In the years since 1970, as poet, Hope has devoted considerable attention to examination of the mystery of being. The post-1970 poems in *A Late Picking* and poems in *Antechinus* and *The Age of Reason* affirm his belief that a suprahuman, rational force informs the created universe. In some of the poetry, it is proposed that the mystical force which animates man in temporality is immanent in the created universe: "Beyond Khancoban" offers a contradictory thesis.\(^1\) When Hope's thinking inclines to the mystical view of the universe, a hitherto fairly repressed recognition of the shadowy side of the psyche, in which atavistic understanding is lodged, comes to the fore. The poetry offers that the mystery of being is apprehended by a primitive faculty in man and that it exhibits a rationality beyond the grasp of human comprehension. Some of the poetic argument along these lines is strenuous but Hope is offering ideas to stimulate the reader's thought, rather than as consistent admonitions, a point not readily discernible when some poems are considered in isolation from the body of the later work. Hope is exploring possibilities and indulging in play with ideas, a method often reminiscent of John Anderson's approach of attacking ideas too readily taken for granted. Hope seems to be talking to himself and hoping that God is lending an appreciative ear; with "In Memoriam: Gertrud Kolmar, 1943,"\(^2\) he is afraid God is lending an unappreciative ear.

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Although he has never discounted the inheritances of the mind, Hope has repudiated Freudian introspection and placed emphasis on the need for man to exercise rationality. With "Pseudodoxia Epidemica", in 1961 Hope introduces the themes that human logic is limited and that knowledge of 'All the true facts' means death for mankind. In the post-1970 poetry there is a shift of thematic focus towards the less-rational, even non-rational, end of the spectrum of consciousness. In earlier chapters it has often been illuminating to refer to Hope's prose statements in order to support or extend observations about the poetry. Certain of Hope's post-1970 writings into which the subject of rationality enters do not permit such convenient cross-referencing. The strongest expression of Hope's perception that man must husband rationality is in the 1972 ABC Christmas broadcast, where he urges the restoration of faith in reason. He observes two manifestations of the 'flight from Reason'. Young people choose to 'drop out' from society because they are unable to believe there is a rational solution to the 'mess of a world' they observe; 'The other side of this failure of nerve is the increase in superstitions and superstitious practices masquerading as science.' Number mysticism is one of the superstitious practices instanced. The first explanation for these retreats from reason that Hope gives is the complexity and volume of available information about the world and it includes the curious statement, 'Science has made the world too complex'. From someone who expresses delight in the adventure of reason that is a baffling statement, regardless of the illogic of 'Science has made the world too complex'. The speed of change of the world-picture is the second reason Hope gives in explanation of the prevailing retreat from reason:

3. Hope, "Guest of Honour."
4. 'numeralogy' [sic] is given in the mimeograph, Radio Special Projects/TH, Australian Broadcasting Commission, "Guest of Honour," A.D. Hope, p.4, and in Idiom, 9, 1, 1974, p.17. Further page references are to Idiom.
that is followed by

But perhaps the first cause of this loss of faith in a reasonable world has arisen from the discovery that we are not as rational as we thought. Man is not a rational animal at all. He is capable of reasoning but he is mostly at the mercy of his emotions and his passions. Psychology in the past fifty years has undermined his belief in his capacity to plan and construct a rational society.

The talk ends with the observation that man must 'learn to live in a provisional world from now on' or the doom of the 'greatest adventure of all time', the adventure of reason, threatens: 'But the first step in this direction must be the restoration of the ordinary man's faith in reason'.

Before considering the later poetry which bears on the subject of science, it is appropriate to look at "The Age of Provisional Man", the talk Hope presented a few months after the 1972 broadcast. The concept of "The Age of Provisional Man" is developed to some extent in "Exercise on a Sphere". The 1972 broadcast contributes to it and it is adumbrated in the 1972 graduation address Hope gave at the Australian National University, "Day-time and Night-time Vision". The 1973 address takes the Provisional Age theory to the proposal that systems of education must be remoulded 'so that even the practical man has more of the poet's cast of mind'. The difference in emphasis on this point between the talks is that in the broadcast Hope advocates a return to faith in reason, in the graduation addresses he advocates imaginative vision. The ideas are not necessarily mutually exclusive but it is perhaps only a difference in terminology which separates imaginative vision, or 'the poet's cast of mind', from some such term as Surrealism or Superrealism.

A Surrealist dimension to a significant proportion of Hope's poetry is more evident in the later period than in the early mature period. 'Surrealist' is a vexed label, with unpalatable overtones, caused partly by misunderstanding and by its vagueness, but it comes closest to being the term to describe aspects of Hope's poetry. In the following discussion, reference is made to Gleeson's "What is Surrealism?" The intention is not to suggest that Hope re-worked Gleeson's ideas but to point out that there is a commonality of thought between the Surrealist painter, Gleeson, in 1940, and Hope as poet thirty years later. Gleeson represents informed but not extremist Surrealist opinion. Comment is directed to the point that what Hope advocates in "The Age of Provisional Man" is scarcely different from what Gleeson is advocating when he urges 'that system [of thought ] which we call "imagination"'. The observations contribute to the understanding of some of Hope's post-1970 poetry.

'Surrealism is a word that is applied to those forms of creative art which are evolved, not from the conscious mind, but from the deeper recesses of the sub-conscious', writes Gleeson.\(^7\) Thus Gleeson establishes his allegiance to what is already in the mind, in the sub-conscious. 'The theory of surrealism', continued Gleeson, 'is based upon a belief that the logical mind, with its prescribed formulas of thought, is incapable of expressing the entire range of human experience and aspiration.' Hope's argument in the 1972 Christmas broadcast and "The Age of Provisional Man" is similar to that part of Surrealist theory as described by Gleeson, in that it says that a mind conditioned to a relatively fixed world-system, and which cannot cope with the pace and volume of new knowledge, needs to

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7. Gleeson, "What is Surrealism?" p.27.
find a way of coping with uncertainty. Hope argues that education systems are too limited because they are aimed at fitting people for defined roles. Gleeson does not discuss education but he describes reason as 'the habit of selective thinking', which would describe the effect of established education as Hope sees it. We are 'trying to fit new patterns to old habits of mind', writes Hope. Gleeson is of the opinion that

There is time now to explore other fields of thought. Indeed, there is urgent need for such exploration, for the redundant tradition of the habit system has become increasingly dangerous to the fuller development of our faculties. Reason has forced our minds into a dangerous malnutrition.9

In "The Age of Provisional Man", Hope concludes that the need for men to think as poets is so urgent that it is 'a much more important condition of human survival in the long run than the solution of short-term problems like over-population or pollution'.10 The causes which have led to the need for an imaginative approach to man's condition are identified differently by Gleeson and Hope. Gleeson sees reason as constrictive; Hope sees reason as being, by itself, inadequate; vision is also needed. Both identify the need for a system of thought which goes beyond reason, as that term is commonly used, and both identify a mental and spiritual need. Neither advocates the abandonment of reason: 'the complete mechanism of the human mind must be utilised', writes Gleeson; 'Keats is not [in postulating the need for negative capability], as some critics have thought, saying that a poet can ignore fact and reason', says Hope.11

Between 1940 and the early 1970s the theoretical world-model changed, but that does not result in any

difference between the two arguments. Gleeson apparently places the imagination with the subconscious. Despite some leanings towards recognition of the force of the subconscious, until the post-1970 poetry Hope has looked to heightened consciousness for release of imagination. Book V of *Dunciad Minor*, added during the 1960s, has Jung as a target of Hone's satire, with Maud Bodkin's advocating that

''Jung, Mother Jung's the name to conjure with!
Poems are simply archetypal myth;
Poets, blind mouths through which Old Chaos streams;
And Racial Memory dictates their dreams.'"12

It is, then, a surprise, even if not a complete surprise, to find in the later Hope poetry endorsement of the collective unconscious and espousal of mysticism. H.P. Heseltine would not be surprised by later Hope poems such as "Palingenesia".13 In 1970, Heseltine noted the formulation by Hope in the preceding decade of

a theory of the spiritual evolution of man, in which he is partly moved by the unconscious forces in his natural existence, partly motivated by that vision of perfection which he can imagine to himself and towards which he yearns. The idea of Paradise within, thus projected into the future as well as recalled from the mystic past ... becomes part of the common equipment of human aspiration.14

From the late 1960s, a humanist preoccupation with the effects on man of a rapidly accelerating volume of knowledge appears in Hope's poetry. Resulting from that preoccupation are a number of poems which express, some less definitely than others, the poet's consciousness of a mystical element in the universe which is beyond the grasp of human reason. In the 1972 address, "Day-time and night-time vision", Hope proposes that the poet can claim a special kind of knowledge, different from the scientist's

knowledge. The poet is concerned 'not with analytic knowledge but with eliciting what the medieval philosophers called the quidditas, the whatness of things.'\textsuperscript{15} Hope is applying the thinking about the relationship between art and science which is evident in "The Esthetic Theory,"\textsuperscript{16} as he also does in the "Three Songs from Pythagoras,"\textsuperscript{17} where he puts forward the concept that, by the exercise of negative capability, man can intuit the mystical in the universe. Two of the "Songs" go beyond metaphor to Symbolism and are difficult of access for readers not as learned as Hope, for whom the instruction and delight are lessened by the difficulty of access.

One source of the Pythagoras poem is the poet's fascination with the mysteries of mathematics. The second last paragraph of the student prose piece, "A Letter to a Mathematician", records the young Hope's absorption with the adventurous possibilities in the concepts of incommensurables; the last part of the paragraph reads:

Think of the infinite risk of a little mistake in the far hundred hundred millionth of a unity ... what an enthralling adventure! I have always wanted to be 'Over those Hills and Far Away.' Indeed, who hasn't? What an idea, then, to lead a mathematical crusade to find that marvellous something at the back of beyond. What shining madness! Worthy the brain of the rarest lunatic, a Quixote or a Columbus of high Bedlam!\textsuperscript{18}

Written twenty years before Hiroshima, the last sentence of the quotation has the ring of prophecy. A fascination with mathematics has remained with Hope and he has been an informed observer of the advances in physics made during his lifetime. A second reason for the Pythagoras poems is that Hope has the theoretical knowledge from which to write them but there

\textsuperscript{15} Hope, "Day-time and Night-time Vision," p.182.
\textsuperscript{16} Hope, "Esthetic Theory," p.104.
\textsuperscript{17} Hope, "Adam Ben Googol," "Nu Nubile," "Palingenesia," in A Late Picking, pp.53, 54, 55-6.
\textsuperscript{18} Hope, "A Letter to a Mathematician," p.103.
is also operative Hope's conviction that the poet has the task of spiritually transforming mankind. In connection with science, that conviction is expressed in The New Cratylus, where Hope says poetry should treat the matter of science. Poets are not called on to teach science or any other body of knowledge but they should deal with the world as it is revealed by science:

What a poet can do, if he takes the trouble to know the subject and respond to it, is to treat it in such a way as to elicit its proper music, to make us feel the power and delight of what this knowledge adds to our concept of the world and of human life in it. But the poets of my time have been lazy and self-indulgent. They have not cared to know enough to feel the magic and the excitement of a world transforming itself.19

The first sentence of the quotation is Hope's revaluation, to his aesthetic, of his reading of Aquinas, which is given in "The Esthetic Theory of James Joyce", that 'the activity of the intellectual nature, which is to know, induces finally the completeness, harmony and due proportion that is beauty in the agent'.20 It is also an extension of his observation in "The Esthetic Theory", that a statement in the Summa Contra Gentiles 'defines the relationship between art and science. Art deals with the particular but reveals its structures, the universal characters which it exemplifies. Science deals with abstract and general relations as such.'21 "Exercise on a Sphere" is an example of Hope's successful application of his theory but there is little, if any, delight in the application. Much of the success of the poem belongs with Hope's having found a conceit which exactly expresses his theme. It is a frightening theme of a world so little known that it is "A world of terror without limit or bound".22 The avowal Hope makes at the start of "On an Engraving By Casserius" (p.222), that the thought of mankind's adventure in search of knowledge is the idea he finds most compelling, is applied to poets in "The Burden of the Mystery":

22. Hope, "Exercise on a Sphere." in A Late Picking, p.20.
I please myself with thinking of a poem as a thing in itself, a dance of language, and ideas, and feelings to be enjoyed in and for itself as it adds to our present being. But I like also to think of that other possibility: the explorer poet, like the explorer bee, bringing back to the hive a clue to unguessed flowery alps, new reaches of consciousness, new powers of vision, new honey for the hive. 23

There is a dichotomy of response by the poet to the idea of 'new reaches of consciousness'. Against declarations that he gains intense intellectual delight from man's adventuring towards greater knowledge can be set expressions of fear that man will transgress into reaches of knowledge not properly his, that, in effect, man will repeat the eating of the apple in Eden. This response takes over in the later poetry which deals with science, even though the possibility of the repetition of Original Sin may be negated by man's inability to comprehend knowledge not proper for him to have. The mother and child in "Casserius", who symbolise the mystery 'Of whence our being draws and what we are', may, to future mankind, speak the truth of the limitations of man's capacity to know. The other danger is that, in his incomprehension, man could go beyond some forbidden point of no return in his pursuit of knowledge and so destroy himself. "Three Songs from Pythagoras" express the poet's fascination with widening knowledge but in the third song, "Palingenesia", is also his fear that we are probing into territories of knowledge beyond our comprehension. "Three Songs from Pythagoras" are fables for our times but the proportion of readers with the key to most of the symbols and concepts is unlikely to be high. Ruth Morse quotes, from Hope's 1961 Notebook VII, a passage in which the poet debates the question of audience:

The resources on which a poet can depend are becoming more and more impoverished and poetry that aims at any sort of general appeal is forced to be superficial. Faced with this dilemma I think there is nothing for a poet to

do but write with all the resources at his command - ignoring his actual readers. But he cannot afford to ignore all readers .... My own recourse is to write for a roughly selected group of literate people ....

