

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ARCHETYPES

IN

T. S. ELIOT AND NATHANAEL WEST

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PREFACE

The following study examines the use of archetypes in the works of two twentieth-century authors, T. S. Eliot and Nathanael West.

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INTRODUCTION:

T. S. ELIOT, NATHANAEL WEST,

AND

ARCHETYPAL CRITICISM

Archetypal criticism, the type of literary criticism which deals with the collective unconscious, is many-faceted-- psychological, cultural, and religious. It is psychological because the projections and dominations of the collective unconscious which create a patient for the psychiatrist also create an archetypal character for the literary man. In order to restore "wholeness" and to help a patient realize his fullest potential through the release of the creative powers of the collective unconscious, modern psychology uses conscious individuation, the conscious integration of the conscious and the collective unconscious.¹ The critic, too, must be aware of these processes since modern writers like Eliot and West worked with a knowledge of psychology and the unconscious and used the scientific terms of psychology and

¹ C. G. Jung, Psychology and Alchemy, pp. 172-173.

individuation in their poetry and prose.

Archetypal criticism also bears on the cultural aspect of literature because man's institutions and arts have always been influenced by the creativity of the collective unconscious. Jung called the deep impersonal unconscious the "collective unconscious" because he found it to be universally common to all men from the beginning of the species. Within the collective unconscious, Jung observed all of the motifs known to myth and literature retained as patterns having an innate tendency toward repetition. These patterns Jung called archetypes. Other archetypes include character-types such as the Siren, the Miraculous Child, the Mana Personality, the Questor, and the Terrible Mother.²

Then, too, archetypal criticism relates to the religious aspect of literature because the natural religions are the creation of the collective unconscious, which is the meeting place of the world religions and contains all of their symbolism.³ Jung's Archetypes of Transformation--

² C. G. Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, pp. 64-69.

³ Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, pp. 65-66.

Death and Descent, Rebirth and Resurrection--fit into this category.⁴

Archetypal criticism strives to decode the message carried by the symbolism of a literary work. The collective unconscious expresses itself in dreams through metaphors which must be interpreted. In dreams the important message is hidden in symbolism making it inscrutable and obscure without interpretation of the symbols.⁵ The literary metaphors of a picture work, as in the case of Eliot's The Wasteland, must be interpreted as one would interpret a dream.

Two twentieth-century American writers, T. S. Eliot and Nathanael West, use literary archetypes in their works to give them form and meaning. That two authors living and writing at the same time would do this is not surprising, but the differences and similarities of their reworkings are interesting and illuminating. Previous critics have noted and examined many of these archetypes in the works of Eliot and West. The original archetypal critic, C. G. Jung,

⁴ Johannes Fabricius, The Unconscious and Mr. Eliot: a Study in Expressionism, p. 105.

⁵ Fabricius, pp. 9-10.

preferred to apply archetypal criticism to books which, like his favorite Moby Dick, were written by authors who were not conscious of the archetypes.⁶ However, he values the work of the Expressionists⁷ because they delve into the collective unconscious and reveal its contents.⁸ In the words of Johannes Fabricius, "T. S. Eliot and the whole movement of Expressionist art represent the eruption of the collective unconscious into the conscious strata of modern civilization."⁹

Basic to an understanding of Eliot and West is Jessie Weston's book, From Ritual to Romance, which provides an anthropological background of the natural religions which, according to Jung, are an expression of the collective unconscious. An authority on the Grail legend, Miss

⁶ Fabricius, pp. 9-10.

⁷ Thrall, William, Addison Hibbard, and C. Hugh Holman, A Handbook to Literature, pp. 194-195. Expressionism: "A movement affecting painting, the drama, the novel, and poetry, which followed and went beyond impressionism in its efforts to 'objectify inner experience' . . . the depth psychologists, notably Freud, laid bare the phantasms in the depth of the human mind and offered the artist a challenge accurately to record them; . . . The Wasteland is the poetic classic of the movement."

⁸ Jung, Modern Man in search of a Soul, pp. 205-206.

⁹ Fabricius, p. 11.

Weston established the archetypes of the Quest--the wasteland, the Fisher King, the Fortune Teller, and the Questor--as elements surviving from the ancient worship of the vegetation deities.¹⁰

Maude Bodkin, another early archetypal critic, studies The Wasteland in the same manner in which she explored the archetypal patterns used unconsciously by Shakespeare, Dante, and Coleridge. She emphasizes the numinous quality of the archetypes and that within us which responds to them. She believes with Jung that they have the spiritual power necessary to raise man to a higher level of thought and action. In her opinion The Wasteland is a poem of rebirth.¹¹

Charles Moorman outlines the advantages of the Grail as a background myth and discusses Eliot's use of the Grail Quest.¹² Other critics, including Genesisius Jones¹³ and

¹⁰ Jessie L. Weston, From Ritual to Romance.

¹¹ Maude Bodkin, Archetypal Patterns in Poetry: Psychological Studies in Imagination.

¹² Charles Moorman, Arthurian Triptych: Mythic Materials in Charles Williams, C. S. Lewis, and T. S. Eliot.

¹³ Genesisius Jones, Approach to the Purpose: a Study of the Poetry of T. S. Eliot, pp. 291-293. Jones demonstrates how Eliot uses myth in "Aunt Helen" as a structural device in concreting his works of art.

Steffan Bergsten,¹⁴ deal with Eliot's use of the mythical method in his shorter poems. Of particular interest is Elizabeth Drew's explanation of the use of the mythical method in "Mr. Apollinax," a method used also by West. In a satiric characterization, Eliot gave Bertrand Russel the mythical qualities of Priapus, a fertility god of Roman mythology:¹⁵

I thought of Fragilion . . .
 And of Priapus in the shrubbery
 Gaping at the lady in the swing.

 I heard the beat of centaur's hoofs over the hard turf
 As his dry and passionate talk devoured the afternoon.
 "He is a charming man"--"But after all what did he mean?"
 "His pointed ears . . . He must be unbalanced."--
 "There was something he said . . ."16

Critics have also observed West's use of archetypes in his fiction. Robert J. Andreach develops the Pan-Christ

¹⁴ Steffan Bergsten, Time and Eternity: a Study in the Structure and Symbolism of T. S. Eliot's Four Quartettes, p. 24. Bergsten uses "Sweeney Among the Nightengales" to explain how Eliot uses myth to demonstrate identical psychological and spiritual patterns at different periods of history.

¹⁵ Elizabeth A. Drew, T. S. Eliot and the Design of His Poetry, pp. 23-30.

¹⁶ T. S. Eliot, "Mr. Apollinax" in T. S. Eliot: Collected Poems 1909-1965, ll. 3-5, 16-20. Subsequent references to this edition which includes The Wasteland, The Rock, Ash Wednesday, Sweeney Agonistes, and Four Quartettes are given in parenthesis within the text.

conflict of Miss Lonelyhearts and in the process explains West's method of mythical characterization which is similar to Eliot's method mentioned above. Shrike, a news editor, is compared to "Pan," the diabolical goat-god who was a vegetation deity.¹⁷

The only critic to discuss West's use of the Grail legend is Victor Comerchero. He points out that three episodes in Miss Lonelyhearts, the Sacrifice of the Lamb, the Children Dancing, and the Clean Old Man, correspond to initiation ceremonies and fertility rites as they are presented by Weston.¹⁸ He does not, however, identify a Fisher King in Miss Lonelyhearts.

Even though earlier critics have examined the use and treatment of archetypes in West and Eliot, they fail to study and develop fully the significance of the purpose and the method of reworking of the archetypes in the works of these two writers. Both writers use symbols. Eliot uses falling towers to denote the secularization of the Church, and West

¹⁷ Robert J. Andreach, "Nathanael West's Miss Lonelyhearts Between the Dead Pan and the Unborn Christ." Twentieth Century Interpretations of Miss Lonelyhearts, ed. Thomas H. Jackson, pp. 49-52.

¹⁸ Victor Comerchero, Nathanael West, the Ironic Prophet, pp. 87-89.

uses secularized Christians, such as Miss Lonelyhearts, to symbolize the decline of Western Civilization.¹⁹ Both authors develop similar archetypes--the archetype of declining civilizations, the archetypes associated with the Grail Quest as interpreted by Miss Weston's research of the regenerative myths, and the archetype of rebirth.

In developing the archetype of declining civilizations, both Eliot and West emphasize the apocalyptic aspect of the archetype by referring to Old Testament prophets of the pre-exile period. Eliot displays the vision and optimism of Ezekial who foresaw the survival of a remnant. West exhibits the pessimism of a Jeremiah, particularly in the character of Tod Hackett, whose painting "The Burning of Los Angeles" provides the structural device about which The Day of the Locust is built.

Both authors emphasize the recurrence of the archetype of declining civilizations by making historical comparisons. Eliot seemingly jumbles events and people without historical continuity to emphasize that all times are alike.²⁰

¹⁹ Comerchero, p. 83.

²⁰ Grover Smith, Jr., T. S. Eliot's Poetry and Plays, p. 67.

West produces a jumble of fallen civilizations in the Hollywood movie lot and dream dump to emphasize that civilizations of the past have disappeared.

Both authors use the regenerative myths in developing their characters. Eliot includes Sweeney, his symbol of the carnal man, who is developed in Sweeney Agonistes where the cyclic rhythm of the myths--birth, growth, decay--is very prominent. West uses the mythical method to give the characteristics of the vegetation deities to his characters who personify the mass media and the entertainment world.

Each author develops his own artistic form to present his philosophy. Eliot uses the technique of the unconscious --a dream in which there is a swift juxtaposition of vivid word images.²¹ West experiments with a comic-strip technique which presents violent, flesh-and-blood caricatures.

