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# The Imagery of Fall in Elizabeth Bishop's *North and South*

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In Elizabeth Bishop's first collection of poetry *North and South* (1946) a poem which is unique because of its allegorical allusion is "The Unbeliever." Among her many poems, most of which reveal her sense of the solid reality of life, this poem depicts a fantastic allegory of imaginative power. In this poem Bishop tries to create an idealistic and secretive poetic world in which she examines to reveal her idea and insight of life and imagination. Strikingly, the allegory shown in this poem primarily concerns the imagery of man's fall. It is a fall, in a tragic sense, from an ideal world, from a dream world, and from a self-indulgent world. The fall is inevitably connected with the process of man's awakening to the reality or even his inevitable clash with it. This study attempts to argue that the imagery of fall is one of the crucial poetic elements which consist of Bishop's poetic world, and the imagery suggests a dominant theme in *North and South.* In Bishop's poetry the imagery of fall describes the delicate balance and interaction between the world of imagination and the world of real life. What follows will first analyze the significance of the use of the imagery of fall in "The Unbeliever" and will see what insights the imagery may reveal in the other poems of the collection.

On "The Unbeliever" Bishop puts a caption, a line quoted from John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress:* "He sleeps on the top of a mast." According to

Bunyan's allegorical story, on the way to the heavenly city Christian finds Simple, Sloth, and Presumption fast asleep and bound with fetters. Christian wakens them, saying that "You are like them that sleep on the top of a mast, for the Dead Sea is under you." Christian means that they will fall into the gulf of damnation unless they wake up and actively seek salvation. Nevertheless, Simple says that he sees no danger; Presumption, that each man must act according to his nature; and Sloth, that he wants to sleep more. Bunyan's allegorical story certainly alludes to the weak condition of man's spirit between fall and salvation. Without doubt Bishop's use of the quotation suggests her consciousness of the central theme of man's fall in "The Unbeliever." However, in Bishop's world the man's possible fall is not so much concerned with the religious and moral aspect of sin and damnation as with the solid power and perception of poetic imagination. On a shaky balance Bishop's speaker endeavors to examine the width and depth of a poetic world where imagination creates the multiple phases of possibilities. Here is the poem:

He sleeps on the top of a mast
with his eyes fast closed.
The sails fall away below him
like the sheets of his bed,
leaving out in the air of the night the sleeper's head.

Asleep he was transported there,
asleep he curled
in a gilded ball on the mast's top,
or climbed inside
a gilded bird, or blindly seated himself astride.

"I am founded on marble pillars,"
said a cloud. "I never move.
See the pillars there in the sea?"
Secure in introspection
he peers at the watery pillars of his reflection.

A gull had wings under his
and remarked that the air
was "like marble." He said: "Up here
I tower through the sky
for the marble wings on my tower-top fly."

> But he sleeps on the top of his mast
> with his eyes closed tight.
> The gull inquired into his dream,
> which was, "I must not fall.
> The spangled sea below wants me to fall.
> It is hard as diamonds; it wants to destroy us all."

At first, the poem shows that a man sleeps on the top of a mast, but this description is a little ambiguous, because the man is not actually sleeping on the mast: "Asleep he was transported there." He is not physically on the mast, but imaginatively he is. He really feels his own presence on the mast in his dream. The dream is real, because he feels in it. The double meaning of the first scene shows that the man is dreaming in his dream. In his dream, the man dreams (imagines) that he climbs on a gilded bird, which is possibly suggestive of the power of dreamlike imagination. On the mast, he appears like a baby seating himself astride a shining cloud narrated in *Macbeth*. On the other hand, a cloud speaks to him with unexpected remarks: "I am founded on marble pillars" and "I never move." What is this cloud? Why is it on pillars and why does it not move? Harold Bloom interprets the cloud as the symbol of the idea of imagination that William Wordsworth and Wallace Stevens reveal, and the gull in the fourth stanza as the idea of Percy B. Shelly and Harte Crane (2). Bloom's classification of the idea of imagination is interesting and significant in showing Bishop's possible interpretation of the characteristics of each poet whom she probably studied. Particularly, she learned from them how to express the relationship between reality and imagination, and the result is shown in her unique treatment of the relationship between the physical and metaphysical worlds. Bishop's perception of the relationship between the imagination and the reality is absolutely idiosyncratic, and it is far more down-to-earth than the mentioned poets.