The "Pythagoras" poems demand an unusual commitment to application on the part of readers not scientifically learned, which is a worthy demand in that it induces them to look afresh at the world and themselves, but "Adam Ben Googol" and "Nu Nubile" are too turgid in content.

In reading directed towards an attempt to give some sensible comment on the "Pythagoras" poems, the innumerate present writer came upon an article on Space-Time by Albert Einstein which includes these sentences:

Consider the concepts referred to in the words 'where', 'when', 'why', 'being', to the elucidation of which innumerable volumes of philosophy have been devoted. We fare no better in our speculations than a fish which should strive to become clear as to what is water.

The point of Einstein's analogy lies behind the "Pythagoras" poems, which re-state the mystery of all created being. Mankind's intellectual attempts to solve the mystery are made under the delusion that human rationality can cope with the imponderables of the universe. "Adam Ben Googol" begins with Hope's preoccupation with the Fall and sexual intercourse and reverts to a concern in "Ascent into Hell". The son of Adam, the 'I' of the poem, identifies Adam as Googol, $10^{1000}$, a huge but finite figure. His Aleph-null mother, Eve, existed only because she was derived from Adam but she was the means by which Adam was able to beget living offspring. Eve 'Mothered the imponderables of being alive', that is, from Eve came the human state. The offspring, 'I', is an ambiguous being, who claims only the sum of Descartes'Cogito ergo sum, which may imply a querying of

27. O.E.D. gives that 'googol' is 'a fanciful name (not in formal use) for ten raised to the hundredth power'; the term was invented by a nine-year-old.
the reality of mind. Conception is likened to the changing into energy of mass which has reached the speed of light, 'mass melts into motion'. The conceived child is an Ichabod, one without glory, (1 Samuel 4.21), but he inherits 'The paradox of the integral I AM.' He is comparable to the theories about matter in space which are disproved by modern science. The imponderables of being alive, including the enormity of the chance of the particular combination of genes which takes place in the 'fine finitude of a forthright swive', parallel the imponderables of the universe. Physicists who probe the nature of the atom play 'peep-show with the universe'. What they find, 'from quark to quasar', from theoretical components of particles to extragalactic sources of radiation, has not yielded information about the 'prime particle' of the universe, because the measure available is the 'common measure of mind'.

The persona establishes his singularity, and that he is the offspring of Googol and Aleph-null, 'Yet my own name is One'. He is 'One' of "A Letter to a Mathematician", whose

head is constantly among the system of stars, and his feet press the root of things. We are mostly a little afraid of One in our hearts. He stands between us and the all-possible beyond. He is an outpost of reason and the definite, and we feel dimly that in some way we depend on him for our existence, and that he is greater than we.29

By his poetic perception, the poet is able to forestall for man the rout of reason by the unknown. The poet perceives beyond 'number' and rationally arrived-at concepts, to arrive at 'the first pure tone, the first clear thought'.

The theme that human rationality is a delusion is continued in "Nu Nubile", where the delusions of male-female love parallel the delusions

28. O.E.D. gives that 'swive' is the act of copulation.
of reason. Cosmic theory provides the imagery for the failure of male-female relationships to meet the needs of human beings. 'Nu', a coefficient of refraction, stands for space-time and Eve. "Nu Nubile" presents a drama in which space-time desires union with infinity, an unlikely union in the light of relativity theory, which indicates that space may be curved because of the presence of matter. Woman is 'Nu', matter. The female and male characters, Topsy totsie and Topsy Turvey, are players in the drama which began in Eden, 'Far away and long ago', and which has left unknowingness of their state as a legacy to the heirs of Adam and Eve. It began with Eve's indiscretion, which 'Caused the universe to wobble'.

The changing world picture shows that faith in logic and empirical evidence is misplaced. The further astronomers look into space, the further back in time they are seeing. Among the contributions to extragalactic discovery made by the U.S. astronomer, Hubble (1889-1953), was the establishment of 'red-shifts', so that we know that the speed of travel of nebulae increases with distance. Thus, 'Far away is long ago.' 'Lovers looking from a mirror', seekers of understanding on planet Earth, 'Hold no writ of habeas corpus'. Some observed celestial bodies are no longer in space. Observers confuse the issue: 'Hocus-pocus is their error', They take the evidence of their senses and employ logic but come to false conclusions. Mankind has given in to the irrationalities of mathematicians who try to make laws for a cosmos which is beyond man's understanding.

Topsy Turvey, the male, does not fit the physical world; he plays a game in which he moves in contradiction to the rotation of Earth:

30. The writer acknowledges that in some of this interpretation of "Nu Nubile" help was given by Mr Brian Lenehan.
'Topsy Turvey's tee-to-tum', a spinning top, 'Contradicts good sense but has/left-hand spin till kingdom-come.' The twirling Topsies meet in sexual activity, where each is equally clumsy, 'Each one blest with two left feet', but at least they are 'blest' to the extent of being in unison in their ineptitude. Sex is the common ground of the lovers but even there they are deluded. Each human being suffers from the misbelief that everybody else sees what he sees. Lovers see in their partners what they want to see, 'Hocus-pocus is their error'. A lover has 'no writ of habeas corpus', no right to the body of the other. His vision may warp accommodatingly so that he meets his opposite Topsy in sex but that is all that is achieved, an echo from "The Wandering Islands". Topsie totsie yearns for the love which Topsy Turvey bestows on the mysteries of the universe. His love takes the male away from Topsie totsie and other things of Earth and, 'Though he roves at cosmic speeds,/Still he runs and she recedes.' With "Nu Nubile", Hope limits the female to the natural world and declares that the male belongs to infinity. Man's enquiries into the created universe are absorbing but his limited human apparatus of the senses and reason are inadequate for understanding of infinitude.

Eve is given a respite in "Palingenesia", which is a warning about the dangers inherent in man's limited rationality. The note which Hope provides for "Palingenesia" makes the poem more explicit. 34 "Palingenesia" is a reiteration, from the imagined viewpoint of Pythagoras, that the universe is a mystery. If man probes too deeply into nuclear physics he may find a truth that will annihilate him. Pythagoras postulated that nature could be understood through mathematics but Pythagoras was also a mystic. He conceived the tetrakys, the triangle which represents the first

34. Hope, Notes, and "Palingenesia," in A Late Picking, pp.91 and 55-6.
four integers, the sum of which is ten:

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Through "Palingenesia", Pythagoras says that he, who was a scientist, knew the unprovable,

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That here at the bottom of things
The infinitesimally small
Was tuned like the phorminx strings
To the limitless and the all.
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Modern scientists, he warns, are repeating the errors of those in the past who would not hear the message of numbers, that there is a mystery in creation that links space with eternity. Although the device of exploiting Pythagoras' theory of reincarnation works well, "Palingenesia" is a less effective poem than "On an Early Photograph", which also warns of the dangers of insensitive use of quantum mechanics knowledge. A particular value of "Palingenesia" is its drawing to the reader's attention of the rediscovery, by a nuclear physicist, of theoretical patterns of baryons (particles, e.g. protons, neutrons, mesons, which interact strongly) which are close 'to the number pattern which so impressed the Pythagoreans'.

Scientists have rediscovered the pattern but, says Pythagoras in "Palingenesia", they have not discerned the message of harmony in the pattern. They may be 'more subtle men' than Pythagoras, since they have 'probed far deeper', but they have not evidenced the subtlety of perception which Pythagoras showed when he recognised the mystical nature of the pattern as 'What the world rests upon'. Hope does not rate modern man's use of his intellect highly.

36. P.T. Matthews, The Nuclear Apple, p.100, quoted by Hope, Notes, in A Late Picking, p.91.
His later poetry suggests he would agree with Vico: 'if we consider the matter well, poetic truth is metaphysical truth, and physical truth which is not in conformity with it should be considered false.'37 With "Palingenesia", one senses a straining towards interpretation of ideas offered by the sub-conscious of the poet, which requires the exercise of faith in non-rationality. The concept is a departure from Hope's middle period proposition that faith in the unknowable but believed is a rational response from creatures of human, and therefore limited, reason. It indicates a turning to the depths of the psyche as the human repository of unprovable knowledge, which is accessible to poetic vision.

The idea that there are minds free of our 'definite, purposeful, analytic' processes is explored in "The Cetaceans".38 As an example of an idea explored for itself, and as a demonstration of what is meant by the exercise of a poetic mind, "The Cetaceans" is particularly appropriate. A conservationist poem, it is a meditation on the intelligence human beings share with whales and dolphins which, the poem offers, may not differ in kind; as for degrees of intelligence, 'several of the many cetacean strains/Could well be more intelligent than we'. The conservationist theme of "The Cetaceans" links the poem with "Moschus Moschiferus" (pp.220-1) of the middle period but the later poem goes further in its considerations. The thesis is advanced that the senseless slaughter of whales and dolphins demonstrates greed, a base passion 'more effective than blind hate' because it is calculated. Born of human failure to think laterally, the slaughter is murder of minds, a form of genocide perpetrated where love should operate and perpetrated at our cost. The gods do not hear man's cries for intellectual light but even though man recognises the sea-creatures'

answering intelligence, he kills them. Man's late recognition of their intelligence and his turning to study of them may be 'too late'. The last few lines of the poem are histrionic and out of tone with the rest of the poem but, as a poetic consideration of the possibilities of scientific investigation, "The Cetaceans" is more imaginative and more convincing than "Palingenesis", where the case put forward rests on mysticism.

The mystical forms part of the narrative of "Sir William Herschel's Long Year", but it would startle Herschel if he were to be reincarnated, for it is imposed on the eighteenth century musician and astronomer by Hope's imagination. A somewhat rambling narrative, the poem is labelled 'This curious, fantastic tale' by its maker, who also says, 'I don't pretend it's true.' Certainly some of the tale requires a suspension of the reader's disbelief, especially part II, where Herschel's mother conceives him as the result of a message, unspecified in kind, from the dislocated ex-God, Uranus. Hope is reworking the story of the Immaculate Conception; unintended shades of John Wyndham's The Midwich Cuckoo are also in that section. Mysterious conception is too prankish an idea, which is a problem, since the point of the poem is to draw the reader's attention to the mystical element in being. There is plenty of authorial comment to draw the reader's attention to the point. Hope's comments tell us that myth has a function of presenting truth, that the collective unconscious exists and that current ideas, which are 'temporary', are 'on the way/To others that may well ante-date today.' The latter point is linked to the close of the work: Swift was right, and thinking on lines which exactly match Hope's in "The Age of Provisional Man", when he declared that man is not 'a rational animal at all,/Just capax rationis at odd times'. All man can

claim is that he is capable of reason 'at odd times', for he is

Ruled by his passions, benighted by his crimes;
So that, when some original mind occurs
To change our knowledge of the universe,
We feel at once it has been taken in hand
By powers we only dimly understand,
And that our most delusive dream indeed,
Is that the march of science at last will lead
To total comprehension of the whole.

The poem ends with the overall theme of "Three Songs from Pythagoras", that the further we see into the universe, the deeper its mysteries are found to be.

Except for "The Cetaceans", these later period poetic considerations of scientific advances do not demonstrate that Hope's knowledge of science has led him, as a poet, to treat the subject in such a way as to 'make us feel the power and the delight of what this knowledge adds to our concept of the world and of human life in it.'  

The opening theme of "On an Engraving by Casserius" is 'the joys in being man' offered by the exercise of curiosity about 'all being'. "On an Early Photograph", "Exercise on a Sphere" and "Palingenesia" take the poet's considerations far away from joy, to warning and fear, even though the fascination persists. In the non-narrative sections of "Sir William Herschel" the fascination is with the past, the warnings and fear are strong and there is a confused warning that man is ruled by his passions and negligent about the exercise of reason. The behaviour of man in the Age of Reason is given as an example of wrong use of reason, for the man of Reason, 'deluded by excess of light,/Bartered his Vision to enlarge his Sight'. "Sir William Herschel" is in line with the concept in "Ode on the Death of Pius the Twelfth", that in the presence of affirmative intimations it is reasonable to believe what cannot be proved. A convincing basis for the validity of the concept is advanced in "Nu Nubile". Yet there is a strain in "Sir William Herschel"

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which, if it is not of the irrational, has a closer resemblance to superstition than to vision achieved within the bounds of rationality. The collective unconscious is rightly recognised but, in the process, mystical importance is accorded to the primitive, pagan inheritances of the psyche:

As in the world of science, so in the heart.
Light ringed by darkness has its counterpart,
And all things lost, forgotten by mankind
Live on in the dim caverns of the mind.
And there, in spite of intellect and will,
The old gods reach us and direct us still.

Those lines could be read as a warning against irrationality but, a few lines later, the man of the Age of Reason is characterised as having forgotten 'what the sun by day debars : / That dim night-vision by which we reach the stars.' The appeal in "Palingenesia" for reverence for the mystery of the 'sacred ten' has a similar ring, for it invokes the superstition of number mysticism.

