer assign roles as he did in the re-enactment of the train robbery. He has never allowed his followers any choice in what they did. He made their allegiance to him attractive, but they had no real choice of their own.

It can be argued that Mr. Big is a true romantic, seeking to live by his own rules and to bestow favours on those who meet his standards. What happens to Mr. Big that separates him from the major characters in the previous Pollock plays, is that we have the opportunity of observing the character's failure through his choice of action. We do not hear Leah's death reported or acted out by other characters. Mr. Big shoots her and, in so doing, brings about the final destruction of his world. He is unable to maintain control over his universe.

Mr. Big's tendency to live by his own rules indicates no conflict between his private and public self. The two aspects of his identity have merged. He does not allow conscience, public opinion or the law to dictate what he does. He acts as he will and his charisma allows him to control the lives of a number of other characters.

Certainly Mr. Big acts, at times, with a public facade. This is most evident when the world he created begins to crumble. That world, which he allowed Leah, Mama and to some extent Johnny, to share, has been a fragile, ethereal one. Johnny points this out in his short epilogue:

I was caught in his kaleidoscope worlds cartwheelin'
through space.
I believed in his crystal shard people radiatin' light
like a rainbow.
She was livin' proof of a transcendence...
Mr. Big once asked me - what do you think an oyster
thinks of a pearl?... What DOES an oyster think of a
pearl? I don't know. He didn't tell me...
It may all have been lies, but that still doesn't mean it

weren't true.(p.145)

Johnny never does discover the truth. He never determines whether a chosen family is superior to a natural family. What he does discover is that man must be free to make his own decisions. One man cannot control the lives of others. However, it is the manipulative control of the benign dictator, Mr. Big, which constitutes the connection with the final plays considered in this work.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WALSH III AND DOC

This thesis has traced the evolution of an important aspect in Pollock's work, the character faced with a dilemma between the public and private self. Through variations wrought by time and changing interests, the basis of the plays has moved from historical interest to events and situations which are rooted in the context of the family. Her changed ideas can be seen in the revised version of WALSH prepared for the stage of Ottawa's National Arts Centre, directed by the same John Wood who mounted the 1974 Stratford Festival production. In this third version of WALSH, Pollock alters the character of Walsh significantly. Formerly, he was a man who acted fairly in his attempts to negotiate between his government and the Indians. Now, he is a man ruthlessly committed to his duty.

The tone of the play differs from the two earlier versions. The atmosphere is darker, fraught with hostility and paranoia. The prologue of version II had been dream-like: it is now nightmarish. Walsh, himself, is much closer to a fall and more clearly on his way to corruption. His battles have already been fought: he merely lives out his life in a self-imposed exile.

The history lesson which marks the transition from the present (prologue) to the past (play), is given by several characters, shifting in and out of focus. Since Pollock chooses to

give us a slightly different Walsh, those characters who represent other aspects of him must also change. This is most evident in Harry. His impact as a chorus member is weaker. On the other hand, he becomes a fuller character in his own right. He is now a member of the Force, rather than an outside observer. He follows an Indian girl around, and seems to be sleeping with her. This level of fraternization with the Indians from Harry, Walsh's conscience character, suggests a deeper level of corruption.

Pollock gives Clarence's arrival special focus. From his first entrance his innocence and inexperience are more apparent. Clarence's concern that Walsh behave responsibly is even stronger than in earlier versions. For example, when the young recruit asks Walsh to plead the case for the Indians in the East, he pushes his superior officer:

CLARENCE: I want you to do more than that. I believe in you, Sir. Some of the men. They -I want you to promise you'll do everything you can, will you promise me that?

WALSH: I have done everything.

CLARENCE: I believe in you, Sir! I know you can change things!³⁰

Clarence's strength emphasizes Walsh's weakness. As Clarence forces the issue, it becomes clear that nothing more will be done, for Clarence's ideals are barely active in Walsh.

