

HENDERSON THE RAIN KING: BELLOW'S "SONG OF MYSELF"

One sees Whitman's persona in "Song of Myself," that fantastic Walt, in repose. Loafing on summer grass, he has made himself the gathering place for the seen and the unseen, the finite and the infinite, the said and the unspoken, and has reconciled them all. Filled with love, he prepares to celebrate his "amused, complacent, compassionating" self. There is no such peace for Henderson, later to become Rain King. He lacks serenity both within and without. Like Walt, he contains multitudes but his chest is bursting. The facts of his life crowd him; they cannot comfort him. There is only this pressure in his chest, a voice that demands "I want, I want, I want," and there is chaos.

The contrast is more manifest as one considers the impulses for Walt's "yawp" and Henderson's wail. Walt can sing the glory of a self because he knows that self. Henderson speaks of himself too but there is neither a celebration nor a self. When he is asked who he is, already well into his search, he has no answer. Two more disparate men can hardly be imagined yet one is hard pressed to separate them. Walt is simply the self at the end of Henderson's search. He begins where Henderson ends. It is only after a search for the self, such as Henderson conducts, is successful, that a celebration, a "Song of Myself" can begin. In a very literal sense, Bellow's novel is Henderson's "Song of Myself," but because this self is so different from Walt's through most of the novel, one might more properly term Henderson the Rain King the song of a self before it becomes "Myself."

Bellow makes clear that it is to Whitman that Henderson looks in his search for an integrated self.

In the midst of his adventures in Africa, Henderson pauses to reflect that he is a person taken up with "becoming," while there are other people around who are satisfied with merely "being." And he offers Walt Whitman as the ultimate "being" person. "Walt Whitman: 'Enough to merely be. Enough to breathe! Joy! Joy! All over joy!'"¹ This is Henderson's rendition of Whitman's philosophy, and while it would be an oversimplification to say that this is the identity Henderson aspires to, it is accurate to state that the magical Walt of "Song of Myself" has something Henderson wants.

This "something" has been identified² by one critic as the ability to love and imagine. Marcus Klein, in his chapter on Bellow, thinks that what Henderson would like is "harmony with natural laws."³ If one wanted to be more specific, Henderson could be said to be searching for peace with his own body, for reconciliation between his flesh and mind, for an understanding of reality and for the acceptance of death. Above all, he wants to love and be loved. And one can hardly find more appropriate terms to apply to Walt in "Song of Myself" than those of love and harmony.

It is important to establish that the self Walt celebrates in "Song of Myself" is already established before the song begins. While there might very well be, as Edwin H. Miller says, a "journey to the depths of being,"⁴ it is Walt Whitman who takes that trip, not Walt, the persona. This Walt already "is," as the poem begins. "Song of Myself" is not only "about the realization of the meaning of self or selfhood,"⁵ it is a celebration of an already realized self. Whatever perpetual journey there is for the poet to tramp, it is not a journey Walt has to take. He has arrived. He is at rest.

This harmony suffuses "Song of Myself" and contrasts greatly with the lack of serenity in Henderson the Rain King. One obvious example is the question in each work, another the way the question is dealt with. Walt asks, "What is grass?" The answer to that question is unanswerable⁶ but provokes no anxiety in Walt, merely a leisure, imaginative, calm consideration. The import of the question is not any less for all that casual contemplation. It asks Walt to consider⁷ "the eternal cycle of life, death and resurrection," and leads the speaker on, to a "merging" with "the eternal stream of life itself."⁸ And all this, from a reclined position! Henderson's question, on the other hand, is "Who am I?" Perhaps an answerable question, but not for Henderson, who, in search of an answer, travels deeper and deeper into Africa and his own heart of darkness, divests himself of wealth, wife and clothes, and wearies himself in frenzied attempts to quiet the anxiety inside himself. In other words, one is presented with "Being" and "Becoming." Walt is, Henderson wants to be and has only begun the process.

As "Song of Myself" begins, Walt declares himself to be "thirty-seven years old in perfect health." As one reads on, it becomes clear that this sense of well-being is at least partly due to an acceptance of the body. "Welcome is every organ and attribute of me," he declares in Section 3, "Not an inch nor a particle of an inch is vile." This, perhaps, is where love begins, with love of self. Walt is not at all loath to express this love. "I find no sweeter fat than sticks to my bones," he tells his listener in Section 20. The adjectives he uses are not always complimentary in themselves but even they become part of the celebration. He may see himself as "hankering, gross," in that same section, and as "Turbulent, fleshy, sensual," in Section 24, but what he makes abundantly clear is that "I dote on

myself,⁹ there is that lot of me and all so luscious." One imagines physical caresses that correspond to these verbal embraces.

