

the central portion of *To the Lighthouse*, "Time Passes," and to some extent the chapter preludes in *The Waves* and *The Years*. This sense of cosmic forces permeates *Mrs. Dalloway*, not only in the mythic figures that inhabit the three "choruses,"¹⁰ but in the forces which struggle in Septimus, rendered in both Hellenic and Christian imagery, as well as in Clarissa.

This pagan imagery is consonant with the use of the canonical metaphor, for in all of Virginia Woolf's novels she combines religious and pagan symbolism to achieve a mythic dimension in time.¹¹ This makes it even clearer that the hours in *Mrs. Dalloway*, presided over by Big Ben and St. Margaret's (a secular and a religious figure), are not only part of the novel's structure but of its philosophical concern: the importance of time as the medium in which selfhood and its psychological progressions are formed.

HARVENA RICHTER



"AND SEATED YE SHALL FALL": SOME LEXICAL MARKERS IN CAMUS'S "JONAS"

While the conclusions of all the stories in Albert Camus's cycle *L'Exil et le royaume* (1957) are somewhat equivocal, that of "Jonas ou L'Artiste au travail" is particularly so. After days and nights of concentration in his loft, Jonas turns his canvas to the wall. "Épuisé, il attendait, *assis*, les mains offertes sur ses genoux. Il se disait que maintenant il ne *travaillerait* plus jamais, il était heureux" (my italics).¹ Did Camus mean this to imply that work represents an evil? Are artists, like Jonas, to remain *assis*, despite the tumult of the world? The final view of the doctor comforting Louise with the assurance that her husband, who has fallen from his platform hideaway, will get well does little to tell the reader whether Jonas has found a solution to the opposing forces that tore him asunder: "*solitaire* ou *solidaire*" (p. 1652).

Throughout the story it is apparent that the word *travailler* has been textually weighted. The first few pages set off the term. There we learn that in Jonas' early life, everything, whether comfort, a wife, or success, came to him with no effort. All that changed with the advent of the third child (p. 1633), when Jonas is said for the first time to work—a word that appears frequently thereafter. He

¹⁰Peter Walsh's dream in Regent's Park, the disquisition on Proportion and Conversion, and the old beggar-woman's song.

¹¹See *The Inward Voyage*, pp. 125-127.

¹Albert Camus, *Théâtre, Récits, Nouvelles*, ed. Roger Quilliot, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), pp. 1651-1652. All further references to *L'Exil et le royaume* will be indicated parenthetically in the text.

did everything he could to “garder intacte sa journée de travail” (p. 1634), but little by little “il travaillait moins” (p. 1638). Jonas is crowded out of one room after another by children, friends, fans, dogs, relatives; everyone wants his attention, his opinions, his signature, his time. When the official painter arrives to canonize him in “l’Artiste au travail” (p. 1642), serious work has almost stopped.

As Adèle King points out, Jonas’ “call” (if I may distinguish this from his “vocation” as a painter) is “to be an intellectual”² and take an active part in the political and social controversies of his time. Camus was explicit on the obligations of artists in his lecture “L’Artiste et son temps,” given at the University of Uppsala shortly after receiving the Nobel Prize: “[L]’écrivain ne peut plus espérer se tenir à l’écart pour poursuivre les réflexions et les images qui lui sont chères.”³ Such public demands are difficult, if not impossible, to fulfill, and Jonas’ work gradually slows. When the inevitable, negative reviews of his paintings come in, he “devint rêveur. Il pensait à la peinture, à sa vocation, au lieu de peindre” (p. 1645). In this sterility, he finds a sort of brotherhood, one of failure: “Jonas sentait que, d’une certaine manière, ils l’annexaient déjà à leur propre échec. Mais, dans un autre sens, cette solidarité nouvelle avait quelque chose de bienfaisant” (p. 1645).