The argument in VI of "Sir William Herschel" is unclear. Contrary to the claim that the poem is 'a parable and not a tract', VI is a tract and it argues the unreasonableness of belief in reason and that 'our most delusive dream indeed,/Is that the march of science at last will lead/To total comprehension of the whole.' The parable is clear: there are mysterious forces in the universe, a point we should heed. Yet the noting of man's limited reason, his ability to be 'Just capax rationis at odd times', is accompanied by the observation that man is 'Ruled by his passions, benighted by his crimes', which, if it is not a criticism of man for his failure to control passion and exercise rationality, reads as though it is. Judith Rodriguez has commented that 'at the end of Sir William Herschel's Long Year occurs either the apotheosis or the failure - celebration and cynicism seem equally in the air - of the reasoning or the reasonable human powers.'

sentence in VI of "Sir William Herschel" breaks the coherence of the poem.

"Sir William Herschel" and the other works in The Age of Reason question what is rational behaviour. The narratives extend Hope's comments in the Preface, that history is distorted by missing detail. It is a contorted Preface, some of it tongue-in-cheek. Hope observes that the pattern of the eighteenth century which has emerged is of a period of reason and enlightenment but that it does not include 'those boisterous details of the pattern which are neither rational, urbane nor enlightened.' The narratives are 'designed to pick out such aspects of the age' but in some respect each raises the question as to whether what is usually dubbed rational (or irrational) is so in fact. Friday's suicide ("Man Friday") is a rejection of a life-style which seemed ordered and serene but did not satisfy his needs. Joseph Banks' dedication to science is presented as abnormal. In "The Kew Stakes", before George III is allowed to tell of how he chased Fanny Burney through the Gardens, Hope gives the reminders, 'We know that Farmer George was not so mad' and that the men of science, his doctors, 'near nursed him to his grave'; man's devotion to what he thinks empirical evidence proves is queried. John Dunton, of "Printer's Pie", might seem as 'crazy' as Don Quixote because of his romanticism but he is shrewd and balanced after all. The Devil ("Tea with the Devil") demonstrates his rationality to John Wesley. Krishna, in "The Bamboo Flute", reveals the error of bringing pragmatic preconceptions to art.

The last section of "The Loves of Ophrys and Andrenus" has the observation that

42. Hope, Preface, in Age of Reason, pp.v-vii.
47. Hope, "Tea with the Devil," in Age of Reason, pp.31-7.
massive talent and relentless will
Sometimes win through, but chance prevails until
It seems the best and worst of human kind
Are those who plump for luck and travel blind. 49

Ben, in "The Isle of Aves", is of the opinion that 'Deluded and insensible
of the wreck/We dance and riot on a foundering deck.' 50 "Girl with Pigs" 51
demonstrates 'How schemes conspire against us in the end'; the Earl is too
smart for his own good. With "Botany Bay or The Rights of Woman", 52 Hope
overturns the argument that men are necessarily more rational than women.

The constrictions of reason are the subject of the 1973 poem,
"Under the Weather", 53 a meditation on the notion that 'God never speaks,
they say, to a drunken man;/Yet drunkenness is a way of speaking with God'.
If Hope's 1975 article on Francis Webb 54 may be taken into account in a
consideration of "Under the Weather", the drunken man can be seen to have
the freedom from his normal self that a poet has. 'Perhaps like all true
poets', Hope writes of Webb, 'he knew that in doing this [talking to himself
in poetry] he was talking to the only audience who knows the hearts of men
and needs no commentator. He was in fact always and only talking to God.' 55
The drunken man, in "Under the Weather", is a facsimile of man 'as he
might have been' in that plan of God's that went awry in Eden. He is a
figure for a person - drunkard, lover, poet, dreamer or seer - briefly
freed of the constraints of normal consciousness. In his poetry, Hope
recognises those kinds of exhilaration which are induced by sexuality,
intellectual adventure or metaphysical intimation and, in "Under the Weather",
he recognises that when man's 'old quarrel of God and man and beast' proves

52. Hope, "Botany Bay or The Rights of Woman," in Age of Reason, pp.117-36.
54. Hope, "Talking to God : The Poetry of Francis Webb."
55. Hope, "Talking to God," p.35.
too burdensome, it can be dissolved in wine "'for an hour or two, at least'. As in "Three Songs from Pythagoras" and The Age of Reason, untempered reason and logic are queried. These later poems are extensions of the theme of "Pseudodoxia Epidemica" (pp.174-5), that 'wisdom's children may hear mermaids sing/In latitudes not found on any chart.'

One of the unchartable human latitudes is the passion of love. In Hope's later poetry, the intellectual and either moral or puritanical barriers earlier erected against love's incursions are let fall. The earlier oppositions within the poetry, between the artist, who is watcher, analyst and creative artisan, and the creature of human passions, have been pinpointed by Fay Zwicky, who sees the lines from "Pyramis", 'The man alone digging his bones a hole;/The pyramid in the waste - whose images?', as Hope's attempt to reconcile the ambiguity of the creative consciousness in the image of the Egyptian Pharaoh: the artist-priest snagged in tension between the heart's passions and that clear-sighted perception of illusion which cuts him off from other human beings.56

There are plenty of tensions in Hope's later poetry but concession is made to the rightness of human love, as, for example, in "Making Love".57 "The Planctus" details the soul-searching that accompanied the making of that concession. "Winterreise" signifies unequivocal acceptance of human love, at least for the purposes of the poem. "The Transit of Venus"58 offers 'A lesson that mankind is slow to learn', that the passion of human love is not to be denied. The theme that was intended in "The Transit of Venus" seems to be the theme of "The Return from the Freudian Islands"

of forty or so years earlier, that science cannot answer man's needs. Joseph Banks, young, handsome, altogether generously endowed by Fortune, has the social graces necessary to earn him favour from women but no inclination for making love. He spurns Venus herself when she visits him in the form of a Vahine of Tahiti. The goddess, who is not to be spurned, takes her revenge by withdrawing from Banks 'the gift of natural lust', a matter not likely to worry Banks since he did not have the gift. The end of "The Transit of Venus" is not nearly as effective as the end of "Freudian Islands". Banks' claim to a volatile temper is given in ridicule of his lack of sexual passion; if Banks suffered from his deprivation of lust, there is nothing in the story to show it. The story promises an amusing ending but does not give it. "The Transit of Venus" is less impressive than "Salabhānjika", which makes a point about male libido where "Transit" only gestures.

"Salabhānjika", the older Hope's version of "The Gateway", gives an opposite reaction to the passion of love from that in the early poem, "The Tides of Brahma", which shares with "Salabhānjika" an influence from Indian lore. Together, these poems illustrate the wholeheartedness with which Hope has come to accept the drive to love. "The Tides of Brahma" expresses the young poet's longing to be free of human passion, a longing engendered by the fear implicit in the 1928 poem, "After Hearing the Aria 'Se Tu M'Ami ...'", that 'passion takes the wonder from the hill'. "Salabhānjika", inspired by an Indian goddess 'older than all Hindu gods', gives the aging poet's understanding that it is from the operation of the divinely-inspired human passion of love between man and woman that a male


60. Hope, "Passages in India," Quadrant, June 1977, pp.15-16, comments on his 1977 visit to India, is without reference to Hindu mysticism.
is able to 'flower'. Passion is seen as making available the wonder of
sense experience. 'I am that tree', says the poet, as he asks the 'goddess
of the trees' for her rejuvenating and divine woman's touch, in an appeal
for sexual vigour which will release poetry.

With some Hope poems it is difficult to know whether what is
presented as love is other than lust. Sexual love is given as lust in
"The Transit of Venus" and "Lot and His Daughters" is about lust and incest.
A later period poem about incest, "The Myrrh Tree", describes a girl's
need for love as being so strong that 'she crept into her father's bed/
Trembling with love', even though she was 'trembling even more/With horror
at her act'. The ending of "The Myrrh Tree" is an expression of compassionate
understanding for the girl. That understanding is in the best traditions
of charity: 'some gods listened to her misery,/Disdaining man-made laws'
and Christ's compassionate attitude to Mary Magdalene is cited. Christ's
words to Mary Magdalene, 'Neither do I condemn thee' (John 8.11) are a
refrain to two other later poems which concern sexuality. The story of
coupling sailors on the doomed ship, told at the end of "The Isle of Aves",
is narrated by Ben, 'that scholar-tar' who read Plato. Ben ends his
recital, "'Yet it was countenanced in antiquity./Plato did not condemn
it nor do I.'" Ben's view is that, since death is inescapable, there
may be a case to be put for man's spending what life he has 'in rapture
in defiance of death', a point taken up and also unresolved in "Antechinus".
A note Hope gives about "The Countess of Pembroke's Dream" says that John
Aubrey, the Countess' chronicler, saw nothing to her discredit in the
stories he recorded about her lasciviousness. 'Nor do I', adds Hope

64. Hope, Notes, in A Late Picking, p.91.
as Hope. His comments, whether made as Hope or through the poems, identify sexuality as a part of the human condition and they repudiate social mores which condemn incest and homosexuality. The definition of the human condition made by Hope as poet has come to include sexuality however it is expressed. Eroticism is a human attribute which manifests itself in a variety of ways. In a prose comment on a homosexual element in Marlowe's Hero and Leander, Hope indicates that the range of eroticism, from natural passion to 'cultivated' eroticism, is available for exploitation by an artist. The passage in Hero and Leander where Neptune falls in love with Leander, says Hope,

is one of the richest and most ornamental passages in the poem. ... The cult of homosexual love is the final indication of the cultivated and formalised eroticism with which the simple and entirely natural passion of the young lovers is meant to contrast.65

A review by John Leonard66 touches on one telling point. "The Isle of Aves", says Leonard, "has a striking conclusion where two sailors engage in "making frantic love" in the poop of a sinking ship, a "rapture in defiance of death" not necessarily specific to gender which is perhaps near the heart of Hope's concern with sexuality."67 Hope's always deep concern with sexuality has come to be with sexuality as an undeniable dimension of human being, to be recognised regardless of how it is manifest. Hope's later period, urbane affirmations of sexuality as inherent in humanity take a direction away from the earlier unease about sexuality, but the unease persists in the poetry at least as late as 1971. "What the Serpent Really Said" shows that Eve remained 'the doubt his mind explores'. It is difficult to believe that such a persistent doubt has

resolved, although the generous attitudes of the older Hope are in keeping with his delight in virility, and they are in keeping with his conception that any aspect of the world and man is an appropriate subject for poetry. The jaunty reflection which ends the 1981 sequence, "Intimations of Mortality", expresses a hope which is in character with the poet's acquired freedom from terror occasioned by sexuality:

If those with whom I shared a bed
Love me a little when I'm dead
And it don't make them weep but laugh,
That will be my best epitaph.

As equally in character as the end of "Intimations of Mortality", though quite different in tenor, are the poems of the "Western Elegies", published in 1980, where love between two poets is treated with the sensibility which has marked Hope's poems about love, as distinct from love-making, since the late 1950s. "Western Elegy II : The Hoopoe" laments the separation of the persona, perhaps the poet, from a beloved Oriental Lady: 'Fire-birds link spirit to spirit but cannot compass the union/Of hands, the lively caress of voices exalted in greeting,/Ardour of eyes that speak without words and kiss without touching.' "Dialogue", "Winterreise" and "Western Elegies", published later than "The Planctus", are love poems, not poems about love, yet there is an indescribable quality to them which hints that the relationships they celebrate are imagined relationships. Though in "Western Elegy II" Hope specifies the irreplaceable nature of the physical presence of the beloved, which allows 'the union/Of hands', the reader gains the feeling that the union of the lovers is of

72. Hope, "Western Elegy IV : The Tongues," pp.34-5, has elements of both types of poem.
the kind that Susannah creates by imaginative indulgence of her sensuality. The point cannot be demonstrated; but there is no reason these poetic creations should be any less the product of imagination than is "The Double Looking Glass".

Except for a couple of enigmatic references, in "Australia" and "Conversation with Calliope", Australia is not treated with tenderness in the Hope poetry published before the 1970s. Despite his lack of overt patriotic sentiment and despite his dislike of sentimental Australianism in writing, Hope has been sensitive to aspects of his natural environment and has taken some of his imagery from the country. Some of "The Drifting Continent" poems in Antechinus argue against Elliott's thesis that Hope's landscapes are 'all landscapes of the mind'. The title poem restates the white man's sense of alienation from the continent of Australia which is given in "The Wandering Islands"; the poems differ in their central themes but the titles overlap in meaning. "Beyond Khancoban" leaves little doubt that the mountain image in "Conquistador" is, at least in part, Australian. It may be a composite image taken from the Snowy Mountains country where Hope was born and from other mountain scenery, maybe Mount Wellington, near Hobart. In the 1956 essay, "Standards in Australian Literature", to make an analogy Hope uses a recollection of Mount Buller, in the Snowy Mountains. Referring to "Conquistador", in 1967 Brian Elliott commented, 'But the topic is not mountain-climbing. It is sex. Why, then, the mountain image? It is not an Australian image.'

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73. Elliott, Landscape of Australian Poetry, p.322.
75. Elliott, Landscape of Australian Poetry, p.323.
Elliott's comments are understandable, given the infrequency of identifiably local landscape detail in Hope's poetry and his facility in making images from literature. Not all "The Drifting Continent" poems are poems of place. "Antechinus" is based on the life-story of a native marsupial but that is not what the poem is about. "The Nomads" is quite the opposite to a poem of place.