For one thing, Bishop describes the relationship between the physical and the metaphysical as the one between reality and dream, where she brings in the idea of fall to show the state of imagination and man's consciousness involved. As the gull inquires into his dream, the man thinks that he must not fall, though the sea lures him. He feels that his fall leads to a physical and spiritual death. Interestingly, on the mast top he goes through a dreamy transformation, which is ultimately real to him, but he is not totally captivated by it, being half conscious of the internal activity of his mind. In a way, he is awake in his dream and

soberly sees what his dream leads him to. In other words, he is willing to be taken into an unknown world of dream, though he is careful not to be deceived. Bishop probably fears that it is easy to fall into a dream and lose self-control, and the dream may sometimes become more real than the reality of life. The dream may work as part of real life , and in a dream begins the responsibility. One may be reminded of John Keats's doomed and soul-deprived knight in "La Belle Dame sans Merci."

Thus seen, "The Unbeliever" is a poem which deals with the problem of the delicate relationship between dream and imagination, and the imagery of fall reveals the presence of some danger involved in it. Apparently, the creative power of dream and imagination is similar but each is different in quality and effect. For Bishop the imagery of fall involves the danger of falling into the deceptive world of dream. For her, the dream is an unreliable power bound with the danger of losing self. The unbeliever of the above poem is fully awaken, though transported with the zeal of imaginative power, and he refuses to follow the windy flow of clouds consequently to be prodded into an idealistic and metaphysical world and to forget the requirement of real life. At the same time, however, he is not so much realistic as half idealistic and clings to his own dreamy and poetic world. Between idealistic and realistic worlds he perceives the aspects of the necessities of life and imagination, fully aware of the danger of being fallen and buried in the sordid and crass realities of life.

Thus seen, the imagery of fall displays the crux of the creative power of Bishop's poetic world. Bishop uses this imagery in her other poems, and one such example is a poem called "Sleeping on the Ceiling." In this poem, a park is transformed into a dream world, yet the necessities of life remind one of the presence of daily reality. The image of fall is used as a device to show the relationship between reality and dream:

> It is so peaceful on the ceiling!
> It is the Place de la Concorde.
> The little crystal chandelier
> is off, the fountain is in the dark.
> Not a soul is in the park.
>
> Below, where the wallpaper is peeling,
> the Jardin des Plantes has locked its gates.
> Those photographs are animals.
> The mighty flowers and foliage rustle;

> under the leaves the insects tunnel.
>
> We must go under the wallpaper
> to meet the insect-gladiator,
> to battle with a net and trident,
> and leave the fountain and the squire.
>
> But oh, that we could sleep up there....

The Place de la Concorde changes its daytime figure at night. Animals and insects begin to creep out and "the wallpaper is peeling," which may be indicative of the beginning of the transformation of the world. Into this transformed world, Bishop says, "We must go under the wallpaper" and, if necessary, fight with the insect-gladiator. All the setting seems to be a fantasy world. Yet the last line, "But oh, that we could sleep up there...," is significant in suggesting the fact of an imaginative fall and conversely a wish to enter the world of peaceful sleep. It is like the wish of an unbeliever who would want to continue to have a dream on a mast.

What the poem reveals is that Bishop perceives the dark and harsh realities of life in her unconscious (probably suppressed) and dreamy world, but in order to attain the peaceful sleep she must tackle with and possibly erase the memory of the dark realities of her life. On examing the poem closely, one can see that it reflects the profound misery and darkness present in her mind, and it may be possible to say that the poem resounds the cries of the one who knows the pain of fall. The imagery of fall reveals Bishop's sad awareness of her own fall. It may not be proper to connect the dark and risky image of the poem with the poet's biographical history, for a poem should retain its own independence as a piece of literary work, but it is easy to see that the poet's childhood dark experience, for instance, narrated in her own story "The Country Mouse," indicates some influence on it.