Then Jonas runs away. He discovers

que l’alcool lui donnait la même exaltation que les journées de grand travail, au temps où il pensait à son tableau avec cette tendresse et cette chaleur qu’il n’avait jamais ressenties que devant ses enfants. Au deuxième cognac, il retrouvait en lui cette émotion poignante qui le faisait à la fois maître et serviteur du monde. Simplement, il en jouissait dans le vide, les mains oisives, sans la faire passer dans une oeuvre. (p. 1647)

Psychologists call it “mid-career crisis,” the time when some collect hangovers, affairs, and bills for child support. Jonas breaks free of the pattern only when confronting his wife. “Et pour la première fois, le cœur déchiré, il vit à Louise ce visage de noyée que donnent la surprise et l’excès de la douleur” (p. 1648). Above the little apartment’s central hallway, he builds a loft, an analogue of Jonah’s sea monster, and retires to it. “Dans l’ombre et ce demi-silence qui . . . lui paraissait celui du désert ou de la tombe” (p. 1649), he listens to his beloved family, realizes that he has never truly helped his wife (p. 1650), thinks about painting, waits for his “star” to reappear, and, finally, asks for a canvas. He begins again to work.

The clear pattern of allusion to the Biblical Jonah⁴ would suggest that Jonas does not remain passively *assis*. The prophet Jonah, after all, was vomited out of the sea monster only when he agreed to accept his call and go to work proclaiming the truth to the Ninevites, and when Jonas falls from the loft, the doctor concludes that, although he suffers from overwork, “[d]ans une semaine, il sera *debout*” (my italics—p. 1652). Remembering that his good friend, Rateau, loves Jonas’ activity especially, rather than the results—“Ce ne sont pas tes tableaux que j’aime. C’est ta peinture” (p. 1639)—one might be led to doubt that Camus

²Adèle King, “Jonas ou l’Artiste au Travail,” *French Studies*, 20 (1966), 268.

³Albert Camus, *Essais*, ed R. Quilliot and L. Faucon, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), p. 1079. Further references will be indicated parenthetically in the text.

⁴King, pp. 267-269.

wished to promote sloth. Should one proceed further to consider the essential context provided by the cycle's next story, "La Pierre qui pousse," where d'Arrast works to support his Brazilian friend, little doubt remains. It seems unnecessary to recall Camus's statement published in *Actuelles II*: "[L]e temps des artistes assis est fini" (*Essais*, p. 804). I may then safely conclude that the seated Jonas has allowed the comfort of his lofty exile to lull him.

In the last paragraph of the story, Rateau looks at the canvas that represents Jonas' new beginning, the result of his efforts in the loft: It is "entièrement blanche, au centre de laquelle Jonas avait seulement écrit, en très petits caractères, un mot qu'on pouvait déchiffrer, mais dont on ne savait s'il fallait y lire *solitaire* ou *solidaire*" (p. 1652). To interpret this with assurance requires an analysis of the following "La Pierre qui pousse," but "Jonas" seems to indicate that an artist is expected to be in the world and yet to create. Elsewhere, certainly, Camus left no doubt of his position. "[C]'est au moment même où l'artiste choisit de partager le sort de tous qu'il affirme l'individu qu'il est. Et il ne pourra sortir de cette ambiguïté. . . . Il plaide vraiment pour l'amour du prochain, non pour cet amour du lointain qui dégrade l'humanisme contemporain en catéchisme de tribunal" (*Essais*, pp. 1091-1092). "L'artiste libre est celui qui, à grand-peine, crée son ordre lui-même" (*Essais*, p. 1093). Today's artist must actively hew out his order in love while maintaining his individuality and his commitment to his brother human beings. He must be both *solitaire* and *solidaire*.

ALLAN H. PASCO



THEME AND STRUCTURE IN TIM O'BRIEN'S *GOING AFTER CACCIATO*

Readers and critics for the most part agree that to date the richest literary legacy of the Vietnam era has been nonfiction works such as C. D. B. Bryan's *Friendly Fire* (1976), Michael Herr's *Dispatches* (1977), and Philip Caputo's *A Rumor of War* (1977). Part of the problem that fiction writers seem to have had is trying to build an artistic structure around a war that lacks the familiar geometry of clearly established battle lines, troop movements, and advances and retreats. Significantly, Caputo's *A Rumor of War* began as a novel, but Caputo found the war itself too chaotic to bring under a fictive reign. "The big problem was structural," he recalls. "Writers about other wars had the experience of the war to structure their books. But Vietnam was an existential war of meaningless episodes, five-minute fire fights,

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