Both Eliot and West use the Grail legend as a controlling metaphor to give form and meaning to their works but in very different ways. Eliot presents a dream in which the most obvious symbolism is taken from the regenerative myths of the natural religions. West presents a portrait of a priest of our time who has a religious experience,

²¹ Fabricius, pp. 29-31.

supposedly Christian.²² In both works, a Questor experiences the sterility of the wasteland and proceeds toward a religious experience at the Perilous Chapel which might be an initiation, psychological individuation, or Christian rebirth. At this point, the reader becomes increasingly aware of an inversion in both authors' meaning, making it necessary to "decode" the meaning by a study of the hidden symbolism in each text. The Wasteland, which begins with the symbolism of the myths, actually contains, hidden throughout, the Christian symbolism of Ash Wednesday and the nucleus of Eliot's Christian philosophy. Miss Lonelyhearts, which begins with Christian implications and references to the Christ dream, develops a religious experience which follows the pattern of the regenerative myths and depends on the revelations of the collective unconscious. So it would appear that The Wasteland is a poem of Christian faith presenting orthodox Christianity as the hope of Western civilization, while Miss Lonelyhearts and The Day of the Locust are satires portraying the leadership of Western civilization, the mass media and the Church, as being under the domination of the pagan myths of the Life

²² Nathanael West, "Some Notes on Miss L." in Nathanael West, ed. Jay Martin, pp. 66-67

Cult,²³ in Jung's terminology, the collective unconscious.

This study will compare and contrast the development of the Archetype of Declining Civilizations in the work of T. S. Eliot and Nathanael West, particularly The Wasteland, Miss Lonelyhearts, and The Day of the Locust. This comparison will be made in the light of C. G. Jung's contention that, because Western civilization was made possible by Christianity's role in the building up of consciousness, it would not survive the rejection of Christianity. In psychological terms, the decay of the Christian dominant would result in the domination of individuals and their society by the evil forces of the collective unconscious.

Since both authors use the Archetype of the Grail Quest in developing the main archetype, their use of the Grail legend will be compared and contrasted in terms of how they rework the archetypes associated with the Grail--the Fisher King, the Questor, and Belladonna--in order to give meaning and form to their art.

In comparing these authors' use of the Archetype of Rebirth, this paper will first explore the rebirth archetype

²³ The following terms will be used interchangeably with Life Cult: Cult of Sex, Natural religions, Regenerative myths, Deity of Vegetation, and Life Principle.

along the different levels of meaning found in The Wasteland and Miss Lonelyhearts. Then, it will attempt what no previous critics have done, an interpretation of rebirth in The Wasteland by the symbolism of Ash Wednesday which it contains and an interpretation of rebirth in Miss Lonelyhearts on the basis of the symbolism of the natural religions which it contains.

Finally, a comparison will be made of the purpose for which these authors reworked these same archetypes in different ways--Eliot to present orthodox Christianity as the best solution for man's dilemma and West to satirize man, his institutions, and his leadership.

CHAPTER I

THE ARCHETYPE OF DECLINING CIVILIZATIONS

Who are those hooded hordes swarming
Over endless plains, stumbling in cracked earth
Ringed by the flat horizon only
What is the city over the mountains
Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air
(WL, 11.369-373)

Convinced that Western civilization is in its twilight hour, T. S. Eliot considers the cause of the decline to be the decay of Christianity, symbolized in The Wasteland by "Falling towers / Jerusalem Athens Alexandria / Vienna / London / Unreal" (WL, 11. 374-377). His feeling of helplessness is expressed in The Rock:

The Church disowned, the tower overthrown,
the bells upturned,
What have we to do
But stand with empty hands and palms turned upwards
In an age which advances progressively backwards?
(TR, 64)

Nathanael West views the slow lingering death of a civilization with the pessimism of a Jeremiah. His symbol is not that of falling towers but of secularized, fallen-

away Christians--a Miss Lonelyhearts²⁴ and, in The Day of the Locust, riotous crowds spurred to violence by a secular Church. Intent on reforming the world, they become the means of destruction: ". . . He [Tod Hackett] would paint their fury with respect, appreciating its awful anarchic power and aware that they had it in them to destroy civilization."²⁵

Since the archetype of declining civilizations is better understood with a background of psychological and anthropological research, this chapter will first discuss briefly certain aspects of the collective unconscious and ancient religious rituals. Then, the methods used by Eliot and West to develop this archetype will be compared, and finally their development of the destroyer of civilization, massman, will be examined.

The psychologist, C. G. Jung, a contemporary of these authors, also predicted the fall of Western civilization because of its rejection of Christianity. His opinions are germane here, because they are stated in terms of

²⁴ Comerchero, p. 83.

²⁵ Nathanael West, The Day of the Locust, p. 142. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parenthesis within the text. West's Miss Lonelyhearts is also in this edition.

the archetypes and archetypal forces of the collective unconscious. Stated briefly, the building of Western civilization was possible only because Christianity through the centuries had subdued the animal instincts and built up consciousness²⁶ to the point where Western man, freed from the domination of the collective unconscious, could devote his energies to the constructive activities which benefit man and build up a civilization.²⁷ The decline of Christianity is, in psychological terms, the decay of the collective dominant. With the decay of any collective dominant, an unconscious individuation sets in allowing an eruption of the contents of the collective unconscious--licentiousness, brutality, and violence--with an eventual regression to the level of the collective unconscious.²⁸

In exploring the collective unconscious, Jung studied its contents through two forms of its expression which proved to be similar. The first consisted of fantasies produced under clinical observation of neurotics and schizophrenics in whom the psyche is divided into distinct halves, the

²⁶ C. G. Jung, Symbols of Transformation, pp. 433-444.

²⁷ Jung, Symbols of Transformation, pp. 70-72.

²⁸ Jung, Psychology and Alchemy, pp. 34-35.

conscious and the unconscious. These fantasies revealed the archetypal motifs of myth and literature mentioned earlier²⁹ and the religious symbolism of the natural religions. In addition to archetypes, the collective unconscious contains forces which are more powerful than anything which the conscious can muster, the drives which man shares with the animals--sex, will-to-power, herd instinct, and self-preservation.³⁰ For the second form of expression of the collective unconscious, Jung studied ancient religious ritual.

The rites of the natural religions attempted to abolish the separation between the conscious and the collective unconscious which was believed to be the real source of life. As the most direct route to the collective unconscious, drunkenness was a part of the religious rituals, particularly the Dionysian revels.³¹ The aim of the religious rituals in worship of Tammuz, Adonis, Attis, Dionysus, the other vegetation deities was intensely materialistic as

²⁹ See above, p. 2.

³⁰ Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, pp. 29-31.

³¹ Jung, Psychology and Alchemy, pp. 134-143.

their only purpose was the stimulation of fertility in the animal and vegetable world through sympathetic magic. Anything which would stimulate the regenerative forces in man would, they reasoned, have the same effect on the animal and vegetable worlds.³² Consequently, every motion of the ritual fertility dances was intended to arouse the natural passions. On the other hand, the dances of the sacrificial rites in which the priests cut themselves with knives to the accompaniment of the unrhythmic clash of cymbals were intended to cover the cries of the sacrificial victims.³³ At the time when the religious rituals gave full expression to the forces of the collective unconscious, no tension existed between the culture and the religion. According to Jung, life at the level of the collective unconscious was characteristic of the first century when the "cult of sex was in full bloom."³⁴ Both Jung and West refer particularly to this period, making comparisons between the first and twentieth centuries.

³² J. G. Frazer, The New Golden Bough, ed. Theodor Gaster, pp. 91-92.

³³ Weston, pp. 88-90.

³⁴ Jung, Symbols of Transformation, pp. 230-231.

In Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, Jung uses terms to describe the first century which are of special interest in studying West. He writes of a wave of Dionysian licentiousness which crested in the culture of ancient Greece and was revived for a brief period by the Renaissance.³⁵ Shrike, in his first appearance in West's Miss Lonelyhearts, toasts the Renaissance and ancient Greece. West continues to draw parallels with the first century in two ways--(1) by creating mythical characters patterned on "Pan" and "Dionysus" and (2) by recreating its licentiousness in such situations as the evening at the Doyle's and the party at Homer's house, its brutality as in the cockfight, and its violence as in the crowd which gathered to adore its movie idols. West dramatizes a return to the level of the collective unconscious. The shock of such a spectacle as West produces emphasizes Jung's contention that a regression to the level of the collective unconscious as demonstrated in the first century is a long step backward. Jung also compares the first and twentieth centuries because in the first century Christianity appeared and demonstrated its ability to change the nature of man and in

³⁵ Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, pp. 29-31.

the latter century Christianity is being, in his opinion, blithely rejected. Jung believes that the state from which Christianity saved Western man is the state to which he would return without that faith,³⁶ unless, as he hoped, an effective substitute based on the archetypes could be found. West's Miss Lonelyhearts experiments with a religious experience based on the collective unconscious, a substitute for Christianity.

In continuing to develop the archetype of declining civilizations, both Eliot and West emphasize recurring periods of decay by drawing many parallels with the past. Eliot juxtaposes scenes of kingdoms and people in a telescopic way which eliminates time and space. As Jay Martin expressed it:

In The Wasteland, Eliot had created a form in which he could arbitrarily yoke widely separate events and places so that there appeared to be no time-or-space-lapse between them. He understood that it was possible, as Bertrand Russel put it, "For the time-interval between two events to be zero: when the one event is the seeing of the other."³⁷

Though West learned from Eliot by reading his works all through the twenties, his juxtaposition of historical scenes

³⁶ Jung, Symbols of Transformation, pp. 230-231.

³⁷ Jay Martin, Nathanael West: The Art of His Life, p. 314.

is unique. Tod wanders through the movie sets and into the Hollywood dream dump seeing the paper mache and plaster ruins of countless extinct civilizations:

While he watched, a ten-ton truck added another load to it [the dump]. This was the final dumping ground. He thought of Janvier's "Sargasso Sea." Just as that imaginary body of water was a history of civilization in the form of a marine junkyard, the studio lot was one in the form of a dream dump. A Sargasso of the imagination! (DL, 32)

His painters of Decay and Mystery, Salvator Rosa, Francesco Guardi, and Monsu Desiderio, implied a comparison with other times of decay. The references to these artists were inserted in the last revision of his book when he realized fully the apocalyptic significance of the work.³⁸

The apocalyptic aspect of history is developed by both Eliot and West in the use of Old Testament prophets of the pre-exile period. With this reference, each predicates an Old Testament standard of morality, and each recognizes a judgment of the vegetation deities because the captivity was predicted as a punishment for Baal and Tammuz worship. Eliot's poem reflects the optimism of Ezekial, who foresaw the return of the captives and the rebuilding of the Temple from which there would gush a river of life-giving, fish-

³⁸ Jay Martin, p. 315.

laden water which would flow to the sea, its banks lined with people fishing. From this point of view, Eliot's Fisher King finds fishing at the end of The Wasteland a symbol of hope.

