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PSYCHOANALYSIS AND LITERARY HISTORY: A NEW SYNTHESIS

by

LLEWELLYN HILLYER SMITH

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Thesis Director's Signature

W. J. Morris

Houston, Texas

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In bringing this project to fruition, I have had the benefit of the advice, support, and expertise of many individuals.

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the third reader, Dr. Rudy Nydegger, of Rice's department of psychology have added a much-needed clarification to my theoretical preoccupations.

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Finally, I acknowledge the indispensable encouragement and love of my wife, Corneille McRee Smith. To her I dedicate this dissertation.
PREFACE

The essays grouped together here attempt to explore the consequences for literary study of two distinct, but nonetheless related, preoccupations of psychoanalytic theory.

Chapter I develops a model of narrative structure from Freud's concept of the dream work in Chapter VI of The Interpretation of Dreams. In deriving this model, I have relied almost exclusively on Freud's own work, rather than on the extensions of Freud's theories of American or French psychoanalytic critics of literature. I began with the assumption that the ego-psychologies of Hartmann and Erikson would be helpful, but their ultimate influence on my conceptions has been slight.

In Chapter II, the basic model proposed in Chapter I is applied to the analysis of the narrative mode I call Romance, after Northrop Frye. Romance I define as the dream made literary. Throughout my discussion of Romance, there is an implicit contrast between Romance, as the narrative mode based on unconscious fantasy, and a possible narrative mode based on reality-testing. The theory of this second, realistic, mode has not been further explored in these pages. Throughout the entire dissertation, and especially in Chapter II, I have used Otto Fenichel's
Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis to help me formulate the dynamics of specific configurations of Romance.

In Chapter III, the focus shifts from the internal dynamics of specific narrative modes to the structure and function of literature as a social institution. My model-building in this essay depends heavily on the theory of the development and social function of religion of the Freudian anthropologist Weston La Barre, described at length in his Ghost Dance. I have taken from La Barre the concepts of the writer's social function as a form of shamanism, the literary audience as a weakly-knit cult, shared projections as the source of cult-cohesion, and many other incidentals of my argument. La Barre's theory, in my literary adaptation, makes possible a synthesis of psychoanalytic approaches to literature and traditional literary history by specifying the modes of reciprocity between individual psychodynamics, group interactions, and cultural history.

Chapter IV applies the different approaches of Chapters II and III successively to the analysis of Ian Fleming's Casino Royale. In applying the insights of Chapter III to the James Bond phenomenon, I have limited myself to pointing out the directions research based on the theory might take, rather than attempting to perform that research myself. The emphasis of Chapter IV is the implications and limitations of method, not the reporting of any actual investigation. Throughout the dissertation I have taken the position that psychoanalytic criticism is a
branch of applied psychoanalysis, not literary criticism in any of the more familiar, traditional senses; and I have attempted to make both the theory and its applications as consistent with this view as possible.
CHAPTER I

The Psychoanalytic Background

1. The Poet and Daydreaming

Sigmund Freud's brief essay, "The Relation of the Poet to Daydreaming," outlines in the space of a mere ten pages virtually the entire program for a psychoanalytic theory of literature. First published in 1908, Freud's penetrating essay attempts to sketch out the potential contribution of psychoanalytic knowledge to the understanding of the writer and his work. Significantly, Freud's essay lays the foundation for two fundamental dimensions of psychoanalytic criticism: the analysis of plot, theme, and character within individual literary works, and the dynamics of the relationship between writers and their audiences.

Freud begins with Plato's double question: Where does the poet get his material and how is he able "to arouse emotions in us of which we thought ourselves perhaps not even capable?" What human needs does art supply and how? Typically, Freud seeks the answer first in the phylogenetic past of childhood, where he finds "the first traces of imaginative activity."

The child's best loved and most absorbing occupation is play. Perhaps we may say that every child at play behaves like an imaginative writer, in that he
creates a world of his own, or, more truly, he rearranges the things of his world and orders it in a new way that pleases him better. ²

The "new world" of play that the child creates "pleases him better" because his desires and powers are absolute in it, because there the power and wishes of parents and others who control him have no effect. The child's play is serious; he "expends a great deal of emotion on it"; but despite his considerable investment of affect in his play world, he is nonetheless able to distinguish it "perfectly" from reality.³ Imaginative activity compensates the child for his passive vulnerability to his social environment.⁴ Like the child, the artist creates a fantasy world, distinct from reality but heavily invested with affect, a world in which his own powers and desires are supreme. The unreality of these fantasies allows them to represent events that in real life would be intolerably painful to spectator and creator alike. By viewing serious reality from the perspective of this play world the artist and his audience temporarily "throw off the heavy burden of life."

Of course most people are not poets, though they deeply need poetry. For most men, adulthood means relinquishing the pleasures of childish play:

As they grow up, people cease to play, and appear to give up the pleasure they derived from play. But . . . Really we never can relinquish anything; we only exchange one thing for something else. . . . So when the human being grows up and ceases to play
he only gives up the connection with real objects; instead of playing he then begins to create phantasy. He builds castles in the air and creates what are called day-dreams.  

As the adult substitutes fantasy for play, he usually becomes ashamed of his day-dreams, which on the one hand are "childish" in themselves and on the other often contain forbidden wishes. The child hardly needs to conceal his play because its determining wish-- the "one Wish" of childhood, Freud calls it--is the wish to be grown-up. Having attained that wish, the adult finds himself ironically wishing for the unlimited power and satisfaction of the child in play rather than the qualified rewards of adulthood.

Thus, the driving power of the fantasies in which all adults to some extent indulge is "unsatisfied wishes": "every separate phantasy contains the fulfillment of a wish, and improves on unsatisfactory reality."  

Although the specific nature of these wishes is various, Freud believes most wishes fall into one or two classes, the "ambitious" or "erotic." "Ambitious" here denotes both the ego's striving for mastery, the ego instincts of pre-World War I psychoanalysis, and what were later called aggressive drives. Both trends are frequently combined, Freud asserts, in actual day-dreams.

The fantasies stirred up by unfulfilled wishes "fit themselves into the changing impressions of life, alter
with the vicissitudes of life . . ." 7 The fantasies of everyday life are not timeless Jungian archetypes; like everything else human, they have a history:

The relation of phantasies to time is altogether of great importance . . . a phantasy at one and the same moment hovers between three periods of time—three periods of our ideation. The activity of phantasy in the mind is linked up with some current impression . . . which had the power to rouse an intense desire. From there it wanders back to the memory of an early experience, generally belonging to infancy, in which this wish was fulfilled. Then it creates for itself a situation which is to emerge in the future, representing the fulfillment of a wish—this is the day-dream or phantasy, which now carries with it traces both of the occasion which engendered it and of some past memory. 8

There is, of course, a considerable similarity between daydream and the theory of dreams proper. Both are wish-fulfillments triggered by some event in the present which reminds the dreamer of an unfulfilled wish of the past. Real dreams, however, are distorted; daydreams are straightforward. Dreams represent the wish as fulfilled in the dreamer's present; daydreams project the fulfillment into the future.

Although wishes produce both dreams and daydreams, the wishes that inspire dreams are "wishes which we have to hide from ourselves, which were consequently repressed and pushed back into the unconscious." 9

The poet comes in as a mediator between wishes and
the repressions that inhibit the human enjoyment of fantasy. Somehow he is able to bridge for us the gap between the arid grownups' notion of right thinking and permissible action and the childish enjoyment of daydream and fantasy. Like a benevolent parent, he gives us permission to enjoy what we would otherwise renounce. The plot of the fable embodies this permission—as Freud summarizes it in the form typical of popular books of his—or any other—day. Freud simplifies his argument by excluding both "the bygone creators of epics and tragedies" and later writers "who are most highly esteemed by critics" from immediate consideration, confining himself to "the unpretentious writers of romances, novels, stories . . . ."

There is one very marked characteristic in the productions of these writers which must strike us all: they all have a hero who is the centre of interest, for whom the author tries to win our sympathy by every possible means, and whom he places under the protection of a special providence. If at the end of one chapter the hero is left unconscious and bleeding from severe wounds, I am sure to find him at the beginning of the next being carefully tended and on the way to recovery.10

The hero of this universal story is, of course, "His Majesty the Ego, the hero of all daydreams and all novels." The hero's progress offers the reader of such a romance satisfactions absent from or severely restricted by reality, just as a day-dream would. Because the hero's success is essential to these gratifications, the romance cannot view his world or those in it with detachment. Female characters
invariably fall in love with the hero; everyone else will be judged by whether they help or oppose the hero, "with complete disregard of the manifold variety in the traits of real human beings . . ."

Stories grounded on wish-fulfillment, then, have a characteristic structure determined by the shared motives of author and reader. Freud realizes, of course, that his description here covers only a small part of the field:

We do not in any way fail to recognize that many imaginative productions have travelled far from the original naive day-dream, but I cannot suppress the surmise that even the most extreme variations could be brought into relationship with this model by an uninterrupted series of transitions.  

The psychoanalytic theory of literature strives to bring the immense variety of literary works into relation with the basic model of wish-fulfilling fantasy "by an uninterrupted series of transitions." The poles of such a theory will necessarily be the extremes of naive wish-fulfillment, or day dream, with its literary analogues, and—the opposite of wish-fulfilling play—reality. This conception offers us the opportunity of bringing the immense variety of literary productions into relation with the most comprehensive theory of human psychology yet proposed.

Freud emphasizes—he does not diminish—the great distance between the talents of the popular writer and the great artist. Despite this distance, the popular writer
and the serious writer share not only a great many thematic preoccupations but artistic techniques as well. The artist begins where all men usually remain—in fantasy, but in making over his fantasy into art he must use those means that will really affect our response if his work is to succeed. This requires both psychological strategy and strictly literary technique. The daydreamer would repel rather than move us if he were to disclose his fantasies because we would be unwilling to admit to ourselves or to the day-dreamer that we had anything to share with him, that his self-revelation could also be our own. The artist extracts from us, however implicitly, precisely this admission when we read his book. The means by which he does so is his "innermost secret." The artist "softens the egotistical character of the day-dream by changes and disguises"; moreover, the artist offers us the "fore-pleasure" of a purely aesthetic or formal enjoyment. Freud calls this fore-pleasure a bribe, by which the artist entices us to allow his disturbing fantasy material to stir up deeper tensions in the mind and to release them in a sort of psychotherapeutic exorcism.

I am of the opinion that all aesthetic pleasure we gain from the works of imaginative writers is of the same type as this 'fore-pleasure,' and that the true enjoyment of literature proceeds from the release of tensions in our minds. Perhaps much that brings about this result consists in the writer's putting us in a position in which we
can enjoy our own day-dreams without reproach or shame.\textsuperscript{13}

"The Relation of the Poet to Day-Dreaming" points the way that any psychoanalytic theory of literature must go. That course runs from the most private and sequestered individual fantasies through mankind's gigantic collection of shared fantasies, myths, folklore, legend and popular stories of all sorts, to the recognition of reality as such, uncolored by our wishes. The psychoanalytic approach must not only call attention to and analyse these materials of literature, but also, and far more importantly, it must identify and explain the specifically literary act by which the poet is able to gain acceptance for fantasies we would ordinarily reject from our consciousness. To approach this task we will need more information about the characteristic content and structure of these (mostly) unconscious fantasies; we shall have to learn about the controlling and modifying structures these fantasies encounter on their way to consciousness; finally, we shall have to study the relation of the most important of these controlling structures, the ego, to reality. The task of psychoanalytic criticism is, finally, to make possible a consistent, acute, and dynamic perception of the difference between fantasy in the broadest sense and reality (and here, and throughout this essay, I mean by reality the neutral, purposeless, objective world posited and studied by the natural sciences) as represented
by works of literature. The difference between fantasy and reality has not always been apparent to mankind in his various cultures, is still not apparent to many. Only when we know what fantasy is and how the human mind generates and responds to it, only when we know, not so much what reality is as how to find out how it works, and the shape our guesses about how it works must take if they are apt to be successful, can we begin to separate the two elements from that complicated production of the human mind, literature. For criticism to undertake this task, it must align itself with science; it must commit itself not to prede-termined values but to guesses; to discover truth, psychoanalytic criticism takes the crucial scientific risk of being wrong.

2. The Language of Dreams

Nearly everything psychoanalysis has learned about fantasy depends on what Sigmund Freud learned about dreams between the early 1890's, when Freud first began using free-association in his neurological practice, and the publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1899.¹⁴

Before Freud, dreams were regarded either as divine revelations or as unintelligible gibberish. Late nineteenth-century psychiatrists believed the dream to be an incoherent reaction of the central nervous system to random stimuli received during sleep. As such, it had no more claim to
meaning than the improvisations of a monkey at a typewriter. Since no interpretation of something meaningless is possible, the very title of *The Interpretation of Dreams* signifies Freud's rejection of the scientific orthodoxy of his time. Freud's approach begins with man's age-old conviction that dreams have meaning:

... there is a psychological technique which makes it possible to interpret dreams and ... when that procedure is employed, every dream reveals itself as a psychical structure which has meaning and which can be inserted at an assignable point in the mental activities of waking life. (italics mine)\textsuperscript{15}

"A psychical structure which has meaning"—The phrase echoes throughout not only the Freudian study of dreams but also Freud's later investigations of a vast range of human phenomena, from bizarre neuroses to the psychopathology of everyday life, from the daydream to the wildest fantasies of psychotics.

If dreams are intelligible, that intelligibility must have some other ground than the consciously remembered dream, which is usually fragmented and absurd. The dream as experienced and remembered, in its manifest content, is a facade; it means to deceive. The manifest content disguises the intelligible core of the dream, which Freud calls the latent content, or dream thoughts. The tactic of looking beneath surfaces which arises from this discrimination of manifest from latent remains a constant of psychoanalytic
thought no matter what hypotheses are used to account for the relation of manifest and latent. The assumption that apparently nonsensical acts and thoughts have a meaningful latent content makes possible the dynamic study of human motives both in and out of dreams. Thus, psychoanalysis was from the outset predisposed to view virtually all manifest human behavior as symptomatic of underlying conflict.

Freud calls these essential motive forces of the dream wish-fulfillments. "The dream is the fulfillment of a wish," an hallucinated experience of satisfactions denied the dreamer in real life. Every human wish eventually finds its way into dreams. Many dreams of adults as well as children show undistorted wish-fulfillment. Common dreams of this sort are dreams of drinking water when the dreamer is thirsty, of waking up and going about one's business when the dreamer would rather sleep, and dreams of having gone to the bathroom to relieve a full bladder. Freud calls these dreams of convenience because the hallucinated action of the dream enables the dreamer to go on sleeping. Because so many dreams serve this purpose, Freud calls the dream the guardian of sleep.

Few dreams, however, show their wish-fulfillments as clearly as children's dreams or dreams of convenience. Most of the dreams of adults as well as children are distorted and apparently nonsensical. Some wishes pressing for
hallucinatory representation collide with forces opposed to their straightforward representation, called the censorship. The conflict of the censorship with wishes striving for expression creates the peculiar forms of expression in dreams. In dreams, psychic conflicts produce language-like structures potent with concealed meanings. The key to these concealed meanings is the relation of the latent dream thoughts to the manifest content of the dream as presented in memory. "The dream-thoughts," Freud remarks,

are versions of the same subject matter in two different languages. Or, more properly, the dream content seems like a transcript of the dream thoughts into another mode of expression, whose characters and syntactic laws it is our business to discover by comparing the original and the translation. The dream thoughts are immediately comprehensible as soon as we have learnt them. The dream content, on the other hand, is expressed as it were in a pictographic script the characters of which have to be transposed individually into the language of the dream thoughts. If we attempt to read these characters according to their pictorial value instead of according to their symbolical relations, we should clearly be lead into error.17

By themselves, the dream thoughts are perfectly intelligible. Opposed by censorship, they become the unintelligible, distorted manifest dream. The dream content thus represents a compromise between the censorship and the wishes that are the ultimate driving force of dreams.
Strategies of conflict between wish and censorship in the dream have a characteristic grammar and syntax, based on the lawfulness of the processes by which the dream thoughts are transformed into the manifest dream. Freud calls these processes the dream-work:

Dreams are nothing other than a particular form of thinking made possibly by the conditions of the state of sleep. It is the dream work which creates that form and it alone is the essence of dreaming, the explanation of its peculiar nature.\(^{18}\)

The dream work might be described as the negotiation of the compromise between wish and censorship which allows the dream to come into consciousness. This compromise requires that dream thoughts which secure conscious representation do so only in disguised or distorted ways. The forms of the dream-work are forms of concealment. The Freudian enterprise of interpreting dreams resembles the activity of a code-breaker. The dream is deliberate gibberish and the Freudian interpreter's approach to it sceptical, wary.

The various forms of the dream-work are all forms of disguise. Condensation, the most important mode of the dream-work, brings the dreamer's entire life of dispossessed associations into relation with the manifest dream thoughts:

Dreams are brief, meager, laconic in comparison with the range and wealth of the dream thoughts. If a dream is written out, it may perhaps fill half a page. The analysis, setting out the dream thoughts underlying it may occupy six, eight, or a dozen times
as much space. This relation varies with different dreams, but, so far as my experience goes, its direction never varies.¹⁹

Opportunities for the expression of repressed wishes would seem to be limited. Once the dream gets underway, latent dream thoughts jam themselves into the ongoing dream like a crowd of refugees trying to pass an international frontier open only a few minutes a day. A particular dream thought in this situation can secure only an abbreviated expression. So intense is the pressure of these latent thoughts that each element of the manifest dream must represent numerous dream thoughts. Every rift of the dream is packed with ore. Hence, each element of the dream is—as Freud puts it—overdetermined:

Not only are the elements of the dream determined by the dream thoughts many times over, but the individual dream thoughts are represented in the dream by several elements. Associative paths lead from one element of the dream to several dream thoughts and from one dream thought to several elements of the dream. Thus a dream is not constructed by each individual dream thought or group of dream thoughts finding in abbreviated form separate representation in the content of the dream . . . a dream is constructed rather by the whole mass of dream thoughts being submitted to a sort of manipulation process in which those elements which have the most numerous supports acquire the right of entry into the dream content . . . ²⁰

As a result of condensation, certain points called
nodal points, take on greater importance than others. An example of such a nodal point in a typical dream might be a composite figure who takes on aspects of several different persons in the dreamer's real life, much as (to use Freud's own metaphor) Galton's composite photographs show the facial features of different members of the same family fused into a single image. Often a single word serves as such a nodal point. Many a dreamer has produced what Lewis Carroll called portmanteau words.21

The second major mechanism by which latent dream thoughts are transformed into the manifest dream is displacement, in which elements of the dream thoughts which have great importance in the individual's unconscious life are suppressed from the manifest dream or forced to take positions of relatively little consequence. Sometimes these crucial elements can secure an expression only in the most distorted, trivial ways:

... the elements which stand out as the principle components of the manifest content of the dream are far from playing the same part in the dream-thoughts. And, as a corollary, the converse of this assertion can be affirmed: what is clearly the essence of the dream-thoughts need not be represented in the dream at all. The dream is, as it were, differently centred from the dream-thoughts—its content has different elements as its central point.22
Displacement need not invariably occur. There are dreams whose important latent elements retain their approximate importance in the manifest dream content. But when displacement does occur in the dream, what has the greatest importance in unconscious psychic life is made to seem trivial in the manifest dream. It is as if there were a hidden self inside the everyday self. The thought processes of this hidden self, its peculiar styles of thinking—all are ordinarily suppressed from waking life. Displacement levels intense dream thoughts, dispersing their psychical intensities:

... in the dream work a psychical force is operating which on the one hand strips the elements which have a high psychical value of their intensity and on the other hand by means of overdetermination creates from elements of low psychical value new values which afterwards find their way into the dream content. If that is so, a transference and displacement of psychical intensities occurs in the process of dream formation, and it is as a result of these that the difference between the text of the dream content and that of the dream thoughts comes about. ... dream displacement and dream condensation are the two governing factors to whose activity we may in essence ascribe the form assumed by dreams. 23

Nothing in the dream reveals the presence of bitter unconscious conflict more than displacement. The strength of the censorship is much greater than that of the unconscious. Unconscious wishes must take what they can get in
the manifest dream. The structure of the dream is the structure of that taking, the shape of what the latent dream thoughts, which figure forth our most intense desires, must settle for:

The consequence of the displacement is that the dream content no longer resembles the core of the dream thoughts and that the dream gives no more than a distortion of the dream wish which exists in the unconscious. But we are already familiar with dream distortion. We traced it back to the censorship which is exercised by one psychical agency in the mind over another. Dream displacement is one of the chief methods by which that distortion is achieved. . . we may assume then that the dream displacement comes about through the influence of the same censorship; that is the censorship of endopsychic defense.24

This "censorship of endopsychic defense," Freud later called repression.

The constant pressure of censorship during the formation of the dream implies that the means of representation open to the manifest dream are indeed limited. The dream lacks expressive power. The dream censorship is ruthless and often quite stupid, censoring certain elements arbitrarily just because they are there. The manifest dream cannot speak discursively; it cannot use logic or evidence. Its native language is not words but pictures; as Freud frequently points out, the manifest dream is like a rebus. We must interpret its concrete images abstractly in order to make our way back to the dream thoughts. Since the dream
cannot represent logical relations directly, it must employ substitutes. The dream has little capacity for intellectual work. What often appears as complex thinking in a dream is either part of the original material of the dream-thought or material superadded to the dream by secondary elaboration which has access to the full intellectual resources of the waking mind. The bitter conflict of wish fulfillment and censorship allows little room for intellectual activity even if the unconscious mind were capable of it. Here Freud contradicts both Jungian and Existentialist interpreters of dreams, who assert, like pre-Freudian sages, that dreams are full of intellectual portent.

Dreams represent logical connection or implication by means of simultaneity in time:

Here they are acting like the painter who in a picture of the School of Athens of Parnassus represents in one group all the philosophers or all the poets. It is true that they were never in fact assembled in a single hall or on a single mountaintop but they certainly form a group in the conceptual sense... dreams carry this method of reproduction down to details; whenever they show us two elements close together this guarantees that there is some specially intimate connection between what corresponds to them among the dream thoughts... locations in dreams do not consist of any chance disconnected portions of the dream material but of portions which are fairly closely connected in the dream thoughts as well.25

In representing causal relations, the dream work uses two devices; the first is simply succession; one dream will
be followed by another clearly related to it. In the world of dreams *post hoc ergo propter hoc* is logically valid. Occasionally the chronological sequence may be reversed, so that effect follows cause in the succession of the two dreams. Usually, however, the more extensive part of the dream corresponds to the cause. Another less common device for representing causality in dreams is the transformation of an image in a dream into a second, different image before the dreamer's eye.

The dream cannot represent either/or. Both alternatives secure representation as if there were no contradiction. Freud gives an example of this from his own dreams:

During the night before my father's funeral I had a dream of a printed notice, placard, or poster rather like the notice forbidding one to smoke in railway waiting rooms on which appeared either 'You are requested to close the eyes' or 'You are requested to close an eye.' Each of these two versions had a meaning of its own and led in a different direction when the dream was interpreted. I had chosen the simplest possible ritual for the funeral, for I knew my father's own views on such ceremonies. But some other members of the family were not sympathetic to such puritanical simplicity, and thought we should be disgraced in the eyes of those who attended the funeral. Hence one of the versions 'You are requested to close an eye,' that is, to wink at or overlook. Here it is particularly easy to see the meaning of the vagueness expressed by the either/or. The
dream work failed to establish a unified wording for the dream thoughts which could at the same time be ambiguous, and the two main lines of thought consequently began to diverge even in the manifest content of the dream. 26

"'No' seems not to exist as far as dreams are concerned. They show a particular preference for combining contraries into a unity or for representing them as one and the same thing." 27 This exemplifies the more general rule that the unconscious does not know contradiction.

Similarity or an analogy between one figure and another, one memory and another, and so on get into the dream as identity. Dreams cannot express gradations in analogies; they cannot easily specify how much one thing is like another, or in what ways one thing is like or unlike another. Any similarity tends to become an identity in the dream. This tendency contributes much to the formation of substitute figures in the manifest dream. An individual with brown hair, for instance, might represent a man's father who had brown hair but nothing else in common with the dream figure. A human figure represented in a dream may for this reason stand for several important figures in the dream thoughts, all of them linked to what represents them in the manifest dream by the merest of analogies. There are endless variations of this device. Not only persons but places, buildings, animals and the like may be used
to make composite structures in the dream. The use of such composite figures in dreams is so extensive that Freud is led to remark "Dreams are, of course, a mass of these composite structures." 28

Beyond these isolated devices Freud points out that the form of the dream itself, we might almost say its plot, is an important clue to its meaning, not simply an expedient way of organizing the dream thoughts:

The form of a dream or the form in which it is dreamt is used with quite surprising frequency for representing its concealed subject matter.

Freud's own example of this mechanism is unforgettable:

A young man had a very clear dream which reminded him of some fantasies of his boyhood that remained conscious. He dreamt that it was evening and he was in a hotel at a summer resort. He mistook the number of his room and went into one which had an elderly lady and her two daughters undressing and going to bed. He proceeded, 'Here there are some gaps in the dream. There's something missing. Finally there was a man in the room who tried to throw me out and I had to have a struggle with him.' He made vain endeavors to recall the gist and drift of the boyish fantasy to which the dream was evidently alluding until at last the truth emerged that what he was in search of was already in his possession in his remark about the obscure part of the dream. The gaps were the genital appertures of the women who were going to bed and 'there's something missing' described the
principle feature of the female genitalia. When he was young he had had a consuming curiosity to see a woman's genitals and been inclined to hold infantile sexual theory according to which women have male organs.29

According to the Freudian doctrine of determinism, the literal narration of the dream must form a seamless web with the associations that originally led to the dream itself. The narration of this patient's dream, in which he remarks, "here, there are some gaps," nonetheless points to its core.

These are the primary strategems by which the dream accomplishes its work. In the remainder of Chapter VI of The Interpretation of Dreams, Freud discusses a variety of phenomena met within the study of dreams, not all of which are pertinent to our interest here. Two of these are worth a brief consideration—affect in dreams and the use of symbols in dreams. In discussing affect in dreams, Freud remarks that whereas the censorship can easily distort the ideational content of dream thoughts, it has greater difficulty changing the affect. As a result, affect more often appears in the manifest dream undistorted than any other component of the latent dream. The censorship's main technique for changing the affect of the dream thoughts is reversal into the opposite. By far the best example of this reversal known to me is the famous dream of an elderly gentleman recorded by Ferenczi. This dream, with its
accompanying interpretation, is a virtual psychoanalytic homily on the origin of comedy. It explains not only the conversion of affect, but also why comedies so often deal covertly with such frightening aspects of human existence as pain, dismemberment, illness and death:

An elderly gentleman was awakened one night by his wife who had become alarmed because he was laughing so loudly and unrestrainedly in his sleep. Subsequently the man reported that he had had the following dream: I was lying in bed and a gentleman who was known to me entered the room. I tried to turn on the light but was unable to. I tried over and over again but in vain. Thereupon my wife got out of bed to help me but she could not manage it either, but as she felt awkward in front of the gentleman owing to being en negligee, she finally gave it up and went back to bed. All of this was so funny that I couldn't help roaring with laughter at it. My wife said "Why are you laughing? Why are you laughing?" But I only went on laughing until I woke up. The next day the gentleman was very depressed and had a headache. So much laughing had upset him, he thought.

The dream seems less amusing when it is considered analytically. The "gentleman known to him" who entered the room was in the latent dream thoughts the picture of death as the "great unknown," a picture which had been called up in his mind the previous day. The old gentleman who suffered from arteriosclerosis had good reason the day before for thinking of dying. The unrestrained laughter took the place of sobbing and weeping at the idea he must die. It was the light of life that he could no longer turn on. This gloomy thought may have been
connected with attempts at copulation which he had made shortly before but which had failed even with the help of his wife en negligee. He realized that he was already going downhill. The dream work succeeded in transforming the gloomy idea of impotence and death into a comic scene, and his sobs into laughter.