Pollock deletes a number of scenes in this version to create a more sombre vision of Walsh. The inclusion of the incident of the stolen washtub allowed us to see Walsh judiciously maintaining a delicate balance between settlers and Indians. In this version, Pollock omits the scene so that Walsh's effectiveness as a mediator is diminished. The scene in which Walsh writes to his wife is also removed, obscuring the softer, more personal aspect of

the man. The scene with White Dog has also disappeared: therefore, Sitting Bull has no opportunity to observe Walsh dealing fairly with the Indians. When Sitting Bull finally places his trust in Walsh, calling him "White Sioux", he seems to do so more under duress than out of a sense of trust.

Pollock herself prefers this third version for, as she comments, "there is more sense of community among the men".³¹ She intends to show that all the men are in this situation together and their allegiance to the military creates a bond which gives them strength to face their conditions. This sense of community also increases the pressures on Walsh to follow the dictates of his public office. He must enforce the law.

Moreover, the inclusion of a scene with the American General Terry further reinforces the demands of Walsh's duty.³² Terry was reputed to have discovered the carnage of Little Big Horn. Consequently, Terry's emotional investment in seeing Sitting Bull punished is strong: Walsh must, therefore, perform his duty as an officer. Pollock's further juxtaposition of the visit of Terry with that of Walsh's Commanding Officer, Colonel Macleod, propels Walsh towards an inevitable choice. As a result, his personal morality is pushed even further into the background.

The playwright alters the final confrontation between Harry and Clarence. This more sombre version indicates that both Clarence and Harry witnessed the return of Sitting Bull to the States. The two together report the events to the men in the barracks:

HARRY: We seen a historical sight!
We seen the end a the Sioux Nation!

CLARENCE: That is not true!

HARRY: Was you there?

CLARENCE: Yes, I was there!

HARRY: Well then?... What's the matter with you bastards? Me Harry is gonna propose a toast! Here's to the Sioux. They won the battle but they lost the war!

CLARENCE THROWS HIS DRINK IN HARRY'S FACE. HARRY THROWS ONE PUNCH AT CLARENCE WHICH KNOCKS HIM OUT... HARRY DRINKS ALONE.(p.105)

Clarence, although he witnessed the incident, still denies that the Sioux Nation has been destroyed. There remains a persistent and naive notion that the Sioux will be treated with compassion. The suggestion within the scene that Walsh's idealism and conscience allowed this to happen subtly emphasizes the concept that Walsh's commitment to his office has progressed to a level where it is no longer possible for him to act according to his private feelings or beliefs. He must simply accept the consequences and continue.

The darkness of version III with its coarse language, crude characters and heavy emphasis on public duty, is a precursor to DOC. The central characters of the 1983 WALSH and DOC are both "professional" men separated either physically or emotionally from their private worlds. Both bow to the demands of a public position. It seems as if Pollock took a step back to refashion Walsh so that her portrayal of the central character in DOC could clearly exhibit this intense dedication to duty. DOC features a portrayal of Ev, the doctor of the title, as an irreverently outspoken character with few soft edges.³³ Tied to the demands of his practice, he is incapable of showing compassion towards his family. The play chronicles a meeting between Ev and his daughter, Catherine, both distanced by time, miles and misunderstanding. Whether Catherine or Ev is the major character in this play is of relatively little importance, for it is the confrontation between the two and the subsequent exorcism of the spirits separating them for so long,

which forms the central action of the play.

Ev is the quintessential character who has followed his personal urges and desires, creating and living a public life to the exclusion of all else. The issue that Pollock explores in this play is the effect that such a lifestyle has on the other people in this particular world. Do others in this type of world, bound by imposed ideals of what their identities should be, have a personal identity? Can private identity survive under such pressure?

Ev's over-bearing control is evident in how he treats everyone who populates his world - his mother, wife, daughter, friend, nurse and patients. It is most evident with his wife, Bob:

EV: I don't know what doctor would hire another doctor's wife as an office nurse.

BOB: Why not?

EV: Look, you're not just an R.N. any more.

BOB: Who am I?