West's work conveys the pessimism of a Jeremiah who saw within the wasteland the means of its destruction, massmen, symbolized in West by the people who come to California to die:

He only wondered if he weren't exaggerating the importance of the people who come to California to die. Maybe they weren't really desperate enough to set a single city on fire, let alone the whole country. Maybe they were only the pick of America's madmen and not at all typical of the rest of the land.

He told himself that it didn't make any difference because he was an artist, not a prophet. His work would not be judged by the accuracy with which it foretold a future event but by its merit as a painting. Nevertheless, he refused to give up the role of Jeremiah. He changed "pick of America's madmen" to "cream" and felt almost certain that the milk from which it had been skimmed was just as rich in violence. The Angelenos would be first, but their comrades all over the country would follow. There would be civil war. (DL, 118)

While West is credited with an understanding of the implications of the birth of massman,³⁹ Eliot also develops massmen who are destroyers of civilization. Their concepts of the underlying causes of the birth of massman differ only in

³⁹ Jay Martin, p. 37.

degree. For Eliot the cause is a life lived without commitment to a higher power. For West it is a life wasted in the pursuit of a false dream.

Eliot characterizes crowds as consisting of ". . . a few good men / Many who were evil, / And most who were neither / Like all men in all places" (TR, 165). As crowds of people flow over London Bridge in a fog, the words from Dante's Inferno bring a phantasmagoric shift to the Vestibule of Hell where men on entering have abandoned hope. Prominent among the inhabitants are the "angels who were neither for God nor Satan, but only for themselves." The mortals are "the nearly soulless whose lives concluded neither blame nor praise." Among those inhabitants he knew, Dante "recognized the shadow of that soul who, in his cowardice, made the Great Denial."⁴⁰ This "shade" Eliot names "Stetson," making him a symbol of the mass secularism of the wasteland. The futility of being one of the crowd is stressed in The Rock:

There is no help in parties, none in interests,
 There is no help in those whose souls are choked
 and swaddled
 In the old winding-sheets of place and power
 Or in the new winding-sheets of mass-made thought.

⁴⁰ Alighieri Dante, The Inferno, trans. by John Ciardi, pp. 42-43.

O world! forget your glories and your quarrels,
 Forget your groups and your misplaced ambition,
 We speak to you as individual men;
 As individuals alone with GOD.⁴¹

Eliot's destroyers of civilization are linked with the great denial:

Do you need to be told that whatever has been,
 can still be?
 Do you need to be told that even such modest
 attainments
 As you can boast in the way of polite society
 Will hardly survive the Faith to which
 they owe their significance?
 Men! polish your teeth on rising and retiring;
 Women! polish your fingernails:
 You polish the tooth of the dog and the talon
 of the cat. (TR, 160)

In "What the Thunder Said" section of The Wasteland, hooded hordes mill about amidst a scene of destruction. The men who make West's crowds are better defined.

West's massmen, dreamers who lose their individuality in the pursuit of a false dream, begin by rejecting their condition--a dangerous first step which is demonstrated by the letter-writers. The tragedy of these correspondents lies in the fact that they are not responsible for their condition. Still, it is their condition, and their well-being depends on accepting and improving that condition, even

⁴¹ T. S. Eliot, The Rock, quoted by Kristian Smidt, in Poetry and Belief in the Work of T. S. Eliot, p. 230.

though it might involve work, hardship, and discipline.⁴²
Instead, they dream of an easy magic solution and so begin the creation of a fantasy world. The second step is the rejection of self and with it the right to be an individual, "I refuse to be what I am."⁴³ This step is also dangerous because the self is the basis for belief and action. Faye Greener lives and acts a dream, easily switching from one dream to another. In a third step, the individual dream may be easily adjusted to the general daydream. As individuals are lost in fantasy, their society also becomes lost--drifting and undefined.⁴⁴ West's symbol of the lives lost in the pursuit of a false dream is the group of people who came to California to die. They reject their way of life in the Mid-West and conform to the general daydream of wonderful California. When their false dream is shattered by harsh reality, they do not accept the blame for having

⁴² Jung, Psychology and Alchemy, p. 117. A man accepts his own condition which has to be reckoned with no matter how much it may have been the fault of others--his parents or grandparents. "Only a fool is interested in other people's guilt, since he cannot alter it."

⁴³ W. H. Auden, "West's Disease" in Nathanael West, ed. Jay Martin, p. 150.

⁴⁴ Jay Martin, pp. 158-164.

dreamed a false dream. They are, then, the cheated, a symbol of the cheated everywhere whatever their condition may have been. Though West does not minimize the responsibility of the cheated, he also blames the cheaters, the media and the churches which prey on the gullibility of the cheated.⁴⁵

Buoyed up all of their lives by a dream of enchanting California, the cheated are left disillusioned and bored at the loss of their dream. As Tod looks at some of them in the back rows of the funeral parlor at Harry's funeral where they have come hoping to find excitement, it "seemed to him that they stared back at him with an expression of vicious, acrid boredom that trembled on the edge of violence"

(DL, 127). These were not Tod's torchbearers, leaders of the riot, but the people who would run along and shout. The "torchbearers" were the reformers who attended the secular, materialistic churches of Hollywood, which with the media shared responsibility for the problems of West's Wasteland:

⁴⁵ Jay Martin, pp. 303-341. In an earlier version of The Day, West classified his characters into two groups, the cheaters and the cheated. The cheaters were connected with the mass media and the movie industry while the cheated were those who were preyed upon and were duped by the cheaters.

. . . the "Church of Christ, Physical" where holiness was attained through the constant use of chestweights and spring grips; the "Church Invisible" where fortunes were told and the dead made to find lost objects; the "Tabernacle of the Third Coming" where a woman in male clothing preached the "crusade Against Salt;" and the "Temple Moderne" under whose glass and chromium roof "Brain-Breathing, the Secret of the Aztecs" was taught. . . . a man stood up to speak. . . . The message he had brought to the city was one that an illiterate anchorite might have given decadent Rome. . . . Tod didn't laugh at the man's rhetoric. He knew it was unimportant. What mattered were his messianic rage and the emotional response of his hearers. They sprang to their feet, shaking their fists and shouting. On the altar someone began to beat a bass drum and soon the entire congregation was singing "Onward Christian Soldiers." (DL, 142)

On the day of the riot, the crowd gathers in front of Kahn's Persian Palace Theatre where there is to be a world premiere of a new picture. Thousands of people eager for a glimpse of their movie idols gather several hours before the celebrities arrive. The police are there to keep a lane of traffic open for the limousines of the stars and to protect them from the mob. The cheaters are there--a reporter with his microphone:

The police force would have to be doubled when the stars started to arrive. At the sight of their heroes and heroines, the crowd would turn demoniac. Some little gesture, either too pleasing or too offensive, would start it moving and then nothing but machine guns would stop it. Individually the purpose of its members might simply be to get a souvenir, but collectively it would grab and rend.

A young man with a portable microphone was describing the scene. His rapid, hysterical voice was like that of a revivalist preacher whipping his congregation toward the ecstasy of fits.

"What a crowd, folks! What a crowd! There must be ten thousand excited, screaming fans outside Kahn's Persian tonight. The police can't hold them. Here, listen to them roar."

He held the microphone out and those near it obligingly roared for him. (DL, 176)

As Tod looks over the crowd, he sees that there are no workers, consequently, no responsible people. The crowd is made up of the lower middle classes, the cheated, and every other one is one of his "torchbearers:"

It was a mistake to think them harmless curiosity seekers. They were savage and bitter, especially the middle-aged and the old, and had been made so by boredom and disappointment.

All their lives they had slaved at some kind of dull, heavy labor, behind desks and counters, in the fields and at tedious machines of all sorts, saving their pennies and dreaming of the leisure that would be theirs when they had enough. Finally that day came. They could draw a weekly income of ten or fifteen dollars. Where else should they go but California, the land of sunshine and oranges?

Once there, they discover that sunshine isn't enough. They get tired of oranges, even of avocado pears and passion fruit. Nothing happens. They don't know what to do with their time. . . . Their boredom becomes more and more terrible. They realize that they've been tricked and burn with resentment. Every day of their lives they read the newspapers and went to the movies. Both fed them on lynchings, murder, sex crimes, explosions, wrecks, love nests, fires, miracles, revolutions, wars. This daily diet made sophisticates of them. The sun is a joke. Oranges can't titillate their jaded palates. Nothing can ever be violent enough to make taut their slack minds

and bodies. They have been cheated and betrayed. They have slaved and saved for nothing. (DL, 177)

Very few people in the crowd know how or why the riot starts, but it leaves Tod injured and delirious. In his delirium, he imagines himself at work on his picture "The burning of Los Angeles," which pictures the cheated turning on the cheaters and all of society:

Across the top, parallel with the frame, he had drawn the burning city, a great bonfire of architectural styles, ranging from Egyptian to Cape Cod colonial. Through the center, winding from left to right, was a long hill street and down it, spilling into the middle foreground, came the mob carrying baseball bats and torches. For the faces of its members, he was using the innumerable sketches he had made of the people who came to California to die; the cultists of all sorts, economic as well as religious, the wave, airplane, funeral and preview watchers--all those poor devils who can only be stirred by the promise of miracles and then only to violence. A super "Dr. Know-All Pierce-All" had made the necessary promise and they were marching behind his banner in a great united front of screwballs and screwboxes to purify the land. No longer bored, they sang and danced joyously in the red light of the flames. (DL, 184)

The archetype of declining civilizations with its increasing secularization of the culture fits into the wasteland theme of the Grail metaphor. The existence of Arthur's kingdom was also threatened because of its decreasing spirituality and morality. However, in the legend there was hope because of the Grail and the activities of the Questor.

CHAPTER II

THE ARCHETYPE OF THE GRAIL QUEST

For the presentation of his philosophy in The Wasteland, Eliot uses the methods by which the collective unconscious expresses itself. His convictions about the world's problems and their solution are presented metaphorically in a dream form. West in Miss Lonelyhearts presents his ideas in an extended metaphor bordering on the allegorical.⁴⁶ Eliot states the advantage of the mythical method: "It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history. . . ." ⁴⁷ In The Wasteland, this immense panorama of futility and anarchy, with possible solutions, is presented in a stream-of-consciousness form as it might come to a troubled mind in a dream. West in Miss Lonelyhearts experiments with a form

⁴⁶ Andreach, p. 49.