By far the most notorious part of The Interpretation of Dreams is part E of Chapter VI on the theory of symbolism. This is the one part of Freud's dream theory that everybody knows something about, the fons et origo of cocktail-party psychoanalysis and the popular notion that Freud considered all dreams sexual. This is familiar material, which needs little discussion in detail. Its general principle is that the dream employs as symbols for the sexual organs all objects which in any way resemble them; brooms, sticks, cucumbers, fire hydrants, faucets, trees for the male sexual organs; closets, caves, wells, sinks, anything concave to represent the female genitals. Sexual intercourse may be represented by such ingenious substitutes as climbing stairs; masturbation by scenes of playing with or beating a child.

According to Freud, these symbols constitute a universal language of dreams. Other features of the manifest dream are determined by a complex network of associations in the mind of a particular dreamer. We can interpret a dream which contains no symbols only by obtaining the dreamer's associations to each element of the manifest dream, analyzing these associations from manifest content to latent content, using the known mechanisms of the dream-work as a guide.
But where these universal or at any rate widespread symbols are found, we do not need the dreamer's associations, since these symbols have similar meanings in all dreams in which they occur—at least within a broadly European linguistic and social context. That these symbols are common also in literature is one of the best pieces of evidence that literature and dreams are closely related.31

From the point of view of the psychology of dream processes, secondary revision is the least important of the factors contributing to the dream work; from the point of view of literary criticism, it is one of the most important. Secondary revision applies the criteria of waking consciousness to the already distorted manifest content of the dream. In addition to the other demands made on the dream, the secondary revision demands that the dream seem intelligible. Here appearance is all:

The thing that distinguishes and at the same time reveals this part of the dream work is its purpose. This function behaves in the manner the poet maliciously ascribes to philosophers, it fills up the gaps in the dream structure with shreds and patches. As a result of its efforts the dream loses its appearance of absurdity and disconnectedness and approximates the model of an intelligible experience. But its efforts are not always crowned with success. Dreams occur which at a superficial view may seem faultlessly logical and reasonable. They start from a possible situation, carry it on through a chain of consistent modifications, and, though far less frequently, bring it to a conclusion
which causes no surprise. Dreams which are of such a kind have been subjected to a far reaching revision by this psychical function that is akin to waking thought. They appear to have a meaning, but that meaning is as far removed as possible from their true significance.\textsuperscript{32}

This cosmetic addition of intelligibility to the dream ultimately serves the interests of censorship, since it conceals that censorship has taken place. To do its work, the secondary revision has access to the full resources of waking consciousness, intellectual, mnemonic, and aesthetic. Most of the apparent philosophic profundity of dreams comes from secondary revision. Interpretations of dreams which make much of their moral and oracular content run the risk of taking the secondary revision at its face value—and thus of missing the genuine dynamic altogether. In contrast, Freud insists, for the purposes of psychoanalytic interpretation

\ldots it remains an essential rule invariably to leave out of account the ostensible continuity of a dream as being of suspect origin and to follow the same path back to the material of the dream thought no matter whether the dream itself is clear or confused.\textsuperscript{33}

Secondary revision, the one explicitly aesthetic act of the dream work, smooths, harmonizes and integrates the discordant and incoherent manifest dream content. In the root metaphor of the expression, secondary revision, one can almost see a writer working over the raw materials of
his inspiration to make a coherent, formally complete poem, play or novel. Indeed, the work of art could be described psychoanalytically as a dream which has been subjected to an extremely large amount of secondary revision. The primary Freudian aesthetic category—in Phillip Reiff's phrase— is complication. The work of art is a highly complicated version of unconscious conflict. Although these complications take us far from those conflicts in which the work of art begins, the elaborate superstructures would not exist at all without the foundation of unconscious conflict. When we dissect the work of art into its component parts, we must steadfastly refuse to take the complex superstructure of secondary revision at its face value. This superstructure has meaning—indeed a meaning coordinate with the unconscious material it overlies—but it is not the root unconscious conflict on which the work as a whole depends. Aesthetic complication, by definition, is integral to the work of art, but it cannot be the final ground of our analysis. Opponents of psychoanalytic criticism overlook this when they object that psychoanalysis is reductive in its approach to literary works. It is indeed; it need not neglect in that reductiveness the structure of secondary revision and aesthetic complication which overlies basic unconscious conflict.

Nonetheless, the Romantic view of art as an irreducible organic whole cannot withstand psychoanalytic scrutiny.
Nothing in the vast range of dream-work stratagems from condensation to secondary revision, corresponds to Coleridge's unifying, organisising function of imagination. Instead, psychoanalytic study of the operation of the human mind reveals something nearer to what Coleridge would term "Fancy." The elements of the latent dream thoughts have the logic of suppressed wishes; under the pressure of censorship these underlying elements are closely packed together and broken up, so that the manifest dream content is often incoherent. The unity which the secondary revision attempts to give is of another order altogether. From latent dream thought to manifest content, nothing takes place in the dream that is not essentially rearrangement. The dream invents nothing; it creates nothing: it rearranges memories, associations, ideas, wishes. The dream is not creative, it is recreative. Even speeches in dreams are recalled not invented. Everything in the dream, then, is simply a recombination of materials already available either in the conscious or unconscious mind of the dreamer. If Coleridge's Fancy describes with some accuracy the recombining functions of the mind that we see in dreaming, we must also admit that psychoanalysis shows us nothing in the full range of mental activity that corresponds to Imagination.

The study of dreaming brings virtually every aspect of mental life under scrutiny—the unsuspected life of instincts through their ideational representatives, the
equally unsuspected functioning of censorship or repression, the full range of what later were to be called ego functions—functions of waking consciousness and more generally the functions of control whether conscious or not—and, finally, the relation of all these things to reality. Although it is a distorted and disguised wish fulfillment, the dream begins in reality. A chance stimulus encountered in reality during an ordinary day stimulates some unconscious conflict within the dreamer. During the night that chance stimuli is incorporated into the dream along with the unconscious conflict which it stimulated and any others which can hitch a ride on the primary motives of the dream. The recent event in the real world which has triggered the dream Freud calls the day residue because it is left over after analysis as a residue of content in the dream not directly ascribable to unconscious motives. The mental activities stimulated by this chance encounter with reality must pass an elaborate series of tests before their productions can return once again to waking consciousness. These tests define the conditions of censorship. Having cleared the censorship, the dream, originally stimulated by contact with reality, once again becomes available to that part of the mind which deals with reality on a day to day basis, the waking consciousness.

Viewed in this way dreaming is a cyclic process, but the waking mind at all times retains only a little of what
the total mind endures and produces. Ego controls which enable us to adapt to reality also impoverish our inner life. The intense need for literature, both popular and refined—as well as for other forms of art—reflects this impoverishment of control. Literature undoes this impoverishment by making available to us—consciously, but still in disguised form—the unconscious and instinctual life which the ego must repress.
3. Analogues of Dreaming

Romance, the literary form closest to the dream in content and structure, may be viewed as a dream that has undergone a particularly high degree of secondary revision. Although more complicated than a dream, its core is not essentially different. Every complication in romance, no matter how apparently intellectual, religious or moral ultimately subserves the overarching motive of wish fulfillment. As here defined, romance includes the majority of what are ordinarily called novels as well as satire, fable, allegory—we shall see that all allegories are necessarily romances—children's stories, parables and fairy tales. A vast range of motives both conscious and unconscious, persistent and trivial, are bound up in such forms. Wish fulfillment dominates all of these forms, but is by no means the only motive found in them. A vast range of intellectual, social and moral concerns coexists with the of wish fulfillment. I shall try to show, both theoretically and by example, how this comes about and why it is natural that it should come about—why, for instance, a term like philosophic romance has an almost uncanny appropriateness.
The discussion of romance which follows has two parts. In the first I shall attempt to explore the direct analogues of the forms of dream work found in romance. If romance is indeed a literary analogue of the dream, we should expect Freud's formal categories—condensation, displacement—to be directly applicable to it. In the second I shall summarize some of the typical characteristics of romance narratives, outlining a brief phenomenology of romance plots.

2. Distortion in Romance

"The state of sleep," Freud writes, "can recover the likeness of mental life as it was before the recognition of reality because a prerequisite of sleep is the rejection of reality."

Romance, like sleep and the dreams sleeping brings on, rejects reality. In rejecting reality it necessarily falls back on the wish, as the sleeper in rejecting reality necessarily falls back on his own impulses. In this rejection of reality both romance and dream originate. At the core of romance we can identify the same dialectic of impulses striving for representation opposed by a hostile censorship as in the dream. In romance, as in dreams, this conflict generates certain characteristic forms. The surface of a romance often makes a kind of shallow sense—as action it may be intelligible—but its meaning is often as deeply problematic as that of any dream—for instance, the familiar children's story, "Jack and the Beanstalk," which
derives from an ancient German folk tale. In one version of this story Jack, a poor peasant boy, takes the family's cow to market in order to sell it to obtain money for food. On his way to market he meets a mysterious old man, or dwarf, who offers him three or four magic beans in exchange for the cow. Jack accepts the bargain and returns home, where naturally his mother (there is usually no mention of a father at home in the tale) finds Jack's bargain appalling. Undaunted, Jack plants the beans in a garden near the window of the house and huge bean stalk sprouts from the beans, its top reaching beyond the sky. Curious to see where the bean stalk leads, Jack climbs it and enters a stratospheric world in which he finds a huge castle, occupied by a giant as vicious as he is huge. The giant owns a golden goose—in some versions of the story simply a cache of gold. Jack, after several visits to the giant's castle, steals the money and flees down the bean stalk. Reaching the ground, Jack cuts the bean stalk off with an axe, whereupon the pursuing giant plunges to his death. The story of Jack and the Beanstalk may be intelligible as action but its meaning is obscure. On its surface, the plot makes little more sense than the recollected fragments of a manifest dream. The Freudian interpretation is obvious, but not trivial. Clearly, the story is a little disguised Oedipal fantasy in which little Jack kills the mean father figure, steals his gold and lives happily ever after with
mother. The basic motif of Oedipal aggression against the father is repeated several times in the story. Thus, Jack not only steals the father's gold, his financial potency, but also kills the father, significantly enough by cutting off a beanstalk. The basic motif of aggression against a hated father figure, successively repeated, is the essence of its plot. Thus interpreted, we can see Jack and the Beanstalk as a folk version of the famous Zeus-Kronos story in which Zeus castrates his father, Kronos, and takes over rule of the heavenly world. The materials of the Zeus-Kronos myth have here been subjected to a more severe censorship than in the classic tale, a censorship which effectively covers their intention. Uninterpreted, "Jack and the Beanstalk" makes shallow sense at best. We must probe beneath its surface in order to get at the unconscious conflicts which have inspired it.

The shallow sense of the "Jack and the Beanstalk's" plot, so typical of romance, has the same origin as the seeming incoherence of dreams. The plots of most romances may not say outright what they mean, rather they are subject to the demands of a severe censorship. The influence of the censorship on the form of romance creates forms of narrative experience in romance closely analogous to those in dreams. The pressure of censorship produces marked condensation in the manifest content of romance. Composite figures are frequently encountered, centaurs, sphynxes, and hypogriFFs, to
mention only those drawn from the animal kingdom. Due to condensation, a romance narrative can have many different meanings at the same time. These multiple meanings in romance, in contrast to the dream, are compounded by the relatively more extensive operation of secondary revision.

As a result of condensation, certain nodal points in the narrative structure take on immense significance. In romance nodal points provide a skeletal narrative structure around which certain basic motifs proliferate. In "Jack and the Beanstalk," the forbidden act of Oedipal aggression constitutes such a nodal point. In Le Morte d'Arthur, to note another example, the ritual confrontation of heroic and villainous knight becomes a similar nodal point. These confrontations, emblematic of the perennial tension between good and evil in Malory's world, are centers around which groups of plots crystallize. As in the case with the dream, motives that demand such nodal representation are at one and the same time the strongest motives pressing for representation and those which provoke the strongest repression. Since such motives are too strong to be denied by the censorship, they are split up, making each individual representation at a nodal point weaker than the corresponding dream thought but by the same token more frequently represented.

Displacement is hardly less frequently encountered in romance than in dreams. In romance as in dreams, psycho-
analytic interpretation undoes the effect of this displacement and transvaluation. It seeks to recover the original importance of the dispossessed dream thoughts. Two extremely common displacements in romance are displacements of Oedipal aggression from the father, to whom they properly appertain, onto a substitute figure; and displacements of the Oedipal attachments from the mother to a substitute feminine figure. Time and again in romance the hero encounters powerfully attractive women who are forbidden to him. In such cases, we may always suspect a tacit Oedipal taboo. Should the hero break this taboo, disaster follows.

One of the better known examples is the consequence of Lancelot's adultery with Guinivere in Le Morte d'Arthur. Indeed, because it provokes disaster, we know that Lancelot's transgression is no ordinary act of adultery. A large part of the horror with which Malory's narrative views Arthur's demise derives from the implicit recognition that this too must correspond to Lancelot's wish. No matter that the kingdom is wrecked; Arthur, who blocks Lancelot from unrivalled possession of Guinivere, is destroyed. Mordred thus may be said to represent the dark side of Lancelot. Mordred's murderous hatred of Arthur and Lancelot's adulterous desire for Arthur's queen cannot be acknowledged in the same figure, although both are properly part of the same complex of feelings. The censorship divides the Oedipal strivings, placing the hatred in Mordred's breast or rather
creating him out of it and allotting the love for the father's wife to Lancelot.

Displacement in romance is usually accompanied by more elaborate rationalizations than are common in dreams. In the Arthurian example, an elaborate network of superficial motives conceals the underlying Oedipal pattern. Although this rationalization abets the censorship, it also allows the basic Oedipal situation to emerge more clearly. If Lancelot is not acknowledged as Guinivere's son, he can manifest his Oedipal passion for her more directly. Under the pressure of censorship, one alternative or the other must be relinquished.

The means of representation available to plot in romance shares many of the limitations of dreams. As in the dream, two objects or persons physically close in romance may be connected in other than physical ways. Causality, by all odds the most important connection between anything and anything else in romance, is represented in romance as in dream by succession in time. In romance post hoc ergo propter hoc is valid logic. We know that Lancelot in Le Morte d'Arthur is responsible for the disaster that overtakes Arthur's kingdom, because that disaster follows Lancelot's sin with Guinivere. Lancelot knows it, too; nothing should convince us that Mordred's bitter hatred of Arthur is Lancelot's own so much as Lancelot's in effect accepting responsibility for Mordred's destruction of
Arthur. The wholesale application of *post hoc ergo propter hoc* in the romance world produces a virtually magical conception of causality. In romance transgression automatically causes punishment. There is no disproportion between the act and its consequence as so often in the real world. The grandest example of this almost geometric conception of moral causality occurs in Dante's *Inferno* where we see the immoral act and its final consequence merged timelessly within a single human figure. In other romances, the coupling of act and consequence is rarely this close. But it is always immensely closer than in the world of everyday life, where the just man may suffer and the sinner go forever unpunished.

In both dream and romance, the relation of either/or becomes the relation both/and. No choice is made between conflicting alternatives. Both secure representation. As a corollary, the romance plot finds it difficult or impossible to suggest contradiction. With both sides of a contradiction usually represented, paradoxes abound in romance plots. Lancelot both does and does not wish Arthur's destruction. In the plot of the Oedipus play, Oedipus both knows and does not know that he had killed his father and married his mother. In *Absalom, Absalom*, Sutpen both is and is not human. At times the narrative views him as a suffering, striving human being, even providing us with a quite commonplace motivation for his hubris. At other times the
narrative views Sutpen as a demonic, alien creature, a
devil in human flesh. And both views are, in a sense, true.
In Macbeth, the hero has both the sensitivity of a poet
and the ruthless cruelty of a psychopath. The inability of
romance narrative to decide between mutually exclusive al-
ternatives creates a unique richness, a richness we demand
of great literature. This inability to choose between
logical alternatives manifests in the mind's symbolic func-
tioning the primal fact of ambivalence. Logically speaking
we should either hate or love our fathers. The two are,
logically, mutually exclusive. Psychologically speaking,
we do both at once. Almost all of us both hate and love our
fathers at the same time. The neater assumptions of common-
sense psychology, often used to criticize this or that
character in literature as being inconsistent because he
incorporates within himself some of these mutually exclusive
alternatives, actually falsifies our deepest psychological
experience. To this deepest psychological experience romance,
like the dream, is faithful.

As I have previously noted, the transformation of
similarity into identity in dreams is a device of particular
importance in the understanding of satire. Like the dream,
satire as well as other forms of romance cannot make fine
distinctions between like and like. All intermediate
figures tend to be drawn to their extremes, ordinary sinners
thus becoming anti-christs, and moderate disturbances in the
moral order negative apocalypses. The relation of Pope's *Dunciad* to its historical background provides a most illustrative example. The changes in England's monarchical line and society to which Pope's poem responds, in the vision of the *Dunciad*, a literal end of the world. And yet history continued despite Pope's dire vision, and England has somehow managed to survive crisis after crisis without the Stuart line on the throne. Similarly, in Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall*, a prison warden whose views on penology Waugh clearly and obviously disapproves of is made responsible for a gruesome murder. Waugh's accusation against the warden's vaguely Freudian penology is analogous to contemporary cries that permissiveness in child rearing is responsible for violence. In Pope, Waugh, and other satirists, the exaggeration which makes their vision so striking at the same time invalidates the vision as intellectual critique. But a form of narrative capable of distinguishing between degrees of analogy would not be romance—or satire either. Having elected to use a form of romance to make their points, Waugh and Pope must forego making the kinds of distinctions which would logically strengthen their arguments.

Just as the form of the narrative frequently contains much of its latent meaning, so the plot of romance usually has meaning in itself apart from any other features of the narrative. Plot is the true native language of romance,
the axis of psychological conflicts expressed in narrative. The typical plot form of romance is an ideogram of this conflict. At one end of this plot stands the hero; at the other end, his goal, the attainment of which is gratification. Between the hero and his goal, there are the company of villains and blocking figures whom he must confront and overcome to attain his goal. This is as clear a schema of conflicted strivings for wish fulfillment as anyone could ask for. This core plot repeats itself over and over again on a small scale to make the large scale plot of an extended romance narrative. Like a salt's pattern of crystalization, this shape remains constant no matter how large the narrative. Thus, in romance we can expect to find visible symmetry between episode, chapter, book, and the total narration.

Christian myth furnishes an excellent, and historically influential, model of this symmetry. The fundamental moral pattern of a Christian's life on earth is the confrontation with temptation and the overcoming of it. Since the Christian is one with Christ if he be a true Christian, his contest with evil is at the same time a confrontation of Christ and Satan. The individual's life in its entirety is a pilgrimage or quest for God, made up of many such confrontations with evil. On a still larger scale, the history of the church in the world is a pilgrimage of the total human community of the saved toward reunion with Christ at
the end of time. On a still larger typological scale, the whole history of creation is itself the Christ-life, Christ's quest through time to confront and defeat his ritual cosmic opponent, Satan; find total reconciliation for all humanity with God; and reunite himself with humanity, symbolized as the church, Christ's bride of the apocalypse. The pattern of confrontation with evil replicates itself in ever larger units until the total structure embraces the limits of the Christian universe.\textsuperscript{38} Christian dogma represents one of the grandest systems of wish fulfillment ever projected by the mind of man. It promises to the Christian nothing less than total fulfillment. Not only will he in the end be happy; he will also be victorious over his enemies who will be confined to the everlasting torment of hell. Such a vision offers no small consolation and gratification to the man who participates in it. This Christian cosmic romance reveals the same patterns of conflict in its plot structure and in the episodes which make it up as do less grandiose romances. Its importance as a model for many lesser romances cannot be overestimated.

Secondary revision contributes relatively much more to the structure of romance than to the dream. Secondary revision, in effect, opens up to the censorship the full resources of the waking mind. As the unconscious conflicts are brought closer to becoming an actual literary work in the mind of the writer, secondary revision becomes aesthetic
complication. Every gap or disproportion of the manifest dream is covered. At a late point in this process, strictly technical considerations begin to make themselves felt—the actual mode of telling the story, the style in which it is to be written, and the like. In this process most traces of the dream censorship are rubbed out; condensation and displacement are extensively rationalized; the dream work's transvaluation of anarchic individual drives is completed. The most striking feature of this secondary revision is the substitution of certain approved moral and philosophical structures for the original wish-fulfilling structure, or rather, the fitting of the two together, hand-in-glove. The ingenuity and skill with which this fitting is carried out is itself an aesthetic criterion of romance. Romance thus has a native affinity with intellectual material. The unconscious motives of romance are relatively few in number, but the number of intellectual systems which can be attached to these motives is enormous. Romance is paradoxically both repetitious and inexhaustible. As with the dream, the psychoanalytic critic must steadfastly refuse to be misled by even the most elaborate secondary revisions. Dante's quest for Beatrice is no less Oedipal because it somehow manages to embrace so much Medieval European history, theology and philosophy.
CHAPTER II

The Structures of Romance

1. Plot-Structure in Romance

So far, I have discussed the relation of dream to romance without fully defining what was meant by romance. In what follows I will attempt to describe some of the principal romance plots. I believe the most important elements of this description define romance, but these descriptions do not exhaust by any means all the possibilities of the romance mode. Psychoanalytic criticism should seek, I believe, not to list all possible variations on romance themes à la Frye, but to cultivate an alertness to the many possible variations on the underlying dynamics of romance. Although most romances have certain common elements, new variations of these common elements are constantly devised by writers of romance. Any exclusively archetypal classification of romance necessarily neglects historical change. Although a broad description of common elements in romance may sound archetypal, psychoanalytic theory does not view romance narratives as the presentation of unchanging archetypes in an atemporal void. On the psychoanalytic view, both the underlying patterns of unconscious conflict in romance, and their aesthetic complications are plastic, changeable, malleable. Nonetheless, just as a child learns how to deal with conflict in stereotyped ways from its parents, so the writer learns to deal with the same conflicts in literary ways from his literary progenitors. The stereotyping of literary themes and aesthetic strategies is thus more appar-
ent than real. Literary stereotypes, like neurotic stereotypes, are temporary balances of opposing forces. Seemingly stable, they incorporate into their very structure considerable potential for change. It follows that psychoanalysis cannot commit itself to any rigid genre theory; genre is a convenient fiction, a handy way of organizing large quantities of literary observation. Psychoanalytic genre theory thus should be neither prescriptive nor static; it will constantly be open to modification by new evidence.

By far the most important defining characteristic of romance is plot. Plot is of the essence: it is, as we have indicated, the axis along which all other psychic conflicts in romance organize themselves. But plot in romance almost invariably takes the specific form which I shall call the questplot. The questplot depicts a journey or pilgrimage of one or more heroes towards some desired objects or situations. Its fundamental form is linear, naively sequential. Variations on this sequential pattern were rare until quite recently in literary history. In dramatic versions of romance, the plot may be implicit or concealed. We may need to invent a plot for ourselves to account for the dramatic situation, on which the romance focuses in dramatic fashion or, as in the Oedipus Rex, the plot may itself be the object which the hero seeks. In undoing its concealment, he literally discovers the story of his life. More often, though the plot is explicit, its dynamic significance is
obscure. In classifying plots I have focused mainly on this underlying dynamic situation.

Plot itself gives us the most unmistakable genetic criterion of romance. By far the most important quest plots derive from the Oedipal situation. Oedipal here refers to Freud's famous discovery of the murderous and amorous feelings young (male) children have toward their male and female parents, respectively.¹ In the primary Oedipal situation, the young male child feels a specifically sexual possessiveness toward his mother, who has been the center of his life in infancy and early childhood, and a corresponding murderous hatred of his father, who, as the young child learns more about the family situation, comes to be perceived more and more as a rival for the mother's affections. Not only is the father from the child's point of view a sexual rival, he often becomes the primary socializing figure in the family constellation, the immediate representative of social authority on the family scene. In the Oedipal situation, the young child struggles with the realization that he can no longer claim the infant's oneness with the nursing mother and with the renunciation of childish pleasures demanded by the obedience which the father more and more requires of him as he grows. Propelled into this situation by his own growth, the child produces certain characteristic fantasies. In one of these, he imagines himself killing the father and making off with mother. In the other large group of
fantasies, he imagines himself losing out to the father and being castrated as a punishment. The child's fear of castration in the long run dooms the Oedipus complex. It does not matter whether the child has in fact been threatened with this punishment. What matters is that he believes in it. The reality of both Oedipal desires and their countervailing threats are psychological in any case, since the child lacks the means to act on them in reality. In the most common ending of the Oedipal phase, the child renounces his sexual possessiveness of the mother and converts his rivalry with the father into the project of becoming more like the father. Thus the father becomes a model for the male child's masculine character structure; the father's authority, internalized by the child, becomes a part of the child's own psychological makeup, the superego.

This resolution of the Oedipus complex is the successful one. There are other resolutions of the Oedipus complex, however, in which the child renounces sexuality altogether, in which the child when growing up will feel perpetually guilty about his sexual thoughts and desires due to an overly severe superego, and, finally, the homosexual outcome in which the child identifies not with the father but with the mother and seeks to become a sexual object for the father.

Whatever its outcome in a specific individual, the Oedipus complex gives rise to two broad groups of fantasy
material commonly encountered in romance plots. The first 
broad group of fantasies, those centered on the idea of 
possession of the mother as a sexual object, underlie happy 
ending plots involving romantic love. Here our hero of 
romance falls helplessly in love with a feminine object and 
with or without opposition, manages to obtain her. Any 
figures, persons, or situations who try to block the hero's 
progress towards his beloved he eventually eliminates or 
destroy. Such plots have all the earmarks of a happy end-
ing Oedipal fantasy. Even within the basic happy ending 
format we find innumerable literary variations on this sim-
ple theme. At the other extreme, we find another large 
group of Oedipal fantasies underlying romance plots in which 
the child imagines the terrible punishments (actually punish-
ment—there is only one punishment) of incest. In romance 
derivatives of this Oedipal fantasy we shall see the hero 
pursue a powerfully desired female (to whom usually an aura 
of taboo is attached) only to fail disastrously. In many 
versions, this disaster acquires apocalyptic dimensions, 
The last book of Malory's Le Morte D'Artur, as we have had 
occaision to mention earlier, depicts one of the most poig-
nant of these disasters in Western literature. Both the 
happy ending Oedipal plot and the Oedipal disaster plot are 
Oedipal plots—complete because all of the elements of their 
root fantasy are present in the literary derivative. Par-
tial Oedipal plots concentrate on some elements of a
complete Oedipal plot to the exclusion of others.

Literary versions of Oedipal fantasy use every conceivable variety of disguise and distortion. All of the figures of the core Oedipal plot may be concealed or disguised; none of the figures may be identified as son, father, or mother. Nonetheless, plots in which a young virile hero tries to possess an intensely desirable woman, opposed by still other villainous masculine figures are necessarily Oedipal. The plots of Oedipus the King, the Tristan and Isolde legends, the last book of Malory's Le Morte D'Artur, and The Brothers Karamazov are all Oedipal within this definition.

For the moment, we shall consider only those extreme enactments of this complete Oedipal plot which depict total consummation or castration. Either of these extreme Oedipal fantasies may underlie both satiric and romance plots in their literary manifestation. Generically speaking, all satires are romances but not all romances are necessarily satires. Satire and romance do not differ in their core material but in the strategies of defense used by the narrative to deal with this material. The dynamic differences between romance and satire find no place in the present descriptive sketch; however, as I discuss some of the more prominent varieties of romance plots, I shall in some cases indicate the typical satiric transformation of the plots.