Bellow urges the reader to see Henderson on the scale of Whitman. He is "strong, healthy, rude and aggressive"(23), in the words of Klein, "a suffering fat man,"¹⁰ who might be said to suffer from his fatness. But unlike Walt's affection, there is no love of the physical self in Henderson. His huge nose swells with embarrassment and is the target of flying wood and the hope of "Truth" he craves. "My face is like some sort of terminal ... the big horse nose and the wide mouth that opens into the nostrils, and eyes like tunnels," is how he sees himself.(47) There is no love in that description. He sees himself as being "ponderous," and complains of "Physical discrepancies."(47) The descriptions invariably recall Walt but without the corresponding dotting on the physical attributes. Henderson feels himself "sweating boisterously"(48) and he feels uncomfortable, hardly reminiscent of Walt's "The scent of these arm-pits aroma finer than prayer." And again, "big but old, bulging out and sweating turbulently, heavy and sad"(61), a sense of himself that makes him feel sorry he can defeat a prince of the Arnewi tribe in a wrestling match. "He could not believe," Henderson mournfully says of his adversary, "that a gross old human trunk like myself was taking his championship from him."(61)

Because Henderson lacks this harmony with his own body, it rebels against him and betrays him repeatedly. His gums ache, the nose attracts blows, he is slightly deaf in one ear, his teeth crumble. In his attempt to get "clean away from everything," Henderson tries to reject his physical attributes as well. But Henderson yearns for "Being," and Bellow provides him with "Being" people who teach him to

appreciate his own body and love it as an expression of what is inside so that he may say, as Walt does, "Divine am I inside and out."

The first of these instructors in "Being" is Prince Italo, who, beaten in the wrestling match, tells Henderson he "knows him."(62) It is actually Henderson's body that he has gotten to know, in the course of their grappling, but Italo understands that this familiarity with the outside of Henderson has revealed to him the inner man too. Henderson learns a little about loving his body, grudgingly admitting to Italo, "Boy, am I glad my physical strength is good for something."(66)

He learns a great deal more from the old Arnewi queen, Willatale. When he greets her, she responds by pulling his head between her breasts, then against her middle. Henderson's description of the queen's body recalls specific lines from Whitman, as it should, since Bellow clearly identifies the old queen as a "Being" person, along the lines of Whitman. "There was a calm pulsation of the heart participating in that introduction. This was as regular as the rotation of the earth"(63). Henderson notices first, then pressed against her middle, "I felt as though I were riding in a balloon above the Spice Islands, soaring in hot clouds while exotic odors arose from below."(65) The images, of course, evoke Whitman's favorite metaphors where his body both encompasses worlds and is a world.¹¹

Henderson finally comes to terms with his body during his conversations with King Dahfu, kind of the Wariri who, says Henderson disdainfully at first, "had some kind of conviction about the connection between insides and outsides."(199) Henderson is reluctant to accept the connection between body and brain. He is willing to admit that "Physically I am

a puzzle to myself"(200), but unwilling to accept Dahfu's argument that "Disease is a speech of the psyche."(200) Dahfu is wise to Henderson's evasion. "The tendency of your conscious," he tells the quester, "is to isolate self"(225), in this case, the physical self. In an enumeration worthy of Whitman, he urges Henderson to accept his "cheeks... of hope, feet of respect, hands of justice, brows of serenity."(200) In a climatic scene, Dahfu teaches Henderson to "be the beast," to allow his inner feelings to merge with his fierce looks. "Roar, roar, roar, Henderson-Sungo. Do not be afraid. Let go of yourself. Snarl greatly. Feel the lion." And Henderson responds to the urging. Following another dictum from Whitman, he lies down among the animals, in this case, Dahfu's lion, and becomes one with it. "And so I was the beast. I gave myself to it and all my sorrow came out in the roaring."(225) At last, he achieves a measure of the peace with his body that Walt possesses in "Song of Myself." It does not make him a "Being" person, perhaps nothing ultimately will and Henderson must accept himself as a "Becoming" person, but clearly the attempt is being made to achieve a Walt-like self.

Even as he grows to accept his physical self, Henderson develops other aspects of his identity and moves steadily toward the self of Walt in "Song of Myself" that "stands aggressively at the center of things."¹² Bellow's description of these developments continued to remind one of Whitman's.