⁴⁷ T. S. Eliot, The Dial, November, 1923, review of Ulysses, quoted by Drew, p. 1.

which he calls the comic strip technique. This chapter will discuss: (1) the advantages in the use of the Grail myth as a metaphor, (2) the reworking which each author made of the associated archetypes--the Questor, the Fisher King, Belladonna and the Merchant, and finally (3) the dream and the comic strip technique as art forms.

The use of the Grail legend as a metaphor has many advantages for both Eliot and West in that it (1) allows a continuous parallel between two periods of decay, the present and King Arthur's Camelot; (2) develops the same theme which is developed by both Eliot and West--the failure of secularism in society;⁴⁸ (3) contributes universality because of Miss Weston's interpretation linking it with the traditions of the natural religions; and (4) provides archetypal characters.⁴⁹

The use of the Grail legend as a background myth provides Eliot with the invisible framework of the Grail plot into which he fills the scenes of the wasteland. As that narrative is known to all of his readers, he is free to arrange the poem in the structure of a musical composition

⁴⁸ Moorman, pp. 30-37.

⁴⁹ Audrey F. Cahill, T. S. Eliot and the Human Predicament, pp. 38-40.

in five parts--a form he perfected in the Four Quartettes. The "Burial of the Dead" introduces the theme, the Wise Old Woman, and the symbolism of the poem. "A Game of Chess" shows the pawns of the wasteland, bored and unfulfilled, but fearful of Rebirth. "The Fire Sermon," the title itself implying the Buddhist ideal of renunciation, brings together all the threads of thought, levels of meaning, and symbolism in the poem. The lyric, "Death by Water," recalls the warning given by Madame Sosostris, "Fear death by water." In the final section, "What the Thunder Said," the Questor meets his destiny in the Chapel and hears the words of the Thunder.⁵⁰

West uses the Grail legend, not as a background myth, but as an extended metaphor. Both Miss Lonelyhearts and The Day have rather simple plots only tangentially connected with the Grail Quest. However, knowledge of the myth is essential to appreciation of West's satire.

Eliot establishes his metaphor by extracting four symbols from the Grail legend--the Wasteland, the Wise Old Woman, the Fisher King, and the Perilous Chapel. West also extracts symbols--the Wasteland, the Fisher King, the Questor,

⁵⁰ Helen Gardner, The Art of T. S. Eliot, pp. 36-42.

and the Initiation sequence of the Perilous Chapel. Both authors develop a Questor, though Eliot's is an illusive and shadowy character, allowing the reader to identify with that role.

The Wasteland's shadowy and dreamlike Questor is invited into the shadow of the Red Rock to hear the theme, "I will show you fear in a handful of dust." Like other Grail Questors, he immediately seeks the advice of the Wise Old Woman, in this case Madame Sosostriis, who, with the help of her Tarot pack, presents a cast of characters that could not have been brought together in any other way. The first card is the Questor's, the drowned Phoenician Sailor who is a type of Adonis, the resurrection god who is annually given a watery burial.⁵¹ Next is "Belladonna, the Lady of the Rocks, / The lady of Situations." Then follows the Fisher King, the Merchant who carried some hidden thing on his back and the Hanged Man who is arbitrarily the Christ (WL, 11. 44-55). From this point, the reader is unaware of Eliot's Questor as he accompanies him on his Quest, seeing the sterility of the wasteland as he sees it, suffering with him the drouth and thirst of the wasteland, and finally

⁵¹ Weston, p. 47.

witnessing the events in the Perilous Chapel.

Of West's Questor, Miss Lonelyhearts, we learn that he is forced into a quest for values by the suffering of the correspondents seeking advice in his daily column. Like Cretein's Questor, he is a weak and erring knight who knows not where to begin or how to proceed in his Quest.⁵² Ridiculed by Shrike for his Christian background and his attraction to the Christ dream, he attempts a synthesis of religions more acceptable to the wasteland. It is his task to heal the Fisher King, but the identification of the Fisher King presents a problem in Miss Lonelyhearts.

The Fisher King was originally a vegetation deity in the tradition of Tammuz, Adonis, Attis, Osiris, Dionysus, Baal, and Hermes, to mention a few. Only Tammuz, however, shows the evolution of a Life Cult from the worship of a vegetation deity on a yearly cycle of Birth-Growth-Decay to a semi-divine king, a ruler who was worshiped as a god. Though the length of the cycle changed from a yearly basis to a generation basis, the relationship between the god-ruler and his subjects remained the same. While the King was young, vigorous, and virile, his kingdom flourished.

⁵² Moorman, pp. 26-28.

With his old-age, sickness, impotence, or wounding, his kingdom suffered drouth and the infertility of man and beast.⁵³ The Fisher King is identified in The Wasteland as the fisherman who was

. . . fishing in the dull canal
 On a winter evening round behind the gashouse
 Musing upon the king my brother's wreck
 And on the king my father's death before him.
 (WL, 11. 189-192)

At the end of the poem, he is again discovered fishing upon the shore as he awaits the coming of the Questor. He remains a shadowy symbol with no reference being made to his effect on the wasteland. Eliot's emphasis is entirely on the lack of spirituality and the misuse of sex among the inhabitants of the wasteland. West, on the other hand, places a great deal of stress on the relation between the spiritual sterility of the leader and the spiritual sterility of the people.

None of the critics consulted identifies a Fisher King in West. However, Andreach points out that Shrike has the characteristics of Pan, the half-goat, half-man son of Hermes, a phallic god, whose symbol of worship was stones.⁵⁴

⁵³ Weston, pp. 114-119.

⁵⁴ Andreach, pp. 49-52.

Like the Fisher King, Pan was a vegetation deity. Several details support this view of Shrike as Pan. First, as Miss Lonelyhearts sits in the park pondering his dilemma, he searches the sky for a sign, but there are no angels. Tradition has it that, when the angels announced the birth of Christ, a great cry of lamentation arose from the earth "Great Pan is Dead." Second, Shrike has a "deadpan" expression and advocates a goat-adding-machine religion. Further, Miss Lonelyhearts is the Butt of Shrike's jokes and wants Mary Shrike to help him give Shrike horns. Pan, though lecherous, was ugly and unattractive to women and had few affairs, one of the few being with Diana of the multiple breasts who was goddess of both chastity and fertility. It was Pan to whom the early Christians gave embellishments to make him the "Devil."⁵⁵ By virtue of these details, Shrike qualifies as Pan who was a vegetation deity.

An argument for Pan as the Fisher King depends upon his having a realm or sphere of influence in which his pernicious influence can have a deleterious effect on the people of the wasteland. By a master stroke of satire, West gives the diabolical Pan a realm as the managing editor of

⁵⁵ Andreach, pp. 49-52.

the newsroom, where he exploits weakness and gullibility, destroys the Christ-dream, promotes false dreams, and instigates violence. His voice dominates the newsroom and the speakeasy as he harangues his attendants, the reporters. "I give you the renaissance. What a period! What pagentry! Drunken popes . . . Beautiful courtesans . . . Illegitimate children . . ." (ML, 6). Of more interest to Shrike is the period which the renaissance revived, the days of pagan Greece. "To the brown Greek manuscripts and mistresses with the great smooth marbly limbs" (ML, 6). Except for the regenerative myths with their "dance-drunk Indian," he is against all religion. Speaking of the soul he says, "The Catholic hunts this bird with bread and wine, the Hebrew . . . the Protestant . . . the Buddhist . . . the Negro . . . I spit on them all" (ML, 7). By this satiric and blasphemous exaggeration, West develops a Fisher King in Shrike, the personification of the mass media, who is part of West's philosophy of the cheaters and the cheated mentioned earlier, and who is largely to blame for the sterility of the wasteland. Miss Lonelyhearts' meditation indicates this philosophy: "Men have always fought their misery with dreams. Although dreams were once powerful,

they have been made puerile by the movies, radio, and newspapers. Among many betrayals, this one is the worst"

(ML, 39). Though this destruction of the ennobling vision is the worst betrayal, West indicates that there are others.

The exploitation of dreams has become a business as the wastelander, a mass man, in his gullibility continues to hope for the "magic" solution for every problem. During an evening at the El Gaucho, Miss Lonelyhearts meditates on this desire for easy solutions:

Guitars, bright shawls, exotic foods, outlandish costumes--all these things were part of the business of dreams. He had learned not to laugh at the advertisements offering to teach writing, cartooning, engineering, to add inches to the biceps and to develop the bust. He should therefore realize that the people who came to El Gaucho were the same as those who wanted to write and live the life of an artist, wanted to be an engineer and wear leather puttees, wanted to develop a grip that would impress the boss, wanted to cushion Raoul's head on their swollen breasts. They were the same people as those who wrote to Miss Lonelyhearts for help. (ML, 22)

His Miss Lonelyhearts' advice column has been initiated by Shrike as a circulation stunt to gain new subscribers. This greed on a larger scale is exhibited in Hollywood, also, where the business of dreams has become big business. Some motion picture producers discuss the movie magnates:

"But how are you going to get rid of the illiterate mockies that run it? They've got a strangle hold on

the industry. Maybe they're intellectual stumblebums, but they're damn good business men. Or at least they know how to go into receivership and come up with a gold watch in their teeth."

"They ought to put some of the millions they make back into the business again. Like Rockefeller does with his Foundation. People used to hate the Rockefellers, but now instead of hollering about their ill-gotten oil dough, everybody praises them for what the Foundation does. It's a swell stunt and pictures could do the same thing. Have a Cinema Foundation and make contributions to Science and Art. You know, give the racket a front." (DL, 71)

This is West's wasteland. The cheaters, who exhibit characteristics of the vegetation deities, prey upon the cheated who exhibit characteristics of the worshipers of the ancient deities, particularly the desire for an easy, pleasant, magic solution to every problem. The characteristics of the vegetation deities of the regenerative myths appear also in The Day, underscoring the satiric quality of West's emphasis on the Life Cult.