There are two major varieties of complete Oedipal
plots. The first emphasizes woman as a sexual object; the second emphasizes the nurturing side of woman, usually symbolized by paradise or the golden world. Straightforward versions of the first type show the progress of a hero toward sexual object opposed by one or more blocking figures or villains. In the successful version, the hero ultimately overcomes his opposition and proceeds to consummation, Naturally, such stories tend to generate a rather sunny world view—the world view of the untested adolescence, that has never tasted defeat or experienced impotence. This Oedipal plot is the main plot of most of the comedies of Molière and Shakespeare, for instance. Often the Oedipal plot itself will form no more than a premise of the comedy and the major dramatic interest may focus on the blocking figures as in Le Malade Imaginaire. Such shifts of emphasis do not effect the basic structures of the plot. In fact, the greatness of many comic portraits of blocking figures results directly from the Oedipal framework in which they are viewed. The richness and intensity of characterization of such figures is a necessary byproduct of their position in the plot. Some of the greatest moments in comedy occur when the full ambivalence of such figures manifests itself. Shylock is the supreme example here. Since he is a bad Oedipal father and blocks the consummation of the lovers, he must ultimately be defeated and eliminated; but Shakespeare keeps him from being a mere villain by allowing
him to present the full pain of that defeat. By giving the father his due in this way, Oedipal plots dispose of a large measure of the guilt necessarily associated with the type of consummation they propose. No matter how sunny the plot, we can usually find some residual taint of Oedipal guilt, often displaced onto a minor figure. The pure hero of such a romance, for instance, may have an ugly rival for his lady's love whose filthy lust shows clearly in the plot and is condemned. The debauched lord who tries to rape Sophie in *Tom Jones* is such a figure. In reality he wants nothing more than what Tom wants, but the narrative approves of what Tom wants, steadfastly associating that want with virtue, whereas it heaps abuse on the dirty old man who tries to ravish Sophie. A similar observation applies to Fanny's many would-be ravishers in *Joseph Andrews*, where Fielding's efforts to sharply discriminate between the ravishers' and Joseph's passion for Fanny make visible the urgency of such distortions in romance plots. This is as clear an instance in its own way of displacement as the Lancelot--Mordred dichotomy in *Le Morte D'Artur*. The frequent occurrence of such split figures in literature is an index of the prevalence of Oedipal themes. Such splitting allows the creation of a paradoxical category, pure Oedipal lust contrasted with the dirty lust of the antagonist. Thus, the guilt and anxiety which both the reader and the author might feel in sharing an enacted Oedipal fantasy can
be deflected onto a scapegoat. Often a villainous father-figure himself serves as such a scapegoat. We must in either case learn from psychoanalytic criticism to recognize the fundamental kinship beneath such rivalries.

Romance is not straightforward and honest, but devious. Romance creates the hero by removing the dirty or filthy aspect of his desires from the image of his personality, foisting them upon a surrogate. Romance does not lead us to the recognition that both pure and dirty feelings, both lust and tenderness, both love and hate in fact exist together within us. On the contrary, romance encourages our repressions and self-deceptions. Romance has the tendency, if not the function, of reassuring members of a particular society that what they already believe to be true is indeed true. And its use of intellectual material is normally as uncritical as its adoption of psychological subterfuge. Everyone recognizes this in propagandistic fables like Uncle Tom's Cabin or socialist realism, but critical piety balks at recognizing the propagandistic thrust of Shakespearean comedy or Fielding's novels.

2. Satiric Romance

Satiric versions of Oedipal plots criticize the happy conclusion of the hero's quest rather than identifying with that quest and deriving satisfaction from it. More precisely, the satiric equivalent of the complete Oedipal plot
manages to have things both ways, providing us with the shared gratification of the fulfilled fantasy and the moral righteousness of criticism of it. Pope's *Rape of the Lock* provides a typical, if highly disguised, example. The lover's quest to cut off a lock of Belinda's hair is clearly a trivialized version of grander Oedipal themes. By showing a belittled distortion of Oedipal fantasy Pope allows us to laugh at what passes for passion in Belinda's artificial world while at the same time sharing the underlying sexual thrill. Hair, after all, is a blatant sexual symbol. But Pope accuses his characters of more than triviality. Pope's moralistic critique requires us to sense that the action of the plot is as sinful as if it were incestuous, as beneath the symbols it surely is. Intellectually, the accusation runs, Belinda's world neglects the eternal verities and occupies itself with trivia, card games, clipping of hair and what have you. Formulated according to the underlying dynamic, however, Belinda and her world regard incest lightly, finding it as morally insignificant as the trivia with which they distract themselves. But at the same time we, the readers, and Pope as narrator, enjoy in fantasy what we are piously urged to condemn. Although Pope's variation on the basic Oedipal plot is highly eccentric, his moral and psychic ambivalence is virtually universal in satire.

Versions of the successful Oedipal plot in the satiric
mode may show a professedly passive hero trapped by fate, succeeding in a quest he did not want to undertake. The satirist, by displacing the hero's desire to undertake and complete the quest onto a malignant world, in effect accuses that world of incestuous sinfulness. The world in general may thus take on the function of the Oedipal antihero in romance. Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall* provides a fine example of this pattern in which modernity is somehow brought to book for having forced Paul Pennyfeather into the series of wild adventures whose core is his pursuit of a clearly Oedipal figure. As is the case with Pope, Waugh in *Decline and Fall* uses the dynamics of the Oedipal situation to focus an ambivalent moral critique of modern life. Because it typically invites us to share and criticize the Oedipal fantasy at the same time, satire all too often compounds the deviousness of romance.

The unsuccessful version of the Oedipal plot might be described as the successful version plus an additional chapter, a chapter normally suppressed from the successful version. Unsuccessful, complete Oedipal plots depict the quest of a hero for a sexual object in which the hero is punished (normally by some variety of castration) either for the desire or consummation of the quest. What matters, as Freud insists, is that the child believes in it. In literature undisguised representations of castration are rare, but any irreparable disaster visited upon the hero of a romance
either for attempting or completing an Oedipal quest may serve as a substitute for the original idea of castration. Castration is the unhappy ending in Oedipal romance.

The unsuccessful Oedipal plot underlies almost all stories that we normally call tragic. The plot of the *Oedipus Rex simply is* the unsuccessful Oedipal plot. Oedipus's putting out his own eyes is, transparently, a displaced castration. The idea of castration also extends to the other disasters that follow upon the discovery of Oedipus's crime: his loss of power and authority in Thebes, his exile, and the general calumny which the community visits upon him. There is little structural difference between successful and unsuccessful Oedipal plots. In successful Oedipal plots, the hero overcomes or evades the threat of castration; whereas, in unsuccessful plots, he fails to escape punishment. Many romance plots work very near the thin dividing line between threat and realization. Unsuccessful plots, more frequently than their successful counterplots, remove all traces of Oedipal desire from the image of the hero. Rendered impersonal, desire becomes fate. Despite his denial, King Oedipus has made of his life a quest to destroy the father and possess the mother. The gods are not fooled by his claim that he has spent his life trying to escape the edict of the oracle. Oedipus's consent to and participation in his punishment implies acknowledgement of the legitimacy of his guilt. The object
of analysis here is not Oedipus's personal psychology--he is not a complete human personality in any case--but rather the whole play. Only rarely are the personalities in romance complete enough to analyze independently. In most instances we can properly analyze only the full plot structure in question. When we do so, Oedipal patterns and other normally disguised unconscious trends in plot reveal themselves transparently.

Satiric versions of the unsuccessful Oedipal plot typically show progress of a hero toward consummation and its aftermath, with the hero protesting all along that he does not wish to accomplish the quest; or the hero may passively but silently seem to resist what happens to him. Such a variation on the unsuccessful Oedipal theme provides the root plot of the picaresque novel where the hero normally is a passive observer. In the picaresque, the full Oedipal mechanisms are often totally in the background. The hero may not seem to be going anywhere, but the sheer energy of his movement from one adventure shows that he is participating in an unacknowledged quest. Moreover, the plot often brings him into forbidden consummations followed by disasters or near disasters. The episodic character of picaresque plot derives from these repetitions of consummation and disaster. At its extreme this strategy generates a perpetual cycle in which the hero is alternately gratified and castigated, virtually ad infinitum. Such cyclic versions
of the unsuccessful Oedipal plot may cast the cultural enemies of the satirist as the punishing fathers of the Oedipal plot.

Whereas the triumph of the hero of successful Oedipal satire represents the triumph of false values or in general whatever the satirist opposes, the defeat of the hero of unsuccessful satire represents the defeat of whatever the satirist regards as the true and the good. Thus the hero of unsuccessful Oedipal satire becomes a martyr or Christ figure whose destruction accuses his punishers. Because the hero's goodness permits a more untroubled identification, the moral vision of this satiric mode shows much less ambivalence than does successful Oedipal satire. The moral and intellectual critique of successful Oedipal satire works against the grain of the plot. In any romance, the reader tends to identify with and be gratified by the hero's triumph, even where this identification is tempered by an intellectual awareness that the hero's triumph is a triumph of illegitimate values. No such ambivalence affects the unsuccessful pattern. The hero is always a good guy trampled down by villainous father figures. As a result, therefore, the satirist finds it more difficult to keep his satiric balance; such forms of satire easily degenerate into diatribe.

Elliot Baker's novel *A Fine Madness* provides a fine example. Here the poet-hero seduces the wife of his
psychiatrist. When the psychiatrist learns of this he consents to the poet's lobotomization, which he had previously opposed. Baker throughout accuses the stodgy psychiatrist of being unable to understand or appreciate the poet's magnificent, though somewhat volcanic, creative personality. (The novel associates the poet's creative powers specifically with his sexual prowess; the poet is a veritable Don Juan.) The cuckolded psychiatrist thus attacks the poet's sexual potency when he attacks the brain that supports creativity. This, the novel insists, is the psychiatrist's real motive, though he himself protests that he is having the lobotomy done for the poet's own good. Unfortunately, as it approaches its denouement, Baker's book loses its satiric tensions and tends more and more to become an ordinary unsuccessful Oedipal romance. The resulting unambivalent division of heroes and villains oversimplifies the book's moral and psychological vision.

Great satires are far more frequently found in the successful Oedipal mode where our identification and criticism of the hero and our identification with and uncertainties about the values by which he is criticized combine to produce a characteristic rich ambivalence. Ambivalent characters and situations in romance or satire must necessarily engage our feelings more deeply and complexly because our own feelings have a parallel ambivalence. The issues raised by the rich ambivalence in romance or satire touch
on virtually universal inner conflicts which can rarely be permanently resolved. According to psychoanalysis, we never quite make up our minds about what most passionately concerns us in life. The greatest romances and satires touch our permanent ambivalences.

In contrast to plots grounded on the quest for woman as a desirable sexual object, some romance plots emphasize the quest for woman as a nurturing object. Such plots recall the situation of the nursing infant more than the rivalry of the older child for possession of mother's love. They commonly resort to more extreme displacements and other distortions than do Oedipal plots proper; in particular, they almost always substitute a desired world or state of being for the image of the nursing mother. This substitution fits the core fantasy of this mode well, because we must suppose that the very young infant cannot perceive his mother as an independent being. He sees her strictly in relation to his own needs. So long as she gives him everything he needs, he scarcely perceives any difference between himself and that totally supportive other. When he does not get everything he needs, he may imagine that the entire world has abandoned him. The very young infant alternates between viewing his world as magically responsive to his needs or as somehow fiendishly indifferent and, still worse, totally threatening, devouring. Romances that derive from
this complex of feelings tend to transpose the infantile questions into a cosmological or theological vocabulary. Oral romances are typically more grandiose than the Oedipal. Whereas the Oedipal quest can be conceived of quite personally and privately, romance themes deriving from oral issues are congenitally vulnerable to a kind of ontological elephantiasis. (Throughout I am dealing only with elementary and paradigmatic plot fragments, not with whole works of literature.) In such complete works of literature oral, Oedipal, and many other themes or fragments are usually combined: thus, for instance, in an Oedipal romance, whether or not the hero can ultimately possess what he desires may have powerful influence on whether or not the world at large appears supportive of human desire. But where such cosmic questions intrude themselves powerfully, we should suspect the presence of underlying oral fantasy.

The oral version of the quest plot is a quest or pilgrimage of one or a group of heroes for admittance to a totally supportive world, a world totally in harmony with human needs. The successful ending of such a plot is an entrance into paradise, a positive apocalypse. The Christian vision of history, for instance, has precisely this plot showing mankind's progress from the loss of paradise through the travails of time to the return to paradise at the end of time. By any measure, this is one of the most influential plots ever invented and it has been widely adapted,
plagiarized and reinvented in other contexts. For instance, 
this is essentially the Marxist version of history as well 
as the Christian, although the heroes and villains have 
different names in Marxist myth. Rousseau and Blake, among 
very many others, also adapted this core oral plot as the 
center of their own vision. A world vision, more properly 
creation of reality, constitutes the very core of romance; 
its unmoving center surrounded by an infinity of turbulent 
suburban galaxies. No matter what other theme they incor-
porate or struggle with, all romance modalities must finally 
envisage the world as ultimately responsive to human needs 
or irrevocably opposed to those needs. Romance cannot en-
visage the world as genuinely indifferent. In romance, the 
accusation of indifference against the world means an ac-
tive, hostile indifference. For the hungry infant, the 
mother's refusal to nurse is hardly an indifferent act; from 
his point of view, such a refusal suggests unmeasurable and 
incomprehensible hostility. Although Oedipal themes are 
relatively far more common than overt oral themes in litera-
ture, a prior commitment on the oral question about the uni-
verse—Does it feed or starve us?—lies behind every Oedipal 
romance or for that matter, romances on any other theme.

Like Oedipal romance, oral romance has its unsuccess-
ful or disastrous ending. The ultimate nightmare of the 
nursing infant would be to cry without being heard until he 
starved; to be abandoned. This is one version of oral
disaster. Simply to recognize oneself as trapped in a demonically unsupportive world, not having his needs met, not being fed when he wants to eat, provokes the infant to huge and overpowering rage; gripped by this rage, he has fantasies of biting or devouring the nursing mother; as this rage continues, however, he begins to feel more and more abandoned and helpless, and he comes to see himself as the one being devoured—devoured by his own needs, left vulnerable to this devouring by the mother, now perceived as hostile, indeed as the devourer. Such limitlessly angry fantasies underlie a second unhappy ending of the oral quest plot, the negative apocalypse, in which the world reveals its inhumanness by falling apart at the seams, as in Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle*. The negative apocalypse may be seen as the triumph of dark, anti-human powers: the plot of *The Dunciad*.

Satiric versions of the oral quest plot invariably derive from its negative or unsuccessful version. I have not been able to discover a satire which assumes the world is supportive and then ridicules some figure or figures who do not see the world in this way. Polemics by various defenders of the status quo do this; a satiric enactment of this tactic is conceivable, but to my knowledge has not been attempted. Satirists typically envision a contemporary scene aberrantly indifferent to their values. This indifference becomes their principal accusation against the
world: Satires using predominantly oral themes may show their misguided antiheroes leading humanity not into paradise but into hell. The hero and his followers may think that they have found a way into utopia, but the satirist knows differently. Satires with this theme take the form of ironic utopian visions such as *Brave New World* or *1984*. The utopia created by Swift's Houyhnhnms is essentially of this sort, though much more ambivalently conceived.

The hero of a satiric or straightforward quest need not show any awareness of what he seeks or indeed that he is on a quest at all. This holds true even when the satire is told from the hero's point of view as in Kurt Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle*, where the narrator provokes a negative apocalypse in his quest for a humanly responsive world. Blocking figures have relatively much less importance in purely oral schemes than in the Oedipal. In oral plots the distance between the hero and the world he seeks is his primary opposition. Whether he gains paradise or the inferno, the end of the quest tends, by definition, to be its own punishment or reward: Where Oedipal themes combine with oral motifs, the hero may encounter masculine blocking figures between himself and his goal. Occasionally, too, an angry, devouring feminine figure may oppose the hero. Such feminine figures have great complexity and they usually owe as much to Oedipal trends as to oral. The image of a hostile world alone suffices to represent the hostile
mother who refuses to feed the infant. When this mother reappears as a concrete figure in the fable other elements are usually at work, most frequently the two-women complex (The division of all womanhood into opposites such as the Virgin Mary vs. the Whore of Babylon, pure and noble woman vs. the sexually voracious woman). This almost always reflects both Oedipal and oral configurations: the good woman of this complex is not only sexless and pure but also nurturing, the evil woman is not only filthy and carnal but also devouring.

The extremes of gratification or frustration in oral and Oedipal fantasy material define the limits of happy or unhappy endings in romance. Such themes are by no means the only fantasy material incorporated into romance, but these two modes taken together present the greatest fulfillment or deprivation that the human mind can conceive. Castration, abandonment, to be devoured by our own hungers without hope of succour—these are the worst we can imagine. We cannot imagine death, nor would it be the worst thing if we could. When death appears as a horrible necessity in romance, it is a disguise for these more terrible disasters. We can imagine nothing better than to totally possess the object of our sexual wishings or to be forever nurtured. Other rewards, perpetual or temporary, disguise these fundamental rewards or represent lesser pleasures.

In romance, we find two extremes: one presents a
sunny world virtually devoid of serious threats or conflicts in which disguised, secondarily elaborated, and aesthetically complicated fantasy gratifications are proposed and realized with little conflict. Lack of conflict is the crucial variable. The wishes so fulfilled are more often trivial ones because these wishes, precisely, can obtain conscious representation without provoking significant conflicts. Accordingly, it is a psychoanalytic as well as literary principle that the happiest of romances are likely to be dull. Narratives without conflict attract little interest because the most pressing wishes encounter the greatest conflict. These happy, innocuous romances clearly have the daydream as their psychodynamic basis. Only the more superficial wishes of the ego, which derive mostly from petty human vanity—the wish to be stronger, smarter, or more beautiful—can find representation without risking conflict with the forces of censorship. Many apparently happy romances conceal substantial conflicts beneath an euphoric exterior, as the mechanisms of disguise can make use of innocuous exteriors. Ordinarily, though, we can distinguish between a genuinely innocuous wish dream or its literary equivalent—Anna's dream of strawberries—and a deceptively innocuous one, because deceptive romances cannot preserve a thoroughly self-consistent facade. Usually there are faint but clearly perceptible cracks in the superficies. Many fairy tales have such a deceptively innocuous facade.
Other examples, particularly popular fictions, give more difficulty. For instance, is the familiar Superman comic strip an innocuous fantasy of omnipotence or is it a highly conflicted Oedipal fiction filled with vicious father figures, helpless, pure heroines and so on? This problem, though not literary, is hardly trivial, for psychoanalytic critics hear constantly the objection that their psychodynamic interpretations of literature err because the fiction in question is simply a jeu d'esprit, an example of playful, but essentially superficial ego wishes in action, so much high-minded and graceful fooling around. True, but irrelevant, is the answer. Such dynamically insignificant productions of human wit are possible, but they are not likely to attract much attention for long. Superman, for instance, appeals basically to the boyish desire for limitless strength, but the actual plots of this comic strip invariably exhibit features of the successful Oedipal pattern and are populated with all the familiar heroes, villains, and intermediate characters of that pattern. The discrimination of trivial from dynamically portentous romances poses mainly practical rather than theoretical problems, since the theory plainly makes allowances for the existence and characteristics of both.

At the opposite extreme, from sunny Oedipal or oral romances we have romances whose world and action spring from fantasies of abandonment or castration. Such romances
in the extreme truly take the reader to the end of night. Their mood is bleak, irremediably pessimistic, their dominant feeling-tone, pain and frustration, the weather of their world perpetually stormy. Much of the pessimistic literature of the later nineteenth century as well as of the modern period is of this sort. The works of Kafka, George Orwell, Aldous Huxley, Louis Ferdinand Celine, and a host of lesser writers can provide many examples. The intimate connection of the core fantasies of such works with unsuccessful variants of Oedipal and oral motifs makes it clear that such bleak works are no less wish fulfillments than are happier fictions. The proper psychoanalytic analogue of such works is the nightmare. Nightmares represent wishes that are strongly repressed. The dreamer repressed such wishes at an earlier period of his life because they threatened to put him in a psychologically dangerous situation. Once the child believes in castration, to cite the most common instance, Oedipal wishes tend to arouse castration anxiety. Rather than undergo the painful experience of this anxiety the child represses all such wishes and their derivatives. Later, when the grown-up child has dreams whose current flows from these heavily repressed wishes, he will experience anxiety. The wishes are not unpleasant in themselves but in their imagined consequences. Nightmares are dreaded wish fulfillments. Unpleasant, nightmarish romances are wish fulfillments which provoke large quantities
of anxiety in the reader and author. Often such romances represent the punishment phase of a total fantasy. In Kafka's *The Trial*, for instance, the hero, K., is pursued, persecuted and ultimately put to death by shadowy, paternalistic authorities for a crime we have no evidence he has ever committed. Like Oedipus he is nonetheless guilty. In romance there are no miscarriages of justice. The psyches of reader and author are perfectly in tune with the action despite what they may say; like the real judges and jurors, they know what the heroes deserve. Wherever we find this comensurability, we are dealing with romance.

The horror and repulsiveness of nightmarish romances is yet another strategy of disguise, and such romances are as disingenuous in their way as their sunnier counterparts. What the narrators of such nightmares never admit is that they want the nightmare to happen. It is not true, as Frye would have it, that negative romances represent what we most wish not to happen. On the contrary, they represent what it terrifies us to wish—a very different proposition. The hero of romance—and presumably the reader along with him—always gets what he wants, although he rarely admits this to himself or to the reader. The denials of Oedipus, the mute denial of Kafka's K, and the other disclaimers proffered by their tribe protect the readers' own repressions at a crucial point. This protection at the same time induces the reader to continue the complications of fantasy
that the work of literature enacts. Lulled by this denial, the audience stays to watch Oedipus discover and acknowledge his guilt. Now there are no denials and the audience is trapped in its identification with Oedipus for a fatal moment. But later, after the play, those who need it still have the protection of Oedipus's denial of intent. It is true in fantasy but not in real life that we get precisely what we want, what we really want, no matter what we say we want. "A terrible nightmare happened to me last night," says the dreamer, as if it were thrust upon him without his consent. But the dreamer cannot disown his own dream. It belongs to his desires, not to any other world natural or supernatural. The wish-dreams incorporated in literature belong to human desires in general; we cannot renounce them without renouncing a portion of our humanity. Hence at the end of the most terrible tragedy or apocalypse vision the honest reader of literature must acknowledge how intensely he has desired this frightening gratification.

Between the extremes of sunny and stormy romances we find the great majority of actual literary romances, whose plots show neither extreme fulfillment nor the blackest disasters. They are in the middle. I shall call them chiaroscuro because they have features of both extremes, moments of sunny euphoria alternating with moments shrouded with horror. Conflict is the hallmark of such romances, more so than at the extremes, where either positive wish fulfill-
ment or the punishments of anti-wish have their way without restriction. In this mode, hero and villain struggle against one another on an approximately equal footing. One or the other may win out but we cannot say that the overwhelming preponderance of force lies on either side. In contrast, in sunny romances fate is with the heroes and stormy with the villains. Despite this equality of hero and villain, most middle romances tend to lean recognizably toward one extreme or the other. No matter how detached, most writers of romance wind up placing their bets on one side or the other.

It is impossible to discuss this huge group of middle romances generally. The limits of what can be done within this general mode are the limits of authorial ingenuity. Most of the detailed subplots I shall discuss commonly take the chiaroscuro form in literature. The extremes are rare, partly because they invariably strain credulity. The unrealistic optimism of a Polyanna has become proverbial. Similarly, the critical reader will not suppose that George Orwell or Franz Kafka show us the way things really are, even in actual totalitarian countries. Although the comparison of fantasies to a critical conception of reality properly forms a part of the theory of the novel rather than romance, I mention it here because middle romances frequently look realistic. Not only do they use realistic details of place and time—most romances written since 1700
do this in any case—but also the nearly equivalent re-
sources of hero and villain give their world the appear-
ance of our everyday world, where those we struggle against
and who struggle against us are rarely immensely stronger
or weaker than we are. The apparent realism of chiaroscuro
romance comes also from our tendency to see our own lives
in broadly romantic terms. All of us, at times, interpret
what happens to us as good or evil according to its fulfill-
ment or frustration of our personal wishes. Our struggles
to obtain more fulfillment and less frustration have the
characteristics of a romance quest. But the world apart
from our wishes simply does not have this structure. The
natural world does not respond to wishes. With respect to
natural phenomena, our fulfillments and frustrations are
equally accidental. Any personal view of reality which de-
nies this and seeks to restructure reality according to
human needs partakes of the nature of romance. Obviously
most world religions would fit this definition, as well as
the metaphysical gravamen of most political doctrines. Only
a critical view of reality, one based ultimately on what
natural science has discovered about the world, can distin-
guish between the apparent reality of chiaroscuro romance
and the reality testing which is the key function of the
novel.

Complete Oedipal plots offer us a paradigm of the max-
imum gratifications and terrors that the literary imagina-
tion can offer as well as delimiting the middle ground between these two extremes. But complete Oedipal plots by no means encompass all romance plots, nor even the greater part of them. A large group of romance plots derive their structure from isolated components of the complete Oedipal pattern. I call these partial Oedipal plots. The creations of such a category is largely a matter of convenience. In most partial Oedipal plots, we could fill in the deleted portions to make up a complete Oedipal plot. But this involves the critic's second guessing the writer in a way that many non-psychoanalytic critics find objectionable. By identifying the Oedipal component of many commonly encountered plots and defining their relation to the complete Oedipal pattern we eliminate the necessity of reconstructing these plots in every individual instance. Since the complete Oedipal plot consists of son, mother, father, partial plots consist, by definition, of only two of these elements out of the three of the Oedipal triangle, or, with greater fragmentation, of isolated but powerful complexes of feelings brought up by the complete Oedipal situation.

The first large group of partial Oedipal plots concentrate on the son's quest for and ultimate possession of or loss of the mother. The father is excluded from such plots as an active figure although his influence is rarely absent. The criterion of such plots, thus, is that they do not represent a direct, unmediated conflict between son and father
figure. Successful, positive versions of this plot are staples of popular magazines, movies and television—the familiar happy ending, boy-meets-girl story. Although such stories exhibit relatively little conflict, nonetheless the hero of such a romance often has to go through a series of trials at the hands of fate or circumstance before he gets the girl. In the opposition of this depersonalized fate to the hero we see the remote hostility of the Oedipal father. The stereotyping so common in popular romances on this theme reflects both an unwillingness to confront the depths and a time-proven method of coping with such conflicts as they do develop. Dulled by the tireless repetitions of these formula stories, the reader is unlikely to ponder any relation between them and his own situation. Happy ending versions of partial Oedipal plots are all very much alike, and are rarely encountered in serious literature. In unhappy versions of this plot, we get a certain amount of differentiation among the causes of the hero's loss. I have already mentioned the version in which the opposition of the father figure is transformed into fate, which in this context refers to whatever disembodied force defeats the hero. Often this defeat involves not only the loss of a love object but the hero's destruction as well. Probably no transformation of the maleficent influence of the Oedipal father is more common than this one. When the father's opposition becomes impersonal in this way, Oedipal conflict
returns us to the underlying oral issue in all romance, whether the world as a whole is supportive or not. This is but one example of the innumerable ways in which these two levels of conflict may dovetail with one another in narrative.