The imagery of fall also appears in the other poems of *North and South:* "The Imaginary Iceberg," "The Man-Moth," "Paris, 7 A. M.," and "Anaphora." These poems respectively show Bishop's genius of exquisite poetic craft and sensibility. In "The Imaginary Iceberg," Bishop describes her sense of fall and return from the mysterious realm of the fusion of dream and reality in her brilliant use of poetic diction:

We'd rather have the iceberg than the ship,
although it meant the end of travel.
Although it stood stock-still like cloudy rock
and all the sea were moving marble.
We'd rather have the iceberg than the ship;
we'd rather own this breathing plain of snow
though the ship's sails were laid upon the sea
as the snow lies undissolved upon the water.
O solemn, floating field,
are you aware an iceberg takes repose
with you, and when it wakes may pasture on your snows?

This is a scene a sailor'd give his eyes for.
The ship's ignored. The iceberg rises
and sinks again; its glassy pinnacles
correct elliptics in the sky.
This is a scene where he who treads the boards
is artlessly rhetorical. The curtain
is light enough to rise on finest ropes
that airy twists of snow provide.
The wits of these white peaks
spar with the sun. Its weight the iceberg dares
upon a shifting stage and stands and stares.

This iceberg cuts its facets from within.
Like jewelry from a grave
it saves itself perpetually and adorns
only itself, perhaps the snows
which so surprise us lying on the sea.
Good-bye, we say, good-bye, the ship steers off
where waves give in to one another's waves
and clouds run in a warmer sky.
Icebergs behoove the soul
(both being self-made from elements least visible)
to see them so: fleshed, fair, erected indivisible.

The first enthralling line is repeated in the fifth line, and obviously it represents the central theme of this poem. But a question arises: why is the iceberg desired than the ship, although Bishop knows that in that case death may await her? Already the boundary between life and death has evaporated, and a transparent and transcendent world appears, reflecting the fantastic mixture of human and inhuman elements. The iceberg has "wits" and floats on the snowy "breathing"

plain of the sea as if it has an independent life. The speaker attains a possible and unique rapport with the iceberg, saying that "O solemn, floating field, / are you aware an iceberg takes repose / with you, and when it wakes may pasture on your snows?" What is attained is not a mere personification of the snowy field but a fusion of the human and inhuman elements which continue to retain each characteristic. Bishop displays the beauty of the iceberg dramatically as if it is presented on a stage: "The curtain / is light enough to rise on finest ropes / that airy twists of snow provide." What is revealed on the imaginative stage is a poetic world recreated by the power of absolutely brilliant imagination. Yet a question remains: what is the iceberg? Is it some symbol of memory, unconsciousness, or dream? The speaker says that the iceberg is like "jewelry from a grave" and that it "adorns only itself" with the snows which fall like the accumulation of unconscious memory. After the rapport with the iceberg, the speaker feels that it lingers to live in her mind: "Icebergs behoove the soul." The iceberg has a concrete entity, and it is "fleshed, fair, erected indivisible."

With respect to the imagery of fall, the scene of fall is crucially depicted in the speaker's relationship with the iceberg. From the ordinary reality of the world Bishop imagines that she would fall into the world of idea through her rapport-like fusion with the iceberg. Her attempt is complex and dangerous, and it almost suggests the imaginative loss of her life: "it means the end of travel." However, the attempt is worthy, because it is a poetic adventure and one may be able to discover the world of unexpected grandeur and beauty. In a sense, Bishop's relationship with the iceberg is a kind of exploration into the profound recess of her own soul. The iceberg is nothing but a representation of the figure of her soul, and beneath its tip over the water lies the profound sea of her fathomless unconsciousness. Also, when the iceberg's "glassy pinnacles / correct elliptics in the sky" (a beautiful and perfect phrase in itself), the pinnacles are nothing but the willful projection of Bishop's imagination. All in all, the imagery of fall reveals Bishop's absolute search into the depth of her own soul and her projection into a celestially perfect world. Bishop is a tenacious seeker, and her persistent investigation is carried out by her tremendously robust self-reflection.