In The Day, the echoes of the regenerative myths are most pronounced in three characters whom Tod is painting in a set of lithographs called "The Dancers," which feature Harry, Faye, and Abe dancing against the background of the people who have come to California to die, the cheated:

They [the dancers] changed with each plate, but the group of uneasy people who formed their audience remained the same. They stood staring at the performers in just the way that they stared at the masqueraders

on Vine Street. It was their stares that drove Abe and the others to spin crazily and leap into the air with twisted backs like hooked trout. (DL, 62)

Harry Greener is reminiscent of the Priest of Nemi who, fearing that a younger man would climb to the top of the tree and steal the Golden Bough which was the symbol of his reign, dared not sleep, but kept circling the tree day and night to guard that symbol.⁵⁶ Harry continues his acting, spinning like a top until the spring breaks (DL, 92). The emphasis on youth is evident, also, in his daughter Faye, who is seventeen but dressed to look twelve (DL, 94). In addition to being a modern Siren luring men to their destruction, Faye pays for her father's last rites by prostitution to strangers just as the women of Sumer paid tribute to the dead Tammuz by offering money solicited on the street from strangers.⁵⁷

The third of the dancers, the dwarf Abe, has definite archetypal and mythical qualities. The archetype of the Miraculous Child, who may appear in dreams and myth as a dwarf, is the herald of a new life and was represented in Greek

⁵⁶ Frazer, pp. 3-4.

⁵⁷ Weston, p. 48.

mythology by Dionysus,⁵⁸ who served a double purpose being a vegetation deity and also the god of wine, Bacchus. Dionysus, both benefactor and destroyer of man,⁵⁹ would spring up in an unexpected place having phallic significance, such as the furrow of a field,⁶⁰ and offer a wonderful opportunity to the peasant and his wife. The Dionysian revels, celebrated at harvest and enlivened with wine, were the most orgiastic of all the festivals. At one point, the god, having changed into an animal, was dismembered alive by his frenzied worshipers and buried. In the spring of the year, his resurrection was heralded with great rejoicing.⁶¹ Abe had sprung up in an unexpected place which had phallic significance, had introduced Abe to a new life at the San Bernardino where he met Harry and Faye, and had continued to offer opportunities for betting on the races. That he is also the destroyer is demonstrated by the fact that Tod's new life leads to insanity. The revels of the last night at Homer's, the killing

⁵⁸ Jung, Symbols of Transformation, pp. 127-128.

⁵⁹ Edith Hamilton, Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes, p. 60.

⁶⁰ Jung, Symbols of Transformation, p. 340.

⁶¹ Hamilton, pp. 61-62.

of Abe's cock, and the mating dance of Faye and Mig have the quality of a Dionysian revel, foreshadowing the violence of the next day's riot. Perhaps, the most important clue in establishing Abe as Dionysus is the fact that he is Tod's muse. Dionysus was also the god of inspiration:⁶² "Despite the sincere indignation that Abe's grotesque depravity aroused in him, he welcomed his company. The little man excited him and in that way made him feel certain of his need to paint" (DL, 62). Ironically, Tod in painting the "Burning of Los Angeles" is pursuing the role of a Jeremiah in his prediction of doom. Jeremiah prophesied the Captivity as punishment for the worship of the Life Cult. Tod's identification with the prophet implies a judgmental attitude on the part of West toward the Life Cult as he sees evidences of it in his wasteland.

West's mythical characters, particularly Shrike, Abe, and Faye, are archetypal. Shockingly grotesque in their exhibition of raw, unvitiated nature, they bring the unmitigated archetypal qualities directly into a modern setting where one expects to find the traits of civilized society. Eliot's archetypal characters in *The Wasteland* are developed

⁶² Hamilton, p. 60.

differently. The remote, the historic, and the modern are jumbled together in swift juxtapositions to emphasize Eliot's contention that all times are alike.

One of Eliot's most important archetypal characters is Belladonna, the Lady of situations, not of marriage and motherhood. The development of the archetype begins with hints of two ancient queens who, though linked with the gods, resort to self-destruction when they are rejected by their lovers. "Burnished throne" suggests Cleopatra who was worshipped as Isis, a goddess of fertility. "Laquearia" recalls Dido, Queen of Carthage, who loved the son of a goddess. A sylvan painting on the wall of the room introduces Philomel:

. . . by the barbarous king
 So rudely forced; yet there the nightengale
 Filled all the desert with inviolable voice
 And still she cried, and still the world pursues.
 (WL, 11. 99-102)

The final clause makes the transition into the present. The first modern woman portrayed is obviously a member of the wealthy upper class, overcome with boredom:

'What shall I do now? What shall I do?'
 'I shall rush out as I am, and walk the street
 'With my hair down, so. What shall we do tomorrow?
 'What shall we ever do?'

The hot water at ten.
 And if it rains, a closed car at four.
 And we shall play a game of Chess.

(WL, 11. 131-137)

In juxtaposition, we find lower-class Lil, without money to buy new teeth and resorting to abortions, as she is being discussed by the friend who is taking Albert her husband away from her:

But if Albert makes off, it won't be for lack of telling.
 You ought to be ashamed, I said, to look so antique,
 (And her only thirty-one)
 I can't help it, she said, pulling a long face,
 It's them pills I took, to bring it off, she said.
 (She's had five already, and nearly died of young George)
 The chemist said it would be all right, but I've
 never been the same. (WL, 11. 155-161)

These unhappy, bedeviled marriages are followed in "The Fire Sermon" by a "cauldron of unholy loves" all outside of marriage.

The unholy loves, begun with Mrs. Porter and Sweeney, continue with the average typist and clerk and end with Elizabeth Queen of England and Leicester. The men linked with the Belladonna archetype, Eliot explains, blend with the merchant and become one archetype. The Merchant was originally, with the soldier and the slave, the missionary who dispersed the knowledge of the mysteries, the "higher" religions which strove for union with the gods.⁶³ In the modern wasteland, his descendents have degenerated into a symbol of decadence and doomed civilizations--the merchant's

⁶³ Weston, p. 170.

invitation to the city is an invitation to a homosexual tryst. West's Miss Lonelyhearts, the son of a Baptist minister and fallen away from his early training, follows this same pattern.

The connection between the people of the wasteland and the public worshipers of the vegetation deities is clarified in Eliot's Sweeney Agonistes, which features his symbol of the carnal man. The following lines which carry the cyclic refrain of the regenerative myths, Birth, Growth, Decay, portray the escape to the level of the collective unconscious on a South Sea island:

SWEENEY:
 Well that's life on a crocodile isle.
 There's no telephones
 There's no gramophones
 There's no motor cars
 No two-seaters, no six-seaters,
 No Citroen, no Rolls-Royce.
 Nothing to eat but the fruit as it grows.
 Nothing to see but the palmtrees one way
 And the sea the other way,
 Nothing to hear but the sound of the surf.
 Nothing at all but three things

DORIS: What things?

SWEENEY: Birth, and copulation, and death.
 That's all, that's all, that's all, that's all,
 Birth, and copulation, and death.

DORIS: I'd be bored. (SA, 118-119)

The composite Belladonna-Merchant archetype, which conforms with the sterility motif of the Grail legend and the sexual emphasis of the natural religions with their

worship of the Life Principle, is the only domination developed in either wasteland. The Doyles, Abe, Faye, and Mig, involved as they are in modern activities, are shocking in their depravity. Eliot, according to Kirk, "gave hell back to us."⁶⁴ In West, according to Andreach, the pestilence "was invited in to stay."⁶⁵

In The Wasteland, Eliot faces and exposes the depraved and corrupt inner condition of man. He is not alone in this endeavor as Expressionist Art in general is an expression of the collective unconscious. Though the dream, The Wasteland, follows the tradition of the "higher" dream of Dante,⁶⁶ the form of expression is in the manner of the collective unconscious as developed by the Expressionists.

The expressionists, in revealing the contents of the collective unconscious, found the best art media to be the motion picture film-strip which employs montage, a succession of pictures or images following each other in a synchronism of contrasts or parallels, or in a narrative sequence, always

⁶⁴ Russell Kirk, T. S. Eliot and His Age, p. 59.

⁶⁵ Andreach, p. 59.

⁶⁶ Fabricius, p. 17.

without any transitional material.⁶⁷ Eliot in developing the "script" for his dream poem, The Wasteland, uses a succession of clear, concise word images juxtaposed one upon another without transition. An example of contrasting montage appears at the beginning of the poem, in which three contrasting scenes appear: (1) rebirth in nature, (2) life far removed from nature in a fashionable resort, and (3) a characterization of Marie, one of the women at the resort. The shifting of scenes is evident in the length of lines:

April is the cruellest month, breeding
 Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
 Memory and desire, stirring
 Dull roots with spring rain.
 Winter kept us warm, covering
 Earth in forgetful snow, feeding
 A little life with dried tubers.
 Summer surprised us, coming over the Starnbergersee
 With a shower of rain; we stopped in the colonnade,
 And went on in sunlight, into the Hofgarten,
 And drank coffee, and talked for an hour.
 Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch.
 And when we were children, staying at the arch-duke's
 My cousin's, he took me out on a sled,
 And I was frightened. He said, Marie,
 Marie, hold on tight. And down we went.
 In the mountains, there you feel free.
 I read, much of the night, and go south in the winter.
(WL, 11.1-18)

In the first scene, the lines have four accents with a medial pause. To emphasize the dark discomfort and pain of rebirth,

⁶⁷ The film-strip technique was used very effectively in "What the Thunder Said" which will be discussed in connection with the rebirth sequence.

the slow rhythm of the first four lines is enhanced by the alliterative use of the consonants r, l, and n within the line. The change of scene from the forest to the superficial chatter of the fashionable resort is emphasized with a longer line. The faster rhythm is accompanied by a change in alliteration within the line--six s's in the first line. The phantasmagoric shift as Marie reminisces about her childhood is emphasized by a slower line, with a return to the longer last line, "I read, much of the night, and go south in the winter."

Parallel montage is found in the first passage in "A Game of Chess" which presents Cleopatra, Dido, and Philomel, all part of the same Belladonna Archetype, with contrast in the last lines:

The Chair she sat in, like a burnished throne,
 Glowed on the marble, where the glass
 Held up by standards wrought with fruited vines
 From which a golden Cupidon peeped out
 (Another hid his eyes behind his wing)
 Doubled the flames of seven branched candelabra
 Reflecting light upon the table as
 The glitter of her jewels rose to meet it,
 From satin cases poured in rich profusion.
 In vials of ivory and coloured glass
 Unstoppered, lurked her strange synthetic perfumes,
 Unguent, powdered, or liquid--troubled, confused
 And drowned the sense in odours; stilled by the air
 That freshened from the window, these ascended
 In fattening the prolonged candle-flames,
 Flung their smoke into the laquearia,

Stirring the pattern on the coffered ceiling.
 Huge sea-wood fed with copper
 Burned green and orange, framed by the coloured stone,
 In which sad light a carved dolphin swam.
 Above the antique mantel was displayed
 As though a window gave upon the sylvan scene
 The change of Philomel, by the barbarious king
 So rudely forced; yet there the nightingale
 Filled all the desert with inviolable voice
 And still she cried, and still the world pursues,
 'Jug Jug' to dirty ears. (WL, 11. 77-103)

With the change of time from past to present and the change of thought in the next to the last line, the rhythm changes from the languorous line of four accents with medial pause and abundant r's, n's, and l's to iambic pentameter with five s's.