Oedipal plots in which the hero fails because he is rejected by the woman he seeks bring up an as-yet-undiscussed aspect of the Oedipal situation. In our earlier, idealized discussion of the Oedipal situation we purposely considered the mother only as an inert object of contention between the father and son. As a participant in conflict, the mother may choose to place her loyalties primarily with the father or the son. If she places her loyalty with the father, then she will work with him to coerce the child into renouncing childish possessiveness of the mother. If she places her loyalty with the child, she will work with him to subvert the father's authority; but in this case, she is not likely ever to be able to act out what the child's fantasies require of her. When the mother takes the child's side, it is more often for reasons of her own—anger with the father, her husband—than out of any special regard for what the child himself wants. The child is bound to discover this; because, as he more and more proceeds to demand in reality what he already enjoys in fantasy, the mother must thwart him in one dishonest way or another. To the extent that the child realizes what is going on, he will come to see that no
matter what mother says, she cannot and will not really put him first in her world. From the child's point of view, then, the mother is a seductress unwilling to deliver what she promises, an agent willing or not of the familial power structure, or, finally, as a helpless damsel in distress trapped by the father's all encompassing power. Most of the great rejecting women in literature derive from the image of the mother as seen in one of these three roles, especially that of the damsel in distress or the seductress. Contributing to this total configuration are not only the role the mother plays within the Oedipal situation but also the child's specific rationalization about the mother's conduct. All such rationalizations attempt to account for the child's inability to have in reality either the power or the gratification which his fantasy proposes. Keeping both the mother's typical role and the childish rationalizations which may attach to it in mind we can approach, I believe, a psychoanalytic understanding of the two-women complex mentioned earlier. The good woman of this complex has three leading characteristics: she is passive, sexless and nurturing. All of these characteristics arise from the child's fantasy about the mother who says that she loves the child best of all but must pretend that she loves the father more because he is more powerful. Passivity is obviously the foundation of this particular role. The mother is in effect passing the buck both ways. She will not tell the child
that he is really not first with her--this mainly to avoid conflict--and she, of course, will not tell the father that he is not first. The mother in this role--or rather in later rationalizations of it--is perceived as sexless because the child naturally imagines that she will not give the father, whom she does not really love, what the child most desires of her. This aids in the child's repression of his own sexual strivings toward the mother. He avoids intense jealousy by repressing from his consciousness any knowledge of sexual goings-on between the father and the mother. Finally, the overall vision of the mother as nurturing in this role reflects the child's satisfaction in supposing that he is really first with the mother, that she loves him best of all, although she can show it only at certain times. This is a special, secret relationship. Its covert character appears often in literature when the Oedipal mother appears as a heavenly guide, a benevolent figure who helps the hero complete his quest, a Beatrice. Such figures have a special and covert relationship with the heroes they assist. Athena in the *Odyssey* and Venus in the *Aenied* are parallel examples. Though such figures extend special protection to the hero, they themselves are controlled nonetheless by an overarching fate, Zeus, Jupiter, or Jehovah. They can assist the hero only in certain situations. There are things against which they cannot protect him. This reproduces precisely the checks and balances of
the original Oedipal situation. Consistent with this Oedipal origin, such guiding female figures are not sexually available to the heroes they assist; but they may steer the hero towards sexually accessible substitutes, as Athena helps Odysseus return to Penelope. No matter how helpful they may be to the hero, such figures continue to be rejecting in certain ways, as becomes startlingly clear when the Oedipal mother becomes the direct object of a hero's quest. The hero in romance simply cannot possess such a figure— not at any rate without paying the penalty attached to Oedipal consummation. Where the romance narrative is unwilling to let the hero pay this penalty, the hero must endure perpetual frustration. Almost all of the great frustrated loves in literature are of this sort.

In contrast to the good Oedipal mother, the bad Oedipal mother takes an active role in relation to the hero, arousing his interest or engaging his trust only to betray it. Behind this typical role lies a rationalizing fantasy which attributes the failure of the boy's Oedipal designs to the mother's malice. The sexualization of such figures is a covert accusation against them, just as the desexualization of the good Oedipal mother represents a sort of praise. The little boy is accusing the mother of granting to the father what he, in his Oedipal ambition, believes should rightly be his. This argument runs, mother gives sexual satisfaction to father but not to me, whereas I really deserve it. In
romance, bad Oedipal figures can be possessed but not enjoyed: their sexual favors are always a form of betrayal. Duessa in the first book of the Fairie Queen is a very apt example. The secret agent who betrays James Bond in Casino Royale is an analogous figure.

The murderous, devouring woman, or vagina dentata, represents the most extreme of negative Oedipal figures found in romance. The frequency with which such destructive feminine figures appear in literature, both profound and trivial, is indeed astonishing: Clytemnestra, Medea, the Wife of Bath, Lady Macbeth, and the multitudinous femmes fatales of detective and spy stories are but a few examples of many. Unfortunately for theoretical neatness, these destructive women do not derive all of their characteristics from the Oedipal configuration; oral trends are also prominently displayed in these rapacious females. Since much oral fantasy material revolves around the issues of being eaten or eating, the near total destructiveness of the literary vagina dentata reflects this cosmic concern of underlying oral fantasy. The destructiveness of this feminine figure goes beyond specific malice towards a particular male—which we might expect in purely Oedipal fantasies of castration—and expands into a truly voracious appetite for carnage. The Medea of legend not only dispatches Jason's new bride by means of a poisoned cloak, but also kills her own children. The Wife of Bath, similarly, has outlived
five husbands when we meet her in Chaucer's prologue. In the prologue to her own tale, she makes no attempt to conceal that she has somehow drained them of their vital essence like a spider sucking the vital fluids from a fly.\textsuperscript{11}

The primary Oedipal element in the vision of destructive women (over and above the patent fascination which they are viewed) is castration, often deflected to other organs or generalized to mean simply death. This vision of castrating woman springs from the infantile view of her as castrated.

According to the Freudian description of the sexual fantasies of children, the male child thinks everyone has a penis until he learns otherwise by observation. Beings who lack a penis, females, are thought of as castrated—as having had a penis at one time but having lost it.\textsuperscript{12} Thus, the overt or implicit castration threats used to coerce the child in the Oedipal state fall on fertile ground when he already knows that there are castrated beings. The terror that this fate might also befall him is strongly reinforced by the dynamic of the Oedipal situation. Since the narcissistic investment in the penis is extremely high at this time, the possibility of losing it seems not only to threaten the loss of a valued organ but total annihilation as well. By a kind of regressive inference, the concept of this annihilation reawakens the world view of the oral situation, in which the mother was the villain and devourer—hence the teeth in the vaginal mouth corresponding to teeth in the
proper mouth. Moreover, the child is at this time tempted to resolve the Oedipal conflicts passively by giving up his phallic ambitions, rather than his phallus; he would then identify himself with the mother rather than the father, thus becoming an object for the father rather than a rival of the father. As active Oedipal striving tends toward passive reconciliation, the image of the female tends from castrated to castrating. The figure of the destructive woman or vagina dentata thus conflates two of the most significant loci of anxieties arising during human development. When figures stemming from this conflation appear in a literary world they are invariably signs of all the animosity or fears than man may feel about his world or the people in it.

Romance plots in literature abound in feminine figures whose affective outlines are brought into focus by the optics of the Oedipus complex. The great span between the most extremely positive and the most extremely negative of such figures gives vast scope to even the more schematic romance characterizations. The immense variety of gradations between the best and the worst of these women allows the writer of romance to populate his world with innumerable differentiated feminine figures, none of whom has much relation necessarily to women in real life. Each individual in this huge catalog of feminine types has been produced by a fusion of Oedipal with oral fantasy material. Since fantasy, not observation, has produced these literary creatures, the
contemporary feminist's objection that views of women in literature are highly distorted and unrealistic has considerable force. Our real lovers and wives rarely provide us with either total satisfaction or total destruction. Actual experience, here as elsewhere, tends to be an indifferent mix of satisfaction and frustrations, one which--incidentally--has little attraction for the literary imagination. The motives of our real life feminine partners and colleagues probably have little in common with the young child's fantasies about the Oedipal or pre-Oedipal mother. Thus, the image of woman, her behavior and the rationalizations about that behavior in literature has little empirical basis. This in any case is not what literature has promised us. What the literary vision of woman provides is a series of highly dramatic, fascinating, or frightening variations on a few basic themes, splendors which the minutia of everyday relationships rarely offer.

Partial Oedipal plots of the type we have been discussing gain most of their breath and depth from the characteristics of the spectrum of feminine figures which occupy them. The male heroes of such romances are rarely equally impressive--for example, the faceless hero of Thackery's *Henry Esmond* who provides merely a pair of masculine eyes through which the two enigmatic women at the center of the book's plot are seen; it is no accident that we remember Anna Karinina long after the memories of Levin or Vronsky
grow fuzzy in our minds.

The third variety of partial Oedipal plots which focus on the pursuit of woman are those in which the defeat of the protagonist comes about not because of interference by a father-like fate, nor because of the qualities of the feminine object pursued, but because the protagonist is self-defeating. With this permutation of the possibilities of this plot form we approach a boundary between novel and romance. It is as characteristic of romance to transform individual psychology into cosmology as it is characteristic of the novel to see the problems of human lives sociologically and psychologically. The motto of romance might be, "The cause is in the stars, not in ourselves." It takes an entire romance world with all its human and subhuman figures taken together to make a complete individual psyche. When the cause of a protagonist's demise moves inward from fate or the characteristics of the object he seeks to himself, the ideological and psychological basis of romance is necessarily undercut. Nonetheless, in some romances the hero's self-defeating tendencies become a kind of internalized fate, a literary equivalent of Freud's superego. Stories built on this pattern are usually comic in tone and somewhat inconsequential. Figures derived from this pattern frequently occur in larger and more complex works, as, for instance, the hero of *Tristam Shandy*.¹⁵

The second major group of partial Oedipal plots con-
centrates on the aggressive strivings of sons against fathers and excludes from view the woman over whom the two men are fighting. Anger, not love, is their great subject. Oedipal rebellion plots, like other partial Oedipal plots, may completely preoccupy a work of art, as in Shelley's *Prometheus*, or they may be part of a larger design. The most important and popular Oedipal stories invite us to identify with the rebelling son, although he may not be seen sympathetically. Often both son and father-figure are represented as gods, as if to underline the immortality of Oedipal hate. The Egyptian god Set, Aeschylus' Prometheus, Milton's Satan—but not the medieval devil—are a few of the more important rebellious sons in literature and fable. Common and less grandiose representations of this pattern are rebellious sons who struggle not against an identifiable father figure but against the world, society, circumstance, or fate. We recognize such figures when they lack a personal antagonist by their unflagging, demonic anger, which gives their lives a furious though often destructive energy. One of the greatest of these figures is Faulkner's Sutpen in *Absalom, Absalom*. Like Sutpen, such figures condemn themselves to torment and annihilation unless they ultimately find some reconciliation with the father or whatever represents him. Many famous Biblical stories are variations on this theme.

Modern versions of this plot typically have an angry young man struggling against social or cosmic circumstance,
or with limitations in himself. If in the romance mode, such a story will end with the hero either continuing his rebellion, battered but undaunted or with his defeat and submission. Novelistic treatments of the same theme show the hero learning to outgrow his anger, to accommodate reality where he must and master it where he can. This distinction between novelistic and romantic treatments of analogous themes has crucial importance. Both of the common variations of rebellious Oedipal plots reflect drive—dynamics exclusively in their romantic treatments. The rebellious hero must either continue in his stiff-necked ways or submit; romance worlds have no middle ground; they will support none of the subtle accommodations and negotiations of everyday life. What romance necessarily leaves out of account, social and interpersonal reality, preoccupies novelistic treatments of analogous themes.

Plot, rather than technique, is the ground of this distinction. According to this criterion, Camus' *L'Étranger* is a romantic, not a novelistic, treatment of the theme of Oedipal rebellion. Mersault in Camus' work is the very type of the rebel who struggles against social convention until society destroys him. A kind of passive, diffident refusal to go along with social forms is the keynote of his charac-
ter. At the beginning of the book, he refuses to feign a grief he does not feel over the death of his mother, not with any conscious anger but rather with a curiously self-
conscious naivety. His refusal to conform is nonetheless absolute and non-negotiable. Later he refuses equally stubbornly to mimic the conventions of romantic love. Mersault's anaesthetic actions project anger and stubbornness even though his talk is flat. Even the murder he commits is curiously will-less. (Describing it he speaks as if the gun had a will of its own.) When he comes to trial, he refuses to act the part of the repentant murderer, a tactic which would surely have gotten him a less severe penalty than death. Notwithstanding his passivity, Mersault clearly is a stubborn, stiff-necked man whose will-lessness—really a kind of moral jujitsu—abets his nay-saying to everything conventional, to everything human except his own life. If we imagine a child adamantly refusing to relinquish his phallic strivings despite luridly repeated castration threats, whose father then carries out the threats, we would have a situation close to the latent dynamic of Camus' plot. Mersault pertinaciously clings to his integrity, as to a forbidden gratification. Like so many of his romantic forbears he persists despite all the world can do. He never considers, perhaps he never imagines, the possibility of adjustment or accommodation. Mersault, like the typical adolescent he so patently is, strives to live as if there were no one else in the world. Clearly, then, the book appeals at once to pubescent egoism and repressed Oedipal angers. A novelistic treatment of the similar theme
would emphasize as pointedly as Camus omits the subtle process by which our compromises with society and the world are negotiated. In the world-view of the novel a Mersault comes to seem a kind of monster who rejects the core of his adult humanity, which would consist precisely in the development of his ability to negotiate humane compromises with tact and finesse.

Rebellious Oedipal plots frequently take forms which signify revenge against or triumph over the father. These are distinguished from Oedipal plots we have been previously discussing by their literal representation of the father's destruction. Rather than staying within dialectics of hostility between son and father figure—the static, perpetual conflict of god and Satan—they represent fantasies of victory in this conflict. Since the vision of any immediate, complete solution to Oedipal conflict is fanciful, such plots are less "realistic" than plots which acknowledge the perpetuity of Oedipal conflict. Moreover, these plots evade the guilt which would normally attach to such a deed in ways which disclose their rigorous limitations. Probably the most common of these violent Oedipal motifs in western literature are dragon-slaying stories, in which a quasi-human figure, beastly in form but human in malevolence threatens some human community. The figure so constructed then is slain by an obviously Oedipal—because youthful and virile—hero. The dragon in these plots is a
scapegoat, a passive vehicle in which the community's sins are disposed of. What distinguishes these plots and their heroes is the righteousness of their deeds. From Perseus to Beowulf, from St. George to the latest heroes of detective fiction, these virile upstarts wreak carnage on their beastly antagonists with scarcely a twinge of guilt or remorse. Guilt is literally disposed of in the dragon-like father figure. The typical transgressions of this figure against the community provide a further clue to its identity. As in the Perseus myth or for that matter King Kong, these beasts almost always wind up threatening a young, beautiful maiden whom the hero would rescue. The insistence of this rivalry of beast and hero for the possession of a desirable woman argues conclusively for the Oedipal derivation of the dragon-killing plot.\textsuperscript{16} Since these plots bestow the sanction of morality on the hero, they are often the least disguised of all Oedipal plots in literature.

A third version of Oedipal revenge, the Oedipal upstart plot, has the father, rather than the son as its hero. Just as, in the majority of Oedipal plots, the reader is invited to identify with the son in the Oedipal triangle (identification thus serves as the premise of the point-of-view) so, occasionally, he may be asked to identify with the father. From the dynamics of the Oedipal situation, it is easy to derive plots appropriate to this identification. In such stories, the father, reacting to the rebellious
strivings of the son, effortlessly puts down the uprising, as in Milton's narrative of the war in heaven in *Paradise Lost*. The frequently heard complaint that this part of *Paradise Lost* is dull compared to the first two books suggests how treacherous such father-identifications are. Somehow, we are all more sons than fathers; confronted with a narrative that insists we identify with a father as he suppresses a rebellious child, we respond at best with a restive ambivalence. Only those who use the authority of the narrative's symbolic father to control their own unruly impulses are likely to wholeheartedly approve his actions. The triumph of the father guarantees to such people the continuity of their own self-control, the integrity of their repressions. This equation of inner and outer order, with its consequent fear of change, can be clearly observed in certain political conservatives; it is no coincidence that such defenders of a Christian-apologetic interpretation of *Paradise Lost* as C. S. Lewis or Merritt Hughes were also champions of an authoritarian and dogmatically nostalgic version of Christianity. Literary heroes defend the ego's beleaguered boundaries—or expand them if that is our need;—our identification with the hero thus depends in a crucial sense on the characteristics of the needs we bring to the narrative. Individual readers and cultures alike select their heroes in this way; conflict arises between different readers of the same work when one group of readers
impugn the legitimacy of the needs of another group of readers. If the traditionalists object that the Satanic reading of *Paradise Lost* is a modern heresy which could never have entered Milton's mind, the modernists may likewise reply that if Milton himself had had no ambivalence on this issue, the Satanic reading could never have arisen. Many readers do in fact find Satan more attractive than God. It is no objection that they should not, still less that they do not, feel this way. But both responses are equally motivated, from different sides of the universal Oedipal heritage: each reading reflects a slightly different shading of the same ambivalent complex of feelings. This universal ambivalence assures that no straightforward identification with either son or father figures in literature is possible. It is no feat to identify with the dragon against the more cocksure sort of St. Georges. Until the conflicts that make all identifications in such contexts uneasy find a final solution, nominal heroes will have to risk being booed, and villains will occasionally hear themselves cheered. The fluidity of audience identifications is yet another argument against static, archetypal interpretive schemes of whatever origin.

Another large group of Oedipal plots derive from fantasies of punishment for imagined transgression. Since the unconscious cannot distinguish between wish and deed, the thought can provoke all the punishments of conscience that
the act itself might. In literary form, these dreams of punishment, like their psychic precursors, represent wish and punishment in the same manifest context. Only rarely are wish, transgression, and punishment separated chronologically. Literary dreams of punishment are recorded nightmares whose hero is also their victim. His transgression will not usually be specified; the reader is left to assume that the hero must have done something to deserve what he gets. This exploitation of the reader's latent guilt contributes much to the credibility of these otherwise far-fetched tales. Just as anyone may have more than a slight twinge of guilt when accused by legitimate authority of a crime he did not commit, so, identifying with the hero of a dream of punishment, we find grounds for what he suffers in our own residual guilt. As the transgression of the punished hero is almost invariably incestuous, so the punishment itself is invariably some variety of castration.

The two major divisions within this mode are plots of tortures and plots which show their hero-victims trapped in malevolent worlds. Stories of the first type, familiar to all in the works of Poe, simply represent the punishment with or without explanation of its justice. The narrator of "The Pit and the Pendulum" does not tell us what crime he has committed, but whatever it is, is enough to get him threatened first with being sliced up by a knife attached to a pendulum and then with being devoured by a deep, dark
hole full of rats. The narrator of "The Fall of the House of Usher" is called upon to witness the destruction of Usher and his sister for an unspecified, though obviously incestuous, crime. In "The Masque of the Red Death" we get to watch the deaths of a king and his court from the plague, another kind of swallowing-up. The structure of these and similar tales is that of a crescendo of pain, but the reader's experience of them is anything but painful. The unspecified crimes are only ambivalently repugnant in Poe's vision; beneath the mock-solemn punishments, the clanking of chains and grumbling of instruments of torture, Poe shares with the reader a tacit, salacious delight. The transgression that provokes punishment is also gratification, and the gratification is invoked with the punishment, so that the consequence of the act becomes an acceptable way of thinking about the act itself. This salacious hypocrisy in Poe's moral vision accounts both for the popularity of his stories and the slightly campy effect they have on adult readers.

The duplicity of Poe's visions of punishment is far easier to see than is the more self-important and humorless production of his modern compatriots. What is, for Poe, a kind of playful enjoyment of thrills and chills, becomes with Kafka, a frigidly serious apologue. Here in deadly earnest is a vision of the world as a den of confusion and torture, sober, hysterical but humorless. In "The Penal Colony,"
for instance, a perspective on torture gradually expands to include all experience: the world is the machine; the body that feels the laceration of its unintelligible message, mankind. No explanation of the punishment is tendered because none is needed; none shall 'scape whipping here. The story could be described without exaggeration as a pocket version of the Book of Job, devoid not only of wonder but of humanity. The moral of the story is hardly remarkable—that all human suffering is meaningless—but it serves as little more than a pretext for a fantasia of punishment. This dwelling on the dialectic of torture reveals that the story, like the child who hits himself because it hurts so good, embodies gratification as well as pain.

Many of Kafka's torture plots dwell lovingly on punishment as a memorial of some forbidden enjoyment. In "The Metamorphosis," Gregor Samsor wakes to find he has been changed by the gods into a huge cockroach. The remainder of the story works out the consequences of this fate with strict neo-realistic precision. What loving attention to the details of degradation and slow death! Like the murderous tattoo machine of "The Penal Colony," the mechanics of the situation slowly dismember the dumb and uncomprehending victim. Like "The Penal Colony," "The Metamorphosis" operates on some unstated premise; an invisible act brackets the action—predictably, some unnameable incestuous desire. Kafka's vision depends not on observation of the meaningless
world postulated by modern science, but on the strictly moralistic world of orthodox Christianity, a world where the talion law operates with Euclidean precision, as it does in Dante. By showing the punishment in all its exacting moral ferocity but omitting the reason, Kafka sets us to solving a theorem which lacks its essential premise (Thus readers of Kafka are themselves in the position of K. in The Trial.). But if we refuse to play this game, we can easily supply the crime by analyzing the fantasy punishment it requires. The punishment—castration—is that which always follows some variety of incestuous wish, within a particularly severe Oedipal framework. Nightmares of punishment are wish-fulfillments of the superego, the child's internalized, vindictive, unconscious parent. What makes the nightmare—and Kafka's visions—so convincing and terrifying is precisely the dread it invokes. Since the wish the superego punishes is, at its insistence, equally unconscious, the dreamer of a full-blown nightmare of punishment knows neither what is punishing him nor why; he is passive and helpless before the painful experience of his own dream. But the need for punishment could not exist if the dreamer renounced the punishable wish. In this lies the dishonesty of the dreamer's complaint about his nightmare—and the dishonesty of the Kafkaesque hero, whose martyrdom is implicitly the same complaint: for he will not give up the dream no matter how much painful conflict it stirs up, will not give it up
because he takes too much pleasure in both wish and punishment to relinquish them. The hero of a Kafkaesque romance cannot escape torture because he desires it.

Kafka's works have inspired a second category of punishment romances, which depict not only the tortures of a specific hero, but a large vision of a malevolent world in which everyone is trapped with the victims, or the torturer's, fate. Such romances take the form of grand, pessimistic visions, Dante's *Commedia* sans Purgatory or Paradise. *The Trial* is the supreme example of this type, along with its numerous modern descendants, *Catch-22*, *Cat's Cradle*, 1984, and *Brave New World*. The difference between these romances and the romances of torture discussed above is largely a matter of scale. In the malevolent worlds postulated by books like *The Trial*, the cosmos itself becomes the instrument of torture, and the victim's fate another version of every man's life story. At the same time, fables of malevolent worlds differ from apocalyptic visions such as Pope's *Dunciad*, in representing the nightmarish order not as imminent but achieved, as static and perpetual, rather than potential. Their rhetoric depends on invoking an oppressive order of things while at the same time denying the possibility of doing anything about it, like an insanely pessimistic recension of the *Communist Manifesto* whose peroration would be "Workers, you can never throw off your chains." Visions of malevolent worlds invite the same
critique as visions of torture. Since these visions are not observations of any particular actual world, but projections of ambivalent desire, the real conflict in the work is not that between the victim's desire for freedom and the forces that tyrannize him, but between his need to submit and his inability to relinquish his wishes, which would precisely constitute submission.

The writer of a Catch-22, or 1984, is in some sense putting us on. It is one thing to attack totalitarianism itself, or some specific totalitarian policy; it is quite another to present a passionately conceived and executed vision of a totalitarian world, one which wildly exaggerates the omnipotence and omniscience of the oppressor, with the bald assurance that antipathy alone has inspired the vision. Some attachment to the condemned order has surely motivated the author, and is thereby elicited from the reader. Within the ending of 1984 lurks both a representation of the desire for submission and a fundamentally hypocritical denial of that desire. Both writer and reader find gratification in their vicarious submissions to authority, a gratification encouraged and covered-up by the intellectual critique of authority which has ostensibly produced the fable. A writer more thoroughly disenchanted with totalitarian solutions than Orwell would make his point with a less hysterical irony. A similar point could be made about Huxley's ambivalent vision of technocracy in Brave New World.
or Heller's worshipful critique of bureaucratic authority in *Catch-22*. (The generals and colonels send the boys to their death, but by assuming the heavy responsibilities of adulthood, permit the boys to indulge in unending adolescent high-jinks.) Thus, in these visions of infernal worlds, worlds at the greatest possible remove from the golden world of naively wish-fulfilling romance, we find a degree of ambivalence which makes half the negative vision look once again suspiciously like a positive utopia. Both golden world and infernal utopia are visions of a totally fulfilled and fulfilling order. The conflict which is excluded from the golden world vision altogether finds its maximum scope in the infernal vision, in which both the desire for submission and the desire for gratification, libido and inhibition, delight and self-punishment are held together in the same frame.

This completes our survey of the major Oedipal and partial Oedipal patterns found in Romance. Romance is such a vast and variegated category of literary performance, however, that it would be surprising indeed if no other widely shared unconscious fantasies made their way into its core. There are, of course, many other types of fantasy material capable of forming core material in Romance, either alone or in combination with certain varieties of Oedipal material. We can do no more than list some of the more common
non-Oedipal fantasy material here, along with some brief comments and examples.

In discussing Oedipal material in Romance, I have concentrated exclusively on the family triangle involving the male child; I have presented the dynamics of this triangle as seen from the child's point of view not only because this is in fact the most common literary treatment but also because it provides the clearest analytical pattern. The incestuous triangle seen from the father's point of view also occurs with some frequency, but is analytically more complicated because part of the father's rivalry is a recrudescence of his own Oedipus complex rather than a derivative of his adult father-husband role exclusively. Oedipal stories viewed from the mother's standpoint are in fact quite rare in literature—a fact worth further study elsewhere—partly because a heavier taboo attaches to mother-son incest than to any of the other possible combinations—at least in Western European culture—and partly because there have been fewer female than male authors, and few women have written about the mother's side of the family romance. The Oedipus complex proper, from Sophocles to Freud, is male property.

Despite this, incestuous fantasies deriving from the father-daughter relationship occupy the core of numerous Romances, particularly modern ones. In the more commonly
seen versions, told from the daugher's viewpoint, a malif-
cent maternal figure or witch blocks the girl's access to
an idealized male (Sleeping Beauty) or her anxieties about
powerful sexual strivings directed toward the father may
cause her to envision him as a lustful beast who tries to
rape her. (Beauty and the beast: Pamela). In this context
the blocking action of the mother may be seen as a form of
rescue from the frightening incestuous situation (The Fairy
godmother).

Since the mother is the female child's first sexual
object and is only later replaced by the father, the outlines
of the Oedipus complex in women are more obscure than in men.
Psychoanalytic insight into this area is both less secure
and more controversial than in the male Oedipus complex.18
However, the fairy godmother pattern seems to point regres-
sively to the "first" female Oedipus complex, especially
where the fairy godmother saves the child from a dirty old
father, by implication replacing him as sexual object. A
splitting of the image of the father occurs in feminine in-
cestuous Romance analogous to the Whore/Virgin split in male
Oedipal plots. This split may be a radical one between a
dirty old man and a younger, sexless figure, or it may be
elaborately complicated, as in Clarissa where Clarissa's
father and Mr. Soames are both dirty old men, sexually
threatening implicitly; and Lovelace, a handsome (but dirty)
young man whose approach to Clarissa is explicitly sexual.
Jane Austen often has the older man as the sexually safe, proper marital choice, and the younger man as the sexually dangerous (but fascinating) object.

Father-daughter incest as seen from the father's standpoint is a frequently-encountered core fantasy in Romance. Sometimes the 'Father' is a book's narrator, who may view one of the romance's major female characters with the characteristic ambivalence of a love-smitten father toward his too-much-loved daughter, as Thackery views Amelia in Vanity Fair. Such feminine figures come in antithetic pairs, just as Oedipal mother figures do. Corresponding to the pure, "good" Oedipal mother, there is the innocent, sexually immature, cute daughter. Such a figure is by definition incapable of any of the violent or terrifying acts ascribed to negative feminine figures. She never arouses castration-fears because she lacks the frightening marks of mature woman; if we could see her intimately, naked she would have neither pubic hair nor would she menstruate. Because she is toothless, this feminine figure does not usually disturb the hero's relationship with her; such disturbances come from outside the relationship—from either a jealous older female, representing the incestuously enamored father's wife (and also the half of the two—woman split not represented in the good daughter), or a younger and more virile rival of the father.