In Section 23 Walt declares, "I accept reality." Reality for Walt consists of a number of things, many of them contradictory. It means the recognition (and acceptance) of the physical world for what it is, including the "deformed, trivial, flat, foolish, despised." It means the acceptance of physical man, including the physicality or animality of man. It

also means being aware of the unseen and recognizing that it is as real as the seen. The real world Walt accepts also contains what Chase calls "the paradox of identity," which he explains as being both separate ("integral to one's self), and, at the same time, together ("equal to or even the same as, everyone else").¹³ Walt accepts the contradictions largely because love is also part of reality and through the power of love, "the kelson of creation," one can be both One and one with all. Finally, death becomes part of reality. Walt makes clear that his "I accept reality" includes the acceptance of death.

Henderson proceeds to much the same kind of acceptance of reality. D. J. Hughes, in "Reality and Hero," sees the entire novel, in fact, as a delineation of Henderson's attempts to discover reality.¹⁴ Bellow makes clear that Henderson's perception of reality is a limited one. By Henderson's own definition, truth comes in blows(25), and the spirit's sleep must be burst(67) so that it may wake to reality. Henderson, However, has it too good. He has not yet suffered enough and is, as yet, unaware of reality.

Bellow offers two examples early in the novel that undercut Henderson's brave "I am on damn good terms with reality."(34) When his daughter brings home a black foundling, Henderson deals with the situation as "any other daddy would," confronting her and her superiors in school with the "reality" of the situation. He succeeds only in getting Ricey dismissed from school and making her (as well as himself) terribly unhappy by forcing her to give the child away. Later, his son questions him about life and truth. Henderson is vague and distracted by a baby seal. Filled with pity at its cries, he is informed that the seal is a beggar, playing on unwarranted pity. Kicked on his behind, the seal

uncomplainingly moves on. Henderson seems unaware that he has been given a lesson in reality. Hughes sees hubris in Henderson's insistence that he knows reality¹⁵ but that seems a bit strong since Henderson embarks on his quest to Africa at least partially because he feels that his awareness of truth and reality might be limited. "I want the truth," he tells the Arnewi queen, who responds with "Grun-tu-molani," or "man want to live." The how and the why of that wanting remains hidden from Henderson. He must continue on to the teachings of Dahfu.

At first, even with King Dahfu, Henderson insists, "Me, I love the old bitch (of reality) just the way she is." (127) But after being with Dahfu, Henderson understands enough to say, "Yes, yes, yes. The world of facts is real, all right, and not to be altered. The physical is all there and it belongs to science but then there is the noumenal department Oh, what a revelation!" (142) Henderson finally admits the existence of something other than the phenomenal world. The declaration is his equivalent of Walt's vision of the "unseen." At the same time, the statement specifically evokes Walt's evaluation of science and materialism. "Hurrah for positive science," he says, but cautions, "Your facts are useful, and yet they are not my dwelling." This is what Henderson discovers about reality also.

Henderson's revelation ends with the words, "We create and create and create" (142), echoing Walt's "Urge and urge and urge, / Always the procreant urge of the world." Hughes describes this moment as the time when "To his inborn and passionate sense of the real, Henderson adds spirit and imagination admitting that what we often call reality is nothing but pedantry."¹⁶

The search for reality is incomplete, however, until death is dealt with. There is some question whether Whitman ever deals with death in a realistic way. R. W. B. Lewis has accused him of lacking "tragic insight,"¹⁷ and his sense of death might also be said to lack insight. "Song of Myself" contains a number of statements about death pertinent to this discussion. In Section 6 he argues that "the young and old men" as well as "women and children" are not really dead but "alive and well somewhere." His proof consists of what one might call "argument from process," that is, the assertion that life continues always, with grass sprouting from graves. As Walt puts it, "The smallest sprout shows there is really no death." A variation of this is his argument in Section 42 that he continues to exist through "duplicates," a reasonable extension of his "For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you."¹⁸ Without entering into a technical discussion about the Egyptian or Vedantic sources for Whitman's attitude, the "reality" of his conception can be easily determined.

If one believes, as the speaker in "Song of Myself" does, in continuation through other forms, he must have relinquished a belief in any literal resurrection. Nor can one be said to be denying the reality of an actual physical cessation. Interestingly Walt declares a number of times that he is "deathless"¹⁹ but in each case it is the general scheme that is "deathless," not the individual Walt. It seems then that an acceptance of death is part of what Walt accepts when he declares "I accept Reality."²⁰

By contrast, Henderson does not accept death and must be taught to do so. Whitman's word, "deathless," is evoked in a recurring adjective in Bellow's novel. Henderson is described by others (and

ultimately by himself,) as being "unkillable," a description that unaccountably seems an accusation to him and fills him with unease.