EV: My wife.³⁴

Clearly Bob is struggling for an identity beyond that of being Ev's wife. The portrayal of her as an invalid, always in a dressing gown and frequently drunk, serves to strip her further of whatever identity she did have. It is apparent that since their marriage, Bob has too little to occupy her mind. Unable to find reasonable fulfillment at home and blocked from working as a nurse, she turns to alcohol. Except for a brief period spent nursing a close friend dying of cancer, she remains dependent on alcohol to dull the loneliness of her life. In more sober moments, when she tries to speak with Ev regarding personal matters, he turns the conversation to his practice. Bob is unable to win approval from anyone, even from her own daughter. Katie throws her mother's

liquor down the drain and wishes her dead. This reaction is hardly surprising, given her father's treatment of her mother.

Ev's ideal world allows no time for an alcoholic wife. He exhibits little insight into the reason for her behaviour. His solutions provide only symptomatic treatment. He instructs liquor store staff not to sell her any booze, hires servants for her, sends her away for treatment or buys her a summer home.

Ev's domination of his close friend Oscar shows little regard for his friend's abilities as a doctor or as a man. For Ev, Oscar is merely an extension of himself, necessary to keep his world functioning as it should. Oscar dresses Ev, visits Ev's mother for him, mends Katie's hurts and even takes Bob to the Caribbean to recover from surgery. When Oscar suggests to Ev that there might be something more than friendship between Bob and him, Ev's response is complete disbelief:

OSCAR: I do find Bob very attractive!

EV: Total agreement.

OSCAR: You never think for one minute there could be one iota of truth in those rumours?

EV: I just don't believe you'd do that to me.

OSCAR: How can you be so sure?

EV: I know you.

OSCAR: Better than I know myself?

EV: I must...(p.113)

Ev's perception of those in his world bears little relationship to the individual's perception of themselves. The image Pollock creates of this man is harsh. He displays none of the largesse or wit of Mr. Big nor does he share the fierce family

loyalty of Old Eddy Nurlin. However, Pollock is able to paint a sympathetic picture of the man through the device of Catherine's visit. She creates a relationship between Ev and Catherine in which there is a desire for reconciliation which has not yet been explored.

To develop this relationship Pollock uses the dream thesis from BLOOD RELATIONS. DOC exists concurrently in the past and present. The liminal elements inherent in the constant shift between past and present alone create dramatic tension. The scenes in the past resemble an hypnotic trance. Ev's ability to conjure Bob, Oscar and Katie to life so vividly and Catherine's ability to join in the reverie allows them both to face the incidents in their pasts which have caused their estrangement.

As the play opens, Catherine arrives, to find her father deep in a memory of the past in which he seems to be searching for her. Through the device of the reverie he gradually becomes conscious of her presence but only after he "...MOVES AS IF TO LOOK TO SEE IF CATHERINE IS IN THE HOUSE. HE MAY PASS CLOSE TO CATHERINE BUT HE DOES NOT SEE HER"(p.10). Catherine's reference to her father as "Daddy" establishes a warmer father-daughter relationship, though it is fraught with tension. The two are very similar, immediately confronting each other and hitting an impasse:

EV: You sure as hell don't write to me!

CATHERINE: I don't have the time.

EV: Some people make time.

CATHERINE: Why don't you?

EV: I'm busy.

CATHERINE: So am I.(p.21)

The returning writer, involved in her own life, must come to peace with who and what she is. Similarly, Ev, now alone, seems to be questioning the validity of his actions. The very public man presented in the memory sequences stands in sharp contrast to the old man who, in the present, seeks release from the prison of his past. Father and daughter argue about whether or not he should have notified her of his illness: "You are not to tell Katie... Because I didn't want you to know... Because I knew, even if you did know, you wouldn't come - and my heart would've burst from that pain"(p.28). This concern for Catherine's love for him is an aspect of the private self which is evident only in the present. Moreover, it is an indication that Pollock is examining the consequences of action or choice. This character is willing to change. In the present, Pollock suggests that Ev does in fact have a private self, beyond the mask of the god-doctor who swapped the lives of his wife and his mother for those of the thousands of patients he saved.