The negative daughter-figure is psychologically less
distinct than her positive antithesis; her image tends to merge with the images of other negative Oedipal figures, especially the "bad" Oedipal mother. She has, of course, all the frightening qualities excluded from her good rival. She is seen as sexually mature, if not voracious, aggressive, punishing. She is the "Kitten With a Whip" of masochistic fantasy, dominant and cruel, who enslaves her male worshipper by a combination of sexual attraction and authority. Any relationship with her is necessarily ambivalent to begin with, so external forces are usually not credited with the disturbances that inevitably affect any relationship with her. Though she is technically the opposite of the good daughter, her image represents more nearly the truth about the male fears of woman than does the radically expurgated vision of good women. Whereas the positive feminine image represents merely the absence of anxiety-provoking female traits (She is in fact a vacuous mask created by the repression of these very traits.), the negative image represents those imagined terrors which men must come to terms with to see real women as they are and develop adequate relationships with them. Because bad feminine figures incorporate real fears, they are always more interesting than the comparatively featureless good figures. It is no accident that Becky Sharp is one of the most fascinating female characters in fiction, whereas Emily, the nominal heroine of the same book, is one of the dullest.
None of the many other possible core fantasies of romance has anything like the importance of the major patterns already discussed. Sibling incestuous fantasies occasionally turn up in romance and folk-tale (Cupid and Psyche), but such material lacks autonomy; its characteristics derive in all cases from primary Oedipal patterns. It is worth noting, however, that virtually all brother-sister attachments in Romance are seen as initially positive. Any ambivalence that they may harbor is displaced outward onto fate or menacing parental figures, who are responsible for any misfortunes that may strike the relationship itself.

Brother-sister incest is the only one of the possible types of incest found in Western literature in undisguised form. Possibly because in an excessively intimate relationship, the siblings have already found substitutes in one another for primary Oedipal object-choices. Probably for the same reason, brother-sister incestuous feelings and actions are the least subject to taboo of all possible types of incest, at least in Western-European and American culture. Since in most cases, taboo is correlated with individual repression, incestuous feelings between brother and sister can more easily become conscious in undisguised forms than other sorts of incestuous wishes.

The one psychodynamic structure of some importance in romance which has not yet been discussed derives from the anal stage of psychosexual development. At this time, the
erogenous zones of the organs of excretion have primary importance; the child not only takes great pleasure in the acts of urination and defecation, but experiences considerable conflicts over demands that he control these functions, which many societies impose upon him at this time. His ability to master his social environment and preserve to some extent the integrity of his gratifications thus depends in large measure on his ability to control his own physiological functions. Since retention of his excreta actually increases his pleasure, the child's obedience inevitably has a subversive character. He cannot control or modify social demands directly, but by controlling his own body he can please mother and enjoy himself at the same time. Thus it is natural that the faeces, especially, take on the semblance in fantasy, of a world of controllable objects, contrasted with the objects of the great world which he cannot yet affect. Although children at this stage do manipulate both literal turds and obvious symbolic substitutes (mud pies, blocks, and similar things), the full possibilities of mastery of a substitute world constructed out of the conflicts and satisfactions of anality are realized only in fantasy. In such fantasies, the child envisions himself as possessing unlimited, magical powers over a cosmos of inert objects—in effect, sanitized turds. The child's omnipotent self-image in this fantasy is the prototype of the common mythic figure of the trickster god.
Trickster gods like Hermes and the medieval devil have spawned a host of literary relatives in the form of the myriad comic manipulators of narrative and drama. Such figures keep the action going, often literally moving the other characters about like so many blocks. They focus both aggressive and libidinal energies with extraordinary efficiency, with the result that the audience is often unwilling to see them judged within the ordinary moral framework of comedy. Like Hermes himself, such figures are often portrayed as thieves. The morally obligatory "crime doesn't pay" ending of the comedies they play in usually grates on the sensibility of those who have vicariously enjoyed the trickster's exploits; the ending of Volpone, and the kindred denouments of contemporary "heist" films are clear-cut examples. Akin to the tricksters, though found in other comic plots, are magicians like Merlin or Prospero. Often these figures occupy self-created worlds within which they enjoy virtual omnipotence; Prospero, particularly, literally makes the play by arranging the other characters to suit his own aesthetic proconceptions. The extreme of magical control proposed by The Tempest thus constitutes a kind of anal-sadistic apocalypse. Prospero is also a model of the artist, whose imaginary worlds are secondary realities, far more manipulable than the world itself.

The third major type of anal fantasy found in romance depends on the transformation of the highly valued faeces in anal fantasy into substitutes having the common denominator,
"valued substance"; thus, gift, money gold, treasure. In romance, this constellation gives rise to stories of a quest for treasure, buried or otherwise, the familiar legacy-hunting stories of classical satire, and to stories of successful or unsuccessful thievery. Since the heroes of such stories are typically tricksters, as in Volpone, they demonstrate a double derivation from anal fantasy material. Like other major plot-motifs, anal materials can be combined in varied ways with Oedipal and pre-Oedipal structures. There are subordinate Oedipal plots in both The Tempest and Volpone.
CHAPTER III

Literature as a Projective System

1. Literature and the Magical View of the World

The previous chapter's outline of psychodynamic structures in narrative rests on assumptions about the nature of works of literature essentially identical to those of the late New Criticism, which regarded the literary work as an internally complex aesthetic object isolated from specific social contexts.\(^1\) Although this assumption is perhaps one of the most convenient theoretical fictions in the critic's arsenal, its use as an analytical reagent does not imply that the critic in fact can produce evidence that the aesthetic object enjoys a significant degree of autonomy from its actual or potential audiences. On the contrary, a critic adopting this assertion quite deliberately suppresses his awareness of the work's relationships to its author and audience. The question this poses for a psychoanalytic theory of literature is simply this: how can a theory which views the internal psychodynamics of literary works in the fashion outlined in Chapter II accommodate those historical and cultural data which it necessarily seems to suppress in order to attain theoretical clarity?

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Just as the analysis of the dynamics of individual works of literature must be grounded in the analogy between the work and the dream, so must a theoretical model which sees the work as the embodiment of social process depend on an analogy between the individual dream and something generally shareable which resembles it. The building of a model of social dreamwork has been a major preoccupation of an area of psychoanalytic inquiry much neglected by literary critics—psychoanalytic anthropology. Beginning with Freud's pioneering efforts to apply his new insights to groups larger than the family and to societies as wholes, such psychoanalytic anthropologists as Geza Roheim, George Devereux, and Weston La Barre have transformed the psychoanalytic theory of personality into an instrument capable of illuminating the origins and functions of culture and its major component institutions.

If we can properly place literature as one of the component institutions of specific cultures, psychoanalytic anthropology should have much to contribute to our understanding of the social matrices of writers, audiences, and the works that link them. The present chapter will attempt this placing of literature as a social process. On the basis of a working hypothesis about the general social provenance of literature, I hope to show below the relevance of the conceptual models and data developed by psychoanalytic anthropology to an understanding of the social
psychopathology of authorship, the mechanisms by which
audiences cohere, and the ways in which historical changes
may affect these processes. For these are not—as the
antagonism between psychoanalytic critics and historical
scholars has perhaps led both sides to believe—isolated
categories, but rather interrelated aspects of the same
problem. The vision of the work of literature as an aestheti
world to itself and the conception of it as merely
one link in a complicated social process are not such con-
traries as they may seem; rather, I hope to show, the psy-
choanalytic approach can develop a social conception of the
work of literature congruent to the private, aesthetic con-
ception of the earlier chapter. The assumptions of both
derivations are identical, but they begin in diametrically
opposed realms of human experience to meet nonetheless in
the same point.

Although investigations of the social place of liter-
ature are scarcely novel in literary criticism, the question
of the social place of literature has become more vexing in
the past fifty years or so than it previously was because
of rapid changes in society and culture. The oft-noted de-
cline of institutions which had heretofore seemed to sup-
port literature has made literature itself stand out in
stark and anxious relief, as I. A. Richards was among the
first to point out:
The central dominant change may be described as the Neutralization of Nature, the transference from the Magical View of the world to the scientific, a change so great that it is perhaps only paralleled historically by the change from whatever adumbration of a world-picture preceded the magical view itself. By the magical view I mean, roughly, the belief in a world of spirits and powers which control events, and which can be evoked and to some extent controlled themselves by human practices. The belief in Inspiration and the beliefs underlying ritual are representative parts of this view. It has been decaying slowly for some 300 years, but its definite overthrow has taken place only in the last 60. Vestiges and survivals of it prompt and direct a great part of our daily affairs, but it is no longer the world-picture which an informed mind most easily accepts. There is some evidence that Poetry, together with the other Arts, arose with this Magical View. It is a possibility to be seriously considered that Poetry may pass away with it. 4

If we take Richards' suggestion in this passage seriously, despite his somewhat inexact use of the term magical, 5 we must see literature as a part of and subordinate to the great religious organizations of thought and society which have been so recently and so harshly overthrown by the rise of science. Both the anthropological research of such scholars as Jane Harrison and Gilbert Murray and the literary theorizing of Northrop Frye contribute strong supporting evidence for the hypothesis that literature both originated in religion (in man's early history was in fact an
indistinguishable part of religion) and continues to perpetuate the patterns of thought and emotional preoccupations of earlier religion. Although these insights have been widely acknowledged in contemporary literary study, what has not been clearly recognized—what is in fact obscured by complacent assumptions like Frye's,⁶ that literature's mythological descent somehow validates it—is that the critic's estimate of the epistemological status of myth becomes all the more crucial to criticism precisely because of our new knowledge that literature in essence is mythic. Approaches like Frye's, which focus primarily on archetypal content, doubly confuse the profound issues which Richards points to, because the answer to Richards' question necessarily lies in our understanding of the social function of literature, apart from the archetypal content of specific works. If literature as an institution depends on other prior institutions, as Richards urges, then our notions about the social functions of literature will necessarily evolve from our implicit conception of how those prior institutions function. Conversely, insights into the workings of those prior institutions should illuminate literature. The purpose of the present chapter, then, is to adapt from the most sophisticated available psychoanalytic studies of literature's twin prior institutions—magic and religion—a dynamically and empirically viable model of literature as social process.
2. Sacred and Secular

Richards' assertion that literature depends on the Magical View of the world—the sacred realm of culture—clearly makes sense with reference to Western literature at least down to the Eighteenth century, but seems more problematic as a description of literature from that time on. However, this assertion does not depend on the manifest commitment of writers to a particular religion or the expression of a specific religious ideology in their works. The classification of literature as sacred rests on a broadly applicable contrast between two adaptively and dynamically distinct modes of personal and cultural functioning which have remained relatively constant over some thousands of years of Western history. This distinction is parallel to and informed by Freud's basic contrast of primary and secondary process thinking.7 The anthropologist, Weston La Barre, has pursued this dimension of Freudian thought most thoroughly in relation to ethnographic data. He writes:

Anthropologists have often noted that most societies divide their culture into sacred and secular parts, the "holy" and the "profane," either conceptually or in their behavior or in both. The secular is the realm of mundane workaday technology, of ego control, and of constantly evolving adaptation to the environment. The secular is a realm of relatively low emotional charge. By contrast, the sacred is a realm of adaptation to anxieties, to crises both social and personal, and to common
unsolved problems like death. The sacred is a realm of high emotional potential. But if we were to suppose there is only one objective supernatural world, we quickly learn that the sacred realm differs radically from society to society. The subject matters are widely different; only the basic religious mood is the same or similar. Further, religious attitudes change in historic time as well as in ethnographic space. Change is not surprising; secular culture changes too. What is interesting is that religions are always tailor made, projectively, to fit current individual and group anxieties. . . thus, material culture, technology and science are adaptations to the outside world; religion to the inner world of man, his unsolved problems and unmet needs.

The sacred is then a shared mode of collective dreaming, fantasy, and acting-out, both conscious and unconscious. Like the content of all drive-organized thought, the thought content of the sacred is highly cathexed in each and every individual who participates in it; by contrast, reality-oriented thinking must have a relatively low cathexis; for it must take its shape from what is observable not from what we wish to be true or fear to find out. Although there usually is some reality testing in the most outrageous fantasy and there is some fantasy certainly in most scientific hypotheses, particularly at any early stage in their development, drive-derivatives necessarily and inevitably distort reality testing. The two are dynamic opposites. He who would know what really goes on in his physical and social environment must assay it calmly or he will surely come to conclusions predetermined not by observation
and reason but by his own needs.

Man's adaptive, reality-oriented thinking has changed relatively rapidly in human history; scientific thinking is the most thoroughly reality-directed that man has yet achieved and its hallmark is the readiness of the individual scientist as well as that of science as a cultural institution to discard old hypotheses as new evidence accumulates. Although long-dominant theories tend to accumulate cathexis, the institutional conservatism of science scarcely rivals that of sacred institutions. At both individual and social levels, the readiness to change from one set of hypotheses to another provides an operational measure of cathexis.

Sacred institutions tend to be conservative because they represent a socialization of highly-cathedted primary-process thinking in the individual. The characteristic resistance to change of the primary process reflects, in turn, the biological fixity of the drives and the relative fixity of the superego, which is bound to the cultural past and hidden in the individual unconscious. When sacred institutions do change, they do so not as a direct response to changes in the environment but out of anxiety-charged superego reactions to such changes. For instance, when the Bubonic plague struck Europe in the 14th century, men responded not with renewed efforts to understand what caused the plague and what might prevent it—as modern medicine
might respond—but rather with the conviction that God was punishing mankind for its collective sins. The reaction this partly-conscious guilt provoked was not a technologically adequate response to actuality but rather a religious revival. This cure actually made the situation worse by distracting attention from practical measures to realistically irrelevant issues. Thus hundreds of thousands perished, perhaps thousands more than need have perished had the crisis been handled in an entirely practical manner. But what we may ask would have been the conditions of such a practical response? Clearly the leaders of that society would have had to control their irrational anxieties in order to face the very real terrors at hand. Sacred attempts to liquidate anxieties make those who participate in them more comfortable but rarely originate practical responses to real crises.

3. Literature as a Projective System

The complex symbol-systems which evolve from man's struggles to maintain his collective intrapsychic equilibrium may be termed projective systems of thought. Both the form and content of these systems of thought come not from observation of reality and reasoning but from highly elaborate primary process responses, wishes and fears, heavily modified by secondary revision. "Projection" refers specifically to the psychological process by which these
emotionally charged thoughts come to be perceived not as part of the individual self but as observed reality. Although projection may be a private, ideosyncratic phenomenon, many projections are widely shared within specific human groups. Gods, devils, angels, lepruchans, goblins, vampires and ghosts are all examples of projective objects collectively perceived by large human groups at one time or another. Projection could aptly be called the mode of observation of sacred culture. Since projection takes little account of reality, it cannot ever provide new information; what was cast out of the mind constantly returns to it. A true believer always finds the mark of his God on the world because he himself puts it there, unconsciously.

Two salient facts about these projective systems make their study of the utmost importance for criticism. Firstly, these projective systems are widely shared by large human groups over long periods of time, unlike individual psychopathologies; secondly, very often the native medium of these projective systems is verbal, which makes them highly accessible to study. Verbally-represented projective systems are collective prototypical literatures, as Frye's work clearly implies. Myth and folklore, when incorporated into language, are literature in this general sense.\textsuperscript{11} Historic literatures differ from the ancient literatures of orally transmitted myth and folklore primarily in their emphasis on the identification and identity of individual writers and
to a certain extent, the development of specifically ling-
guistic craftsmanship. The social and psychological pro-
cesses which make literary communication possible are iden-
tical to those that operate in all projective systems.

The content of the most significant projective systems
which mankind has invented – magic, religion, myth, and
folklore – is in its gross outlines predictable from the
characteristics of human infancy and the human family that
must nurture it. Projection, "by putting unpleasant sensa-
tions into the external world, also attempts to reverse the
separation of ego from non-ego." Projection imposes on
an unfamiliar and frightening reality the familiar wishes
and frustrations of the eternal infant inside everyone.
Projection thus is the specific psychological mechanism by
which mankind accomplishes the identification of the human
and non-human worlds which Northrop Frye finds to be the
basic impulse of all literature.

Projective systems originate in prolonged human in-
fancy: the primary process is the necessary psychological
complement of neotony. And all projective systems that the
individual will later participate in have this at the very
least in common: that they represent man to himself im-
bedded in the protective, sentient, and moral world of in-
fancy and childhood. The projective process is also the
means by which the realm of the sacred is kept full of hal-
lucinated objects; but the perception of these objects and
their activities is by definition shared, mutually reinforced among the members of a permanently constituted group:

All men are variously infantile ontogenetically. Man meets life not alone or even mainly with individual genetic adaptations, but with his traditional societies' accumulations of the pasts of many other persons. Some at least of these persons have been possibly mistaken in their solutions to problems. Each literate civilization is a vast grab-bag of 'solutions' each of which may match some epistemologic-Oedipal disposition, and a variety of such Oedipal constitutions continues to be manufactured. Each civilization, therefore, is an incredible melange of magic and superstition, of ethical faith and religion and ego-oriented rationalism and science. . . Biologically, these projective systems rest upon species – specific human nature, and upon the experiences of the neotonously instinctless child as he enters successively new worlds not walled about with prepared adaptations. At each step he must learn his humanity.15

As the child grows he is taught the accumulated lessons and lore of the society in which he lives; although these tribal mythologies have inevitably some realistic content, they mostly represent accumulated dreams, daydreams and nightmares of his race.16 These have been retained, elaborated upon and transmitted over the generations precisely because they channel specific anxieties and wishes of his people. Probably these huge collective projections reflect a stable human biological substructure, but they inevitably incorporate, also, historically specific anxieties. Practically all cultures have gods, but each culture has its own. Of course, language is the primary medium by which these
collective materials are transmitted. At this state, obviously, we already have an embryonic literature. Although religion and folklore in a preliterate culture remain at this stage of shared projections, loosely incorporated into an oral tradition, literature in the Western world has gone far beyond this genesis. Literature nonetheless retains many hallmarks of its preliterate, irrational, beginnings.

Conceiving of the transactions between artists and audience as elaborations of the basic mechanisms of the collective projective process permits criticism to go beyond some of the sterile debates that have developed out of a tendency to hypostasize the aesthetic object. This tendency has created many bogus issues, few more vexing than the problem of illusion and reality in drama. To illustrate, let us consider a famous polemic in literary criticism, Dr. Johnson's attack on the concept of the unities:

The necessity of observing the unities of time and place arises from the supposed necessity of making the drama credible. The critics hold it impossible, that an action of months or years can be possibly believed to pass in three hours; or that the spectator can suppose himself to sit in the theatre, while ambassadors go and return between distant kings, while armies are levied and towns besieged, while an exile wanders and returns, or till he whom they saw courting his mistress now laments the untimely fall of his son ...

From the narrow limitation of time necessarily arises the contraction of place. The spectator, who knows that he saw the
first act at Alexandria, cannot suppose that he sees the next at Rome, at a distance which not the dragons of Medea, could in so short a time, have transported him . . .

The objection arising from the impossi-
bility of passing the first hour at Alex-
andria, and the next at Rome suppo-
ses, that when the play opens, the spec-
tator really imagines himself at Alex-
andria, and believes that his walk to the theatre has been a voyage to Egypt, and that he lives in the days of Anthony and Cleopatra. Surely he that imagines this may imagine more. He that can take the stage at one time for the palace of Ptolemy, may take it in half an hour for the promontory of Actium. Delusion, if it can be admitted, has no certain limitation; if the spectator be once persuaded that his old acquaintance are Alexander and Cesar, that a room illuminated with candles is the plain of Pharsalia, or the bank of Granicus, he is in a state of elevation above the reach of reason, or of truth. There is no reason why a mind thus wandering in ecstasy should count the clock, why an hour should not be a century in that cal-

tenture of the brains that can make the stage a field . . .

A play read, affects the mind like a play acted. It is therefore evident, that the action is not supposed to be real; and it follows, that between the acts a longer or shorter time may be allowed to pass and that no more account of space or duration is to be taken by the auditor of a drama, than by the reader of a narra-
tive, before whom may pass in an hour the life of a hero, or the revolutions of an Empire.17

In criticism, the questions that seem almost too ob-
vious to ask are often the most fruitful. Here, for in-
stance, why apart from the absurd literal-mindedness of the
position Johnson demolishes, should illusion be a problem at all for the dramatist or the playgoer? Johnson in his enthusiastic rebuttal of the contention that the playgoer supposes himself where the play is set, and the actors to be actually the persons they represent, stumbles over a crucial problem. For insofar as the playgoer responds with feeling at all he responds as if the dramatic spectacle were psychologically real, he responds to it as "representing to the auditor what he would himself feel, if he were to do or suffer what is there fained to be suffered or to be done."

In psychoanalytic terms, if we respond to the play as a dramatic work of art at all, that response necessarily entails a partial failure of reality testing, Coleridge's "willing suspension of disbelief"—"willing," because the playgoer somehow remains in control. Lacking a dynamic standard by which to gauge the degree of the playgoer's involvement in dramatic illusion, Johnson must insist that we cannot admit a concept like delusion into our explanation at all. Logically, then, he cannot explain how spectators who are "always in their senses" can respond to an old acquaintance walking about a stage illuminated with candles as playgoers indisputably respond to, say, King Lear. That which is strictly observable in the playhouse, the players on the stage, and the motions they go through, cannot explain the responses of virtually every playgoer. Johnson's attempt to account for the audience's response by means of the as-
if conception fails precisely because it attempts to reintroduce into his argument the "delusion" which he has previously banished.

Obviously a large part of Johnson's problem here is created for him by the theory of mimesis, which he does not analyse. But I have deliberately avoided dealing with this problem because, from the point of view of psychoanalytic criticism, it is a bogus problem. Hardly any literature imitates observable reality or tries to; moreover, our most profound emotional responses originate not in realities observable beyond the self but in the contested boundary layers between biological imperative and social fiat like the dream. Johnson is right to insist on the crucial significance of the spectator's response for the argument in which he is engaged; here his marvelous critic's instinct keeps him on exactly the right track despite his lack of an explicit theory by which to overcome his logical difficulties. For the way in which any playgoer becomes aware that he is viewing a drama—not merely calisthenics performed by old acquaintances under candlelight—is that his response is different. The playgoer may not have learned anything more than he would have learned from a basketball game but he has experienced quite different feelings. Moreover this response cannot depend entirely on the denotation of the words the actors utter in the course of the performance, for the playgoer might have experienced quite momentous affect
from a pantomime or a ballet. Since the stage action observable from outside the drama's projective system could not conceivably stir up the emotions which the playgoer nonetheless experiences, the playgoer's feeling-response to what happens on the stage must be, though Johnson denies it, in some measure delusion.

Johnson's brilliantly dialectical analysis of the unities flounders because it lacks a sufficient psychology. The psychoanalytic hypothesis of a projective system can account for the same phenomena which give Johnson so much difficulty with almost equal ease as explanatory force. According to that hypothesis, as we have seen, powerfully charged objects may be projected from the unconscious into socially perceived reality, then responded to as if they were non-ego, as if they were "real." Since reality-testing has already failed to some extent when this process takes place, reality never fully enters into the equation. We fear the gods because they are more truly ours than we dare to acknowledge. The objects in projective systems are not in fact outside the self but inside. Their power to affect us is simply our own affect returning to consciousness by a devious route. Thus, to return to the Johnsonian example, the objects to which the playgoer responds, as opposed to the actual acquaintances he observes in the candlelight on the boards, are not external either. These internalized objects, reclaimed from projection, because they are now
closer to the individual conflicts in which they originated, because we now feel them in despite of the observable reality of boards and acquaintances, are the objects to which the playgoer veritably responds and to which that response is appropriate. These are the objects that the playwright manipulates in us through the medium of words and actors, the stage, the other apparatus. By means of the machinery and paraphenalia of drama the playgoer is induced to give up much of his reality-testing so that his mind becomes the dramatist's instrument.

We might apply as a further example of the power of the hypothesis of the projective system the same considerations to religious ritual. Translated into the framework of Christian theology, Johnson's problem is exactly that posed by the dispute between literal transubstantiationists and those who choose to regard the Eucharist either as symbolic or memorial. The doctrine of transubstantiation, from the psychoanalytic point of view, accurately describes experience of a true believer participating in the sacrament. The unleavened bread and wine, which would not change for an observer detached from the ritual, becomes for the believer the body and blood of Christ in a literally delusionary sense. The status of the projected objects "body and blood of Jesus Christ" is exactly that of the other parts of the Christian religion viewed as a projective system; none of them are observable objects, but, sustained by long-ingrained
collective hallucination, they provoke quite powerful emotional responses in the believer. If this no longer occurs in many believers, it merely signifies that the projective system of Christianity is very nearly worn out. But like the actor who becomes King Lear for the playgoer by the diligent exercise of his art, the bread and wine do not imitate, they are, the blood and body of Christ for one inside the projective system.

Viewing literature and literary works as parts of a projective system radically alters traditional conceptions of the aesthetic object. At the one extreme are theories which posit the aesthetic object as an almost literally real house in which the critic can live, breath and move about. This attitude is, itself, a powerful testimony to the delusional power of art, but the aesthetic object cannot, whether on Johnson's analysis or the present one, be a ding an sich. Like the stones, trees and houses of Berkeley's philosophy, it does not exist until it is perceived in the special way that objects in projective systems are perceived by human beings disposed to respond to them. We cannot distinguish between aesthetic and nonaesthetic objects by means of the intrinsic qualities of the object itself; a reader "knows" that the writing on the page before him is a poem and not a block of prose printed like poetry because his response to the poetry differs radically from his response to the prose—if, and only if, he has adequate prior
training which can enable him to respond differently. We can use a "certified" reader to test whether or not a piece of writing is a poem; or we can use a "certified" poem to test the reader. We cannot, however, test both the reader and the writing at once. Moreover, when we test the reader, we really test his response to the poem for congruence to the response of some other reader or group of readers whose responses we choose to consider "correct." Thus the reader's response alone provides the final ground of the distinction between "aesthetic" and "non-aesthetic" objects, not any qualities of the object apart from that response. A poem in a foreign language is no poem at all to a reader who understands not a word of that language. Such a reader could not prove whether or not the scratch marks on the page before him or the noises in the air were poetry, or indeed language, at all. But once he can read or understand the language of the poem, the poem becomes an aesthetic object only by virtue of the reader's own psychological process. The text of any work of art, the literal arrangements of matter of which it is composed, is not the aesthetic object but a sequence of cues by which the aesthetic object is reconstructed by a specific appreciator.

Although the reconstruction of purely denotative language, sheer information, from the cues on the page requires little more than sufficient linguistic competence and some knowledge of the objects to which the linguistic
signs refer, much of the structure of aesthetic objects is necessarily contributed by persistent structures within individual psyches in the community of appreciators. Thus the linguistic example of a "poem" in a language the reader cannot construe is somewhat misleading. What both poet and appreciator must rely on in their own and in other minds is a similarity of affective responses only somewhat less strict than the similarity of linguistic responses in the case of bald denotative language. A would-be appreciator of a work of art whose affective response is inadequate fails to reconstruct the aesthetic object, which can only exist by virtue of that response. To an observer outside the projective system of western art, the Venus De Milo is merely a piece of rock shaped like a woman, an erotic, but not an aesthetic, object. An Aborigine probably would not respond to a Henry Moore sculpture as a work of art, though he would so respond to the equally abstract totemistic idols of his tribe. Objects in reality, whether pieces of stone or marks on a page are not aesthetic objects because of their intrinsic qualities. They become aesthetic objects, and thus meaningful cues to an aesthetic experience, by virtue of the uses to which the human community puts them in expressing its wishes and resolving its anxieties. Potentially any object can become an aesthetic object when human ingenuity finds a way to use if for these ends.