The sense of unease is, of course, justified. As he has failed to know or love his body, as he was unable to see reality, so he denies death. Again, as he had brought him face to face with reality, Bellow lets Henderson see death but, as before, to no avail. In an early scene, Henderson watches an octopus in an aquarium. The creature fills him with "a cosmic coldness in which I felt I was dying."⁽²⁰⁾ For the moment there is a realization, "I thought, 'This is my last day. Death is giving me notice'"⁽²⁰⁾, but the effect of the realization is that Henderson denies the existence of death.²¹ When their breakfast cook falls dead in the kitchen, Henderson leaves her on the floor, pinning "Do not disturb" on her apron. Knowing his wife's father committed suicide by shooting his head off, Henderson fires guns in the house, driving away visitors and bringing Lily white with fright to the attic. Though the largest man in his company, one of the best targets, bullets avoid him. His attitude is best expressed in his offhand remark, "Death and I are just about kissing cousins."⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ In order to "know" death, he must embark on his journey to Africa.

This might be the place to point out that Bellow has been criticised²² for creating an imaginary rather than real Africa. Henderson's journey would then be solely a mental one and hence the realism of the whole novel would come under question. The parallels to Whitman become instructive. Whitman too speaks of journeying but as Allen points out, "He tramped with his imagination."²³ The critical Lewis accuses him of too much travel, accurately pointing out that, at least in his early poetry, Whitman was going backwards, not forwards, back toward a "primal

perfection."²⁴ Whatever the direction, the journeys are "epochal" and accomplished by "huge and almost unconscious leaps."²⁵

Henderson's trip to Africa is precisely this kind of a journey. He goes back to "the real past, no history or junk like that. The prehuman past."⁽⁴²⁾ Small wonder then that "Bellow's Africa is not the Africa of the morning newspapers."²⁶ It is a fantastic Africa of the imagination, much like the "primeval" world of Whitman's return. The kinship is emphasized by critics who see a common ancestor for Henderson and Walt. Chase says Natty Bumppo "was a spiritual father of Walt Whitman."²⁷ Guttmann says, "Henderson set off, like Cooper's Natty Bumppo."²⁸

In this fabulous Africa then, Henderson learns to deal with death, "the ultimate reality."²⁹ The progress is slow. Preparing to help the Arnewi by blasting to death the frogs that fill their reservoir, Henderson's relationship with death is still too casual. "My heart was already fattening in anticipation of their death. We hate death, we fear death, but when you get right down to cases, there's nothing like it."⁽⁷⁷⁾ When his plan fails, Henderson is ready to "die" in shame. Italo, an African familiar with death, tells him, "You want to die, you got to die you'self"⁽⁹⁵⁾. Italo is unwilling to answer the question of life or death for Henderson, insisting he must learn to accept responsibility for both himself.

Forced onward, Henderson arrives at the Wariri. While under detention, he discovers a dead body in his tent. Romilayu, Henderson's native guide, is frightened. "He suffered," Henderson tells us, "from terror of the dead." Henderson himself feels no terror. Death has become abstracted for him. "It was the affront, the challenge, that got me most."⁽¹¹⁷⁾

It is Dahfu who finally brings him face to face with the meaning of death.

Dahfu has already brought about some reconciliation between Henderson and his body. He has also brought him into the "present moment" of reality. Henderson finally realizes, "That left the biggest problem of all, which was to encounter death." (233) The encounter is soon at hand. Dahfu must capture the lion Gmilo, Dahfu's father reincarnated, and Henderson, unarmed, joins in the hunt. Henderson senses what is coming. "Reality! Oh, reality! Damn you anyhow, reality!" Dahfu, serene, understands Henderson's turmoil. "Death is on your mind?" (249) When Dahfu falls and is mauled to death by the lion, Henderson has a lesson in death. "I never took another death so hard" (264), he says. But Henderson, as Guttman says, "weeps not for himself but for his friend,"³⁰ keeping death still at arm's length from himself. He claims that Dahfu's death has "broken" him, but Romilayu points out, "You no look so too-bad, sah." (264) Then Henderson finds out that as Rain King, he is to become Dahfu's successor, inheriting Dahfu's wives as well as a sentence of death, for by custom, when he can no longer satisfy those wives, he is strangled by them. Then he understands death as well as the meaning of Grumto-molani. It is simply that man wants to live in spite of the coming darkness.