"The Drifting Continent" poems were privately published in a separate volume, which indicates that they have a special significance for Hope. Among them is "In Memoriam : James McAuley, 1976", a personal tribute to Hope's friend and sometime poetic mentor. As noted in Chapter IV, in 1972 Hope remarked that the relation of poet to Australia expressed by McAuley in "Envoi" had become so much his own attitude that at times he almost forgot that it was McAuley, and not he, who wrote the poem. Hope's identification with the sentiments in "Envoi" is not apparent in his poetry. McAuley presents in "Envoi" the limitations of the land and of the people and he declares, 'And I am fitted to that land as to the body'. The cultural environment of Australia has weighed on Hope but he has turned his receptivity to his physical environment to account in his imagery. This strand in his work he attributes to McAuley's influence in making him aware of Australia as his 'country of the heart' and 'land of similes':

It was my island, too, my boyhood's home,
My 'land of similes'; from all you gave,
This I hold close and cherish as I come
To your untimely grave.

Because Hope takes some of his images from the land does not argue a tenderness towards his social and cultural environment. Intellectually, Hope has repudiated Australians and the later poems of place show no change in his attitude.

The most immediately noticeable "Drifting Continent" poems, "Hay Fever" and "Tasmanian Magpies", concentrate on the poet and temporality. Both are closely focussed, sensuous poems. "Hay Fever", in particular, is packed with appeals to the reader's senses which are less impressionistic than is usual in Hope's poetry. The delight in deeply absorbed details that have stayed with the poet for a lifetime is apparent but the poem is neither banal nor sentimental. The small-compass description of the hay-field provides a metaphor for the span of the poet's life. The old man luxuriating in the 'well-cured hay' of a fully-lived life is given the humanising touch of a still-uneasy conscience, 'And a thistle or two in the pile for the prick of remorse'. In as near to perfection as human experience comes, the poet conveys, there is always the counter to perfection which denotes human experience and shows that the ideal is not to be had in temporality:

Cornflowers, lucerne and poppies, sugar-grass, 
summer-grass laced
With red-stemmed dock; I feel the thin steel crunch
Through hollow-stalk milk thistle, self-sown oats
and rye
I snag on a fat-hen clump ...

"Hay Fever" shows how strong a claim the Tasmanian part of the poet's boyhood has on him and how active an influence it remains on his imagination. The birdsong of "Tasmanian Magpies" symbolises innocence and unity with the physical world. The poet rues his inability in age to catch the 'magic syllables' which, in boyhood, 'brought me full awake and roused the sun'.

This experience in time is the reverse of that which informs the stanzas of Marvell's "Upon Appleton House", where the poet is beginning to understand the language of the birds and is returning to a state of innocence. The Monaro magpies sing as gloriously as those in Tasmania but in a 'dialect' which is 'not the same' as that of their Tasmanian kind. Although born in the Monaro region, and living on its northern periphery since the 1950s, Hope has not found an imaginative anchor there. The identification of self with the region, given in "Beyond Khancoban", especially when considered in relation to "Hay Fever" and "Tasmanian Magpies", is more in the head than in the heart.

Bruce Bennett, in his 1985 lecture on Place, Region and Community, notes a quality of irony in certain 'contemporary images of Westralian suburbia'. By 'place', Bennett means the space inhabited by man, not the physical place by itself. Having quoted from William Grono's "Postcard from Perth", Bennett adds, 'The irony is pervasive, not corrosive; like Australia's most famous poet of suburbia, Bruce Dawe, Grono is half in love with the limitations he regrets, for he identifies with it; its voices are his.' Both Grono and Dawe half-love, or more than half-love, the people and their limitations which are reflected in what they make of their environment and themselves. It is not possible to come to a similar conclusion about the irony in Hope's attitudes to Australians, which are compounded of amusement and patronage, disapproval and regret.

82. Hope, "Beyond Khancoban," in Antechinus, pp.3-4.
83. Bruce Bennett, Place, Region and Community (James Cook Univ. of North Queensland : Foundation for Australian Literary Studies, 1985).
84. Place, Region and Community, p.53.
85. Place, Region and Community, pp.52-3.
The suburban wilderness is treated by Hope in the 1940s satires on marriage. The comparable spiritual wilderness with which the later poem of place, "Country Places", is concerned is created by non-urban Australians. Against the late letting-down of his guard to the claim of his birth-region on him, Hope sets his duty to see that region with a poet's clarity of vision. "Country Places" records that he sees the inhabitants' rejection of the mind-forming land and their exploitation of the land because of their greed. They spurn their place of origin as the science-besotted Joseph Banks spurned Venus ("The Transit of Venus"), another symbol of life. The farming families of "Country Places" suffer the same dehydration of spirit as the personae of Grono's "Postcard from Perth", whose voices come from 'Between the long white shore and the pillaged hills/the haze of roses/in the aching suburbs'. The voice in "Country Places" is Hope's and its message is Eternity: 'a latter-day Habbakuk/Rises in me to preach comic sermons of doom'. The tone of "Country Places" is in part wry amusement, part regret: 'Woe unto Tocumwal, Teddywaddy, Tooleybuc!' When the poet declares 'Alas! my beautiful, my prosperous, my careless country,/She destroys herself', the Australian who worships the golden calf and cuts down the 'only tree at One Tree' is admonished. Erosion of the soil, implicit in the cutting down of the tree in "Country Places", is a metaphor for the spiritual erosion which accompanies materialism, the greed to which, in "The Cetaceans", whale-hunters are shown to yield. In the mid-1950s Hope used the erosion image, in "The Discursive Mode", to express the decline of poetry under the stimulus of 'alien and sterile forms of cheap amusement, by exhaustion of the heart and mind, proceeding from greedy and ignorant exploitation'.

87. Hope, "Discursive Mode," in Cave and Spring, p.2.
of the resources of poetry. Bennett makes the irrefutable point that there is 'always an interaction between a person and his environment - even when that involves an attempt to block out environment'. 88 As "The Discursive Mode" attests - Hope refers to specific man-spoiled areas of Australia 89 - his sense of environment was strong at a time when it was infrequently evident in his poetry. It may be that the scattered overt references to Australia and Australians in the pre-1970 poetry are scattered because they are comments of censure or complaint or disappointment. Such a strain, too often repeated, would be impolitic. It would be too carping, even if wrung from love of a subject seen to be destroying itself, which it probably is not, for Hope's opinion of Australians is not high and people are more important to Hope than Australia as a country is. His adult responses to Australia show none of the merging of self and place which he evidently experienced as a child ("Hay Fever"). 90 "The Drifting Continent" 91 makes uneasy use of Australian elements. The typical bush picnic in 'the dry gully of a dry creek', the flies and ants, do not contribute as much to the effect of self-consciousness as the stilted mini-lecture on monotremes given by the lady picnicker. Australian in setting and some subject-matter, "The Drifting Continent" has none of the understanding of place that accompanies delight in place. There is none of what Les Murray, in "The Wilderness", has called the 'is-ful ah-nesses of things', although to achieve 'ah-ness' seems to have been one of Hope's intentions. The subject is man's greed and the theme is the universal theme of the effects of man's greed on environment. The Australian setting and the echidna are devices for expression of a theme more effectively communicated by "The Cetaceans".

88. Place, Region and Community, p.23.
89. Hope, "Discursive Mode," in Cave and Spring, p.2.
When Hope incorporates Australian-derived images unobtrusively and naturally in poetry, as he does in "The Wandering Islands", they add to the poetry. In "The Drifting Continent" he uses Australian place too deliberately as setting for a superimposed idea and the poetry suffers. A further problem with "The Drifting Continent" is that Hope is trying to make poetry of what can be said as well in prose:

'Before it set out from Gondwanaland
Perhaps two hundred million years ago,
The earliest of mammals, or the last
Of links with bird and reptile held command
And this was monotreme country then, although
They vanished leaving no trace upon the past.'

The language is dry and academic, lacking the element of wit that is in the lecturer's presentation in "The Age of Innocence" (pp.90-3). Sensitivity to language is one of Hope's greatest strengths but that strength did not come to his aid with "The Drifting Continent". It is altogether an uneasy poem.

The success of "Three Songs for Monaro Pubs" rests with Hope's usually unerring ear. The Monaro "Songs" are Australian in setting and idiom and the setting is defined only by the place names and idiom, but that is all that is required. Most noticeable is the well caught idiom, as in 'Might of married one' or 'Give 's a hand with this poor sod' ("She'll be Jake"). The theme is sexuality which, as Hope has said of love, is without nationality; the subject, male-female relationships, does have some Australian particularity. In the verses there is the cavalier attitude of men to women which is observable in isolated bush settlements and small towns. It is not an attitude exclusive to the Australian outback but it is part of the ethos of bush society. The

93. Hope, "She'll be Jake," in Antechinus, pp.11-12.
sentiments about women expressed by the bush men and knockabouts of the "Songs" are Hope's sentiments: 'Girls, they always back and fill,/Saying no and meaning yes'. The women are spoken of as being independent, sensual, not to be ignored, and they put men 'through the mill'. The Australian elements are much more deftly handled than they are in "The Drifting Continent" because they have to do with the sound of language - place names and idiom - and are directed to the evocation of people of a place. If there is any condescension towards the male characters as rough bushmen, it is lost in the certainty of treatment of one of Hope's favourite themes. Hope can be as earthy as any knockabout. He entertainingly applies his observations of bush patois and bush social organisation in "The Ballad of Sloe-eyed Sal",95 a bushman's yarn which fables shrewd observation on how Venus operates in lightly-populated Australian rural areas. The story seems to lack the standard ingredient of what is known as the oldest trick in the book, and its sequel, the shot-gun wedding, but perhaps that is implied in 'mother-naked'. If 'From Adaminaby to Tom Groggin, nobody's heard of an old maid yet', it must be because the bachelors are 'that tame' that they can be 'clobbered'. The story is from Genesis 2.25 to 3.13, translated to the late nineteenth century in rural Australia. The theme is Eve's ruthless sexuality and Adam's tameness. Hope cannot forgive Adam for having been 'that tame'. In "Sloe-eyed Sal", the Fall is re-enacted 'in old Monaro', not the Macquarie valley in Tasmania, which suggests that the Monaro symbolises for Hope the 'lost country' of lost innocence and earliest sexual understanding to which he refers in "Ascent into Hell" (p.33), when he takes his mid-life journey into a vortex of personal associations.

A key Australian and Monaro poem, "Beyond Khancoban", partly discounts the point Hope is at pains to make in "Nu Nubile" and "Palingenesia", that there is a mystery beyond the mind of man in the created universe. Whatever may be the mystical dimension of the created universe which accounts for 'how the sphere called time/Joins there with the sphere called space' ("Palingenesia"), in "Beyond Khancoban" that which is mystical in the universe is attributed to the mind of man. When a poet catches the music of place,

We have sampled a fragment of that mystery
By which the inanimate wakes to life and thought,
And the universe shakes itself free from entropy
In whose dull net all frames of matter seem caught.

Although the mind of man is given as the animating force which elicits the harmony in nature and forges it into a concept, into a Platonic Idea, with "Beyond Khancoban" the notion is also presented that Hope's cast of mind images the region of his birth, which suggests a metaphysical influence of region on man. As with "Sir William Herschel's Long Year", there is a confusion within the poem. More significant than the conflict of those ideas is that the apocalyptic identification of self with the quality of the landscape peculiar to the Monaro region, reported in "Beyond Khancoban", is shown to be in no degree comparable to the mystical claim of the ancient European site of Nemi which the poet recalls in "A Letter from Rome". The "Letter" gives an account of the ritual joining of the man's spirit and body with the numen of European place (p.144). In its disallowance of the Monaro's being other than matter, unless it is made into something more in the mind of man, "Beyond Khancoban" deepens the implication, which arises from "A Letter from Rome", that intellectually and spiritually Hope is ill at ease with the land of his birth.

In "Beyond Khancoban" the poet says that he has always known the mountain country but has come late to understanding of it: 'The road winds, rises and veers like a difficult tune/ Known always, but mastered for the first time now'. The understanding is that the world which the mind apprehends is the real world. What is animated is the real; matter is just matter until it is given understanding and animated by a human mind.

Tumble-down-Dick and Pretty Sally, of "Hills", cannot make love, for they have hearts of stone. They are just matter, caught in that 'entropy' ("Beyond Khancoban") from which the universe is freed by man's mind. In "Beyond Khancoban", the poet ponders whether his place of birth 'made me or not' and concludes that, although 'Man is made by all that has made the history of man', the claim on him of his place of birth is evident in his cast of mind. Hope characterises the high places of the Monaro as being surrounded by 'great mountains that watch and abide'. The mountains are imaged in the poet's cast of mind, the mind of a watcher and analyst. To the returning son, the region is at first a vast theatre filled with unapprehended music. Sudden understanding is recorded in the fifth stanza for 'the heart of this utter solitude has been tapped;/As I move on, the brooding landscape comes alive./Now I catch the music', and the poet begins to make poetry inspired by his birth-country. "Beyond Khancoban" hints that the poet suffered long frustration at being unable to catch the music and poetry of his country but the thought arises that one must be receptive to any poetry and that as adult poet, for a long time Hope resisted hearing the poetry of his place. The journey back to his birth-region has been via an intellectual route. Having concluded that a mysterious function of man is to animate place by eliciting its music, which 'does not happen out there, but in the mind', Hope claims he is able to grasp the harmony of

the particular compass of place which is his by birthright. In our minds the universe is 'able to enter into the dance' of creation. The concept of a mystical universal harmony beyond man's power to know is reversed. Hope's convictions about the universe are as likely to be in "Beyond Khancoban" as in "Palingenesia". The harmony may be all in his mind and he may have no conviction one way or the other. In his writings, Hope's ideas are characteristically dualistic but confusions and contradictions in the post-1970 writings are disquieting in a way which does not attach to the earlier treatments of an idea from more than one viewpoint.