Pollock explores that element further in her treatment of the daughter, an amalgam of Catherine in the present and Katie in the past. Like the dream thesis, this doubling technique is also drawn from BLOOD RELATIONS. The use of the device here, however, extends into a character who has changed, one who has escaped from the influence of a past life. Catherine returns to face the consequences of her choice. As a child, Katie experiences the tragedy of a grandmother and a mother who, in response to their own peculiar traps, kill themselves. In an attempt to break out of this established pattern, Katie insists that she is "not like her" (grandmother) and that she is "too smart to do that"(p.51). The fear of being merely an extension of a grandparent or parent continues for Catherine:

KATIE: ... Sometimes I look

CATHERINE: in the mirror, I look in the mirror

KATIE: And I see mummy and I see

CATHERINE: Gramma, and mummy and me

KATIE: I don't want to be like them.(p.133)

The direct contact Catherine is able to establish with Katie allows her, as an adult, to resolve the fear that she might have no identity outside the confines of the family. In order to escape, Katie had pleaded with her father to send her away to a school where she could grow up unhindered by the constraints of family:

KATIE: Send me anyway. For me, Daddy. Do it for me.

EV: What if I said No.

KATIE: You won't say no.

EV: You wanna hear me say No!

KATIE: I am like you, Daddy. I just gotta win - and you just gotta win - and if you say No - you'll have lost. I'll come back... every once in a while... I'll come back...(pp.150-151)

Katie's plea to her father suggests a thematic parallel with BLOOD RELATIONS. Lizzie also wonders whether she is like her mother or her father. Lizzie is concerned that her father loves her only when she acts the way he wants her to act. However, Katie, unlike Lizzie, manages to escape from her trap. Catherine's return as an adult is to satisfy herself that it was the appropriate choice and to try to accept her relationship with her father:

CATHERINE: I just came home to see you, I wanted to see you... have you got any idea how hard it was for me to come home, to walk in that door, to, to come home?... Have you?... and when I leave here... my plane... could fall out of the sky, you could get another pain in your ticker, we could never talk again... all the things never said, do you ever think about that?(p.31)

Both Catherine and Ev must come to terms with the past experiences

which have caused them to make their particular choices. Affection between them is not unconditionally evident until the final scene:

HE HAS THE ENVELOPE IN HIS HANDS.

CATHERINE: What are you going to do with that?

EV: Do you want to open it?

CATHERINE: I can. Do you want me to?

EV: I know what's in it. CATHERINE STRIKES A MATCH, SHE LOOKS AT EV.

CATHERINE: Should I?...Should I?...

SHE BLOWS THE MATCH OUT

EV: Burn the god damn thing.

CATHERINE LIGHTS MATCH, SETS FIRE TO THE ENVELOPE. THE TWO OF THEM START TO LEAVE THE ROOM, CATHERINE HOLDING EV'S ARM...(pp.152-153)

The envelope presumably contains a suicide note from Ev's mother. Ev seems to have accepted some degree of responsibility for his actions. There is an understanding implicit in the fact that they exit together: this suggests that they can now accept each other for what they are. The burning of the letter symbolically releases both Ev and Catherine from the trap of the past.

In the program notes to the original production of DOC at Theatre Calgary in April, 1984, Pollock wrote the following commentary:

...It is not "my" story nor the story of my family. There is a lot of my father in Ev, my mother in Bob, and me in Catherine, but Ev is not my father, Bob my mother, nor Catherine me. They are extensions of real people and through them and through telling their story, my personal journey of discovery is hopefully made large enough to communicate itself to you.³⁵

DOC is to be produced for a third time in February, 1986. Theatre New Brunswick is sponsoring a tour of the play under its new title: FAMILY TRAPPINGS. In a recent discussion with Pollock, she said that if DOC/FAMILY TRAPPINGS were compared to a painting, it would be considered the end of a period.³⁶