The imagery of fall also reveals an interesting aspect in the poem, "The Man-Moth," which is also a perfect and brilliant work of art. In this poem a man like a moth seeks for an outlet of light, who is buried in the crooked corners of his dark world. Like "The Imaginary Iceberg," the hero enters the world of

mysterious dream and falls from it, though it is hinted that he acquires what was unexpected. In a somber tone the poem resounds with the desolate sound and image of a dark town at night:

> Here, above,
> cracks in the buildings are filled with battered moonlight,
> The whole shadow of Man is only as big as his hat.
> It lies at his feet like a circle for a doll to stand on,
> and he makes an inverted pin, the point magnetized to the moon,
> He does not see the moon; he observes only her vast properties,
> feeling the queer light on his hands, neither warm nor cold,
> of a temperature impossible to record in thermometers.

The capitalized "Man" may be used to represent each modern man. The image of his pin-like shadow magnetized to the moon is effective and echoes a somber tone. Bishop reveals that the man is actually a Man-Moth, an inhabitant of the dark world of dungeon. The combination of man and moth is, which Bishop at first borrows from a newspaper misprint for a mammoth, is renewed as the symbol of the condition of modern man. Bishop thus describes the condition of the Man-moth:

> But when the Man-Moth
> pays his rare, although occasional, visits to the surface,
> the moon looks rather different to him. He emerges
> from an opening under the edge of one of the sidewalks
> and nervously begins to scale the faces of the buildings.
> He thinks the moon is a small hole at the top of the sky,
> proving the sky quite useless for protection.
> He trembles, but must investigate as high as he can climb.

The man-moth is attracted to the light of the moon, which he regards as a "small hole" to escape. In his underground world, he feels that he is trapped and is no longer safe, and he senses that he must escape from his world. He climbs high on the surface of the buildings and tries to reach for the hole:

> Up the façades,
> his shadow dragging like a photographer's cloth behind him,
> he climbs fearfully, thinking that this time he will manage
> to push his small head through that round clean opening
> and be forced through, as from a tube, in black scrolls on the light.
> (Man, standing below him, has no such illusions.)

> But what the Man-Moth fears most he must do, although
> he fails, of course, and falls back scared but quite unhurt.

The Man-Moth seems doomed, and his frequent exploration for an open space ends in failure. The line in the brackets is meaningful, and probably the "Man" who is standing below him is a sort of prototype, and the Man-Moth may be a projection of his own imagination. At any rate, the Man-Moth fails in his mission, and he "falls back scared but quite unhurt." It may be said that his fall is a sort of symbolic fall from an ideal world. After his fall, the Man-Moth goes down to his underworld and gets on a subway. Even to this dark world he does not seem to belong:

> Then he returns
> to the pale subways of cement he calls his home. He flits,
> he flutters, and cannot get aboard the silent trains
> fast enough to suit him. The doors close swiftly.
> The Man-Moth always seats himself facing the wrong way
> and the train starts at once at its full, terrible speed,
> without a shift in gears or a gradation of any sort.
> He cannot tell the rate at which he travels backwards.

The Man-Moth is isolated, and he does not seem to be able to catch up easily with the speed of the world. In fact, he goes against the speedy stream of his time, and in the train he faces the "wrong way." In a dreamlike speed, he actually "travels backward," while it is indicated that his consciousness goes back to the painful memory of his fall from the other world:

> Each night he must
> be carried through artificial tunnels and dream recurrent dreams.
> Just as the ties recur beneath his train, these underlie
> his rushing brain. He does not dare look out the window,
> for the third rail, the unbroken draught of poison,
> runs there beside him. He regards it as a disease
> he has inherited the susceptibility to. He has to keep
> his hands in his pockets, as others must wear mufflers.

The subway tunnel appears almost like the tunnel of recurrent dreams, and his consciousness (or memory) is knotted in multiple layers ("ties"). He does not wander off from his accustomed route, nor in his choice death is included. The "third rail" is probably a route to death, as is indicated in the line, "the

unbroken draught of poison / runs there beside him." The lure of death is almost irresistible, and the poem says that "he regards it as a disease / he has inherited the susceptibility to." (It may be possible to link this line with Bishop's psychological tendency affected partly by her childhood experiences of the early death of her father and the madness of her mother.)