This is not to assert that when a reader looks at a
poem in a language he can construe and finds himself power-
fully affected, that nothing is really out there causing
the effect. The existence and characteristics of this set
of cues is at least as verifiable as the existence of elec-
trons. What the verifiable aspect of the marks on the
page, taking them as symbols in some language natural or
artificial, cannot account for is precisely the difficulty
to which Dr. Johnson pointed us. What these cues do not
provide is the energy and at least some of the structure
by which they are enacted or performed in the appreciator's
mind. This distinction is easily grasped in the case of
the score of a piece of music; the black marks on the page
of the score are not a sonata, which consists not of black
marks on paper but of an ordered sequence of sounds. To
transform these black marks into an aesthetic object re-
quires performance, either on a musical instrument or in
the mind of someone who reads music. The same thing is
true, but more obscurely perceived, in the case of the other
arts, especially literature. Not only does the appreciator
contribute the raw energy of the performance but he also
contributes at least some of the form, just as does the per-
former of a sonata at a piano. The performer of a sonata or
a poem has had elaborate prior training in how to recon-
struct the aesthetic object in his own consciousness. As a
result, the aesthetic object that we finally get is at least
as much subject as object.
The source of the powerful emotional responses which Dr. Johnson observed in himself and other playgoers is the playgoer himself, as the worshippers are the source of the god's power, not something outside and alien. In projective systems what we suppose to be outside is in fact close to our most vexed conflicts to the degree that it seems awe-inspiring, threatening, and distant.

The work of art acts on the individual's mind very much as a sub-program acts on a computer. We cannot understand the computer's response to a specific instruction unless we understand the general program under which it operates and the computer's overall organization and capabilities. Similarly, we cannot understand the human response to works of art without understanding the general program of those responses as well as the psychology of the human organism in which they take place. Unlike the computer obeying the instructions of its program, the human organism often makes no obvious, overt behavioral response to the work of art; the whole process remains almost entirely intrapsychic, greatly complicating our study of it. This intrapsychic part of the aesthetic object inevitably remains hidden until an adequate human psychology illuminates it for us. Lacking such a psychology, criticism must remain half-blind at best.

The subjectivism of the conception of the aesthetic object here advanced presents many difficulties. Although
the text of an aesthetic object when correctly reproduced from one printing to another does not by definition change, we have contended that the text is not the aesthetic object but only a complicated sequence of cues allowing a properly trained reader to reconstruct the aesthetic object within his own psychological process. What then can possibly guarantee that successive aesthetic objects reconstructed by different readers from the same text will be the same or even remotely similar? What makes it possible that my Hamlet will remotely resemble another man's? This challenge is further complicated by abundant evidence that different individuals do reconstruct aesthetic texts differently to themselves. Ernest Jones' Hamlet is not at all like Professor Schucking's. Even a cursory study of conflicting interpretations of literary works or other works of art would serve to convince that interpretation proper begins at a far earlier stage of the individual's reconstruction of the object than might naively be supposed. Clinical theory alone would lead us to suppose that different readers would reconstruct aesthetic objects in such a way as to reflect their own biases and conflicts. There are, for instance, scholars who literally cannot perceive Swift's anal eroticism despite the hundreds of references to anality in Swift's works.

Given these facts how is it possible to talk about a work or works of literature in a general way at all?
Apparently, only a sufficient psychological similarity between one individual and another, a similarity based on an identical biological substratum and at least a broadly analogous cultural resemblance could assure a sufficient analogy between one individual's aesthetic object and another's to make general discourse possible. Only a certain constancy in human nature—biologically ultimate but culturally reinforced as well—could make possible communication between different individuals and different social groups. If readers 2000 years later can correctly understand and appropriately respond to the Oedipus Rex it is because these modern readers share some of the same psychological difficulties and concerns that made the play effective for ancient Greek audiences; to the extent that modern readers do not share these difficulties to some degree, they are not likely to respond to the play at all. Thus, although we can determine only within a rough approximation whether the modern reader's or playgoer's response to an ancient work of literature resembles the ancient readers' or playgoers', we can predict that works which are very far from the dynamic centers of contemporary projective systems will provoke relatively weak responses in contemporary audiences and thus will be little performed or read. From our point of view, the occurrence of a powerful affective response is itself evidence that a kinship exists between the contemporary audience and the ancient work.21
Summary. Projective systems resemble in their gross structure and fundamental psychodynamics the literary mode of romance as defined in an earlier chapter. Virtually all of Western literature constitutes a subsystem of the projective system of religion, which is both chronologically and sociologically prior. Current anthropological data suggests that in prehistoric times all literature was inextricably bound up with religion. Literature as a separate projective system developed out of primitive religions; literary institutions have become differentiated sharply from religious institutions only in the past 2000 years or so. Despite this differentiation, literature continues to do very much the same thing for the human community that religion once did and still does for the remaining believers.

To the extent that religion has collapsed as a viable projective system for modern man, the critical perspective here proposed would support Matthew Arnold's observation that one of the few functioning projective systems remaining to do the work of religion would be literature. Literature, like religion, is a repository of mankind's most powerful and irrational fears and desires, particularly those fears that technology cannot yet calm and those desires which in the present state of culture must remain frustrated; but quantitatively speaking perhaps this drive-relieving function of literature is less significant than the other functions in which literature parallels religion:
like religion, literature carries with it a vast freight of moral and intellectual material from the past of culture. Most of this material I characterize as superego because it represents literally the collective—and often collectively confused—conscience of mankind. Literary scholars who identify the central importance of literature as moral are right, though their account cannot be complete if they confine themselves solely to the moral function of literature.

The one function of literature which plays a more significant part in literature proper than in most religions is the ego function. In reading a poem, short story, or novel we are invited to share in the author's competence in manipulating the manifold variables of aesthetic technique. To the extent that we can follow the elaborations of technique—and this itself is an ego competence in the reader requiring discipline and learning—we appropriate the author's mastery of his id and superego materials, as well as his ability to handle skillfully whatever form he is using, for ourselves. The game aspect of form is of course especially apparent in those types of literary performance which, like chess, have elaborate and confining rules—the sonnet and other highly contrived traditional patterns. It is this aspect of intellectual play which chiefly distinguishes popular from serious literature. Popular literature requires, in general, less competence, discipline and learning of reader, though some popular
writers play quite elaborate games with traditional forms of narrative such as the detective novel. Nonetheless the intellectual mastery required of the reader of Ulysses or The Wasteland is far more exacting than that required of the reader of an Agatha Christie mystery. Literary scholars rightly emphasize this intellectual and moral content of literature, but they err, I believe, when they contend that this content somehow obliterates or makes impossible the more basic psychodynamic functions of literature. No one would invest energy in a narrative if it did not gratify desires and liquidate anxieties; intellectual mastery alone would not be sufficient motivation. The brisk intellectual game involved in making and appreciating literature would lose its zest if deprived of basic drive-oriented anchorings. The capability of psychoanalytic ego psychology to recognize the relatively greater import of ego functions in the producing and reading of literature constitutes a strong argument against theorists like Murray Krieger, who insist that psychoanalytic criticism cannot distinguish on theoretical grounds between dreams, neurotic symptoms, and works of literature all of which may have identical psychodynamics. The hypothesis of the projective system permits fine and exact distinctions between magic, religion, folklore and other superstitions and the arts and social functions while providing at the same time an accurate guide to how all these apparently different things resemble one
another and thus why humanity has needed them so desperately. Literature like religion is not optional, nor is it essentially recreation; all such projective systems answer to mankind's deepest common needs. So long as these needs persist literature will remain urgently necessary.

4. The Artist as Shaman

The projective systems whose characteristics we have outlined are not closed systems. Once established in a society, projective systems ordinarily do not remain forever the same but change slowly. Changing historical situations within and without a given society necessarily change the kinds and quantities of anxieties collectively felt and the urgency and directions of biological needs. Under the accumulated pressures of social turmoil, projective systems may change quite rapidly in historic time, as in the revolutionary shift from paganism to Christianity.

Not only possible changes in, but the leadership and maintenance of, existing systems, while resting on the group dynamics of the projective system, must in a specific society be vested in particular individuals. Such individuals are self-selected on the basis of sensitivity to the group needs symbolized by the projective system and by their facility in manipulating the projective system's pseudo-objects. Such individuals are called shamans. There is abundant evidence that shamans and shamanisms underlie the beginning of
all world religions.\textsuperscript{23} Since literature was once an indistinguishable part of the primitive religions whose core was shamanism, it is logical to expect that the institution of shamanism would have left its mark on the subsequently differentiated institutions of literature. As the elements of shamanism and the shamanistic personality are expounded below, its relevance to the corresponding literary institutions should become more and more explicit. Although the analogy of the artist and the shaman has been occasionally noticed in literary criticism of the last decade or so,\textsuperscript{24} the logic of this analogy has rarely been followed through to its conclusion. The relationships between shamanism and the later institution of literary authorship is no merely formal analogy; rather there are deep functional correspondences between the two institutions.

In all cultures in which we find him, the shaman is the technician of the sacred whose function it is to invent or maintain contact with the elements of the sacred world in response to generally felt needs and anxieties. As a conduit of tradition, the shaman assures the continuity of the hallucinated-objects of the sacred world, gods or the more vaguely conceived presences of magic; as a master of sacred techniques of responding to human dilemmas, he may become the innovator of new sacred modalities. There is a considerable showmanship in shamanistic performances, which represent an elementary form of drama; shamanistic strategems
may also require the invention of "just so" stories—that is, of plots to incorporate and symbolize widely shared psychic conflicts—and the use of chants, songs and other primitive forms of poetry. The shaman is part literary man just as he is part political figure, doctor, priest and technician.

The great importance of the shaman in the study of religion is that, unlike the god he projects, the shaman is observable and accessible to study. As La Barre puts it:

The ancestor of the god is the shaman himself both historically and psychologically. There were shamans before there were gods. The very earliest religious data we know from archeologists are the dancing masked sorcerers, shamans of Lascaux, TROIS FRERES, and other old stone-age caves. The worldwide distribution of functionaries recognizable as shamans . . . testifies to their antiquity.25

In primitive societies, then, the shaman unites in one person functions that become differentiated in more complex societies. Not only the poet but priests, kings, judges and physicians descend from the shaman, a descent evident not in their secular functions but in the emotionally charged charisma which continues to cling to them.

Shamanism is the institution and the shaman the specific observable human instrument by which societies carry on transactions with and adjustments within their collective hallucinations. Most of the magical exercises of shamanism constitute a wishful, realistically ineffectual but
psychologically potent technology which attempts to control threatening aspects of the environment—weather, the scarcity of food, disease, death—by manipulating the human psychological process.\(^{26}\) This legerdemain performed on pseudo-objects of the projective system makes everyone feel better but cannot alter the real situation. The pseudo-objects native to magical projective systems typically consist of a vaguely-defined congeries of spirits or powers whose shadowy quality obscures the relation of human needs to the projective objects. (The human needs can be clearly seen, however, in the intent of the magical ritual.) The relationship between the projective objects and the needs which call those objects into being appears much more clearly in the objects of religious projective systems—gods, demi-gods, or heroes. In contrast to the objects of magical systems, religious pseudo-objects are sharply defined anthropomorphic projections whose powers and functions usually provide a reliable index to the needs of the communities which worship them.\(^{27}\)

A primitive religious figure whose powers and functions clearly illustrate the relation between projective object and felt needs within a specific type of human society is illustrated clearly by the stone age figure called the Master of Animals.

The characteristics and functions of this figure are voluminously documented both for ancient and contemporary
Of virtually worldwide distribution in paleolithic and melsolithic cultures, this figure not only shows a clear functional relationship to the typical anxieties and perplexities of a primitive hunting culture but is, perhaps, the progenitor of such mythic figures as Orpheus and Christ, conceived of as the good shepherd.

From the point of view of those in a hunting culture, the master of the animals is first of all simply the projected fulfillment of the wish that somebody be out there to help them hunt:

Preoccupied with hunting and stories of hunter's luck, the first men were needful only of a 'supernatural' that would help them hunt. Mimetic ritual—part symbolic gesture in the telling, play or practice, and part boasting—become—magic, compelling that wish come true—must have appeared early. . . . Early man . . . was concerned with his own life and the mastery of animals. We can predict . . . the general psychic pattern—but we are quite startled by the literalness of the projection that surviving evidence of early hunter's religion gives us. It is a remarkable fact that a mythic 'master of animals' has survived in the religion and folklore of most of the world . . . animals, it seems, had a protector, master or father just as human beings did. And early hunters projected the social structure of secular power unto the supernatural just as other groups do.

The fit of myth to the social structure of a hunting band is exact . . . The master of animals is first simply the human shaman himself, who has a special affinity with them and proclaims his magic power over animals. Only when he is dead, remoter in time and gradually given a cult, does the spirit of the shamanistic master of animals become the
supernatural helper of later shamans. The supernatural is patterned simply on the human master of animals. 29

Shamanistic magic is not the only technique by which hunting cultures deal with the necessity for obtaining food, nor is it the one which puts meat on the table. All hunting peoples have funds of objective, reality-directed competence in the art of hunting which, like morality and superstition, are passed on from generation to generation. The hunting technology of primitive peoples cannot, however, eliminate the element of luck and thus cannot assure that the kill will always be large enough to satisfy everyone's hunger. The sacred techniques of the shaman attempt to fill the gap between what society desires and what its technology can procure. This gap appears in the individual's experience as hunger, which generates much anxiety individually and collectively. The sacred magical response reduces this anxiety by reassuring the cultist that his hunter's luck is not blind chance; the animals are controlled by a being who responds to the hunter's state of mind, who can be bribed by prayer or sacrifice, propitiated by confessions of sin and whose good will once procured must guarantee the success of the hunt. This reassurance precisely denies the objective fact that the hunter's technology is inadequate to the demands he puts on it; but this denial, reinforced by the mutual suggestion of the group process in the cult, provides a tremendous relief from the
original anxiety. It is significant, nonetheless, that primitive hunting cultures like more advanced cultures have not one but two modes of dealing with their most urgent current problems, one reality-directed, technological, which attempts to modify the real world for human satisfaction, the other dereistic, wishful, symbolic, magical designed to soothe the discomforts which inevitably arise from man's inability to obtain all the satisfaction and protection that he requires. The magical technique soothes the anxieties but leaves the reality untouched; the technological solution inevitably requires that man endure fear or frustration until he understands the reality well enough to change it. Since the postponement of gratification until favorable conditions obtain is one of the ego's cardinal functions, we must judge the technological way more mature with respect to ego development.

Both projective systems and the sciences derive from intricate group processes. Just as leadership in reality-oriented areas attracts certain types of personalities, so the leadership requirements of projective group processes attract personalities with certain specific qualifications and impose well-defined functions on them. If we can satisfactorily abstract from the vast array of data on the leaders of projective systems, their personal psychopathology and group functions, a valid conception of what these individuals do; and, if we can show that typical functions of
writers as they relate to literary audiences correspond to what is really required of leaders of projective processes, this would make a strong case for the assertion that the social institution of authorship closely resembles the institution of shamanism. In exploring the various facets of this correspondence, I shall focus successively on the psychological characteristics of individuals who feel strongly pulled toward shamanistic roles and on the demands of those roles themselves, which depend on the dynamics of group processes.31

Since the projective process in all of its manifestations, from individual hallucinations to religion and art, puts into the external world what is really inside the psyche, those who carry on transactions with or innovations in these projective systems typically show greater than average sensitivity to shared psychic conflicts in which the projective process originates. Not only is the shaman sensitive in this respect but, by a fortuitous combination of training (In some societies he may be the descendent of a long line of shamans or medicine men.) or communicative ability he becomes, functionally, the arch-projector of his society. The very dynamic of this role is clinically psychotic; in it, the shaman exerts his power regressively with respect to the adaptive direction of those social processes which would develop a technology. Where a Paleolithic scientist might devise a better flint spearhead, the shaman
devises supports for the hallucinatory existence of figures like the Master of the Animals. A better spearhead might make the group better hunters, but a more affectively powerful projective system will certainly make them feel better.

In learning theory terms, the relief from anxiety of the magical or religious solutions to the hunters' problems acts as a powerful reinforcer for those behaviors, whereas the less reliable relief afforded by hit-or-miss improvements in hunting technology would not reinforce those behaviors so powerfully. In primitive cultures we actually find the situation the theory would predict, rudimentary and virtually static technologies combined with elaborate and complex magical or religious cults. The relief from anxiety and the gratification of wish fulfillments which the projective system secures is obtained far more rapidly than any relief of anxiety or enhancement of feelings of power that might result from a technological improvement, whose effectiveness might require a long period of time to assess, especially in preliterate culture which would lack totally the means of accurately recording data to show, for example, whether an improved spearhead brought in a consistently larger kill or not.

Like other manifestations of primary-process thinking, the projective system provides a dereistic shortcut to gratification. The projective process, though collective, exhibits most of the characteristics of individual primary
process thinking; the mis-perception of such primary process operations in reality, the assertion collective or individual that what we desire must exist would be appropriately described clinically as psychotic.\textsuperscript{32} Since the shaman's clientele requires him to make these psychotic assertions on behalf of both his own and their needs, the individuals who are drawn to this role are commonly themselves borderline psychotics. Shamanistic personalities necessarily have good emotional contact with their audiences, but this "adjustment" is to the latent psychosis of the groups they serve.

To a large extent any human culture functions as a defensive envelope designed to provide emotional protection for its members—often at the expense of realistic adaptation.\textsuperscript{33} The maintenance of this envelope against the vicissitudes of time and chance requires a great variety of shamanistic functions and projective innovations; these shamanistic functions run the gamut from the manipulation of vaguely defined magical powers or spirits to the rigid ritualized worship of elaborately delineated gods, goddesses and the like. Because this defensive envelope insures the psychic stability of each individual in the society, cultural change, which tends to punch holes in this defensive envelope, provokes intense discomforts in the members of groups so threatened. Any society not in a state of completely stable equilibrium, requires numerous projective
innovators to patch torn defenses or to devise completely new ones. In a large, complex society a great variety of such shamanistic figures--innovative or otherwise--serves the needs of distinct subgroups of the society. Since anyone who can perform effectively as a projector greatly reduces the anxieties and discomforts of the group he serves, those groups offer the successful projector considerable rewards, especially the intangible rewards of prestige and authority. Such abundant rewards tend to attract many candidates toward shamanistic social roles; hence at any moment, in all but the most simple and stable cultures, we can observe a multitude of magicians, prophets, oracles, seers, and artists of all types offering their projective comforts to the distressed multitudes. 34

Despite the great variety of stances which a complex culture's projectors assume and the numerous different media which they use to make their projections effective, we can identify most would-be projectors by certain common signs or symptoms, in intellectual terms by certain common claims which projectors make for their activities or products. As we have seen, the nature of the projective process itself makes it likely that these claims will be similar from one shamanistic personality to another, at least within a given society; any class of individuals which makes such claims for itself very probably belongs to the general class of
projective innovators. In Western culture artists of all kinds, but especially poets and narrative writers, have tended to make shamanistic claims for themselves either implicitly or explicitly. The most far-reaching and frequently encountered of these claims as they affect the literary artist go to the very heart of the Western world's longstanding reverence for literary art.

Of all the correspondences between the assertions of shamans and the assertions of verbal artists, perhaps the most fundamental as well as the most widespread is the myth of inspiration.\(^{35}\) Virtually all shamanistic personalities—and until modern times virtually all literary artists—have claimed that the ultimate source of their power or visions was some spirit or god presenting the supernatural absolutes of the cultures they occupied. The literary aspect of this claim constitutes the basis of an ancient tradition. All readers of Greek and Latin literature are familiar with the invocations of the muse by the great classical poets and with Plato's observation that poets "make what they compose . . . by . . . an inspiration similar to that of the divines and oracles."\(^{36}\) Christian poets substitute the Holy Spirit for the pagan muses, but the principle is the same.\(^{37}\) What is most important to note in all this well known information is that the tradition of divine inspiration is no mere metaphor, and the aura which such inspiration lends to a literary work is scarcely trivial for readers in a culture which
believes in such gods. The utterances of the poet while he is possessed by his spirit or muse share whatever authority those spirits claim in the poet's society. In cultures whose faith in the supernatural is weakened or absent—as among well educated Western Europeans for at least the last one and one half centuries—the claim of inspiration tends to become a claim to some qualitative, categorical difference between the writer's abilities and those of less gifted men or women and between the writer's and other more patent-ly rational uses of language. Even in contemporary times "artistic metaphor still profusely reflects the inspiration-possession theme . . . derived from archaic shamanism."38

For the modern writer, the muse becomes his miraculous talent, intuition, or genius—the invisible, unanalysable source of his magical power over words. What the writer produces necessarily retains for those who accept his claims something of this unanalyzable essence (organic unity). Whether he claims contact with a god or spirit-familiar or whether he claims to speak from the lofty perspective of an unanalyzable peak experience, the verbal artist, like the shaman, remains "... only the seer or humble witness of external omnipotence, the oracle ... a being passively inspired or 'breathed into' by the god."39 Like all shams, the artist claims to benefit his clients by virtue of his proprietary contact with spiritual forces or beings; even in post-animistic cultures, the artist remains
animistic in the implicit assertions that underlie his functioning.

As we have seen above, both shamans and writers claim that their activities and productions derive from contact with supernatural phenomena; for both, this contact occurs in an unusual psychological state—the trance. Individuals in this state of experience clearly exhibit symptoms of a withdrawal from reality. Most writers report that this state of inspiration is an exceedingly pleasureable one, one in which the writer usually feels that he can do anything he wishes with his art. In such a psychic state the magician has access to the "powers" with which he hopes to manipulate reality, the oracle has access to the god who will inform him about the future, and the writer has access to his vision. In such a state the traditional narrative artist makes contact with the legendary projective figures of his race, beginning the process which will result in a visible literary work. In some such state, too, the innovator in times of rapid cultural change first projects new objects, powers, visions, heroes, or gods.

Possessed by his inspiration, the artist, like the shaman in his trance, becomes a distinctly different person from his quotidian self. The shaman in his trance or the priest at his altar each behaves in a different way than he behaves in ordinary situations. The writer's entranced self appears in his art as the persona of its narrator or
the performing voice of the poem. The difference between the artist's voice as a real historical person and the voice we hear in his work is the difference between the voice of one in contact with everyday reality, aware of the human littleness of his limitations, and the voice of one regressed to a psychological state in which he experiences a godlike power over the objects and events in a projective system which has replaced reality. The difference between the everyday voice of the writer and the voice of his genius speaking in him manifests itself most strikingly in the difference between the affective tone and rhetorical cast of the writer's business or casual social letters (literary letters are almost always written in the trance-voice) and the tone and stance of the voices of any of his poems or stories. The voices which we hear in literary works emanate from, if they are not in fact, the poet's spirit-familiar or genius. Intimacy with or possession by this spirit-familiar was for many centuries held to be literally the source of the artist's powers. Modern critics, most of whom no longer believe in spirits, continue to assert that highly gifted artists—Shakespeare, Goethe, Tolstoy—differ absolutely and qualitatively from both lesser artists and ordinary men and that no rational explanation can completely account for the powers which such geniuses exhibit. The writer's work necessarily carries the imprint of his genius, so that the work's essence too seems ultimately
inexplicable, seems to possess a quasi-mystical organic unity, a "grace beyond the reach of art" which no mere superiority of intelligence or technique could supply.

A supposed contact with supernatural ultimates provides the basis of the power and influence in a specific culture of both the shaman and the artist. Virtually all literary works, because of their association with supernatural absolutes, claim at least implicitly extraordinary moral and epistemological status. On behalf of these supernatural absolutes, the creator's voice makes powerful demands on the members of the audience: total attention, complete concentration, a temporary relinquishing of critical judgment and reality-directed skepticism, and a submission to the artist's vision like that demanded of men by gods.  

By participating in this collective hallucination, the member of the audience necessarily relinquishes a degree of his ego autonomy. The reader's feeling of pressure or necessity in this process derives from two sources: first, the urgency of the group's unfinished dreamwork—which the shaman and the artist offer to complete; and secondly, the shaman-artist's articulation of widely-shared superego injunctions, which audiences consciously experience as authoritative moral traditions. It is of course a commonplace of literary histories that great literature articulates the central moral convictions of a culture. This proposition, too, has received support from most of the world's great literary critics, significantly from both Plato and Aristotle.
It was, in fact, the perception of this moral thrust which ultimately saved literature from its platonic and Christian antagonists. But the moral function of the art is implicit not only in the thematics of specific works but also in the psychodynamics of the artist's function as a projective innovator for human groups.

The artist's, like the shaman's, utterances aim for an immediate emotional acceptance and an immediate acquiescence and moral conviction. Where there is sufficient phatic rapport with an audience, these acceptances are immediate, overwhelming, and almost entirely uncritical. When this process becomes an object of reflection and rationalization in literate cultures, feelings of emotional and moral conviction become the tacit axioms of a variety of aesthetic theories which attempt to establish truth-criteria for works of art different from criteria appropriate to ordinary propositions about the observable world. Whatever their philosophical superstructure, the strategy of such arguments parallels exactly that of Rudolph Otto in religious psychology, which posits that the objects which provoke widespread, powerful religious experiences must be somehow real. The psychologically real objects in a projective system can provoke emotional responses as powerful as those to any observable objects or process; hallucinated tigers are sometimes more frightening than merely observed ones. Actually, it is the psychic effectuality of a projector—magician,
religious visionary, or artist—which convinces us that his vision must be "true" before we examine it rationally. We are convinced of these truths, then, before we could possibly examine the vision empirically. In fact, most fans of a particular author, like most adherents of religion, never get around to examining such convictions rationally. 44

The power, therefore, of a projective system over a given group leads the members of that group to suppose the vision true, not the reverse; and this power, finally, is the power of a projective vision to efficiently facilitate the working out of collective unfinished dreamwork while reinforcing unconscious tribal taboos. To call an aesthetic vision true is to call it authoritative, but the authority of a projector's genius is in the last analysis nothing more than the authority of his own superego. This authority will bind others in his culture to the extent that the projector's work gives articulation to the superego anxieties of significant numbers of individuals in a specific society. Aesthetic truth is a matter of emotional and moral "fit" obtaining between the projector and his audience. The power of art, like the power of the kindred projective systems of magic and religion, derives ultimately from a human group's mutual experience of the power of an "unknowable" supernatural stratum, to which shamanistic figures or projectors claim a proprietary access. This stratum, in fact, represents the most readily projected (i.e., shareable) elements
of the group's repressed unconscious wishes and moral anxieties. The literary artist's dependence on and relation to this force or power replicates prominent features of the age old cultural institution of shamanism. The extent of this correspondence fully supports the conclusion that the literary artist is a shaman who works in a specific medium.

Summary. The artist as a manipulator and innovator of projective systems performs the following shamanistic functions: (a) He facilitates shared regression in the face of shared psychic conflict or intractable reality difficulties. This regression reduces anxiety about the real world by replacing the real with the superego anxiety; the projector attends to the thus aroused superego anxiety by inventing or rediscovering a shareable symbolic ritual to placate the irate superego, which itself usually appears in the projections as an angry god or spirit: e.g., the sacrificial ritual of tragedy. The regression necessary for group experience of projective systems also allows the disguised entry into consciousness of otherwise forbidden drive-derivatives, i.e., wish-fulfillment.

In regression, whose visible symptom in the shaman artist is the trance state of inspiration, the visionary and the members of his cult gain access, at least partially, to the condition of infantile omnipotence of thought. A substitute world is built on the premises of this condition to replace the loathed reality; only in a world hypostasized
from such a psychic stance could the simultaneous fulfillment of superego imperatives and id wishes—which, as we have seen, is characteristic of romance—take place. In this regression, the object relations of infancy and childhood displace contemporaneous object relations; myths and fables evolve from fantasies about these early objects both pre-Oedipal and Oedipal. Individuals in this regressed state hear the moral injunctions of the superego more loudly than they would in a psychological state more thoroughly in contact with reality. The very operation of the narrator's voice—the voice of the shaman regressed into his trance—is based on omnipotence of thought, or words: "Once upon a time . . ." not only prefaces the tale, it literally conjures the new revised world of romance vision.