NOTES

- ¹ Sharon Pollock, The Komagata Maru Incident, (Toronto: Playwrights Co-op, 1978), p.v.
- ² Diane Bessai, Introd., Blood Relations and Other Plays, by Sharon Pollock, (Edmonton: NeWest, 1981), p.8.
- ³ Malcom Page, in his article, "Sharon Pollock: Committed Playwright", which appeared in Canadian Drama, 5.2 (Fall, 1979), pp.104 - 111, does note this dilemma both in relation to Walsh (p.106) in WALSH and Hopkinson (p.108) in THE KOMAGATA MARU INCIDENT. However, I arrived at this concept independently and the further exploration of it is the result of my own study.
- ⁴ Bessai, p.8.
- ⁵ Sharon Pollock, Walsh, (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1973), p.9. This edition is hereafter referred to as Version I.
- ⁶ Telephone interview with Sharon Pollock, October 10, 1983.
- ⁷ Sharon Pollock, Walsh, (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1974), p.7. This edition is hereafter referred to as Version II. All subsequent references to this play appear in the text.
- ⁸ Sharon Pollock, Walsh, Version I, p.24.
- ⁹ S.R.Gilbert, "Sharon Pollock," Contemporary Dramatists, 3rd ed. (London: MacMillan, 1982), p.644.
- ¹⁰ Sharon Pollock, Walsh, Version I, p. 49.
- ¹¹ Telephone interview with Sharon Pollock, July 19, 1985.
- ¹² Sharon Pollock, Walsh, Version I, p.89.
- ¹³ Robert C. Nunn, "Sharon Pollock's Plays: A Review Article," Theatre History in Canada, 5.1 (Spring 1984), p.75.

¹⁴ Sharon Pollock, The Komagata Maru Incident, (Toronto: Playwrights Co-op, 1978), p.4. All subsequent references to this play appear in the text.

¹⁵ Nunn, p. 76.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Sharon Pollock, One Tiger to a Hill, in Blood Relations and Other Plays, (Edmonton: NeWest, 1981), pp. 76 - 77. All subsequent references to this play appear in the text.

¹⁹ John Hofsess, "Playwright Sharon Pollock: Mother, Lover, Artist," The Calgary Albertan Magazine, 9 Mar. 1980, p.11.

²⁰ Ann Saddlemyer, "Circus Feminus: 100 Plays by English-Canadian Women," Room of One's Own, 8.2 (July, 1983), p.85.

²¹ Sharon Pollock, Blood Relations in Blood Relations and Other Plays, (Edmonton: NeWest, 1981), p.19. All subsequent references to this play appear in the text.

²² Telephone interview with Sharon Pollock, August 19, 1985.

²³ Saddlemyer, p. 84.

²⁴ Margo Dunn, "Sharon Pollock: In the Centre Ring," Makara, 1.5 (August - September 1976), p.4.

²⁵ All three plays published in Blood Relations and Other Plays premiered in 1980.

²⁶ Sharon Pollock, Generations in Blood Relations and Other Plays, (Edmonton: NeWest, 1981), p.141. All subsequent references to this play appear in the text.

²⁷ Robert Wallace and Cynthia Zimmerman, eds., The Work: Conversations with English-Canadian Playwrights, (Toronto: Coach House Press, 1982), p.118.

²⁸ Richard Perkyns, ed., Major Plays of the Canadian Theatre: 1934 - 1984, (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1984), p.608.

²⁹ Sharon Pollock, Whiskey Six, TS. Production Script, Theatre Calgary, February, 1983, p.126. All subsequent references to this play appear in the text. In this and subsequent typescripts I have

left intact all idiosyncrasies in spelling, punctuation and grammar as they are essential to characterization.

³⁰ Sharon Pollock, Walsh, TS. Production Script, National Arts Centre, May, 1983, p.100. Hereafter the script is referred to as Walsh III and all subsequent references to it appear in the text.

³¹ Telephone interview with Sharon Pollock, July 19, 1985.

³² This scene also appears in Sharon Pollock's Walsh, (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1983) and is actually a fourth version. It is not discussed here for the major distinguishing feature between it and Walsh II is this one scene.

³³ Doc also exists in an earlier form which premiered at Theatre Calgary in April, 1984. The Doc of this version was foul-mouthed and coarse. His character has been adjusted somewhat for the script discussed here.

³⁴ Sharon Pollock, Doc, TS. Production Script, Toronto Free Theatre, October, 1984, p.68. All subsequent references to this play appear in the text.

³⁵ Sharon Pollock, "Playwright's Notes," Doc Program, Theatre Calgary, April - May, 1984, [p.11].

³⁶ Telephone interview with Sharon Pollock, July 25, 1985.

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