West, in order to express his ideas, experiments with what he calls a comic-strip technique, which he explains in "Some Notes on Miss Lonelyhearts,"⁶⁸ He conceives of the chapters as squares "in which many things happen through one action." However, this form is modified. Miss Lonelyhearts becomes the portrait of a "priest of our time who has a religious experience." Each chapter pictures a state of mind; for instance, the first chapter, "Miss Lonelyhearts, Help Me," portrays maladjustment. The action instead of moving only forward moves forward, backward, up and down as in a

⁶⁸ West, "Some Notes on Miss L." p. 67

picture. Some of the later chapters also present mental states such as "deadness and disorder" and "self-torture by conscious sinning." He credits William James with providing the psychology which follows the supposedly Christian character of Miss Lonelyhearts' religious experience.⁶⁹ His technique is particularly effective in picturing his flesh and blood characters who are not real people, but the grotesque, violent caricatures which inhabit comic-strips. Both authors in developing the rebirth theme, use the method of unconscious expression, the dream, though in different ways.

As Eliot incorporates the film-strip technique into his dream form, he also incorporates another technique of the unconscious expression. In a dream the vital message is hidden and must be interpreted by the archetypal symbolism of the dream.⁷⁰ The Wasteland through the use of metaphor presents the problem of the wasteland. Interwoven into that presentation are the symbols of three types of rebirth, each of which may be considered as a solution to the problems of the wasteland. However, Eliot must already have made his

⁶⁹ West, "Some Notes on Miss L." pp. 66-67.

⁷⁰ Fabricius, p. 105.

personal choice of orthodox Christianity as the best system, because Christian rebirth is the vital hidden message of The Wasteland dream. West, also, presents rebirth, but through the symbolism of the collective unconscious.

CHAPTER III

THE REBIRTH ARCHETYPE

Critics have found support for two interpretations of the rebirth archetype in The Wasteland, an interpretation according to Jung's Archetypes of Transformation developed by Bodkin, and an interpretation according to the principles of Conscious Individuation developed by P. W. Martin and Johannes Fabricious. Cleanth Brooks considers Christian material to be at the center of The Wasteland, but does not pursue the subject of Christian Rebirth.⁷¹ Since no previous critic has interpreted the rebirth archetype in The Wasteland by the Christian symbolism of Ash Wednesday which it contains or has developed the rebirth archetype in West's Miss Lonelyhearts, both interpretations will be attempted in this paper. This chapter will present: (1) a brief background for each of the three interpretations of rebirth used by Eliot and a

⁷¹ Cleanth Brooks, "The Wasteland: An Analysis" in A Collection of Critical Essays on The Wasteland, ed. Jay Martin, pp. 85-86.

presentation of rebirth symbolism which applies to all three interpretations, (2) a discussion of the manner in which each interpretation is applied to The Wasteland, and (3) the development of the rebirth archetype in Miss Lonelyhearts.

The beginning of the rebirth archetype dates back to antiquity. A handsome mortal of the Adonis and Hyacinth type was loved by a goddess, died a violent death, and by the intercession of the goddess was allowed to spend half of each year in the land of the living. Each spring brought a "flowery" resurrection of the mortal who eventually took on the status of a god. The deity's name varied with the locale --Tammuz in Babylonia, Adonis in Greece, Osiris in Egypt, Attis and Baal in Phoenicia--but in general their function was the same. As the vegetation withered after harvest, the dead god was buried with excessive wailing and lamentation, and in the spring he was resurrected with exuberant joy.⁷² In this manner, the archetypes of transformation were developed--death, burial, descent followed by rebirth, ascent, resurrection to the land of the living. Jung contends that, because the archetypes of transformation retain the pattern of the long, slow evolution of religion, they have a

⁷² Weston, pp. 43-48.

numinous quality, and their use in poetry and literature has an unconsciously ennobling effect on man, raising him from a "lower" to a "higher" level of thought and action. Jung believes that the phenomenal success of Christianity in changing the nature of man was due to the expertise with which Jesus used the archetypes of transformation as demonstrated by his talk with Nicodemus about rebirth. Consequently, he believes that a substitute for Christianity based on the archetypes could be as effective in the twentieth century as Christianity was in the first. It should be noted that Jung can not scientifically refute the contention of the orthodox Christians that an outside power, the spirit of God, can enter the psyche and change the nature of man. However, he does not recognize such a supernatural power.⁷³

A second form of rebirth, Conscious Individuation, was developed by the ancient Hindus far beyond the knowledge and practice of modern psychiatry.⁷⁴ It also acquired the symbolism of the natural religions, descent and ascent. Conscious individuation is the conscious integration of the conscious and the unconscious halves of the psyche for the

⁷³ Jung, Symbols of Transformation, pp. 223-232.

⁷⁴ Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, pp. 215-217.

purpose of achieving "wholeness," releasing the creative energies of the collective unconscious and realizing the full potential of the individual. This integration of the conscious and the collective unconscious was the aim of the great Oriental religions, Buddhism and Taoism, as it is today the aim of psychiatry and the Gnostic systems.⁷⁵

The myth which particularly represents individuation stresses the danger of the process--the possibility of no return to consciousness. Pirithous, wishing to have Persephone for his bride, persuaded Theseus to help him abduct her from the kingdom of the dead. They entered a chasm and descended into the bowels of the earth. The Lord of Hades invited them to sit in his presence, and, desiring to rest, they did so. However, when they wished to rise, they could not, for they were "stuck" in the chair of forgetfulness. Hercules later rescued Theseus, but Pirithous remained.⁷⁶ The descent into the underworld came to be known in classical terms as the "nykea," or night journey. Psychologists consider the natural rhythms of introversion and

⁷⁵ Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, pp. 74-78.

⁷⁶ Jung, Symbols of Transformation, p. 293.

extroversion to be a form of descent and rebirth.⁷⁷

The concept of descent-ascent and darkness-light also came to be associated with Christian rebirth, the third type of rebirth presented by Eliot. Experiences, such as the "dark night of the mystics," Dante's descent into Hell in the Inferno, and Augustine's deep sorrow and despondency which preceded his conversion, came to be known as a night journey. In every case, the night journey was followed by a change of direction known as rebirth. Regardless of the emphasis, the symbolism of rebirth is the same.

The rebirth sequence begins with the individual in a "way apart" from the well-beaten path because of a problem such as sickness, old-age, lack of contact with spiritual life-giving sources, a feeling of emptiness, or dissatisfaction with one's self. The second stage is the descent or night-journey which involves facing one's inner condition, the shadow and the collective unconscious. The third stage, the mountain top experience, indicates the beginning of a break through. Next, the storm and rain match the inner sequence of pent-up energy, discharge, and release. Finally

⁷⁷ Bodkin, pp. 70-75.

comes the dawn, the light, the revelation of a new way.⁷⁸

Bodkin, having accepted Jung's theory of the numinous quality of the archetypes, writes of "that within us which leaps in response" to the expression of an archetype in literature. She sees The Wasteland as a poem about rebirth, and from that standpoint the following evaluation is interesting:

Notably the poem accomplishes--in Jung's phrase--"a translation of the primordial image into the language of the present," through its gathering into simultaneity of impression images from the remote past with incidents and phrases of the everyday present.⁷⁹

Bodkin comments on the phantasmagoric shifting from the present to ancient myth in "Burial of the Dead." The scene of people on London Bridge, described by Dante's line, "I did not know that death had undone so many," is followed without transition by the scene of the Osiris mysteries with the planted grain so vulnerable to frost or accident. The "hooded hordes" stumbling in cracked earth with the murmur of maternal lamentation in the air above them recall for her the drouth-stricken lands of antiquity and the wailing of

⁷⁸ Bodkin, pp. 37-54. The use of this symbolism in the text will be noted later after discussion of the three interpretations of rebirth in Eliot.

⁷⁹ Bodkin, p. 308.

the women for the dead Enna and for their starving children. For her, the Quest is not yet completed at the end of the poem, and the Questor still awaits the final redeeming vision. The Paradisal love of earth having been presented, the imagination is urged beyond it, and the reader is left to interpret that Beyond.⁸⁰

Conscious individuation as a type of rebirth in The Wasteland is supported by a number of details, including the reference to Sibyl in the epigraph, indicating a night journey possibly into the unconscious; the description of the "shadow at morning striding behind you / Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;" the inclusion of the opposites; and the allusions to Oriental wisdom. Sibyl of Cumae was the wise woman who guided Aeneas on the trip to the underworld to ask help and advice from his dead father. The epigraph pictures her after that event, imprisoned in a cage at the entrance to the underworld. She had been granted the gift of eternal life, but without youth. The boys asked her, "Sibyl, what do you want?" Her reply was, "I want to die."⁸¹

⁸⁰ Bodkin, pp. 307-314.

⁸¹ Grover C. Smith, T. S. Eliot's Poetry and Plays: A Study in Sources and Meaning, p. 69.

The reference to Sibyl could imply that The Wasteland involves a descent into the unconscious.

The guide on the modern individual's "nykea" is the "shadow," the personification of the personal unconscious made up of the negatives of the conscious personality. It has been explained variously as the dark side of the spirit-flesh dichotomy, or as a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde relationship. The way to the unconscious is through dreams in which the shadow appears as the guide, friend, or counselor. It is he who drags the contents of the collective unconscious into consciousness.⁸² By Jung's constructive technique, the problems of the psyche are resolved one by one as they are brought into the conscious mind by dreams.⁸³ The Wasteland's reference to the shadow may be interpreted to mean that the shadow rises to meet one at night, the time of dreams, or in the evening of life, a common time for neurosis.

The full view of one's inner self, the collective unconscious, is overwhelming because modern man, after centuries of Christian dominance, is totally unaware of the de-

⁸² Jung, Psychology and Alchemy, pp. 31-37.