He escapes from the Wariri, taking along with him a lion cub. At that moment, having recognized the reality of personal dissolution, he accepts Walt's sense of continuation. "Look," Henderson explains to Romilayu, "he's got to survive in some form." (273) The lion cub becomes Dahfu's spear of grass from the grave and Henderson becomes Dahfu's "duplicate," telling Lily to register him in graduate school under the name of "Leo E. Henderson." The lion, the king,

lives on in Henderson the lion.

Henderson's final discovery is a Whitman commonplace. He understands that we must love another. "It's love that makes reality," he admits. He had always said that suffering must be the way the spirit's sleep in burst but he sees now that "love also does it."³¹ He returns ready to love himself, his wife and humanity: himself because he is reconciled to his "rude looks"; his wife because he no longer wishes to be an "Ishmael"; humanity because otherwise we die. This is the meaning of his letter to Lily, asking her to enroll him in medical school so he may follow in the course of Albert Schweitzer.

Having arrived at the position of Walt, Guttman points out "Whitmanesque imagery blossoms."

It is early in life, and I am out in the grass. The sun flames and swells; the heat it emits is its love, too. I have this selfsame vividness in my heart. There are dandelions. I try to gather up this green. I put my love-swollen cheek to the yellow of the dandelions. I try to enter into the green. (238)

These lines remind one of Whitman in "Song of Myself."

I depart as air, I shake my white locks
at the runaway sun
I effuse my flesh in eddies, and drift
it in lacy jags.
I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow
from the grass I love,
If you want me again look for me under
your boot-soles.

At the end of the novel, Henderson's plane lands in Newfoundland. Holding a child he has befriended on the plane in his arms, Henderson celebrates by running outside. Guttman calls him "kindred spirit" to Walt Whitman. Walt contained multitudes and rejoiced, "stucco'd with quadrupeds and birds all over." Henderson leaps with joy that men can love airplanes and orphans and lion cubs.³²

It has been the argument of this essay that Henderson approaches a Walt-like self in the course of the entire novel. It might be worth noting how extensively Henderson is described by critics in "Whitmanesque" terms, though without specifically identifying the two. Elizabeth Hardwick calls him "breezy, boastful, sentimental, philosophical."³³ Detweiler speaks of the ingestion of all natures by Henderson,³⁴ reminding one of Whitman's ingestions and absorptions. Michael A. Goldfinch, in "A Journey to the Interior," points out how love is at the center of the novel, citing Henderson's realization mentioned earlier that "It's love that makes reality."³⁵ It is only Marcus Klein who points a finger directly at Whitman. "Bellow's personalist hero yelps," he says, reminding the reader of Whitman's yawp, "quite the gamecock of a new, urban wilderness."³⁶ He also describes Henderson's tale as singing, "with quite the same nervy insolence with which Walt Whitman met the world." Like Goldfinch does, Klein too, remarks about the way Henderson includes the whole world in himself, and concludes with,

And like Walt Whitman, he celebrates himself by the exercise of a free-wheeling, inclusive, cataloguing rhetoric, gripping great bunches of facts in sentences that just manage to balance, racing through various

levels of diction, saying with every turn, "Look at me, going everywhere." (58)

And Klein sums it all up calling the novel "a brilliant affirmation of the self,"³⁷ which it is, but only as the novel comes to a close.

To Klein's perceptive summation one would add examples that suggest Bellow's identification of Henderson with Whitman to be clearly intentional. One would be the Arnewi queen's identification of Henderson, rendered through her brother. "'World is strange to a child. You not a child, sir?'" (73) Another would be Henderson's divorce of his detached wife, Francis, and marriage to Lily, who "has intensity of love and joy" (20), an act that seems a response to Whitman's wish to separate himself from "disengaged women." By returning to Lily, Henderson is returning to love. As he announces, again echoing Whitman, "I have observed a connection between women's love and the great principles of life." (83) Finally, the last cited phrase by Klein calls for some modification. Rather than merely an "affirmation of the self," hopefully this essay has shown that Henderson the Rain King is about the development of a self. If any self is affirmed, it is the self of Walt, bounding joyously a little ahead of Henderson's eager but lumbering chase.

FOOTNOTES

¹Saul Bellow, Henderson the Rain King (New York, 1965), 136. (All subsequent quotations from Henderson the Rain King are from here.)

²Allen Guttman, The Jewish Writer in America (New York, 1971), 208.