In 1975, Hope spoke of 'the new internationalism in which our culture is so firmly rooted today.'98 By then he had relaxed his earlier, at times indiscriminate, disapproval of Australianism in writing, as "The Drifting Continent" poems evidence. Possibly that relaxation was permitted once he was able to observe a healthy 'new internationalism' in Australian culture. The validity of Australian elements in writing remains a point on which it is impossible to pin down Hope's attitudes. In the interview with Kuch and Kavanagh, published in 1986, "Daytime Thoughts about the Night Shift", Hope indicates that regionalism is a fertilising poetic influence, which operates 'against a sterilized, universal, boring sort of international standard poem so common today'.99 By regional poet, he makes clear, Hope means one who is living and writing in a region, not writing about it. Oddly, he chooses Les Murray to instance as a poet of region of the same kind as himself. 'I count myself and Les Murray as regional poets because we live and write in Australia, not because we adopt any particular attitude to its language or society.'100 Hope's poetry written before

100. Hope, "Daytime Thoughts," p.223.
1970 shows no influence of any particular local region, apart from in the suburban satires of the early mature period and in some imagery. The literary route to poetry which Hope has followed was probably inevitable. Circumstances in his early life helped to direct him to his literary choices and have been aided by his intellectual need for academic learning. When he returns to Australia as a subject for poetry, in the 1970s, the personal poems, "Hay Fever" and "Tasmanian Magpies", are the most successful poems of place, for they deal with the whole person, the boy become aged man, and merge the past impact of environment with the poet's present awareness of himself. Details of place which have been part of the poet's self since childhood are expressed as naturally as images from the Australian scene are used by Hope in earlier writings. His intellectual and spiritual concerns, in varying degrees, dominate the influence of region in the other Australian poems in "The Drifting Continent" group. "Beyond Khancoban," "Country Places" and "Hay Fever" are examples of later period poems in which the rhythms are irregular but there is no conclusion to be drawn that there is a link between subjects and form.

The one specifically Australian poem in *The Age of Reason* is "Botany Bay or The Rights of Woman". 101 "Man Friday" (pp.122-7), which is in *The Age of Reason* 102 but of earlier composition than "Botany Bay", may be a parable of Hope's attitudes to Australia, the dramatic means used by the poet to express a personal sense of frustration and exile at being physically absent from the European cultural milieu to which he feels he belongs, or felt he did at the time "Man Friday" was written. If "Man Friday" is such a parable, "Botany Bay" is in some ways in contrast, for it offers the notion that Australia provides the open social and cultural

environment in which a certain type of strong-minded person is able to flourish. It seems to have the theme of regeneration of spirit in the wasteland of Australia which is so unexpectedly introduced in "Australia" but "Botany Bay" surprisingly demonstrates its theme through a woman. Hope uses a relaxed approach to his subject of woman's status and almost beams on his heroine. It is therefore advisable to consider what he is saying there against his treatment of the nature and status of woman in later period poems published before "Botany Bay".

"What the Serpent Really Said" (1971)\(^{103}\) is a further exercise on Original Sin, following "Paradise Saved" and "To Gwen Harwood". As does "Paradise Saved", it supposes the story of Adam and Eve to be other than it is in Genesis. It is proposed that what we read in Genesis, that the serpent told Eve that she and Adam would be as gods if they ate the apple, is a lie told to Adam by Eve. The purpose of this complex proposition is to justify to man the ways of Eve and her daughters but, since it is Satan who advises and tries to persuade Eve to use precautionary measures to preserve her Edenic nature, the justification is suspect. Even though disbelief can be suspended for the sake of the story, so that the account of what Satan 'really' said to Eve is accepted, can what he says be believed? Hope's intention is that we accept Satan's arguments, for the story carefully accounts for the lying to Adam by Eve that Satan suggests to her. Embedded in the fiction is the statement that, for mankind, the substance cannot be known without foreknowledge of the shadow, that reality can be known only after experience of what seems to be reality.

'Till it know loss, no heart can learn to give,/Nor know truth till it prove it be a lie' is the wisdom of experience offered Eve by Satan. Temporal existence, as his way of foreknowing mortality, is man's means to

\(^{103}\) Hope, "What the Serpent Really Said," in Antechinus, pp.41-3.
knowledge of immortality. Satan tells Eve that after the loss of Eden her body will stir in Adam the memory of Edenic bliss which will linger in his deepest consciousness. Eve is different in nature from Adam and she will stay part of Eden, 'This natural world of which you are a part.' She will dissemble, for she will keep 'The naked animal hid in human dress', but she will know 'all that Adam by thought or skill may guess.' She will be beyond good and evil but Adam will be subject to moral pressures. Eve, as sketched by Hope's Satan, has a prototype in Dunbar's widow, who advised the Tua Mariit Wemen, 'always take on a double nature both of the dove and the dragon'. That is Eve's nature. Her status in Eden before the Fall is as Adam's 'guest'; by eating the fruit first she will ensure her right to Eden, 'this natural world', and be Adam's means of redemption from mortality. Adam, it may be supposed, belongs in Heaven, not Eden, since Eden is 'this natural world'. Hope has apparently based his poem on the argument that not even Satan could have told Eve she and Adam would be as gods, because woman's nature is different from man's.

Satan's spiel in "What the Serpent Really Said" is directed to an Eve who is Hope's idea of woman: clear-headed, amoral, open to argument based on her interests and without aspirations to divinity. Julia, who in 1944 raised the poet's question, 'Was Eve genuine, or just/A gorilla on probation?' ("To Julia Walking Away", p.37), reappears thirty years later in "Tiger Thoughts". In the later poem, Julia is given 'the tigress nature' with which, Hope observes, Dunbar characterises woman. Julia and Tiger are 'glorious beasts'. Tiger's thoughts of Julia are of 'this

105. Hope, "Tiger Thoughts," in A Late Picking, pp.77-8.
106. Hope, Midsummer Eve's Dream, p.266.
voluptuous minx'. Her stare issues a 'feral challenge' to Tiger. Tiger's view is limited by his animal nature but the view of the god Juno could not be limited. A cryptic view of woman is given to Jupiter in "Jupiter on Juno". Woman, says Jupiter, is 'half a living metaphor/That reaches towards its unknown counterpart', the counterpart to the human that is the divine. Woman has a 'dark mortality', to which the god is drawn because it admits him to 'That sense of undiscovered light which broods/In mortal poetry's similitudes'. Woman wants apotheosis through the 'imagination, knowledge or art' of her male partner, in the vision he acquires or the poetry which he is enabled to make because of her sexuality. The other half of the 'living metaphor', the male, assumedly transcends 'dark mortality'. Jupiter's view of woman, wider than Tiger's, places woman towards the lower end of the beast-human-divine scale of being, not right at the bottom, and justifies her 'dark mortality' as the male's means to apotheosis.

The arrogant physicality of Julia in "Tiger Thoughts", and the independence of thought which Satan accords Eve in "What the Serpent Really Said", are given to woman in "The Female Principle", where the hearty female dares some man to 'meet me face to face,/Bed me and beget my son'. 'Female pride', as creating the demand for alligator skins, is a subject of "Conservation Conversation", where woman's nature is the subject:

"Inward our supreme Creator
Made them tough and strong.

Strong and tough's the female woman
Though she tastes so fine."

"The New Woman (Variations on a Theme by Oliver Goldsmith)", a prototype for "Botany Bay", is short enough to quote in full:

When lovely woman stoops to folly
And learns too late that men betray,
She does not yield to melancholy,
No, not the woman of today.

She intercepts the faithless lover
And bowls him over neck and crop,
Blacks both his eyes and does him over
Ending with a karate chop.

Remarking as she sorts his members
And ties them neatly in a knot:
"Next time I hope that he remembers;
And if he don't he'll cop the lot."

"The New Woman" appeared in print ten years after Hope's article, "The Woman of Today". Hope's source for the expression, 'the woman of today' ("The New Woman") is far removed from Classicism but his theme, the indomitable nature of woman, goes back to Aristophanes' Lysistrata. Hope's 'woman of today' is pugilistic, unlike the 'capable wife' of Dunton, the printer of "Printer's Pie", but her goals are the same and one hopes they are as successfully attained. Elizabeth, of "Botany Bay", does not resort to fisticuffs. Her husband is flogged by the authorities. As the employer of a convict who is also her husband, she is in a strong position; but then, in Hope's view of male subjection to woman's allure, in continuance of the payment of Adam's penalty, so is woman in a strong position.

The sexual equality of women with men is the main subject Hope discusses in "Lineaments of Gratified Desire", in A Midsummer Eve's Dream; he concludes that 'The two parties should confront each other as they are,

112. Hope, Midsummer Eve's Dream, pp.256-68.
symbols of the naked morality of the satisfaction of sexual appetites raised to an aristocratic principle of rule. Botany Bay" demonstrates what Hope means by 'an aristocratic principle of rule'. The heroine of "Botany Bay" is a latter-day Eve, a victim of 'the savage customs' of England at the end of the eighteenth century, when 'To be seduced was treated as a crime.' Elizabeth, Bess, marries Jem, who is a parallel to Adam; he is a criminal but he commits his crimes of greed without his wife's connivance. He is cast out of the other Eden of England and transported to Botany Bay. The upshot of the story is that Bess' strength of purpose and her love for Jem enable her to effect his redemption from a life of crime and from his male and Knoxian aversion to 'A woman giving orders to a man!' Jem's submission to Bess is unconvincing but it weakens the story no more than Adam's eating of the apple weakens the story of Genesis. Bess and Jem remain lovers but with the woman the stronger, nobler and more admirable partner. Because of her strengths, they are enabled to establish their marriage conventionally and found a family,

But had Elizabeth not in time got rid
Of those absurd obsessions which her sex
Found fastened in that age about their necks,
She and her children, children's children too,
Might to this day have had good cause to rue.

Elizabeth's emancipation from 'those absurd obsessions' is because of her introduction to Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Woman.

On the boat to Australia, Elizabeth

made determined plans to rise again
And once, discussing the tyranny of men
Over their sex with Laura, her new friend,
Laura remarked, 'I have a mind to lend
One of my books upon that theme, which I
Found quite compelling; would you care to try?'
Elizabeth read the classic trumpet blast
By Mary Wollstonecraft and found at last
Her burgeoning ideas fall into place.

113. Midsummer Eve's Dream, p.262.
114. John Knox, The First Blast, e.g. p.15.
Thus Hope makes Mary Wollstonecraft the sounder of the counterblast to Knox's *First Blast*, although her counterblast is to the oppression of women in general. To Rousseau in particular, as a writer who presented women as objects to be pitied, she directs attention. One moral of "Botany Bay" is that there are natural aristocrats and that the 'naked morality of the satisfaction of sexual appetites' demands that power in a relationship be claimed by the one with the genius to do so. A second moral is that Australia offers to those who are suitably gifted the chance to exercise their talents and reach their potential as human beings. It is a variation of the situation which Hope discerns in *Madame Bovary* and discusses in the essay, "Martin Boyd's Lucinda Brayford", where he describes 'the law which says that living creatures can only realize themselves and come to the full fruition of their natures in the climate and conditions to which they are adapted.' In details of situation Bess is the reverse of Martin Boyd's Lucinda Brayford but she is 'A girl of some intelligence and charm,/Breeding and sense'. As an English migrant, in the 'small society' of Sydney-town, she is able to 'realize her gifts and possibilities', which Lucinda Brayford could not do in Melbourne of a later time. The second moral Hope offers in "Botany Bay" is that Australia provides human beings who lack a spiritual dimension with the ideal climate for their human talents.

"Botany Bay" gives a view of woman very different from that which Hope earlier observed as having been Milton's, 'that woman is not only inferior physically, mentally and morally to the male, but that she exists

117. Midsummer Eve's Dream, p.262.
by reason of the male, Bess stands for the idea that when a woman realises 'I'm free' she can propose 'equal partnership' to man. It is then the man and woman apply the 'aristocratic principle of rule'. Either the natural woman or the spiritual man must rule. Hope felt that, by 1982, he had got the influence of Nietzsche out of his system but "Botany Bay" indicates otherwise, unless it was written before 1982. Ironically, near the end of the narrative, Bess is the model of Nietzsche's 'noble soul', a notion that would make Nietzsche turn in his grave. 'I submit', wrote Nietzsche, 'that egoism belongs to the essence of a noble soul, I mean the unalterable belief that to a being such as "we", other beings must naturally be in subjection and have to sacrifice themselves.' Hope has expressed the idea: 'Aristocrats are distinguished from other sorts of people not by titles or wealth or inherited treasures of art and noble buildings, though these may be necessary supports to an hereditary aristocracy. Their function is leadership, the exercise of power.'

"Botany Bay" is almost certainly a tongue in cheek and disillusioned expression of the hope expressed in "Australia" that prophets would come from Australia's deserts. Writing in his own voice in the introductory section of "Botany Bay", Hope salutes Australia in what could be read as an unqualified acceptance of the land of his birth:

There I was born and live and trust to die
And, since there is no prouder boast that I
Can offer for the country of my birth
Than that she was the first of lands on Earth
To have decreed and given women the vote ...
My tale is of her earliest skirmish won.

123. Hope, in "These Are the Books that Really Matter."
Hope's tribute to Australian liberalism is ambiguous. Its obvious meaning is that to be able to say that one's country was the first to enfranchise women is the best possible boast one could make about one's birthplace. In those lines, and in the poem proper, there may be evidence of the working of Hope's 'passion for a synoptic view', shown in a partial revision of outlook regarding woman. "Botany Bay" may be a tribute to the women colonisers who led the convict males and other males out of the brutishness which characterised first settlement, enabling the establishment of a society in which pursuit of the arts is possible. If it is, it offers more favourable views on woman and on Australia than have usually come from Hope's pen. It is more likely that "Botany Bay" is a statement that 'Hell's Back Door' ("Letter from Rome", p.141) provides a suitable climate for 'tough' ("Conservation Conversation") woman to flourish.