⁸³ Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, pp. 79-87.

pravity and corruption within him.⁸⁴ At this point, the finding of deep centre is crucial. Both Martin and Fabricius discuss individuation in Christian terms with deep centre being the Kingdom of God within you--the result of Christian rebirth.⁸⁵ Jung, however, warns against this view. He finds individuation to be unpredictable; many of his patients return to Christianity, but others turn to those systems whose symbolism is based on the symbolism of the collective unconscious, Buddhism, Taoism, or a modern Gnostic system.⁸⁶ A distinct danger, according to Jung, lies in the possibility that the collective unconscious, as indicated by the Theseus myth, may become completely dominant precluding any return to consciousness. With the finding of deep centre, there is a resolution of the opposites which are an intimation of the Rule of Enantiodromia formulated by Heraclitus stating that every force eventually encounters its opposite force. For the mental health of the individual, it is essential that a balance be found between the opposites. Ancient Chinese philosophy called this resolution of opposites

⁸⁴ Jung, Symbols of Transformation, pp. 70-72.

⁸⁵ P. W. Martin, Experiment in Depth: A Study of the Work of Jung, Eliot and Toynbee, pp. 173-177.

⁸⁶ Jung, Symbols of Transformation, pp. 70-72.

the law of Yin and Yang, rest and activity.⁸⁷ Other opposites commonly encountered by individuals are grief--rejoicing, hysteria--calm, introversion--extroversion, and depression--exuberance.

Martin claims to see the process of conscious individuation in the thinking of Eliot as it is expressed in his poetry, beginning with the use of the mythical method in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock."⁸⁸ "Prufrock" and all of the early poems are about the persona and the participation mystique. They portray the emptiness of modern life lived apart from a life-giving source, but there is always the Myth to give a religious perspective. Eventually, the Dissatisfaction expressed in these poems crystalizes, perhaps because Eliot finds himself in a "way apart" due to life's problems. In The Wasteland, Eliot, according to Martin, faces the human situation in its emptiness and depravity.⁸⁹ Hollow Men shows the inner condition as Eliot meets the shadow. The Ariel poems dealing with death and rebirth show the stirrings of the individuation process.

⁸⁷ P. W. Martin, p. 139.

⁸⁸ P. W. Martin, p. 181.

⁸⁹ P. W. Martin, p. 181.

Ash Wednesday portrays the struggle itself in which Eliot himself achieved a resolution of the opposites--the opposing forces which must be balanced if a person is to find "wholeness." Ash Wednesday also marks Eliot's finding of deep centre:

And the light shown in darkness and
 Against the Word the unstilled world still whirled
 About the centre of the silent Word. (AW, V.11. 7-9)

Martin argues the final vision comes in the Four Quartettes with the realization of the continuous intersection of the timeless with time.⁹⁰ However, The Wasteland itself actually appears to be what Bodkin suggests, a poem of rebirth, not merely an exposition of the human condition. Furthermore, a careful examination of the text of The Wasteland reveals that, though many symbols and details point toward the types of rebirth mentioned, both Bodkin's interpretation and Martin's interpretation are ruled out.

The opening lines of the second section of the introduction state the impossibility of understanding rebirth from the standpoint of the regenerative myths which are part of the wasteland. Drew indicates that the "broken images"

⁹⁰ P. W. Martin, p. 181.

are the myths:⁹¹

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water. (WL, 11. 19-24)

The "broken images" apparently do not offer the most satisfactory solution, and the remainder of the passage suggests "something different," perhaps better than individuation:

Only

There is shadow under this red rock,
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),
And I will show you something different from either
Your shadow at morning striding behind you
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.
(WL, 11. 24-30)

The echo of Ezekial, "Son of Man"⁹² implies that the Questor hears the voice which addressed Ezekial. The significance of Ezekial is emphasized by repeated "echoes" in the next two sections: "Where dead men lost their bones" (WL, 1. 116) and "By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept" (WL, 1. 182).

These three references to Ezekial make it reasonable to suppose that they indicate the key to the main symbolism of the poem, particularly since symbolism from Ezekial is

⁹¹ Drew, p. 69.

⁹² Ezekial II, 1.

used in Ash Wednesday:

And God said

Shall these bones live? shall these
Bones live?

.....

And God said

Prophecy to the wind, to the wind only for only
The wind will listen. (AW, II. 11. 4-6, 21-23)

In these lines, "bones" symbolize the death of the natural man known to psychology as the "collective unconscious" or the "id", and "wind" symbolizes the spirit of God. A reading of Ezekial indicates that "bones" might also symbolize the dead-in-life inhabitants of the wasteland:

The hand of the Lord . . . set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones . . . And, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: . . . Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, Prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. (Ezekial 37, 1-5, 9)

An examination of the text reveals that the "bones" and the "wind" reappear in each of the succeeding sections of The Wasteland. In "A Game of Chess," they are combined with rat's alley:

'My nerves are bad to-night. Yes, bad. Stay with me.
'Speak to me. Why do you never speak. Speak.

'What are you thinking of? What thinking? What?
'I never know what you are thinking. Think'

I think we are in rat's alley
Where the dead men lost their bones.

'What is that noise?'

The wind under the door.

'What is that noise now? What is the wind doing?'

Nothing again nothing.

'Do

'You know nothing? Do you see nothing? Do you remember
'Nothing?'

I remember

Those pearls that were his eyes. (WL, 11. 111-125)

Though the last reply returns to the symbolism of the vegetation deities, the Christian symbolism has been established in the "wind" and the "bones." Also established is the fact that the doors of the wasteland are closed to the spirit of Eliot's God, whose spirit might have breathed life into the half-life of their existence.

The next reference to the "wind" and the "bones" is found in "The Fire Sermon" where the Fisher King is first discovered fishing in the dull canal. "The wind / Crosses the brown land unheard," (WL, 11. 174, 175) drowned out by other sounds, "But at my back . . . I hear / The rattle of bones and chuckle spread from ear to ear? (WL, 11. 185, 186). Nine lines later, there is a repetition and a development of the Wasteland sounds beyond a "chuckle." This time, the

"bones" are rattled by a rat's foot. "But at my back . . .
I hear / The sound of horns and motors which shall bring /
Sweeney to Mrs. Porter in the spring" (WL, ll. 296-298).

The lyric "Death by Water" serves as a double symbol. Adonis, a type of the vegetation deities, carries on the symbolism of the regenerative myths, and Christian baptism symbolizes Christian rebirth. The "bones" are here, plucked by a current, and there is a warning reminiscent of the warning given to the Questor by Madame Sosotris: "O you who turn the wheel and look to windward, / Consider Phlebas, who was once handsome and tall as you" (WL, ll. 320, 321). Also included are the opposites which must be considered in either individuation or Christian rebirth, profit-loss, rose-fell, and age-youth. However, Christianity differs from all other religions in not resolving the opposing forces of good and evil,⁹³ as Eliot emphasizes in The Rock:

The world turns and the world changes,
But one thing does not change.
In all of my years, one thing does not change.
However you disguise it, this thing does not change:
The Perpetual struggle of Good and Evil. (TR, 149)

The last reference to the Christian symbolism is found in the rebirth sequence of "What the Thunder Said."

⁹³ Jung, Psychology and Alchemy, pp. 19-20.

An open door welcomes the Questor into the "winds" home where he learns that "Dry bones can harm no one" (WL, 1. 391). The crowing of the cock heralds a new day, and a damp gust brings rain--Augustine's mighty storm and mighty shower of tears. In the lines following the rebirth sequence, Eliot presents the nucleus of the Christian philosophy he was to develop later concerning what Jung calls the building up of consciousness. Eliot, later, terms it "Make perfect your will!" (TR, 149). The concept is presented, here, in three words, give-sympathize-control, with a few lines which present a Christian interpretation.

These three interpretations of the rebirth archetype, Jung's Archetypes of Transformation, Conscious Individuation, and Christian Rebirth, present the available choices as Eliot sees them and presents them for the consideration of the reader. In "What the Thunder Said," the Questor is discovered as he leaves the sterile wasteland and enters the desert mountains on his journey toward the Perilous Chapel. In a vision, he sees the Passion enacted at Gethsemane and Calvary, and immediately he experiences the torment of the drouth-stricken mountains. The dying Questor has unquestionably reached the limit of his strength:

If there were water

And no rock
 If there were rock
 And also water
 And water
 A spring
 A pool among the rock
 If there were the sound of water only
 Not the cicada
 And dry grass singing
 And sound of water over a rock
 Where the hermit-thrush sings in the pine trees
 Drip drop drip drop drop drop
 But there is no water. (WL, ll. 346-359)

In his extremity, the Questor is aware of One who walks beside him as the resurrected Saviour walked with his disciples on the road to Emmaus. About them high in the air are the sounds of maternal lamentation, perhaps, as Bodkin suggests, the women of antiquity wailing for Tammuz or Enna, possibly an Old Testament echo--"Rachel weeping for her children!" The storm and destruction raging about them have set the stage for the rebirth sequence.

The Questor is in the "way apart" high in the mountains. In the night, he finds the descent into "this decayed hole among the mountains" which leads to the Perilous Chapel. Following the Initiation or Rebirth, the symbolic death and resurrection with the god, comes the crowing of the cock, the light, and finally rain. The entire sequence is compressed into ten lines:

In this decayed hole among the mountains
 In the faint moonlight, the grass is singing
 Over the tumbled graves, about the chapel
 There is the empty chapel, only the wind's home.
 It has no windows, and the door swings,
 Dry bones can harm no one.
 Only a cock stood on the rooftree
 Co co rico co co rico
 In a flash of lightening. Then a damp gust
 Bringing rain. (WL, ll. 386-395)

With the suddenness of a dream, the scene shifts to the jungles of the East for the words of the Thunder given with onomatopoeic effect: Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata. The shift to an Oriental scene and Oriental wisdom expressed in Oriental language re-emphasizes the universality of the Wasteland's problem.⁹⁴

Eliot's solutions are traditional. Like the archetypal characters of the wasteland who have always been the same, the solutions reach far back into the past. Man still has the same choices. Nothing has changed. West in Miss Lonelyhearts departs from these traditions to formulate a synthesis of personal experience and vision from the collective unconscious. Yet, in a sense, he, too, is traditional. He tends toward the traditional heresies of the Christian era.