The last stanza develops the theme of the Man-Moth's desire and fall and reveals what is obtained from his experience. Though he fails repeatedly, his effort is not necessarily unrewarded:

> If you catch him,
> hold up a flashlight to his eye. It's all dark pupil,
> an entire night itself, whose haired horizon tightens
> as he stares back, and closes up the eye. Then from the lids
> one tear, his only possession, like the bee's sting, slips.
> Slyly he palms it, and if you're not paying attention
> he'll swallow it. However, if you watch, he'll hand it over,
> cool as from underground springs and pure enough to drink.

The eyes of the Man-Moth give off little light in them, signifying the profound darkness of his inner world. He is a tragic figure, but, in a sense, he is redeemed for his persistent search for an outlet. The beautiful image of "one tear" is the crux image of this poem and seems to provide a sort of salvation. Referring to this image of tear, Bishop mentions her debt to George Herbert in her letter: "Of course I'm amazed at the obvious reflection of Herbert in the 'one tear' stanza" (477). The tear is the Man-Moth's "only possession," and it is the essence of life. The tear is a sort of crystal formed from his repeated trials and failures of hope and desire. The tear almost symbolizes the pure essence of his life and soul.

"The Man-Moth" describes the painful experience and redemption of the hero's fallible explorations, which is doomed. His fall may look like the fall of a romantic hero, who makes an adventure into a dream world, becomes enthralled in it and ultimately goes through the tragic fall from the world. Bishop, however, does not use a daydreaming hero who is trapped in his dream; instead, her hero is extremely self-conscious of his deeds and the desolate movement of his mind, and in this point he can be called truly a modern poetic hero.

The fall of the Man-Moth is more imaginative but probably less serious than the fall of the hero of "The Unbeliever." In his fall the Man-Moth is "unhurt," while the hero of "The Unbeliever" is scared of falling, for he knows that his

dive will certainly bring death: the sea is "hard as diamonds; it wants to destroy us all." In effect, the Man-Moth is a man of self-consciousness, and he knows what he does. He knows that he is part of the underground society, and he is capable of controlling himself against the irresistible attraction of death. He is not totally absorbed in his self-indulgent dream, and his exploration into a dreamy world is doomed to end in tragic failure. However, he is a hero endowed with the power to expand his imaginative consciousness into an outer world and obtains the rare essence of the imaginative world and life. He is a man-moth, gifted with wings and antennas, and an eternal seeker of light.

In "Paris, 7 A. M.," the imagery of fall also appears in the complex fusion of poetic time and space. Reality and fantasy are combined to enhance the mysteriousness of a symbolic world. Actually, this poem recounts part of Bishop's experience of her life in Paris. The poem starts with a peculiar description of clocks:

> I make a trip to each clock in the apartment:
> some hands point histrionically one way
> and some point others, from the ignorant faces.
> Time is an Etoile; the hours diverge
> so much that days are journeys round the suburbs,
> circles surrounding stars, overlapping circles.
> The short, half-tone scale of winter weathers
> is a spread pigeon's wing.
> Winter lives under a pigeon's wings, a dead wing with dump feathers.

"Time is an Etoile," and time shines like a concrete star. As embedded in the digits of clocks, time begins to assert their concrete realities. According to the different hours of the clocks, Bishop imagines her consciousness in the different dimensions of time, past, present, and future. In her perception time takes the form of circles, like the circles of Emerson, and they overlap with each other in a multiple way. These overlapping circular phases of time creates the complexity of her world, and with this perception she reverts to the gloomy scene of the wintertime.