"What the Serpent Really Said" has Satan telling Eve that after the Fall she will know 'what decreed the ruin' of Adam's pre-Fall world, though Adam will have to struggle towards that understanding. Adam's dream, 'the first dream of this tree', from which came Eve and the apple, is the cause of Adam's ruin. Adam's dream is a form of greed, but "What the Serpent Really Said" does not make the point; it is not an explicit poem. Over-cleverness and greed are the downfall of Jem of "Botany Bay". In these poems greed is a sin of the males. The women, Eve and Bess, are victims of male greed and the means of the redemption of the males. Satan tells Eve that she must sacrifice herself for Adam; the fruit she must eat will become her 'body broken for his reprieve'. Bess is seduced by a scoundrel and beaten by Jem. Because of the hurt done to her body by Jem, Bess brings about his reprieve from brutality.

The differences between the nature of man and the nature of woman are given further definition in the late period poetry. In "What the
Serpent Really Said", Satan says that after the Fall Adam will be the maker of 'Gods, civilizations, systems, law and art' and will offer his creations to Eve. Eve will accept his offerings but that will give Adam no claim on her, perhaps a thought linked to 'no writ of habeas corpus' of 'Nu Nubile'. He will 'probe' her heart to no avail. Eve will manipulate Adam, who will be her 'means to change the universe' - probably to make it 'wobble' ("Nu Nubile"). Adam will be cursed by the knowledge of good and evil but Eve will be beyond good and evil. She will employ her sexuality in wily ways and instinctively know more than Adam can ever know about the metaphysical world. Bess of "Botany Bay", a modern flesh and blood creation, becomes no less wily than Satan tells Eve to be, and Jem becomes no less dependent on Bess' superior cunning than Adam is set to be on Eve's cunning if Satan's words to Eve come true. "Botany Bay" ends with the reflection that had Bess not rid herself of 'those absurd obsessions about her sex', the commonly held idea that women are inferior morally and intellectually, her descendents would not enjoy 'Those virtues which the Age of Reason presents: Intelligence, enterprise, and common sense!' The 'moral' referred to at the end of "Botany Bay" is that the sexual dominance in a relationship belongs with the one better suited to rule. When one partner in a relationship behaves, as Jem does, in ways 'neither rational, urbane nor enlightened', he or she must yield to the dominance of the other - which is what happened in Eden. In "The Female Principle", "The New Woman" and "Botany Bay", woman is independent in thought and ahead of the male in cunning. She is also intimidatingly physical, either in sexual allure or in any other way she needs to be to exert physical suasion.

In according woman the virtues of the Age of Reason ("Botany Bay") Hope

126. cf. Hope, "The Woman of Today," p.57: 'characteristics of Australian women which seem to distinguish them ... resourcefulness, enterprise and a cheerful do-it-yourself attitude to the world'.

is saying that the spiritual sterility of the Age of Reason has a parallel in woman's nature. The Preface to The Age of Reason warns readers that the Enlightenment had its darker side. With "Botany Bay", Hope is sincerely arguing for equality of status for woman on the grounds of her physical, intellectual and moral capabilities but he does not accord her that spiritual dimension which links man with the divine. Any revision in Hope's thinking about woman applies to her status, not to her nature. The women of these later poems are dramatic creations and Hope is playing with ideas about woman's nature and status but the old fear of Eve's nature is there.

The subjects of "A Letter to Amanda", the Russian poet, Anna Akhmatova, and an aristocratic Russian lady, allow Hope to draw a distinction between Akhmatova's nature, as he perceives it to have been, and that of Salomea, an aged Georgian princess. Feted in her youth because of her great beauty, Salomea was exiled after the Russian Revolution and learned to cook:

"I was not Solominka, no one's Muse any more; 
So studied the art women have always known. 
Like them I have learned to compromise; but you, 
It was not your nature, you withdraw 
But do not yield, nor fear to stand alone."

Hope adds in a note that a friend of Akhmatova's said Anna never learned to cook. The note is in support of the observation in the poem that Anna is different in nature from other women, even an aristocratic woman, in that she cannot compromise. She is a poet. She is also one of the few heroes in Hope's poetry. Akhmatova is a political poet-hero, as is the German-Jewish subject of "In Memoriam : Gertrud Kolmar, 1943". Gertrud Kolmar, a victim of Auschwitz, displayed heroic dignity and a saving sense of humour in the face of inhumanity. She 'paid the debt/Of the ancient doom

130. Hope, "In Memoriam : Gertrud Kolmar, 1943," in A Late Picking, pp.84-6.
of her race without dismay' and took 'incredible comfort from St. Just's joke: / Men perish that God may live'.

The heroic theme scarcely appears in Hope's poetry of his later period. There is tribute paid in "Exercise on a Sphere" to the vision of non-Euclidean mathematicians, 'Riemann and Lobachevski share the thought/ Of the watcher there who is, and is not, me', but the "Three Songs from Pythagoras" cast doubt on the visionary capacity of modern scientists and on their willingness to be humble in the face of the possibilities inherent in their discoveries. In the Pythagoras "Songs", scientists are the 'much less cautious than cunning' children of "On an Early Photograph of My Mother". The 'greatest adventure of all time, the adventure of reason, is now threatened by its own partial success', Hope warns in the 1972 Christmas address, and that is one reason for the relatively slight treatment of the heroic theme in the later poetry. Themes emerging from his complex thinking about rationality come to the fore. The burden of scrying the world remains with poets but in Hope's later period poems about poets he concentrates, not on the heroic qualities of poets, but on the message of the line in "The Wild Bees", 'Then the dead man opened his mouth and sang.'\textsuperscript{131} The poetry left by a poet continues the Muse's work.

In the prose article, "Safe Conduct",\textsuperscript{132} Hope considers 'the tyranny of the state in literary and artistic matters',\textsuperscript{133} the state in this case being Soviet Russia. Book V of Dunciad Minor, written during the 1960s, has a tilt at social realist Western critics and the critical

\textsuperscript{131} Hope, "The Wild Bees," in Antechinus, p.42.
\textsuperscript{133} Hope, "Safe Conduct," p.160.
guidelines of Soviet Russia. A 'left-legged Jacob' views the literary criticism 'machines' of the West and tells Dullness,

'This bourgeois junk, these antiquated arks!
No, Goddess, learn from Lenin and from Marx!
These are but children, squabbling at their play;
In Muscovy we take a shorter way:
The trial, the concentration camp, the knout,
Decide what literature is all about.
(Think of Akhmatova and Pasternak -)
Something your western bourgeois cultures lack
Are these two critical machines behind
The readiest way to halt the march of mind.'

Military tanks are the 'critical machines'. "Safe Conduct" gives Hope's reconsideration of the cases of Akhmatova and Pasternak, two of the four poets discussed in the article. The others are Mandelstam and Tsvetaeva. It is an exercise in myth-making, offering the thesis that Stalin was sensitive to the mystical qualities of poetry to the extent that he protected three of the four poets, 'unlikely as this may seem'. "Safe Conduct" ends,

But in general the question arises: Who else but Stalin could have protected at least three of these four? Sheer luck is ruled out ... The question may never be answered but the bare possibility that the most ruthless of tyrants might have intervened to 'Spare the house of Pindarus' remains an interesting one.

One is reminded of Calliope's promise in the "Conversation" (p.200) that 'Some few' will survive 'this next barbarian age', not because of personal heroism, but because they are chosen by the Muse. In "Safe Conduct", Hope's interest is with the power of the house of Pindarus, as it is in the later period poetry about poets. Indeed, "The Thirteenth Labour" seems to be the only later poem in which the heroic theme is not incidental to other themes; in "The Thirteenth Labour" the theme is treated jocosely and it is not a mortal who meets the sexual needs of fifty virgin sisters:

'Time for a miracle!/Let the gods handle it'.

The post-1970 poetry gives the impression that heroes disappeared with the seventeenth century, along with epic. If the answer to Dryden, ascribed to Milton in A Book of Answers, may be taken as Hope's thought - and it may - Hope is not even sure about the heroism of poets in the modern age. Milton is given the declaration, 'Henceforth the fallen World/Breeds no more from her uncapacious womb/Poets, the peers of Heroes whom they sung.' Hope's attention continues to be directed to the non-heroic in man.

The themes of Paradise Lost, of sexuality, will and pride, which pattern Hope's poetry, are distinctive in expression in the post-1970 poems. Sexual intercourse continues as an ambivalent subject. Sexuality is endorsed as a component of the human condition and we are told that Venus is not to be spurned, though her call may be heard in ways not traditionally considered morally valid. When Jupiter, in "Jupiter on Juno," speaks approvingly of 'The full immediacy, that zest of strife/And plural of spouse which is the spice of life', he speaks for Hope. The meditations on love in "Antechinus" are not counter to those endorsements but they query the exercise of sexuality for the purposes of procreation; there is the notion that such biologically fundamental exercise of sexuality is a form of death for the male. Greed, 'cold greed, more effective than blind hate' ("The Cetaceans"), is wilful, a misuse of will. Against the pride in being human which lends heroism to Anna Akhmatova, Gertrud Kolmar and Elizabeth, is set the hubris of misplaced faith in human reason. When he tries to interpret the mysteries of God's universe, man applies the same limited logic as Lucifer. In "Creation," Lucifer is warned by God

that 'The sin of pride,/If you persist in logic-chopping, friend,/Trust me, will be your downfall in the end'. It is the warning Hope gives to twentieth century man in The Age of Reason works, "Sir William Herschel" and "Tea with the Devil".

Hope's choice of "Antechinus" to give the title to his 1975-80 collection, which is 'For Penelope', indicates that the poem is important to him. The poet sees the life of the species Antechinus as a parable of man's life, 'Lives of all mammals, like their bodily shapes,/Are simply variations on one theme', but most of the poem is a personal meditation. The life of the male Antechinus is a parallel to the first fifty years or so of the poet's life: 'two months in the pouch' or eleven years in the family home; several months for Antechinus or, for Hope, twenty years as a 'solitary male'; then for both the need to mate and the distresses attendant on the fulfilment of that need. The loss of singularity of self that comes with marriage ("Pygmalion") and the bewildering passions aroused in the male by connubial cohabitation, evident in poetry of the early mature period, are outlined in "Antechinus":

The time is ripe for you to find a mate;
Then, knowing that, having mated, you will die,
Your small, wild heart grows grim with rage and hate,
To hunt and savage all members of your race,
Even the female clutched in your embrace.

Those strains abate in Hope's poetry later than The Wandering Islands. For Hope, love has been 'love repeated'; he has chosen 'love repeated to fritter itself away/In change and failure or final sad decay' ("Antechinus"). The difficulties of love relationships are treated in "The Planctus", "Winterreise" and "Western Elegy II". "Salabhânjiṅka is a prayer against 'final sad decay'. Awareness of death is pervasive in A Late Picking and Antechinus. It is most obvious in "Hay Fever".

In other poems it is lightly touched upon, as at the end of "The Hills", where the lovers are imaged as a 'Babble of streams rejoicing as they flow/ And plunge towards the abyss'. "Riposte to Jaques", a meditation on life, says that we act as though life has purpose but we do not know why we are here or what will happen when 'We walk alone to take the underground' to death.

In his poetry, the people to whom Hope allows worth are poets, women who are the sexual partners of poets and men of intellectual vision, such as Casserius or Pius XII. His essay, "Henry Lawson", carries a quotation from one of Lawson's stories:

'No matter what a woman does to you, or what you think she does to you, there come times sooner or later, when you feel sorry for her - deep down in your heart - that is if you're a man. And, no matter what action or course you might take against her, and no matter how right or justified you might seem in doing it, there comes a time when, deep down in your heart, you feel mean and doubtful about your own part. You can take that as a general thing as regards men against women, and man against man, I think. And I believe that deep-down feeling of being doubtful, or mean, or sorry, that comes afterward, when you are cooler and know more about the world, is a right and natural thing, and we ought to act more in accordance with it.'

Hope's intention in using the passage is to illustrate his contention that Lawson believed a writer of fiction, in his stories, must not concern himself with 'problems and theories' of life. It is not appropriate as an illustration of Hope's point in the essay, but it is understandable that the passage took Hope's attention, for it expresses the revisions in thinking which enter a significant proportion of his later poetry. Cooler and more worldly-wise, the older Hope acknowledges the rights of women and, in "Clover Honey" and "Botany Bay", allows the worth of women who are

143. Hope, "Riposte to Jaques," in Antechinus, p.52.
neither poets nor poets' lovers. The attention Hope directs to Australia as a subject seems motivated in part by the same need to make amends; David Brooks sees that "The Drifting Continent" section of Antechinus is what 'might be called a spiritual repatriation to the land of his birth.' If he has felt a similar need to effect some reconciliation with formal religion, his poetry indicates that he has not been able to answer it.