The regressed state of writer and reader occurs not as a matter of individual accident but of cultural practice. A large part of the function—hence the durability—of formal convention in literature, as in magical and religious ritual, is to re-induce the appropriate state of regression in an audience. Since all such regressive strategies necessarily subsidize primary process-thinking at the expense of reality-testing the language, plot, morality, and cosmology of the works of art produced and apprehended in such a mental state is inevitably more primitive, less well adapted to reality, than even the most elementary technology. In addition, the disjunction between
the autism of the literary imagination and realistic thinking inevitably becomes more glaringly apparent in the advanced cultures of Western civilization, where, under the influence of science, ever larger numbers of people have become accustomed to a more rigorous kind of reality-testing in their own lives. That art originates in and is appreciated in a regressed psychological state does not imply that the indigenous thinking of that state is simpler than reality-directed thinking, or that such regressed thinking requires less intellectual ability to apprehend. Intellectually speaking, projective systems of any type often are bewilderingly complicated, as Levi-Strauss' exposition of primitive kinship systems demonstrates; whereas a brilliant scientific hypothesis may be stunningly simple.

Literature, ancient or modern, shows unmistakable signs of psychic primitivism because it is and always has been part of the sacred phase of culture.

As we had seen earlier, the morality of even the loftiest literary work elaborates infantile talion morality. For this reason, the morality and ideology of most narratives appears reactionary with respect to their contemporary scene. The works of Homer, most of the Greek tragedies, The Aeneid, and Paradise Lost all incorporate value systems which were moribund at the time when these works appeared. The most prominent exceptions to this observation, the works of apparently revolutionary writers, assert a new moral
authority, which permits heretofore forbidden wish-fulfillments or forbids previously permitted ones, or both. Many revolutionary movements in literature as elsewhere would be more appropriately described as revivalisms, because they seek to restore some discarded or neglected authority. The early poets of the Romantic movement, for instance, sought to restore the ancient, "legislative" function of the poet, to assert the archaic shaman-power of the poet against the secular encroachment of science. This apparently avant-garde aesthetic movement, like so many of the subsequent aesthetic movements that it has inspired, was actually more phylogenetically primitive with respect to its contemporaneous culture than the literary classicism it purported to overthrow. Romantic aesthetic theory, in fact, put a heavier emphasis on the poet's visionary power, (i.e. omnipotence of thought) as a source of the legitimacy of the literary work than had any previous movement in aesthetics, either explicit or implicit, since the New Stone Age.

The ego-functions required of the writer if he is to establish successful phatic communication with an audience have two distinct phases, dynamic and adaptive.

Dynamically, the artist's ego must be sufficiently strong and flexible to permit him to regress to the level of his (and his tribe's) basic conflicts without completely losing contact with social reality. His ego must retain sufficient resilience in the regressed state to be able to
keep superego and id interests coordinated and synthesized in a culturally appropriate way. (Part of the reason why the visions of unsuccessful seers are scorned is that they lack such a balance or fail to symbolize it effectively.)

The artist—like other vatic personalities—tends to be more sensitive than the ordinary individual to the kinds of stresses that provoke the invention, manipulation, and modification of sacred projective systems. The artist projects more rapidly and more intensely, phatically and cognitively more articulately, than others; but he must project from conflicts which a large number of his compatriots already feel if he hopes to enjoy a measure of popular success.

Part of the writer's talent, then, is his sensitivity to what his audience unconsciously wants to hear. Writers and audiences reinforce one another so efficiently in this respect that the number of highly talented writers in the entire history of Western literature who were completely obscure in their own lifetimes is exceedingly small.

Audiences hunger so intensely for contributions to their sacred projective systems, that the opposite case, the writer of slight talent who enjoys large popular acclaim, is by far the more common.

The dynamic aspects of the writer's talent closely resembles that of any phatic personality and consists of an ability to synthesize conflicting id and superego pressures into a compromise acceptable to a specific human group. In
Western literature, especially in narrative literature, the superego component has tended to predominate. The dominant morality of Western narrative literature represents the typically Western solution of the Oedipus complex in which the child relinquishes mother in exchange for retaining a permanently chastened sexual integrity. As I pointed out in Chapter 2, a great many of the plot outcomes in Western narrative conform to this basic moral paradigm. An id-dominated synthesis, incidentally, is conceivable but in fact is exceedingly rare; it would consist of a slightly disguised incestuous-orgiastic hallucination rendered effectively in words. Such a narrative would arouse intolerable anxiety in most potential audiences of Western culture from ancient times to the present. Pornography would appear to meet some of these criteria, but practically all examples of this kind of writing show quite low standards of craftsmanship. Although the superego-interest has tended to subdue the id-interest in Western narrative, most narratives show a disguised and somewhat subversive release of id-pressures which remains essential to audience interest. The verbal product of a pure superego-interest is the sermon.

The second ego function of the writer's role makes him specifically a writer rather than a magician or a religious visionary: his ability to communicate his projective vision by means of verbal artifacts. This ability is by far the
most observable element of literary talent, the one that requires the least immersion in the writer's projective system to appreciate. A reader can analyze the verbal craftsmanship of a writer whose vision offers that reader no psychodynamic payoff whatever. Although the writer's native linguistic ability does not, of course, depend on the strength of his motivation, he develops whatever innate verbal ability he may possess to the point of an achieved literary craftsmanship because of his need to produce word-magic, and his belief in the magical power of words, which reflects the continued hold on him of infantile phantasies of omnipotence.

Thus, although the verbal and formal expertise of any accomplished writer is real and measurable, this skill, like the manual skill and ingenuity of a magician, the oratorical skill of a prophet, or the charismatic skill of a politician, primarily serves the purpose of impressing on some audience the miraculous magical quality of the writer's art. Even the most technical and convention-bound components of the literary artist's skill contribute to the psychodynamic end of provoking an appropriate level of regression in the work's potential audience. The relation of even the most highly wrought technical or stylistic skill to this psychodynamic purpose is most readily appreciated by examining the beginnings of the world's great narratives, their adaptations of the storyteller's hypnotic "Once upon a
time . . .". Homer's inductions of the Muse for instance invite, or perhaps compel, the reader's participation in the poet's trance of inspiration; in the regressed state which this spell quite literally casts upon the reader, he readily hallucinates in response to the poet's cues. Essentially the same point applies to the beginnings of many other world famous narratives, for instance, *The Aeneid*, *The Divine Comedy*, *The Canterbury Tales*, and *Don Quixote*. Any reader of *Moby Dick*—to take an example far removed chronologically and culturally from the others—who can recall his first reading of that work can testify as to his hallucinatory grasp of the first several pages of the book, a grasp which seems to establish itself instantly with the opening sentence: "Call me Ismael." That these powerful opening sequences do arouse and hold the reader's interest critics and writers alike are quick to acknowledge, but the psychodynamic consequences of this stratagem are rarely made explicit.

The narrator's voice in the typical opening sequence of a literary work establishes itself in the reader's psyche as authoritative. The narrator's voice thus becomes, as the tale unfolds, the voice of a temporary auditory hallucination in the reader's mind; it speaks to the reader in the manner and from the perspective of the reader's own superego, or perhaps through an ego state based on superego influence on the ego. The establishment of the narrator as a tempo-
rary superego voice in the reader's mind greatly restricts
the possibility of the reader's criticizing what the narrat-
lor's voice tells him. In all such instances, the narrat-
or's voice prohibits—it certainly does not invite—inde-
pendent rational criticism by the reader of the figure or
plot which the narrator's voice relates to him. This, if
it takes place at all, takes place when the act of reading
or hearing has ended. It is this process which underlies
Coleridge's "willing suspension of disbelief." In addi-
tion to inducing a credulous attitude in the reader, the
opening sequence must stir in the reader an anticipation of
disguised gratification. This, in turn, reinforces the
reader's suspension of skepticism—since he will not have
the proposed gratification without submitting to the narrat-
or's authority. But it is the narrator's assumption of the
stance and tone of voice of his culture's typical superego
which is crucial because the superego is the one culturally-
influenced psychic institution whose power over human be-
havior approaches that of the biologically-rooted id.

Although it may have an awe-inspiring impact on the
reader, the writer's verbal and technical pyrotechnics, his
apparent word-magic, in fact results from an intelligible
though complex skill, not supernatural possession. For this
reason, close analysis of the writer's techniques tends to
dissipate their psychological hold over the previously en-
tranced reader, just as our discovery of the magician's
secret spoils the illusion. In reality, there is no "grace beyond the reach of art" (the reflected glory of everyone's childhood fantasies of omnipotence) only the hard won—and fully analyzable—skill of craftsmanship applied to the task of rendering the artist's projections verbally. Since the craftsmanship of the writer's are closely resembles secular modes of mastery, critics and scholars have learned to analyze it far more readily than the sacred projective vision. Few critics, today as in the past, would readily admit that any work of art is in principle completely analyzable, in both its ego-adaptive craftsmanship and its psychodynamics. To insist that a sacred residue must remain beyond the reach of rational analysis—as many non-analytic critics and scholars do—is to remain in part animistic. An unmediated awareness of the conflicts that produce projective systems stirs up discomfort in the individuals whose needs those systems serve, precisely because it would undo the dreamwork by which those who accept the projective system have fled from the tensions of unconscious conflict, its attendant anxiety. An interpretation which penetrates the essential disguises—whether or not they are incorporated in magic, religion, or art—violates a sacred taboo. The empirical critic of art or religion stands outside the system and is perceived as a threat to it by those inside the system. In this sense, it is true that psychoanalytic scrutiny is intrinsically hostile to
art, as it is to religion, because it necessarily loosens the grasp of the illusions which make art and religion alike authoritative for their adherents.

5. Common Criteria of Self-Selection: Shaman-Poet

If, as I have argued, the poet's role and function parallels and indeed derives from that of the shaman, then similar personality-types should be drawn to those roles. Two coordinated sources of pressure tend to enforce a certain similarity of personality types on the writer's or shaman's role within a given epoch and culture. One of these sources of pressure is the audience or cult, which will accept as authentic only those writers who ably fulfill reader's needs; the other source is the motivation of would-be writers themselves, who are drawn towards these social roles to the extent that they experience appropriate inner conflicts. Although audience-criteria exclude those whose personal psychopathologies do not serve the group's needs, the felt pressures of group anxiety promote conflict in those who already are most susceptible. Combined, these pressures restrict the range of personality type ordinarily found in the shaman-artist role. However, the conflicts seen in vatic personalities in an exaggerated form exist latently in all members of a given subgroup. Under a sufficiently intense affective pressure, almost any member of a culture may regress to the vatic's autistic position, as in the phenomenon of echolalia, seen in ecstatic Christian
cults, the outbreaks of demoniacal possession in 16th and 17th century Europe, or the orgiastic, God-intoxicated behaviors of participants in the mystery cults in the ancient world. Even in these cases where ordinary citizens become vatic personalities under the ego-dissolving pressures of an intense emotional experience, the visionary personality is often the first to show the symptoms and is usually affected for the longest period of time.51 Although on occasion anyone can be his own vatic, normally a few shamanistic personalities supply, symbolically, the needs of much larger numbers of individuals organized into subgroups.

The coordination of group needs and individual psychodynamics towards the cultivation and selection of vatic personalities makes it possible to specify with some precision what types of personalities are more likely to wind up in the shaman's role in a given subgroup of a given culture at a given time, provided we know what forces are then operating in that subgroup and what personality types the concurrent child-rearing practices make available. Lacking such an abundance of specific data, our conception of the fit between particular personality types and group needs must necessarily be vague. Nonetheless, in the cultural situation of Western literature, certain psychodynamic themes turn up frequently enough in the psychology of authorship at widely separated times to be worthy of notice.
What follows is essentially a list, with explanations and a few examples, of some of these recurrent psychodynamic points of reference in the personalities of Western writers.

Virtually all of the personality traits of artists derive from the characteristic relationship of ego function and specific conflict indicated earlier. As Ernst Kris has pointed out, the creative process requires a regression in the service of the ego on the part of the writer; hence the typical personality-type of the artist might be described, paradoxically, as that of a borderline psychotic with strong ego function in certain areas. This is not to say that the writer or artist would very often seem crazy in his cultural milieu. Since the sacred phase of any culture is a kind of shared craziness in any case, the real question has to do with how the writer's conflicts fit his cultural situation. In most cases the writer or artist exhibits a more extreme version of some widely-shared intrapsychic conflicts, but his ability to establish a phatic rapport with at least certain subgroups of his culture by means of elaborate manipulations of emotionally charged symbols gives him a characteristically regressive leadership over those subgroups.

However culturally apposite, the artist’s psychic development, like that of most neurotics, is typically arrested or fixated at some critical point or points in his infantile development. The identification of these
points of fixation in the artist's personality points inevitably to the loci of basic conflicts out of which the dominant themes of his life and work develop. With the artist as with other neurotics, the precise nature of the fixations varies greatly from one case to the next, but viewing the artist as a projector and subtype of the shaman, we find that two major orientations deriving from early object-relations constantly reappear in the psychodynamics of the vatic personality: the shaman (proper) and the priest. La Barre, synthesizing psychodynamics and ethno-graphic data, defines and contrasts these two as follows:

The vatic personality exists in two closely related forms, shaman and priest, depending upon ego boundaries and the psychological space occupied, the attained stage of psychosexual maturity, and their respective contexts socially and culturally . . .

Psychologically and socially the more primitive of the two, the shaman is preposterously and magniloquently a fatuous child, for he uses mother-learned magic, not the secular ego-techniques of mastery that other men use. For the shaman is at best a magician: external powers invade and leave his body with practiced ease, so feeble are his ego boundaries . . . The shaman is a culture hero to the frightened and the infantilized, but psychically he is a child too.54

Although the object-systems of some literary works are perhaps magical in the above sense,55 more frequently it is the process of producing the literary work in which the writer operates magically, whereas the object-system that
the writer shares with an audience by means of the process of literary production more frequently derives from Oedipal fantasies. As a maker of quasi-sacred aesthetic objects, the artist both magically controls and is possessed by his "inspiration": "but there is little ambiguity about who the 'god' of the magician basically is: himself." With respect to the relationship between the artist, his audience, and the vast set of projective objects which he conjures for that audience, the literary artist's function is usually priestly, as La Barre defines it:

By contrast, the priest has arrived, and speaks to a clientele, at the Oedipal level. He does not magically command, he implores omnipotence. Instead of child-mother he uses child-father techniques. . . . When he uses holy water and saints' bones and magic formulas, the instituted priest is really a shaman operationally. With more personified powers whom he placates by sacrifice, the shaman functionally, and in attitude, is really a priest. The real difference between magical and religious practice is not in real outside entities but in the psychic attitude of the practitioner. . . . Mothers make magicians; fathers, gods. . . . The magician is fixed at the more archaic psychological state in which other powers have not yet really become human persons. . . . The religionist has more fully discovered emotionally the persons of the familial imagery: god the father, the loving mother of god, and the suffering son. The symbolic Oedipal lineament of these figures is complete.56

La Barre's theory specifies the reciprocities that operate between the individual psychopathology of the vatic personality and social institutions. His specification of the
two basic levels of fixations found in such personalities accounts for many of the observed psychological idiosyn-
crasies and institutional requirements. In Western culture
the literary artist would appear to function magically as
he produces the literary work but as either the priest of
a tradition or a prophet of new projective figures (heroes)
with respect to the content which he conjures by means of
his magical, creative act. Within the literary work, the
magical component of the act of creation persists in what
I have called earlier the underlying oral premise of ro-
mance, whereas Oedipal fixations determine the nature of
the central characters and plot.

Other aspects of writer's personalities and cultural
functions correlate with the above observations. Practi-
cally all writers report sharply differentiated state of
inspiration, a peak experience of being "hot" as a writer
as a focal experience in the process of creation; in this
psychic state the inspired writer feels all-powerful,
able to do anything, a state of heightened self-esteem
accompanied by an intense feeling of well being. For some
types of writers—notably lyric poets—this experience of
inspiration seems crucial to literary productivity; narra-
tive writers in contrast seem better able to set a steady
productive pace and keep to it. Apparently the oral dimen-
sion is more decisive for the poet, perhaps because with him
the interest in the manipulation of words themselves is more
intense, whereas the narrative artist's primary investment is in the objects of the projective system itself.

If oral fixations are frequently seen in the psychology of the creative process, we can detect the Oedipal fixation in the myths which writers make up about their own lives and ambitions and the images they project of themselves in these autobiographical dramas. One of the most striking, if not the most typical, of these self-images is that of the messiah or culture-hero, which becomes an archetype of its own in the biographies of many romantic poets though it also appears unmistakably—and perhaps with far more justification—in the life of Milton, who to judge from the examples of Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained saw himself as a kind of Reformation prophet. Oedipal fixations are manifest also in the self destructive acting-out and paranoid persecution fantasies seen in some romantic poets, notably both Shelley and Blake. With respect to the writer's messianic self image, most writers, like many prophets, founders of religions, and literary heroes themselves, first commit themselves to the vocation of literature in the force of an adolescent identity-crisis. The hearing of this call or the experience (to use religious terminology) of this state of conviction as to vocation in adolescence is a highly significant piece of evidence for the very hypothesis under discussion here, because adolescence is a time of life during which the individual makes renewed attempts to master previously repressed Oedipal striving.
6. Art and the Psychodynamics of Hallucination

A common structure, imposed by the dynamics of regression, underlies the projective process and its contents; the creative process as the vatic experiences it, the projective object itself, its interior shape and the cultist's experience of it exhibit characteristics which ultimately depend on the nature of regression as a psychological process. From the structure of projective systems, which derives from the dynamics of regression, devolve not only the network of symbolic-social relationship between projector and cult but also the figures, themes, and actions of the projections themselves. These projections in literary incarnation contribute to the basis of what I have earlier called Romance. In exploring in further detail the nature of regression in individuals, groups, and vatic personalities, I hope to elucidate the reciprocity between thematics and social matrix of the projective process. Ultimately, I believe, I can develop a strong case for the proposition that given the thematics of romance as discussed in Chapter II, the projective process as here described is what we would expect to find underlying it; and, conversely, given the characteristics of projective processes as described previously, the thematics of romance are what we would expect to find as the content of projections. In the psychodynamics of regression, I believe, is found the key to the reciprocity of psychodynamic functioning and its
symbolization as observed in individuals, societies, and the transitional relationships of humans and cults.

In psychoanalysis, the concept of regression performs a multitude of duties. Not only is it a primary category of explanation of the symptomology of both the neuroses and psychoses, but it also explains many of the phenomena of normal dreaming.\textsuperscript{58} Although symptom or compromise-formation in any of these phenomena cannot be completely explained without reference to both regression and fixation,\textsuperscript{59} regression is the more general concept, and we can detect characteristic signs of regression in individuals without having to know in advance what the decisive fixations are. Of all mental phenomena, the acute psychotic reactions illustrate most dramatically the mechanism of regression. Accordingly, a discussion of the classical psychoanalytic formulations regarding these disturbances will form a basic model for our later discussions of the dynamics of regression in societies.

Acute hallucinatory psychoses are distinguished from the other psychotic states by their sudden onset following severe traumata, their dramatic and relatively short-lived symptoms, and by their occurrence in otherwise normal individuals. Acute psychotic symptoms constitute a typical human response to catastrophic, unpredictable stresses such as natural disasters or war. Acute hallucinatory psychosis, unlike virtually all other psychoses, runs a course
measurable in days or weeks and often subsides spontaneously, with no other treatment than sedation and rest being necessary or effective. An individual suffering from such a condition is, nonetheless, manifestly crazy; typically, what he says and his inappropriate reactions to people around him indicate his involvement in a powerful system of patently dereistic fantasies. Of all mental disorders, the symptoms of a.h.p. alone resemble to some extent popular notions of lunatic behavior. In addition to his bizarre talk, the a.h.p. may show inappropriate affect, act out violently, or become unaccountably withdrawn and impassive.

Since current environmental stress or trauma is its principal precipitant, we see in a.h.p. psychic defense mechanisms largely uncontaminated by possible genetic defects, a long history of predisposing traumata, or toxic distortions of neural function. More importantly, evidence from dream—and sensory—deprivation experiments indicates that these stresses can induce acute psychotic states in virtually all otherwise normal individuals. The psychic mechanisms of a.h.p., like the analogous mechanisms of the dream, are not the property of a few abnormal people, but are typical responses of normal people when exposed to prolonged severe psychological stress.

An acute psychotic episode may be defined as a reaction to a serious environmental trauma in which the
individual, withdrawing from reality, produces a characteristic sequence of fantasies, whose content is dictated largely by the material and conflicts of his early psychological development. At some point in its elaboration, this system of fantasies takes on the characteristics of a successful defense against the environmental trauma and the individual's condition appears to stabilize, with a marked reduction in felt and observable psychic anguish. Typically, there is a strong correlation between the degree of involvement in the elaboration of these fantasies, the estrangement from reality, and the depth of regression as determined by the loss of adult functioning.

In rejecting reality, the psychotic renounces the possibility of easing his psychic conflict by coping with whatever part of the real world threatens him; by hallucinating, he replaces that threatening world with another world that offers superior prospects of conflict-reduction. The dynamic of this movement from reality-directed thinking to fantasy I have discussed previously in relation to both dreams and the projective process; but it has not been possible previously to define precisely the decisive role that fantasy-formation plays in these autoplastic, regressive solutions to conflicts. For in withdrawing from reality into fantasy, "The place of the real objects, from whom the person turns in disappointment, is taken over by fantasy figures representing the objects of childhood." Fantasies
so constructed out of infantile experiences offer satisfaction not only because they allow drive-release in the manner of dreams but also because they recreate infantile experiences of dependent nurturing. Where these resurrected experiences are fraught with conflict, as is frequently the case, regression toward them simultaneously reinforces the flight from reality and promotes contact with previously-repressed, unresolved conflict. Anyone, however adequate his current functioning, is to some degree latently psychotic; under stress, everyone becomes psychotic in his own way.

The wish-fulfilling function of many psychotic fantasies manifests itself as unambiguously as does the wish-fulfillment of children's dreams. For instance, an amputee may develop a psychosis in which he denies that his leg has been cut off; a newly-delivered mother may hallucinate her unwanted infant out of existence; a widow may resurrect her recently deceased spouse in hallucination. Just as an undisguised wish-fulfillment dream implicitly denies reality, these hallucinations proceed, not by repressing a threatening drive-derivative in the manner of a neurotic symptom or a normally disguised dream, but by denying consciousness to the unpleasant reality which would prevent fulfillment of the wish. Breaking in this decisive way with reality, the psychotic "sinks back into the state of hallucinatory wish-fulfillment in which he lived before acquiring the
capacity for reality testing."

The psychotic's break with reality represents, functionally, a regression away from reality-competent functioning. Fantasies typical of this strictly regressive psychotic phase all have a characteristic feel. The patient may imagine that the world is coming to an end, or he may assert that the world and his experience of it is monotonous, empty, dead. He may feel cut-off from his own body or experience his body as distorted in shape, size, or configuration. Feelings of grandeur, the bizarre leaps and discontinuities of schizophrenic thinking, the negative passivity called hebrephenia, and, finally, catatonic withdrawal are further psychotic symptoms with a regressive thrust. Only the least-regressed symptom in this group, the world-destruction fantasies, produces permanent, shareable fantasy material.

If the regression that produces the psychosis continued indefinitely, the psychotic would ultimately become catatonic. In brief psychotic episodes, the regressive phase rapidly runs its course and is succeeded by a restitutitional phase, in which the ego attempts to restore its contact with reality. Whereas the symptomology and fantasies of the regressive phase strike the clinically-naive as abnormal and bizarre, accepted cultural analogues of restitutional symptoms and fantasies are easy to recognize. There is, in fact, no difference at all between the content
of many widely accepted religious dogmas and myths and the
content of the more prominent restitutinal symptoms of
psychosis. As a group, the restitutinal symptoms of acute,
psychotic states show both a more optimistic affective tone
and a more permanent and effectual interest in real objects
than do regressive-phase symptoms. Representative restitut-
ional symptoms include world-reconstruction fantasies,
which

... consist either of the delusion
that the patient himself has the task of
saving the world, and, perhaps has been
chosen by God to bring order to the world
again, or simply of the feeling that some
kind of salvation or rebirth is to be
expected. The world does not seem to be
empty and meaningless any longer but in-
stead particularly rich and full of new
and indescribably grand meanings ... .
The patient may become subject to revela-
tions of all kinds ... [which are]
perceived as ecstatic by some patients,
as very frightening by others.64

Many hallucinations also fit the criteria of restitutinal
symptoms.

By far the most significant restitutinal psychotic
symptoms for our purposes, however, are the delusions.
Delusions resemble hallucination, in that they represent
primary-process contamination of perception, but unlike
hallucinations, delusions synthesize naive projection and
complex rationalization into a quasi-plausible system of
ideas. Whereas hallucinations are simply things seen which
are not in fact there, delusions, in Eric Berne's apt defi-
nition,
"are things that . . . [an individual] treats as though they were his own ideas, based on observation and judgment, whereas in reality they are ideas imposed on him by his parents, which are so ingrown that he thinks they are part of his Real Self."65

Delusions are by far the most complicated psychotic symptoms—perhaps the most complicated symptoms of any kind. They typically include elements of the repudiated reality, warded-off drive-derivatives, and complexly projected superego imperatives, all rationalized into a more-or-less self-consistent, pseudo-logical system. Although Freud's statement that delusions are caricatures of philosophic systems still seems valid, delusions in some instances more closely resemble a highly developed religion or the articulate worlds of imagination of art. Since a delusion usually has a pseudo-logical veneer, it can often be directly communicated—if not always easily understood.

Both the relation to reality and the patient's ego-functioning are at least in some ways more adequate in delusional psychosis than in any other type. The psychotic Dr. Schreber, on whose autobiography Freud based his famous and widely accepted theory of paranoid psychosis, was able to live and work outside of mental institutions for many years, despite his continued attachment to a patently crazy delusional system.66 Delusion is the steady state of psychotic process; a tightly encapsulated delusional system may present a less severe hindrance to adequate functioning
than many of the more severe neuroses. When effectively walled-off, the delusion can neither influence nor be influenced by reality, while its value as a solution to conflict is unimpaired. Delusions, in a word, contain far more reality than do other psychotic symptoms. Although the premises of a delusion usually derive from primary-process thinking, the delusion itself is a compromise between primary-process and realistic thinking. 67 Functionally, a delusion may be described as a circumscribed, focused area of partial regression contaminating the function of an otherwise adequate ego.

If it were not for its necessary attachment to human nervous tissue, an encapsulated delusion would be detachable from the person it serves, like the speech-balloons in a cartoon. A delusion can be shared between two or more individuals in two distinctly different ways—affectively and usually unconsciously, as in the folie a deux phenomenon; and verbally, in the manner of ordinary linguistic communication. Normally, delusional communications use both modes at once. Delusional communication must be sharply differentiated from the sharing of neurotic symptoms in the family and other human groups: such "interlocking defenses" depend on mutually reinforced secondary gain. 68 Only in shared psychosis do the recipients as well as the originators of the symptom receive direct reduction of unconscious conflict. Thus, for groups undergoing sufficiently intense conflict—provoking stress, delusional systems may be not only more communicable verbally but
more emotionally attractive as well. Unfortunately, the intensity of conflict at the core of delusional thinking requires intricate and elaborate defensive rationalization if its paradoxical goal of containing conflict of high intensity is to be attained. The paranoiac has often to convince himself by means of rigorous proofs that the sun is shining when it isn't or that death is really life, which requires considerable ingenuity. He must often use reason to block reality-testing, like a scholastic philosopher. Since only a small percentage of the general population possesses sufficient cleverness to bring off this intellectual balancing act, good projective solutions to conflict are hard to come by. Societies may cling to the really good delusional systems for hundreds of years, despite the accumulated pressures of historical reality, because no better solution can be found. Among religious projective systems with approximately the same psychodynamics, the intellectually more complex appear to have a distinct competitive advantage, as Christianity did over other mystery religions of the first century A.D. The analogous tendency for the intellectually more complex work of literature to acquire a more enduring social value has been noted above.