In the second stanza Bishop's sight moves to the scene of a courthouse. The figures of some houses and ornamental urns are depicted, and the imagination of some snow-forts begins:

> Look down into the courtyard. All the houses
> are built that way, with ornamental urns

> set on the mansard roof-tops where the pigeons
> take their walks. It is like introspection
> to stare inside, or retrospection,
> a star inside a rectangle, a recollection:
> this hollow square could easily have been there.
> —The childish snow-forts, built in flashier winters,
> could have reached these proportions and been houses;
> the mighty snow-forts, four, five, stories high,
> withstanding spring as sand-forts do the tide,
> their walls, their shape, could not dissolve and die,
> only be overlapping in a strong chain, turned to stone,
> and grayed and yellowed now like these.

Bishop's poetic description of the houses with ornamental urns is unique. The urns enable her to have introspection and retrospection, like a well of ideas and memory. Then, the childhood memory is conjured up, and the snow-forts are recollected and reconstructed as if they are like icebergs in "The Imagery Iceberg." The snow-forts are the magnified crystallization of memory, combined with the various layers of the memories ("circles") of the past. The forts themselves may be imagined to reveal the defensive consciousness of Bishop to protect the innocent purity of her childhood.

The image of war continues in the last stanza and describes the strain of the soul in the complex interactions between time and space, and between life and death:

> Where is the ammunition, the piled-up balls
> with the star-splintered hearts of ice?
> This sky is no carrier-warrior-pigeon
> escaping endless intersecting circles.
> It is a dead one, or the sky from which a dead one fell.
> The urns have caught his ashes or his feathers.
> When did the star dissolve, or was it captured
> by the squence of squares and squares and circles, circles?
> Can the clocks say; is it there below,
> about to tumble in snow?

The ammunitions of snowballs with the "star-splintered hearts of ice" look like the crystal pieces of the mind, with which Bishop tries to defend her soul. For Bishop the sky cannot be an exit from the miserable and tragic situation of her world. Living on the earth, she cannot escape from the endless attacks

and miseries of time, and she recognizes that a forlorn wisher for the sky (like a pigeon) has no other way than being doomed to fall and die: "It is a dead one, or the sky from which a dead one fell." Yet can one deny and blame the worth of the wisher's attempt? Bishop sees that the struggle to reach for an ideal world is worthwhile. Though such attempts are only occasionally successful, she devotes herself to the possible perception and creation of a poetic world. Like the tear that the Man-Moth reveals at the final stage, Bishop implies the possibility of acquiring a star in this poem: "When did the star dissolve, or was it captured / by the sequence of squares and squares and circles, circles?" The entity of poetic value is only momentarily grasped in the spatial and temporal dimension of our actual life, and probably the circles may indicate time, and the squares space.

Like "The Man-Moth," the theme of "Paris, 7 A. M." uses the imagery of fall and flight. The sky Bishop views is a world where memory and imagination interact, where death also awaits. The pigeon's flight, a symbol of soaring imagination and desire, may fail as expressed by the line that "It is a dead one, or the sky from which a dead one fell." Yet at the last stage of the struggle, though the flight ends in failure, some salvation like the silent peace of relief is evoked. Though the "urns have caught his ashes or his feathers," there remains a possibility that a star is grasped. This poem echoes back Emily Dickinson's poem, "Safe in Alabaster Chambers" (#216), which also uses the solemn consciousness of a speaker's fall in the snow:

> Grand go the Years - in the Crescent - above them -
> Worlds scoop their Arcs -
> And Firmaments - row -
> Diadems - drop - and Doges - surrender -
> Soundless as dots - on a Disc of Snow -

Bishop's poem also ends with the suggestion of the presence of the star in the pure snow: "is it there below, / about to tumble in snow?"

The last poem to be examined with respect to the imagery of fall is "Anaphora." This is the last poem of the collection of *North and South*. Anaphora means the repetition of the first line, yet the first line is not repeated in this poem, so it may point to the repetitive theme of the poem. The theme of the poem is about human failure and struggle. The poem consists of two groups, and the first group begins thus:

Each day with so much ceremony
begins, with birds, with bells,
with whistles from a factory;
such white-gold skies our eyes
first open on, such brilliant walls
that for a moment we wonder
"Where is the music coming from, the energy?
The day was meant for what ineffable creature
we must have missed?" Oh promptly he
appears and takes his earthly nature
    instantly, instantly falls
    victim of long intrigue,
    assuming memory and mortal
    mortal fatigue.