The God of Judeo-Christian teaching has posed a recurrent problem. In "Easter Hymn" (p.15), Hope rails against an absent God. "The Planctus" records how his 'Sic et Non/Of mind and heart drags on' (p.215). "In Memoriam : Gertrud Kolmar" is again the proposal that God is absent from the twentieth century world. The 'measure of eternity', of which Gertrud Kolmar wrote to her sister, is a measure very much present in Hope's consciousness; his difficulty in knowing how to apply it is a concern in "Gertrud Kolmar". The poem opens with a reference to 'Francis Bacon's jeu d'esprit : "Kings are God's playfellows"'. The reference is in relation to the fact of a cemetery of Nazi-liquidated Jews. When Hope uses the same Bacon reference in the 1957 essay, "Poetry and Platitude", it is to give his view of the poet's function: the poet joins in God's game of hunt-the-treasure of the Universe. It is a function which 'belongs now perhaps more to poets than to kinds.' The 1974 poem, "Gertrud Kolmar", has 'Kings' like Hitler, not poets, as God's playfellows. Kings play 'a match against God'. Victims of inhumane and political persecution are shown to be God's playthings, not his playfellows. 'We were all contracted' to God but unable to understand what that means. Unlike "On an Early Photograph of My Mother", where the poet's feelings are disciplined and distanced by a

146. Hope, Notes, in A Late Picking, p.94.
147. Hope, "Poetry and Platitude," in Cave and Spring, p.16.
sustained metaphor, "Gertrud Kolmar" is charged with anger and dismay; the metaphor of the match is not sustained. Perhaps because its basis is historical and not theoretical, "Gertrud Kolmar" gains in effectiveness by the change from one metaphor to another, from a sports match to Bluebeard. The change in metaphor indicates the urgency of the poet's concern to give expression to the implications of the genocide which supposedly enlightened twentieth century man repeatedly commits. Hitler's murder of Jews is the case in the poem but the ideas apply to Stalin's purges of Biafra or Hiroshima, to all of those twentieth century manifestations of Political Man's irrationality of which Hope spoke in the 1972 Christmas broadcast. 148 "Gertrud Kolmar" is more than a political poem. Its subject is God, whose ways to man defy justification. Man is given the 'Key' to 'that cupboard in the hall'. He has been given intelligence but when he uses his intellect the only knowledge available in the cupboard is of death, a skeleton in God's cupboard. Contracted to God, by awareness of a greater mystery than that which is explained by the observable universe and by religious teaching, man is left with the terrible evidence of God's death-dealing betrayal. Hope agrees with Gertrud Kolmar that "Ever are we Wives of Bluebeard" and that "Peoples die that God may live" but, where her understanding of these aphorisms leads to sardonic acceptance, Hope bitterly recognises them as evidence of God's desertion of the cause of good. For him, that is the meaning of Bluebeard's love. God is absent when he is needed but he is not dead; his 'step in the hall' promises retribution to the poet for having 'had my say'. Although occasioned by mankind's predicament of having intelligence which is unable to find an answering metaphysical intelligence, and not by personal pressures, "Gertrud Kolmar" shows that Hope's 'Sic et Non/Of mind and heart' ("The Planctus") has not been resolved.

149. Hope, Notes, in A Late Picking, p.94.
Some of the tension in Hope's awareness of 'the mysteries' of formal Christian belief, and his inability to see their 'light' (IV "The Planctus", p.216), enters "The Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine of Alexandria". Several poetic preoccupations which appear in other and diverse Hope poems emerge here in confusing proximity. Christ and death are linked. Death and sexuality are linked in ways reminiscent of "Totentanz : The Coquette" (pp.101-2) but the woman in "St. Catherine" is contradictory to the presentation of woman in "Totentanz". In the earlier poem, woman is presented as an animal 'creature of the wilderness'. At St. Catherine's dedication of herself to be Christ's bride, 'her flesh shivered in mortal ecstasy'. The visionary consummation of her marriage to Christ is for her a re-enactment of the death of Christ: "'It is finished!'' cried Jesus, who then 'gave up the ghost and died./Wondering, she touched his wounded hands, his side.' The idea that female sexuality brought about the need for Christ's death on the Cross is presented. An intriguing aspect of "St. Catherine" is that it allows that virginity has a spiritual significance. In its suggestion that a woman's sexuality can have a spiritual significance for her which is not dependent on a flesh and blood lover who is a poet and can apotheosise her in verse, it returns the reader to "The Double Looking Glass" (pp.167-73). The sexual elements in St. Catherine's religious ecstasies parallel Susannah's pan-eroticism. The poem is a recognition of the sexual and mystical qualities of intense religious experience and Hope approaches the consideration that the female imagination can raise sensuality to a mystical plane. While the quite long poem explores the Saint's visionary experiences, in the light of her story and of Hope's imaginative reconstruction of details, it is constructed on the

principle of an open-ended cause, as is given at the end of stanza two:

'Her virgin visions were not all delusions,/But causes pointing to no
foregone conclusion.' The strongest impressions it leaves are of the linking
of Christ's death with female sexuality and the emphasis on the
connection of Christ with death but it leaves 'no foregone conclusion'.

An undeveloped comment at the end of "The People of the Pale",151
says that the Christian God is a God of death and that Christian belief no
longer serves. Rodney Pybus, in a review of Antechinus, sees "The People
of the Pale" as telling of 'the last few White Survivors in a future world
run by dark-skinned people' and describes it as 'This rather seedy parable'
which is riddled with 'inconsistencies' and 'notions of racial superiority'.152

David Brooks, who notes that 'beneath the conservative attire of his
technique Hope's contemporaneity is astounding', sees Hope's contemporaneity
to be 'evident in the challenge he offers white ethnocentrism in the
remarkable and poignant "The People of the Pale"'.153 It is not possible
to overlook the racist implications of 'White Giants', 'Great White Race'
and 'Brown Race', especially as those references are made in the context
of a scenario in time and place which includes 'the Great African Empire'.

References to brown and white are the dark/light images used in "The Age
of Innocence" (pp.90-3) but altered to meet the needs of the theme.

"The Age of Innocence" draws attention to the debilitating effects of
uniformity; "The People of the Pale" draws attention to the enervating
results of purity. Rodney Pybus makes a point in his concluding comments:

And if a sixteen year-old girl in the far distant
future is capable of relating this tale through forty-five
quatrain of rhyming pentameters, surely it doesn't matter
if the Lamp of Western Civilisation is tended by tiny dark
people with brown eyes?154

152. Rodney Pybus, review of Antechinus : Poems 1975-1980, by A.D. Hope,
154. Pybus, review of Antechinus, p. 256.
To be consistent, Hope should have written "The People of the Pale" in free verse.

"The People of the Pale" seems to be an example of a poem in which three subjects are vying for expression; the racial references make the subject of white ethnocentricity dominant. Curiously, "The Drifting Continent" is an expression of ethnocentric outlook, for there Hope ignores black occupation of Australia and dates 'Man's landing' here at 1788. As a cautionary tale for white races, warning them against complacency and racial insularity, "The People of the Pale" advocates cultural cross-fertilisation in '"the whole range"' of science, technology and art; the biological cross-fertilisation mentioned, an idea received with 'horror' by the People of the Pale, is a last-ditch remedy. One wonders just what particular kinds of cultural cross-fertilisation Hope had in mind. Maybe an important one is religion, for Christianity and its inadequacies are also a subject. The parable seems to have a second application, to yet another subject, the task of the poet. In its warning against indifference to 'the modern age', "The People of the Pale" links with "The Nomads", in which the poet proposes to the professor that poets are cultural nomads. Some of Hope's later poetry demonstrates his belief that 'the whole range/Of science, our technology, our art' ("People of the Pale") is available to poets and that they must apply their vision to the range of culture. The references in "The People of the Pale" to a species which 'won't breed in captivity' and who will perish if they insist on 'Keeping their stock, like their traditions, pure', applies particularly well to the case of poets. Hope carefully distinguishes between 'stock' and 'traditions'. As a poet, he has looked to the traditions of poetry to supply models of form and lucidity. By including sexuality, science and sociological
problems among his poetic subjects, he is attempting to rejuvenate the stock of poetry. His "IV Reply to a Critic"\textsuperscript{156} draws attention to his avant-garde subject matter: "'You fail to keep up with the times!' 'I quite agree. / Let the times change course and try to keep up with me.'" The second warning given in "The People of the Pale" is without amplification: 'This doomed race so determined on their fate, / Worship a dying god nailed to a cross'. It is the warning that the mortal poet in "Exercise on a Sphere" gives his alter ego, the man with an immortal soul, that 'Christmas is over.' Hope's view is that Christian belief is out of date. The implication for poets is that the Christian tradition is a tradition poets should cast overboard. That is curious advice to come from Hope, who bases so much of his poetry on the common Western cultural currency of the Bible stories and not always with purely literary and historical meaning.

The comfort of formal religious belief is, or has been, unavailable to Hope but his belief in the existence of God or Spirit is evident in the body of his poetry. Whether his soul will participate in the eternity of being which is Spirit is not clear to him. In the form of a love poem, "The Waters"\textsuperscript{157} is a commentary on and an exchange between the human Hope and his soul. The man and his soul are one and 'both' must reject what others, 'other waters', crave, that 'The life that is here and now' is all there is. Others think the poet and his spiritual self, as they are expressed through the poetry, are 'Crazy Waters!'. Others ask, 'What is there to wait for beyond?' The poet declares that it is the belief in the existence of what others call '"non-existence"' which sustains him and makes his 'wilderness green'. "The Waters" is a statement of belief in the unknown and asserts by implication that the poet participates in

\textsuperscript{156} Hope, "Four Epigrams," in Antechinus, p.67.

\textsuperscript{157} Hope, "The Waters," in Antechinus, pp.50-1.
'non-existence' through his poetry. It does not reply to 'What is there to wait for beyond?' The poet's belief in the presence in the world of immortal 'other beings' - gods certainly, dead poets perhaps - is in "The Wild Bees", where the artist is given a mystical, post-death function in temporality. The last three stanzas are a prayer to Persephone, not in supplication but to 'offer my death to quicken other lives'. The poet conveys that he is not looking for reincarnation or for immortality other than that which will be his because of his participation in the immortal art of poetry. The sequence, "Intimations of Mortality", though it is, makes a division of the poet's self in death which seems not lightly made. "Intimations" VII has the non-material self separated into 'spirit' and 'soul'. No direction or request is given as to what is to happen to his spirit at death, 'Fly the spirit where it may'; the body can be treated in whatever way happens, 'Share the carcase'. The one injunction is to 'spare the soul'. The 'soul' is Hope's poetry. The importance to Hope of his poetic capabilities is reflected in 'Aubade', which either expresses his fear that his ability to write poetry will cease as his old age begins or mourns the inevitability of death, and the dawn for him of eternity, because it entails the cessation of his making poetry. The rocking lines, 'You must sleep alone/Now and evermore', suggest the rhythmic rocking of a distressed child or a hurt person. This short poem has the plaintive, defenceless tone of "Winterreise".

It must be a difficult undertaking to expose to public scrutiny one's beliefs and unresolved personal dilemmas about supernatural questions. 'Crazy Waters!', in "The Waters", shows Hope's sensitivity to criticism


of his ideas about eternity. Although he wrote some intensely personal poems before the 1970s - "Ascent into Hell" and "The Planctus" spring to mind - not until the later period does Hope give direct comment on his personality. These comments endorse the impressions of a passionate and sensitive nature which a reader gains from his poetry and from comments made by writers such as Craig McGregor and Vincent Buckley.160 "The First-Born"161 establishes that, as the first child in his family, Hope has felt the 'fear inbred' of being a sacrificial victim. The Presbyterian influences in Hope's childhood home would have alerted him to the story of Abraham and Isaac; Hope's imagination probably did a good deal of the rest. His observation about first children have some validity, for first children are sometimes more cautious and reserved than others. "Friday's Child"162 contrasts the type of personality Hope envies, 'Full of frolic, full of grace', with his own, that of a Thursday's child: 'Thursday's child is full of woe'. Tinged with self-pity, these poems are less affecting than the brief reference to the aged poet's shyness which he makes in "Western Elegy I: The Aeroplane",163 where he mentions that his meeting with the Oriental lady found him, 'for once, twice-shy'.

Hope takes the title for his 1972 poem, "Speak, Parrot",164 from John Skelton's attack on Cardinal Wolsey, "Speke, Parrot", but the poem is a personal rumination. He begins by being ironic about himself and by expressing fear that he is repeating himself in his poetry. The parrot is 'like me', for it has 'nothing new to say'. In stanza four, the poet doubts that he is a medium for a metaphysical voice and fears he may be

162. Hope, "Friday's Child," in Antechinus, p.49.
164. Hope, "Speak, Parrot!" in A Late Picking, p.51.
just a man 'Grubbing in the dry springs of poetry'. The last stanza gives the lie to such doubts. It explains that, just as the parrot speaks sense it has been taught, even though it does not understand what it is saying, so the poet transmits truths: 'Both transmit what we scarcely apprehend' (which is perhaps generous to the parrot). Since "Speak, Parrot!", Hope has repeated themes of his earlier poetry. With "Invitation to a Resurrection", Hope reverts to the issues of free-verse and Max Harris' sometime enthusiasm for the avant-garde. The 'free-verse voice is a bore,' The voice of a street-corner whore' and free-verse poets, in 1976 still symbolised for Hope by Harris, are dismissed:

Who in any case care to read them?
Do they read one another, perhaps?
Is it the thought that people don't need them
Makes them such sociable chaps?
'Let's start an anthology, Max,
- with a cultural grant it's easy -
We'll scratch one another's backs
And publish sludge for the sleazy.'

"Invitation to a Resurrection" is not a typical example of Hope's poetic reworking of ideas. Usually, when the older poet repeats themes, they are presented from new angles, as with the themes of rationality and male-female love. In the later poetry there are also excursions into new themes, such as the themes of greed and women's rights.