³Marcus Klein, After Alienation (New York, 1965), 54.

⁴Edwin H. Miller, Walt Whitman's Poetry: A Psychological Journey (Boston and New York, 1969), 20.

⁵Gay Wilson Allen, A Reader's Guide to Walt Whitman (New York, 1970), 126. Richard Chase, quoted later in the essay, is at least one critic who feels that a self is already realized as "Song of Myself" begins.

⁶Cited in Gay Wilson Allen, The Solitary Singer (New York, 1955), 159.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid., 160.

⁹Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass ed. by Harold W. Blodgett and Sculley Bradley (New York, 1965), 54. ("Song of Myself," sec. 24, line 544.) It is this section, of course, that contains the famous lines that declare the body to be holy, worthy of worship. Henderson would settle for respect.

¹⁰Klein, 42.

¹¹In "Song of Myself," sec. 25, line 565, "With the twirl of my tongue I encompass worlds and volumes of worlds." In sec. 24, "broad muscular fields," in sec. 44 "My feet strike an apex of the apices of the stairs," in sec. 17, "You oceans that have been calm within me!" in sec. 33, "I skirt sierras, my palms cover continents."

¹²Richard Chase, Walt Whitman Reconsidered (New York, 1955), 65. "The self is not felt to be incomplete; it has no questing odyssey to make." Chase does say that there is some crisis of identify but it has to do "not with the self searching for a final identify but with the self escaping a series of identities which threaten to destroy its...spontaneity." Clearly, those aspects of the self that Henderson quests after are considered to have been already present in the singer of "Song of Myself."

¹³Ibid., 64.

¹⁴"Reality and Hero," Modern Fiction Studies, VI(1960), 545-64.

¹⁵Ibid., 355.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷R. W. B. Lewis, The American Adam (Chicago, 1955), 48.

¹⁸"Song of Myself," sec. 1, line 3. There are, of course, many additional lines that illustrate Whitman's attitude toward death. Noteworthy are those that fall under the "long journey motif," discussed

by Gay Wilson Allen, Walt Whitman as Man, Poet and Legend (Carbondale, Illinois, 1961), 68.

¹⁹"Song of Myself," sec. 20, line 406 and sec. 42, line 1080.

²⁰Another question might be, of course, if the glorification of death by Whitman (see Allen, Walt Whitman as Man, Poet and Legend p. 68), is a realistic way of looking at death. Certainly there is less glorification of death after Whitman participates in the Civil War. For the purposes of this essay, however, it seems necessary only to determine if the singer in "Song of Myself" is willing to face death. "Hoping to cease not till death," appears a pretty definitive statement. It clearly admits the end of an individual in its present form. The point is that Henderson avoids this truth.

²¹Robert Detweiler, "Patterns of Rebirth in Henderson the Rain King," Modern Fiction Studies, XII, (1966), 406 discusses this scene using the philosophical terminology of the novel. The octopus, according to Detweiler, warns Henderson that his "Becoming is leading toward Nothingness." Marcus perhaps modifies this by pointing out that at the end, Henderson understands "Grun-tu-molani" to mean that man wants to continue living "despite the death-dealing, chaotic Real." (56) This is my understanding too. The octopus does not warn of imminent death but tries to make Henderson become aware of its existence. Nowhere else in the novel do there appear to be "danger signals" of the type Detweiler sees represented by the octopus.

²²Charles Rolo, "Reader's Choice," Atlantic Monthly CCII (March 1959), 88; Donald Malcolm, "Rider Haggard Rides Again," New Yorker XXXV (March 14, 1959), 171-73.

²³Walt Whitman as Man, Poet and Hero, 69.

²⁴Lewis, 42

²⁵Ibid.

²⁸Guttman, 204

²⁶Guttman, 201

²⁹Hughes, 360

²⁷Chase, 78

³⁰Guttman, 208

³¹R.W.B. Lewis, citing the Elder James, argues that Adam must fall in order to enter the ranks of manhood. (55) Bellow clearly offers another method by which the spirit's sleep (Elder James describes the Adamic hero as being "somnolent"), might be burst-through love, precisely Whitman's prescription.

³²Guttman, 210

³³Elizabeth Hardwick, "A Fantastic Voyage," Partisan Review, XXVI (1959) 300.

³⁴Detweiler, 441

³⁵Michael A. Goldfinch, "A Journey to the Interior," English Studies XLIII (October, 1962), 443.

³⁶Klein, 58

³⁷Ibid.