Like "Paris, 7 A. M." the scene of the poem is set in the early morning of a town. In Bishop's view, each morning, though it is repetitive with changeless life, has its steady ceremony with birds, bells, and whistles. Like the naked town perceived by Wordsworth in his poem "Composed upon Westminster Bridge," the sunlight unveils a fresh image of the town and throws the reflection toward the sky, which becomes white-gold; yet Bishop refers to the skies as "such brilliant walls" as if they are a wallpaper and as if she resides in a restricted area like a prison. She feels that the beginning of the day is energetic and wonders if an "ineffable creature" appears to start the day. The creature is implied as an untainted, primitive, and imaginative image of man. The day is a new beginning, and the creature is a new being. Though the man may start his day afresh, however, he "instantly falls / victim of long intrigue, / assuming memory and mortal / mortal fatigue." He is also doomed. He falls from an innocent and pure world and recognizes himself burdened with oppressive memory and fatigue.

The second part of the poem develops the idea of the first part, the refreshing energy of a day and man's fall. The imagery of his fall also suggests a possibility of his struggle toward a possible assent:

More slowly falling into sight
and showering into stippled faces,
darkening, condensing all his light;
in spite of all the dreaming
squandered upon him with that look,

suffers our uses and abuses,
sinks through the drift of bodies,
sinks through the drift of classes
to evening to the beggar in the park
who, weary, without lamp or book
    prepares stupendous studies:
    the fiery event
    of every day in endless
    endless assent.

Men never give up ascending the spiral of hope, desire, and imagination, following the truth of heart, toward the light, no matter what hardship they may encounter. "The fiery event / of every day in endless / endless assent" indeed implies the persistent and persevering reality of our life, which is, however, tends to be buried in the inertia of daily world. "Anaphora" signifies the possibility of the repetitive awakening of consciousness in the tragically dormant condition of human life. The man easily "takes his earthly nature instantly" and falls from an ideal world. The imagery of fall signifies nothing but the recognition of a lost paradise. However, Bishop asserts that human life and the soul never cease to strive for enlightenment. "Anaphora" exquisitely describes man's situation in the modern world and his ceaseless search for the truth of his soul. And this whole redemptive drama is only possible with the recognition of man's imaginative fall.

To conclude, focusing on the imagery of fall, this study has examined Bishop's five poems in *North and South*. What has been made clear is that the imagery of fall plays a central role in the imaginative and thematic structure of Bishop's major poems. In "The Unbeliever" a man is on a risky mast and tries not to fall. His possible fall means a fall from imagination and a spiritual death, and he tries to keeps his balance in the shaky conflicts between dream and reality. In "The Imaginary Iceberg" the celestial and earthly words are fused to suggest an imaginary fall of the mind and the possibility of the discover of truth and beauty. Bishop imaginatively falls into the cold realm of the icy world of exquisite beauty and returns endowed with the purity of the mind. Like an imaginative journey to the cold pastoral in Keats's urn, she recovers herself from death. In "The Man-Moth" the hero, though he falls from the opening light of the moon, is somehow saved by his own efforts. He is a sort of fallen angel, and his struggle is ultimately rewarded. "Paris, 7 A. M." describes a fall from the world of hope and desire and at the same time a possible recovery of man.

The fall suggests the miserable condition of modern man, but Bishop tries to see a salvation in the tragedy. Finally, "Anaphora" displays the truth of man's soul, who tries to set himself free from the cyclic fall into intrigue and mortal fatigue. As long as man listens to the voice of the soul, there is hope.

Thus, the imagery of fall shows various functions in Bishop's poetic world. Using multiple contrasts such as the physical and the metaphysical, the earthly and the celestial, life and death, she has examined what the condition of modern man is and has recognized the fateful misery of the modern world. The imagery of fall truly indicates this miserable state of man who has fallen from an innocent and imaginative world, and Bishop tries to recover the state by means of the truth of the soul. The imagery of fall signifies nothing but the recovery of imagination.

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