The metaphysical insights Hope has looked to give through his art have not taken shape. In that, parrots and 'Poets are not so different in the end', though not in the way Hope means in "Speak, Parrot!". They both speak only as much sense as comes from the application of human intelligence to sensory experience, even when that sense is derived from inheritances of the mind. Understanding of the existence of God derives from contemplation of the complexity and mystery of the universe which is
revealed when observable phenomena are submitted to intelligence and found to be greater than can be understood. The last line of Hope's 1985 poem, "On the Night Shift", acknowledges that the consciously composing poet participates in a guessing game with his 'Night Shift': "My game of blind-man's buff with the Night Shift". Hope would appreciate an illustrative anecdote used by André Breton in The First Surrealist Manifesto (1924) to emphasise the importance of dreaming:

A story is told according to which Saint-Pol-Roux, in times gone by, used to have a notice posted on the door of his manor house at Cameret, every evening before he went to sleep, which read: THE POET IS WORKING.\footnote{165}

One of the reasons for Hope's being drawn to a study of Anna Akhmatova's poetry is that 'In a remarkable series of poems called Secrets of the Craft ... Akhmatova reveals the real nature of the processes that go on in poetic composition.'\footnote{166} Akhmatova's "Creation"\footnote{167} gives her account of 'dictated' poetry. At least until 1979, when The New Cratylus was published, Hope has never been 'presented with a completely spontaneous poem'\footnote{168} but his engagement with Akhmatova's poetry\footnote{169} is an acknowledgement that there have been spontaneously composed poems. For himself, he would change Saint-Pol-Roux's sign to 'The Poet's Night Shift is Working'. Hope, in his age, is as certain that he must practise the art of poetry as he was as a young man. He remains fascinated with the creative process but expresses uncertainty that he can analyse it. In "On the Night Shift", he labels his opinions on the process as 'half drivel and half guess'.

\footnote{165. André Breton, in The First Surrealist Manifesto (1924), in an excerpt in Surrealists on Art, ed. Lucy Lippard, p.15.}
\footnote{166. Hope, "Poetry and the Other Arts," in Cratylus, p.44.}
\footnote{167. Hope, "Creation," trans. of one of Akhmatova's Secrets of the Craft, in Antechinus, p.92.}
\footnote{169. e.g. "Homage to Anna Akhmatova" section of Antechinus, pp.89-104 and sections in Cratylus, pp.6, 44, 96-7, 100-08, 117.}
For a reader to make a definitive statement about Hope's ideas is often impossible; on the point of the creative process, against the idea that his opinions are 'half drivel and half guess', is the comment in the last essay of *The New Cratylus*, "The Burden of the Mystery": 'There is nothing mysterious about poetry. The whole endeavour of this book is to show that it is composed of ordinary materials familiar to us in other contexts and that it works by similarly familiar processes.' The next paragraph of the essay begins, 'Poetry is not mysterious and yet it is a mystery.' What follows takes the point back to free intellection, 'the conscious self-moving, creative will, imagination existing in and for itself and free of all other purposes.' In "The Burden of the Mystery", the poet who had written "Three Songs from Pythagoras" also remarks on the 'still incredible mystery of conscious minds existing in an apparently mindless and for the most part an inanimate universe.' The notion of free intellection is thrown into doubt by the lines in "Sir William Herschel's Long Year" : 'And there [in the mind], in spite of intellect and will,/ The old gods reach us and direct us still.'

There have been queries as to Hope's seriousness. Commenting on *A Late Picking*, Bruce King writes, 'Many of the poems, especially those fusing recent scientific concepts with older metaphysical ideas, give the impression of playfulness and lack of seriousness.' In his review of *Antechinus*, David Brooks asks 'how much of Hope's [poetry] amounts, when and if it is possible to make up one's mind about it, to work of "high seriousness".' David Brooks goes on to suggest that if

we can take as a criterion of such seriousness the ability
to remind us of the ultimate subjectivity and fragility of
our mental structures - of the scaffoldings by means of
which we create and order our world - then we cannot easily
withhold from Hope the term.174

When he reminds us in The Age of Reason of the fragility of our rationality,
Hope relies often on invented divine intervention, by Krishna or Uranus or
Venus, or on amusing stories, such as "Kew Stakes", which do nothing to
restore faith in reason. It is especially difficult to make up one's mind
about how 'high' is the seriousness of his poetry on the matter of
rationality. In the later poetry, the recurrent themes of sexual love,
mortality and immortality, the Fall and its consequences are treated with
varying degrees of seriousness and consistency of viewpoint but that these
are subjects of high seriousness for the poet could never be in doubt.
Similarly, although the seriousness of some of Hope's poems on rationality
is doubtful, there can be no doubt that rationality is a subject of serious
concern to him. The debasement of rationality by custom and reliance on
apparently fixed human codes of how to behave is queried in the brief,
later poem, "Nightmare":

    Custom is a collective dream, the Law
    A lion chained and set to keep the door.
    But if the lion roars or I should wake,
    The door flies wide: in glides a mighty snake.
    Crushed in those folds I plead to sleep again
    And dream that dream once more, but plead in vain.175

At times Hope sees himself as 'full of woe' but occasionally he
laughs at himself, as in "Speak, Parrot!", or in "Country Places", when
he acknowledges the 'latter-day Habbakuk' in him. The mordant wit of the
early mature poetry is less frequent in the later period; instead, there
is sometimes a robust humour or an apparently frivolous approach to

subjects elsewhere treated with gravity. Yet even when his talent for
versification seems to be applied without high seriousness, as in "Three
Songs for Monaro Pubs" and "For David Campbell", Hope's preoccupations
show through. "For David Campbell" is about poets and poetry, wine and
the Last Judgment. Some of the amusing aspects of the more or less possible
consequences of scientific advances into God's territory are the subject
of "Resurrection Blues", one of seven "Transplant Songs". Transplant
surgery would have been an irresistible topic for Hope, as it accommodates
some of his persistent concerns, in addition to those of scientific meddling
and the Day of Judgment. Opportunism is lampooned in "Cri de Coeur",
"Burglar Bill" and "Change of Heart". The possibility of penis transplants
is meditated upon in "Private Parts". Hearts as symbols of love figure in
"Change of Heart" and "Love Duet"; true love is God-given is the theme of
"Change of Heart" and the end of "Love Duet" presents love as 'perfect
union'. In "Love Duet" Hope gives a 'romantic' conclusion; in earlier
stanzas, love as cannibalism re-sounds a note heard in "The Dinner" (pp.49-
54). Uncertainty about the wholesomeness of sexual love appears in "Love
Duet". In other pieces published in the 1980s Hope celebrates the sexual
act as the pinnacle of human experience. "The Language of Love", one of
three "Footnotes to History", says that 'Love needs no language' and
that 'babble in bed' tells all and, after all, what else is there to tell?' The
"Footnotes" poems are bawdy and lascivious and rather silly but they
show Hope's preoccupation with sex to be as obsessive in his age as it
was in the 1940s. "Footnotes" I, "The Bishop of Ross's Errand", is
nastily lecherous. Less salacious are the sexual references in the light

Barnard," "Change of Heart," "Love Duet," "Resurrection Blues,
Quadrant, 182, 26, 10, 1982, pp.50-51.
178. Hope, "The Bishop of Ross's Errand," "The Language of Love,
occasional piece, "The Elixir of Scotland", a toast to 'houghmagandy' and 'what whisky does for you'. A drinking song, "The Elixir of Scotland" proposes that when Adam lost Eden, 'Abel laboured/To raise a crop of grain,/But who invented Single Malt?/MacAdam (call him Cain).' Even in his lightest verse, Hope's persistent preoccupations enter. The wit and humour may be rollicking and a trivialising of established themes evident, but lost Eden and the consequences of Original Sin are in the background.

From the late 1950s, the mystery of human existence permeates Hope's poetry and is most intense in the post-1970 poems; so is his zest for sexuality most intense in this later period. The parry and thrust of ideas and counter-ideas is as marked in the early 1980s as it is in poems of the 1940s. So far there is little sign of a serenely contemplative poet in the older Hope. The progression, from the strength of 'natural need' ("Pius XII", p.209) during the years of physical vigour, to the movement of the spirit, gradually loosed from human demands, towards its perfection, which is celebrated in "Ode on the Death of Pius XII", if it is to reappear as a theme in Hope's poetry, will have to be in his late work, that is, it is yet to come. "Visitant", published in 1982, is a companion-piece to "Observation Car" (pp.22-3), where the younger poet stands in observation, 'Wondering where we are going and just where the hell we are'. The older poet of "Visitant", 'a stranger here', has not been bored by his temporal visit:

Now it is time to return,
I shall miss this world more than I thought,
All I came merely to learn
Holds me now with such love and concern,
To whom shall I make my report?

The mystical has become a dominant preoccupation but Hope's poetry in the early 1980s is as vigorous and restless in its recording of his confrontation

with the world as the poetry of forty years earlier; the poet's intellect is still 'swayed by the desire and loathing which are characteristic of animal natures'. However, some intellectual disengagement is evident.

Hope's Romanticism remains strong but his 'vision of perfection' is more obscure than in the middle period. "The Alpha-Omega Song" ends:

I still think harmony the likelier theme
And hope as has so often been the case,
That, when tomorrow's cosmic model appears,
It makes ours look a noisy schoolboy's dream,
Expels mad mathesis from time and space
And brings us back the music of the spheres.

He cannot accept Christianity as offering valid hope to man, even though, in the later period, he is inclined to take the viewpoint he gives to John Wesley: 'When given a natural cause for an event/Against a supernatural,
[he] was to choose/The one that favoured most the Lord's Good News.' That inclination does not blind him to the fraud of 'the Bas-Limousin Pilgrims to Saint James', whose 'pious bullying' is unmasked in "The Road to Compostela". New uncertainties appear. Where Calliope ("Conversation with Calliope", pp.199-200) assures us that ''in this next barbarian age'' a chosen few poets will survive to 'guard the coals' of poetry for mankind, through "The People of the Pale" the poet appears to warn of the death of poetry and to advise poets to accept 'the whole range' of science, technology and art. The poet of "Exercise on a Sphere" warns the man, Hope, to 'Look well at those features, consider the ways you act;/They are all distortions, your art, your morals, your law'. In 1975, Fay Zwicky could hear a prophetic voice in Hope's poetry:

Because of the social and cultural changes with which he is out of sympathy, the public persona which he has maintained with so much tact says less to his successors than the voice beneath it, a prophet's voice, older and more archetypal than the institutions to which he has given worldly allegiance. We would do well to listen.186

That voice is two voices, one advocating reliance on reason, the other urging our attention to subliminal and supernatural promptings. Each voice prophesies doom unless its message is heeded. Twenty years ago, Dorothy Green wrote:

Hope has many voices ... the critic who tries to define him by one will get into serious difficulties. But though his tone can be grave, measured, rapt, tragic, savage, lyrical, comic, facetious, even farcical, the voice remains that of a man who speaks what he sees and sees what is actually there.187

Hope has always been drawn to examine an idea from more than one viewpoint. If he 'speaks what he sees', it is usually as he sees it at a particular time and from a particular angle; with "Sir William Herschel", Hope looks at rationality from two opposed viewpoints. The one wholly clear view that emerges in the post-1970 poetry is that mankind is heading for self-destruction. Hope's 1981 caustic ballad, "Rough-Riders in the Chariot",188 characterises 'Habbakuk White' and 'Henny-Penny' Manning Clark as being likely to end 'In bitter contention for Direr-than Thou!' Hope could supply two more riders, to complete 'the Four Horsemen of the A-pocalypse' ("Rough-Riders").

Ruth Morse has noted that Hope's critics 'are in remarkable disagreement about what he has said'. She does not take the view that poems can be expected to 'yield extractable opinions' or that an 'Author represents a monolithic, consistent philosophical stance.'189 Ruth Morse

188. Hope, "Rough-Riders in the Chariot," Quadrant, 166, 25, 6, June 1980, p.70.
is aware of the contradictions in Hope's poetry, and some of the prose works also pose contradictions when read in conjunction with the poetry. She argues in defence both of the poet's putting forward conflicting poetic statements and of the consistent treatment of some subjects:

It is precisely this avoidance of explicit fiat or injunction that stymies those who want a coherent philosophy. Hope's central concerns are complex and interrelated; he approaches them from different directions at different times. One poem may contradict another; to look for resolution is to mistake the enterprise, and to risk reducing poetry to the re-statement of banalities. None the less, when a series of different personae address similar subjects in similar ways, and when, furthermore, what they say is consistent with opinions expressed in Hope's criticism, of which there is a lot, we may conclude that creator and creation are in accord.

The inconsistencies, ambivalences and contradictions in Hope's later poetry lead to the conclusion that either 'creator and creation' have been in accord only sometimes, though in which poems it is not usually possible to identify, or that the poems are the poet's personal dialectic on often unresolved ideas, his Sic et Non. The control of concepts evident in Hope's poetry of ca 1956-65 declines from the later 1960s. The controlled development of themes, in the poetry of the decade from 1956, involves neither resolution of issues nor 're-statement of banalities' but neither does it offer contradictions. In "The Lost Australian Nightingale", Hope quotes a statement by W.J. Turner:

'To argue except for the intellectual pleasure of it is a waste of time. To believe in your own arguments is the sign of an arid nature. All real judgments spring from a sudden uniting of heart, mind, flesh and spirit functioning as one and unanalysable.'

Some of Hope's poetic argument is 'for the intellectual pleasure of it', a Romantic stance in keeping with his attitude to creativity but, on

the whole, his arguing in the later period poetry is in response to his need to maintain belief that the human experience has meaning as part of an ordered universe. The impression created by the later poetry is of the poet's increasing difficulty in retaining a vision of eternal wholeness. Hope does not yield his conviction of an Absolute. He turns to the mystical to provide a basis for his conviction of an eternal unity.