⁹⁴ The world religions systems have always been concerned with controlling the collective unconscious and dealing with the orgies of the natural religions. Consequently, Buddhism is a religion of self denial.

The direction of rebirth established by the text of Miss Lonelyhearts is not the direction one might expect from the comments of Light based on a letter written by West: "In it he stated his conviction that the survival of humanity depended upon its acceptance of the Christian ideals of Dostoevsky."⁹⁵ On the contrary, Miss Lonelyhearts, after reading Father Zossima's philosophy about Divine Love, speculates:

It was excellent advice. If he followed it, he would be a big success. His column would be syndicated and the whole world would learn to love. The Kingdom of Heaven would arrive. He would sit on the right of the Lamb. . . . there would be little use in his fooling himself. His vocation was of a different sort. (ML, 48)

As he proceeds to develop his own philosophy, Miss Lonelyhearts recalls his religious experiences as a boy sitting in his father's church. When he had shouted the name of Christ, something "secret and enormously powerful" had stirred within him. He had developed a rhythmic chant which moved him profoundly--Christ, Christ, Jesus Christ. Though he did not know, then, that this "thing" involved the collective unconscious and carried with it the danger of insanity, his

⁹⁵ James F. Light, "The Christ Dream," in Twentieth-Century Interpretations of Miss Lonelyhearts, ed. Thomas Jackson, p. 32.

experiments with it had been cautious:

He knew now what this thing was--hysteria, a snake whose scales are tiny mirrors in which the dead world takes on a semblance of life. And how dead the world is . . . a world of doorknobs. He wondered if hysteria were really too steep a price to pay for bringing it to life. (ML, 9)

The snake mentioned in the text is an ambivalent symbol of rebirth because it sheds its skin, of healing as demonstrated by its use in the medical symbol, and of the unconscious in its evil manifestations.⁹⁶ The snake played an important part in initiation ceremonies of the natural religions as the initiates were required to kiss the snake and simulate eating it.

One expects to find parallels of the initiation ceremonies in the text. Comerchero points out that the dream episode of the sacrifice of the lamb is such a parallel, corresponding to the initiation experience of the Grail legend in the Perilous Chapel.⁹⁷ Weston refers to two initiations. The exoteric, a "lower" and public ceremony, introduced youths to the mysteries of physical life and death at the time they reached puberty. The esoteric, a

⁹⁶ P. W. Martin, p. 109.

⁹⁷ Comerchero, p. 87.

"higher" and secret ceremonial, taught the mysteries of union with a god by way of conscious ecstasy, and supposedly involved a symbolic death and resurrection with the god.⁹⁸ One may assume that since several lads are involved in the episode of the lamb it is the exoteric or public initiation and postulate that Miss Lonelyhearts' religious experience is the esoteric or secret initiation which consummates the union with the god. As rebirth involves a change of direction, an examination of the text should reveal if Miss Lonelyhearts' experience is actually a rebirth on the level of the natural religions and an expression of the collective unconscious.

The dream of the lamb marks the beginning of violence in the personal life of Miss Lonelyhearts. In the episode of the clean old man, interpreted by Comerchero as a fertility procession, Miss Lonelyhearts twists the arm of the old man and in so doing twists "the arm of Desperate, Broken-hearted, Sick-of-it-all, Disillusioned-with-tubercular-husband."⁹⁹ This dream also marks the change from spiritual to physical love as the answer for his correspondent's problems.

⁹⁸ Weston, p. 140.

⁹⁹ Comerchero, p. 87.

In a later dream, Miss Lonelyhearts finds himself among the paraphernalia of suffering in a pawnshop window. He is trying desperately to restore order by rearranging the items in the form of the symbols of various religious and political systems. Among the symbols he constructs are the phallus, the mandala, the heart, the diamond, the swastika, and finally the cross which seems the best and most inclusive. Following this dream, his condition deteriorates rapidly. Failing to help the Doyles find healing in physical love, he retreats again to his bed for a three-day-trip. The rocking of his bed and the slap of waves indicates the unconscious for which water is a symbol.¹⁰⁰ As a result of this experience, he becomes the Rock, above the common crowd and impervious to their ridicule--actually far removed from reality. His final religious experience convinces him of the rightness of his choices in religion.

Miss Lonelyhearts at the beginning of his new life places Christianity on a level with the natural religions. The sacrifice of the lamb follows the pattern of the vegetation rituals as Miss Lonelyhearts uses his chant to work himself into a frenzy for the sacrificial slaughter.

¹⁰⁰ Drew, pp. 65-66.

Finally, the lamb, a Judeo-Christian symbol, is killed with a stone, the symbol of the worship of the phallic gods. In his religious experience, Miss Lonelyhearts sees the world making a similar choice. In an inversion of Christian symbolism, the decorative Christ on the wall, previously cut away from the cross, becomes a bright fly and the black world of things rose in the form of a fish to swallow the bait.¹⁰¹ By this inverted symbolism, the Christ would be either the best man who ever lived or just another of the resurrection gods--Beelzebub was lord of the flies. The black fish would be either a corrupt and secular church, or a secular materialistic world. Though in his delusion Miss Lonelyhearts thinks this vision symbolic of Christ, the light and the life, the subsequent symbolism of the rose is definitely from the unconscious.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Jay Martin, pp. 186-189.

¹⁰² Jung, Psychology and Alchemy, p. 76, 107. "Now we know that the regression to the Helios (sun worship) of antiquity vainly attempted by Julian the Apostate was succeeded in the Middle Ages by another movement that was expressed in the formula . . . (through the cross to the rose) later condensed into the 'Rosie Crosse' of the Rosecrucians. Here the essence of heavenly 'Sol' descends into the flower--earth's answer to the sun's countenance. The solar quality has survived in the symbol of the 'Golden flower' of Chinese alchemy. . . . Lamic mandala (Golden flower in China and the rose or Golden flower in the West)."

The rose symbolism is repeated, "His heart was a rose and in his skull another rose bloomed" (ML, 57). According to the Gnosticism of the Middle Ages, Jung tells us, "The Son of God, God made manifest, dwells in the flower."¹⁰³ Miss Lonelyhearts experiences the ecstasy of delight to be expected in the esoteric initiation and then he becomes conscious of two rhythms becoming one--his heart-beat and the heartbeat of God. The future life he plans is one of easy solutions--God would approve his every thought and make him the greatest columnist. However, his new life ends ignominiously in death as the irate husband, Peter Doyle, ascends the stairs with a gun, and Miss Lonelyhearts rushes to perform a miracle of healing.

As a result of his religious experience, Miss Lonelyhearts is completely removed from reality, and his insanity leads to his destruction. As Eliot's solutions reach far back into the past, West's attempted solution regresses to the Gnosticism of the Middle Ages, to the efforts of Julian the Apostate, to the sun worship of antiquity.

¹⁰³ Jung, Psychology and Alchemy, pp. 107-108.

CONCLUSION

In comparing and contrasting the reworkings of the archetypes used by Eliot and West the overriding problem is the depravity and corruption of man's nature. The major concern of both wastelands is the effective control of the collective unconscious.

In developing the archetype of declining civilizations, both artists agree--Western civilization is decaying as other civilizations have decayed in the past. However, West gives special emphasis to a larger cycle covering two milleniums by his comparison of ancient Greece, the Renaissance, and the twentieth century. The fact that he gives his characters the mythical qualities of the vegetation deities of the first century shows beyond doubt that he is fully aware of the implications of the collective unconscious and the danger of regression.

Eliot's use of the Grail legend is traditional with help coming from the outside in the person of the Questor. The Grail, on the other hand, is the vehicle for West's

satire. A weak and errant Questor, reared in a parsonage away from the haunts of men, steps into the realm of the "sick" vegetation deity "Pan" and assesses the situation. Instead of bringing help from the outside in the form of Christianity, he begins communication with his unconscious to find the knowledge (Gnosis) to solve the spiritual problems of the wasteland. His attempt to gain spirituality in this way ends in his insanity and death.

In comparing the reworkings of the archetypes associated with the Grail, one finds more similarities than differences. In fact, the suggestions of Eliot's dream poem are dramatized in the comic-strip grotesques of West. The falling towers of Eliot are the secularized Hollywood churches inciting men to violence and destruction. The shadowy Belladonna and Merchant archetypes become the Doyles. The vague, illusive Fisher King of Eliot's wasteland becomes the diabolic Pan, the destroyer of dreams. Eliot's dream-like Questor becomes Miss Lonelyhearts, making all of the wrong choices which lead to insanity and death. Eliot's hooded hordes ringed by the horizon become West's rioters, led to pillage and arson by a great leader who promises miracles.

The main difference is in the solutions offered. Eliot, though he offers three solutions for the reader's consideration, presents Christian rebirth as the vital message and the viable solution. West, the satirist, offers no solutions. His works are inimical to easy solutions as he demonstrates by satirizing the desire for "magic" solutions.

That Eliot also is inimical to easy solutions is shown in the concept, give-sympathize-control. The daring of a moment's surrender is expanded in Four Quartettes to a life-time of service:

. . . something given
 And taken, in a lifetime's death in love,
 Ardour and selflessness and self-surrender.
(FQ, 198)

The concept of sympathy in the unlocking of individual prisons is echoed and expressed more clearly by Agatha in The Family Reunion when she says:

Whatever you have learned, Harry, you must remember
 That there is always more: we cannot rest in being
 The impatient spectators of malice or stupidity.
 We must try to penetrate the other private worlds
 Of make-believe and fear. To rest in our own suffering
 Is evasion of suffering. We must learn
 to suffer more.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ Eliot, Collected Poems and Plays, p. 268.

Control came to involve a life-time of discipline and effort
as Eliot expresses the idea in Four Quartettes:

. . . and the rest
Is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action.
The hint half-guessed, the gift half understood
is Incarnation.

.
. . . And right action is freedom
From past and future also.
For most of us, this is the aim
Never here to be realized;
Who are only undefeated
Because we have gone on trying. (FQ, 199)

The seeming inversion of meaning noted in both authors is interesting and undoubtedly lies at the center of their purpose. Eliot wishing to capture a reading audience for a seemingly discredited system of belief, couches his thoughts in psychological and cultural concepts and leaves the meaning to be interpreted through the symbols. West, under a Christian veneer, reveals a pagan civilization in shocking terms as if to jar us into the realization that the time is more advanced than we think.

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