Not only individuals but also whole societies may go through the trauma-regression-projective restitution cycle, as anthropologists have realized since the latter part of the 19th century. This is not the place to review the
vast quantities of anthropological research on the so-called Ghost Dance phenomenon. The social pattern of these phenomena closely resembles the pattern of traumatic psychosis in individuals; since some such historical turmoil forms the background of many of the most productive literary eras, a review of this pattern will point the way toward an inclusion of historical change in the essentially a-historic dynamic models thus far discussed.

Among the traumata which induce social regression, may be found all of the accidents and disasters of human history. Ghost-dance phenomena have been most closely studied, however, in relatively small, weak, primitive cultures encountering larger, overwhelming encroachments from alien societies, as did American Indian cultures in the 19th century. When such a culture comes under the stress of attempting to cope with cross-cultural conflicts, a predictable pattern emerges. Under stress, any society will first attempt to defend itself by means of the secular, reality-directed techniques at its disposal. These failing, the society as a whole falls back on regressive modes of dealing with the anxiety and dissatisfaction engendered by the prolonged crisis. After an initial period of disorganization, during which secular-realistic modes of mastery may collapse almost totally, various group-hallucinatory solutions appear on the scene to offer a more or less temporary relief. If the
society’s fate is disintegration, then no projective restitution of equilibrium can long postpone disaster—usually it hastens the end by distracting attention from possible real remedies; if the society is passing through less catastrophic difficulties, the temporary hallucinatory restitution may become a permanent part of the society’s projective equipment.

The content of the projective solutions offered in a given society—whether successful or not—usually derive from four sources in varying proportions: reality, vestiges of previous projective systems, elements of the projective systems of alien cultures, and innovations specific to the new system. In their incorporation of real objects, their patently wish-fulfilling structure, and typically persecutory tendency, incipient projective systems bear close resemblance to delusions.

The shaman’s personal pathology fits the dynamics of this social process exactly. Since he is more sensitive than the average man to the anxieties provoked by cultural trauma, his regression begins earlier, goes closer to the dynamic core of his compatriots’ difficulties, and moves into the restitutional phase ahead of society at large. Thus, because of the natural phasing of his own creative process, he presents his projective, delusional solutions to what are now his own conflicts to others in his environment at the very moment, that is,
when the socially ambient regression begins to shift toward hallucinatory restitution. The shaman tells his audience what they want to hear before they consciously know what they want to hear, though not before they feel they want to hear it. His uncanny intuition and apparent prophetic power derive from his own psychotic process; often, like Rousseau articulating the concern of his nascent Romantic audience, he addresses an audience that will not even become visible until his message quickens it into life. When his timing is exact and his message well-received, the cure which the vatic personality offers his society becomes his own cure as well. The group's reinforcement of his delusional system maximizes its restitutinal, conflict-reducing function, so that he appears to possess a more than ordinary mastery of himself. Should this group reinforcement weaken or be absent altogether, the would-be vatic's compensation breaks down and he becomes just another paranoid schizophrenic. Indeed, the shaman usually looks like a paranoiac to an observer outside the cult in any case.

Psychodynamically, the literary shaman functions in very much the same way as any other. In primitive societies little or no distinction between literary and religious projective systems exists. Even in highly developed societies the distinction between the liter-
ary and the religious is a quite subtle one. A culture-
alien observer might regard Homer, Dante, or Milton as
religious vatics, just as he might regard Ezekiel,
Isaiah, and Jeremiah as great writers. The most we
might say is that in complex cultures the literary
vatic appeals to somewhat different subgroups and by
different means than does the religious. If we did not
know that no churches read their works out loud on
Sunday mornings, it would be hard to judge whether
Rousseau, Blake, and Yeats should be considered pro-
phets of a new religion or merely literary men. The
verbal skills of an Isaiah or a Jeremiah are scarcely
less impressive than these more recent writers', and
the prophetic vision of a Blake or Yeats is surely no
less religious in content.

Because the unique shareability of delusions de-
pends so heavily on the plausible intellectual structure
within which the delusion incorporates a tribe's conse-
quently experienced real objects and by means of which
it distorts the relationships between those objects into
a wish-fulfilling shape, that intellectual—and in large
measure verbal—structure takes on far greater functional
importance than in any other style of symptom-formation.
Even the opaque delusional systems of institutionalized
psychotics typically include huge undigested hunks of
moribund religions and defunct moral philosophies.72
The psychodynamic properties of delusions equip them to carry a huge freight of morality, speculation, and tribal lore; the necessity of communicating those special delusional systems by which human beings in groups share one another's perplexities puts greater emphasis still on verbal complexity. This increased complexity in turn strengthens the defensive adequacy of the projective system in exactly the same way that secondary revision furthers the dynamic purposes of dreams by making permissible their emergence into consciousness.

In aesthetic terms, this means that the objects of a projective system, their formal relationships with one another, and the specific words by which they are shared within human groups all have critical dynamic functions. Unless the solution proposed—the compromise formation arrived at—be sufficiently ingenious the conflict cannot be resolved and the pressures of drives and anxiety will go unrelieved. When men experience traumatic stresses—either from nature, alien culture, or the accumulation of specific difficulties within culture—they undergo conflicts about which they cannot dream effectually, or which their dreams cannot sufficiently resolve. They then call on a dreamer more ingenious than the ordinary man, a clever visionary, magician, prophet, seer, poet, or tale-teller who dreams them an answerable dream. Sometimes he devises a radically new
dream-solution; more frequently, he puts himself and his
cult in touch with some ancient, forgotten dream whose
structure of compromise can be adapted to the current
difficulties. Always though, the success of his creative
act depends equally on its execution as on its psycho-
dynamics, on what is visible, conscious, and articulate
as much as on what is repressed. Every projective-
process solution of conflict is potentially a work of
art and every work of art is actually a projective solu-
tion of conflicts felt in common between an artist and
his desired audience. Made articulate by the shaman's
craft, the dream walks abroad in daylight; it is trans-
formed from a half-forgotten, private flight of images
into a familiar token of social intercourse.

The creative process of the shamanistic innovator
is a regressive quest to restore contact with an Oedipal
or pre-Oedipal object world in response to potentially
overwhelming trauma. Where words are an important means
of sharing the fruits of this quest with the social group,
the concomitant myths of even a quite routine shaman-
izing look very much like literature to a Western European
or American observer. In advanced cultures, where
literature is sharply distinguished as an institution
from religion and magic, the basic rhythms of the crea-
tive process as well as the structure of the readers'
experience of works of literature retains the trauma-
regression-restitution sequence intrinsic to the pro-
jective-process.\textsuperscript{74} Kris's description of the intrapsy-
chic dimension of this process in the essay referred
to above is entirely consistent with more readily-
observable ethnographic data about vatic innovators.
It would appear from such evidence that the writer's
typical first achievement of his core vision as the out-
come of a late-adolescent, borderline psychotic identity-
crisis parallels the manner in which most other vatic
personalities come to their vocation.\textsuperscript{75} In the writer's
case, the basic vision achieved in this crisis is re-
turned to and modified in subsequent creative episodes,
although scholars can usually trace certain core themes
throughout the lifework of a particular author. When-
ever it occurs, the writer's first achievement of a
satisfactory projective solution to his private con-
flicts provides the foundation of his subsequent respon-
ses to the needs of potential audiences.

All vatic personalities produce their projective
solutions to conflict either in nocturnal dreams, or in
dreamlike states of possession, trance, or inspiration,
all of which closely resemble the waking dreams of psy-
chotics. The fundamental characteristics of these "offi-
cial" dreams of vatic personalities are exactly those
we would expect to find in a primordial, \textit{ur}–form of Ro-
mand: these official dreams identify the socially
experienced trauma with the ogre or villain,76 the shaman with a hero who triumphs over the ogre(s). The quest-plot itself is the dream's structural representation of the wish for the hero's victory:

The fundamental mechanism of the dream is the formation of a double, the dream image or the soul.

A dream recorded in Alor is one step advanced from this double formation - the double is duplicated.

'My familiar spirit and my soul went single file to Lemia, which is the dwelling place of an evil spirit. Then its soul followed up. My familiar has good eyes and legs: he ran. Thereupon my soul hid under a rock. It took a thorny weed and covered up the entrance. I was very much afraid.'

It should be noted that the man is really blind in one eye and crippled. Therefore, the soul, the likeness of the body, is the same. But a duplicate is formed, an idealized version of the individual. It tries to eliminate anxiety, although in this case it does not succeed. The medicine man now plays the role of this double soul or second double.77

This idealized version of the individual shaman is, of course, the hero of romance. All of the basic elements of romance are present in this shaman's dream: the evil spirit is the ogre or villain; since attempted defense against anxiety fails, the quest-plot is one of the unsuccessful type. More complicated shamanistic projections reproduce not only these elementary romance structures but the fine details of the genre as well.
The shaman's official dream, therefore, represents the missing link between the private dream and the shared projective system. The official dream puts the mechanisms of the dreamwork to social use, allowing the community to use defensively the responses of its most sensitive and inventive individuals to commonly-felt problems. In societies which have histories, the most significant function of the vatic personality comes to be the projection of new gods or new relationships to old ones in response to social change. The narrative artist's function, similarly, is the projection of new heroes, who are not at first distinguishable from gods, (Herakles is both) or the rejuvenation of old ones—a process particularly visible in Ulysses and, in a less competent way, The Centaur. A remarkably full history of Western literature could be written in terms of the great heroes alone. Figures like Akhilleus, Oedipus, Hamlet and Faust define the concerns of the ages that required them with an all-embracing comprehensiveness.

The incorporation of current social anxieties into the writer's vision admits a historical dimension into the psychodynamics of the imagination, just as the day residue admits contemporaneous events into the dream. The model of the projective process developed by Roheim and La Barre slights neither individual psychodynamics nor historical actuality; it allows us to look at the deepest
layers of unconscious fantasy in a literary work in a coherent perspective with the most trivial details of literary convention. It provides a framework within which the findings of psychoanalytic biographers of writers, critics of individual works, and students of broad trends in intellectual history can be compared, tested, and ultimately reconciled. No longer will historical scholars be able to object to psychoanalytic interpretations of specific details of narratives or images in poems on the grounds that such details are merely traditional, for literary traditions necessarily preserve the projective solutions of the past. Their persistence into the present as well as their uses in specific works are equally motivated. Although the work of La Barre and Roheim would appear to confirm Northrop Frye's view that literature is displaced myth, it puts us in a far better position to elucidate the mechanisms by which that shift has taken place. "Displacement" in any case was always the wrong word; the literary shaman continues to do the work of sacred culture by different means. Finally, we must judge Frye's attempt to disjoin literature from life unfortunate, for the trauma which provokes man to the grand projections of literature and religion is ultimately the trauma of the human condition itself, which those projections, though they can offer no remedy, must always reflect.
CHAPTER IV

In Place of a Conclusion

The aim of psychoanalytic criticism is to put forward testable hypotheses about literature and literary problems. The subject matter of psychoanalytic hypotheses may resemble that of traditional literary criticisms or it may have reference to purely technical matters in psychoanalytic theory, but, in either case, observation or experiment will finally decide the validity of psychoanalytic assertions about literature. Psychoanalytic criticism shares its empirical commitments not only with psychoanalysis proper, but, of course, with the natural and social sciences as well. This commitment makes the act of psychoanalytic literary interpretation far less self-enclosed that the interpretations of critics with different critical biases. The requirement of ultimate testability does not eliminate speculation, not even the most far-fetched, but it does imply that speculation which does not ultimately point toward observables has little value.

For the psychoanalytic critic, recent advances in the experimental study of psychoanalytic concepts make urgent the desirability of shaping his theorizing to empirical requirements. As the list of psychoanalytic hypotheses
which have experimental support grows, the analytic critic will be in a better position than ever before to distinguish between empty and potentially fruitful speculation. Despite the progress in experimental studies of psychoanalysis, it is unlikely that many psychoanalytic critics will have the opportunity (and few indeed have the requisite training in experimental design and statistics) to perform experimental tests on psychoanalytic hypotheses about literature. What analytic critics can do is to go about the practice of their craft in a way that will facilitate empirical checks, if and when they are ever performed.

The present chapter is intended as a concrete illustration of the kind of literary analysis appropriate to the different theoretical models described in Chapters I, II, and III. Like those earlier discussions, the essay that follows, on Ian Fleming's Casino Royale, is divided into two parts. The first part is an interpretation of the internal psychodynamics of the work on the assumption that the book can be viewed as a highly secondarily-revised dream. The second part focuses on what clues an investigator of the work might find to reveal who might share that dream and why. Many of the anxieties to which Fleming's book appeals are matters of common recollection about recent history. By pointing out how an investigation of
these literary cult-phenomena can move from the affective dynamics of individual works toward hypotheses about the drives and anxieties that weld a writer's appreciators into a cult, I hope to point out the appropriate directions for empirical research into these subjects.

1. The Work Itself

Psychoanalytic interpretations of a work of literature should be regarded as implicit propositions about reader-response to the work, which the verbal cues in the work largely control. The empirical reference of psychoanalytic interpretations cannot be the work itself, because the work itself cannot be observed or measured. The only propositions which observation of a literary text can test are pure descriptive propositions. The smallest unit upon which we can test interpretations of works of literature operationally is a system consisting of the work interacting with some reader, hypothetical or actual. Typically, the psychoanalytic critic's interpretations refer to the system of interaction between the work under scrutiny and his own personality. The act of interpretation which arises out of this interaction results in the critic's translating his own responses to the work—which began as unconscious responses but which he has made conscious in himself—into the vocabulary of psychodynamics. In doing this, the critic observes his responses to the work in much the same way that the analyst observes his responses to the
patient during the analytic hour. In both cases, the interpretations offered can be no better than the interpreter's contact with his own unconscious and facility with psychoanalytic theory. In both cases, the participant-observer process out of which psychoanalytic interpretations arise cannot also test those interpretations. These restrictions introduce an unavoidable tautology into the psychoanalytic critic's assertions. The psychoanalytic critic "knows," for instance, that castration anxiety has a function in a work of literature because the critic has learned to recognize the arousal of castration anxiety in himself, and he detects an increase of this anxiety in connection with his reading of the work. The circle of this tautology can only be broken by arduous experimental research. However plausible and ingenious an interpretation may be, we should place little confidence in it if it turned out, upon investigation, that few other readers shared a critic's response. A psychoanalytic essay on a work of literature is, in the present state of research funding, a check which cannot easily be cashed. Subject to these limitations, I offer below an interpretation of Casino Royale in the clinical shorthand common to most psychoanalytically-oriented observers.

Ian Fleming's Casino Royale is an unusually well-constructed spy story which exhibits many strongpoints of Fleming's craftsmanship at their best—remarkable economy of means, clarity of narration, and precise, well-informed
description of setting and locale. Unlike the more common run of spy tales, Fleming's book does not resort to bizarre plot-complexities (as do both Len Deighton and John Le Carre) to hold the reader's interest. Rather, Casino Royale has—despite its sophisticated facade—something of the naive power of folklore or myth, in both the authority with which it asserts its hero and the lucid inevitability of its plot. Part of Casino Royale power undoubtedly derives from its being the first, establishing book in the James Bond series; authors of series-novels typically devote extra energy and care to the first in a series, hoping to attract a sufficiently large audience to sustain the series.  

From a psychoanalytic point of view, the core fantasy of the book is easy to identify—it is, primarily, an Oedipal plot of the dragon-killing variety—but the plot's specific defenses against Oedipal material and the incorporation of intellectual and moral apologia into its structure result in more complexity than one might otherwise expect to find in such transparently commercialized Oedipal fantasy. Perhaps the most irrefutably Oedipal aspect of the book's plot is its unusually straightforward representation of castration-anxiety, as the following summary of the plot will show:
James Bond, a handsome, suave officer of the British Secret Service, has been selected to attempt to destroy a major Communist agent in France, Le Chiffre (the cipher). Le Chiffre, a fat, balding, red haired villain with perverse sexual appetites ("a flagellant"), has embezzled funds from the Communist-run union he heads to invest in a chain of brothels. When this investment goes sour, Le Chiffre attempts to recoup his losses in a high-stakes Baccarat game in the Casino at Royale. Bond, an expert gambler and "00" officer, signifying his license to kill in the line of duty, using Secret Service and CIA funds, plays against Le Chiffre and, after some unexpected complications, defeats him and wipes out his capital. This action, lovingly and expertly described by Fleming, takes up about half the book.

As Bond takes up his assignment in Royale, he learns that a second British operative, sent by M to assist Bond, is a woman. From this assignment of a woman assistant to Bond flows the second half of the book's plot, and much of its interest to the psychoanalytic observer. Bond is immediately attracted to the woman, Vesper Lynd, but he simultaneously disdains her as inferior, flighty, and unreliable. Shortly after Bond defeats Le Chiffre at Baccarat, Le Chiffre and his accomplices kidnap Vesper; when Bond pursues, he too is captured. This reverse sets up the most memorable scene in the book, in which Le Chiffre attempts
to coerce Bond into revealing the hiding-place of the forty-
million franc check for his winnings by beating Bond's tes-
ticles with a carpet-whip. Bond refuses, but before Le
Chiffre's maltreatment can destroy Bond's masculinity, a
SMERSH assassin slips into the room and kills Le Chiffre and
his men, unaccountably leaving both Bond and Vesper essen-
tially unharmed.

There follows, for Bond, a long period of recuperation
during which he worries a great deal about his possibly im-
paired sexual functioning and undergoes a curious—for so
unreflective a man—moral crisis (of which more below).
Upon his release from the hospital, Bond repairs to a pic-
turesque French seaside resort with Vesper where he begins
an affair with her, the enjoyment of which Vesper's growing
and mysterious emotional upset shortly mars. Bond's
anguished befuddlement at this situation does not last long.
After she and Bond have spent about a week together, Vesper
commits suicide. Her suicide note reveals (as the hardened
reader of spy fiction has long suspected) that she has been
a Russian agent all along. Bond's love for Vesper vanishes
when he reads this note; at the same time, his moral faith
in anti-Communism revives. The last words in the book are
Bond's: "The bitch is dead now."7

The plot-structure of Casino Royale is remarkable in
at least two respects: its representation, as if super-
imposed, of two or the more common varieties of Oedipal fantasy; and its subtle and ingenious fitting of moral and ideological argument to the core Oedipal fantasy. Part of the plot consists of the commonplace dragon-killing, Thesaurus and the Minotaur, motif, in which the hero searches out and kills some half-human ogre and afterwards enjoys a beautiful woman as his reward. Most of the other James Bond books have this plot, as does much other popular fiction. The second, far less common, motif has the hero straying from obedience to proper moral and cultural authority—sometimes personal, sometimes abstract—to fall in with a wicked, forbidden female whom he finally renounces in submitting to authority once again. This Prodigal Son version of Oedipal fantasy represents, genetically, a much more mature, moralized, and submissive stage of infantile fantasy than does the dragon-killing motif.8

The mixing of the two motifs here provides a rich soil for ambivalence and allows a tolerance of contradiction in the basic elements of the plot-structure which approximates the dream's indifference to logic. On M's orders, Bond pursues and destroys the villain; but the villain is finally killed by a SMERSH assassin, Bond's Communist equivalent, not by Bond himself. Bond both possesses and rejects Vesper, his reward for dragon-slaying. When Bond implicitly and unconsciously disobeys M, because of a personal attachment to Vesper, and attempts to rescue Vesper from her kidnappers,
his folly is punished by Le Chiffre. Bond's torture by Le Chiffre, while it does not destroy Bond's potency, does weaken his anti-Communist faith, so that he resolves to resign from the Service. In this state of open rebellion against M, Bond has the affair with Vesper, for which he is punished by her suicide and the subsequent exposure of her treason.

Every important character in the book has a double on the opposition side except Vesper, who is herself a double agent, two identities hidden beneath one mask. Because of this doubling, whose visible sign is the split between Communist and anti-Communist camps, actions in one place have effects in other places of the fable; and intentions directed toward one figure reap consequences in relation to other figures entirely. The total impression on the reader is that of an animistic universe in which result follows wish with the irrational compulsion of a fairytale. The chances are good that a male reader, regardless of his specific Oedipal fixations, will find much that he responds to among the multiple emotional potentials of the book's plot structure.

Psychoanalytic students of dreams or neurotic fantasies will recognize the splitting of major figures in Casino Royale as evidence of the operation of displacement. If the splitting of major figures is defensive, then we should expect to find a plausible underlying unity behind
the doubled figures of the plot. Perhaps the most compelling argument for such unity can be made for Bond's two fathers in the story, M and Le Chiffre. Although quite different personal characteristics are attributed to each of these two characters, there are overriding similarities in Bond's relationship to each.

Bond sees M as cold, remote, superior, and utterly authoritarian:

'It's very kind of you, sir, I'd like to do it. But I can't promise to win. The odds at baccarat are best after "trente et quarante"—evens except for the tiny "cagnotte"—but I might get a bad run against me and get cleaned out...'

Bond was stopped by the cold eyes, M knew all this already, knew the odds at baccarat as well as Bond. That was his job—knowing the odds at everything and knowing men...9

There is already more than a hint of the omnipotent Father of infantile fantasy in this portrait of M. M's unquestionable authority emerges shortly after, in the same chapter, when M quite casually contradicts Bond's wish to work unassisted on his assignment: "Bond would have preferred to work alone, but one didn't argue with M." Bond's relationship with M, in short, is essentially one of submission. M's power and influence extend throughout the book, hovering over Bond wherever he goes; it is he, far more than Bond, who ultimately triumphs at the end of the book.

Le Chiffre, during the course of the story, goes
through a transformation vis à vis Bond. At first, Le Chiffre seems no more imposing than any other morally corrupt villain of Romance, quite incapable of equalling the hero. As Bond closes with Le Chiffre for the combat at the gaming table, Le Chiffre's stature grows rapidly, so that Le Chiffre, not Bond, would win at cards but for a timely loan from Felix Leiter, a CIA agent. When Bond's pursuit of the kidnapped Vesper turns his apparent triumph into disaster, Le Chiffre's hidden strength becomes manifest. Like Alice in the rabbit-hole, Le Chiffre has, magically and insidiously, grown huge. Suddenly, by comparison, Bond has shrunk to nothing; he feels "puny and impotent." What follows makes unmistakable how Le Chiffre occupies the dark side of M's benevolence. The Father has now become a ferocious and implacable ogre:

He (Bond) was utterly a prisoner, naked and defenceless.
His buttocks and the underpart of his body protruded through the seat of the chair towards the floor...
He (Le Chiffre) looked Bond carefully, almost caressingly in the eyes. Then his wrist sprang suddenly upwards on his knee.
The result was startling.
Bond's whole body arched in an involuntary spasm. His face contracted in a soundless scream, and his lips drew right away from his teeth...He uttered a deep groan.
Le Chiffre waited for his eyes to open. 'You see, dear boy?' He smiled a soft, fat smile. 'Is the position quite clear not?'
'My dear boy'--Le Chiffre spoke like a
father... 'You are not equipped, my dear boy, to play games with adults...'"

Bond's relationship with Le Chiffre reduplicates his submission to M at the beginning of the book, but here Bond's submission is physical rather than symbolic. The metaphorical castration of M's peremptory manner with Bond here becomes the literal castration which Le Chiffre attempts to perform. It is this fate, implicit in Bond's always grudging and conflicted obedience, which he has striven all along to avoid but which, blindly as Oedipus, Bond has backed into. It is this horror which all of Bond's phallic amulets—the .25 caliber Beretta, the gun-metal cigarette case, the 4½ litre Bentley—are designed to ward off. This is the devastating wound which Bond thought he had already inflicted on Le Chiffre (To deprive Le Chiffre of his money is, of course, to castrate him.) and which now Bond—almost—suffers himself.

In proper fairytale fashion, Bond, as it turns out, both does and does not suffer castration. His testicles are very nearly beaten to a pulp by Le Chiffre, but Bond miraculously recovers. The stunning literalness of the castration scene here raises forcefully the question, what has Bond done or wished to deserve such treatment. In dreams and infantile fantasy, castration is exclusively the punishment for incestuous wish. The analogy between and Romance implies that any element of such a plot structure could be
different, just as any element of a dream could be different, if its author wanted it to be. Thus, the attempted castration of Bond cannot be accounted for by Le Chiffre's need to know the whereabouts of the forty-million franc check. Le Chiffre, in any case, only inflicts literally on Bond what Bond has already inflicted symbolically on Le Chiffre.

It is Vesper who provides the link between the two different Oedipal motifs in Casino Royale. The reader has been alerted from the first to her importance in the story by the lengthy descriptions of her appearance and actions which the narrator lavishes on her. Bond's emotional response to her is ambivalent from the first: he is "excited by her beauty" but also feels "a vague disquiet." Bond's feelings for Vesper rapidly take on the highly-charged quality of all transference relationships. After he has known her for half an hour, he feels "...a warmth of affection and understanding...that would have seemed impossible half an hour earlier." Bond's attraction continues to grow throughout the first half of the book, so that when Le Chiffre kidnaps Vesper, Bond quite automatically, and, for a secret service officer, illogically, follows Le Chiffre's car in an attempt to rescue Vesper. Thus it is because of his intense attraction to Vesper that Bond nearly loses his masculinity—and, psychodynamically speaking, rightly so.
Vesper and Bond are locked into two crucial, interrelated, and transparently Oedipal triangles. Because M has assigned her to Bond, she is in that sense M's woman, under his control, forbidden to Bond. Bond wants to sleep with Vesper, but only after the job is done. Since Vesper actually works for the Communists, she is symbolically Le Chiffre's woman; and he, in fact, controls her. When Bond falls in love with Vesper, he not only puts himself directly in conflict with Le Chiffre on the new, and more obviously Oedipal level of fighting over a woman, he also implicitly disobeys M too. Vesper is a double agent not only politically but psychodynamically as well. Her double function gives the intellectual-moral dimension of the romance access to the psychodynamic level and vice-versa.

As Bond recovers from his wounds, he feels more strongly attracted to Vesper than ever before. He feels his passion for Vesper is something unique, something distinct from his habitual rutting after other women. By making love to Vesper, Bond can also prove to himself that he hasn't really been castrated after all. The imagery with which Fleming renders Bond's worrying on this subject is a study in the ingenious exploitation of a single, obsessive theme. As Bond's involvement with Vesper grows, he suddenly has an attack of moral reservations about his work as a secret service officer. He begins to doubt that
the anti-Communist cause can justify his assassinations of enemy agents. His belief in a rigid, absolute separation between good anti-Communists and evil Communists weakens, and he announces to a friend his intention to resign.\textsuperscript{16}

It is in this state of rebellion against both the values of the anti-Communist cause and M's personal authority that Bond has his brief, troubled affair with Vesper Lynd. At this point in the narrative, Oedipal and ideological structures merge. Bond, in possessing Vesper, violates both political and psychological taboos at once. Undoubtedly most readers sense—as Bond does not—the reasons for Vesper's bizarre behavior before her suicide. The reader's experience of the book's final episode thus resembles to some extent the audience's experience of dramatic irony in the \textit{Oedipus Rex}. Bond's unawareness of Vesper's treason is the functional equivalent of Oedipus's ignorance of his paternity. Both represent the unconscious component of the Oedipus complex made visible in literary structure. But Bond, unlike his distant Greek literary relation, rejects self-knowledge when he learns Vesper's true identity. Instead, he renews his loyalty to M and the anti-Communist cause and vows a personal vendetta against SMERSH. Bond learns the traditional Oedipal lesson—to reject mother as a sexual object and to obey father—in an ideologically appropriate way. Here the emphasis falls more on Bond's rejection of Vesper than on this submission to M because
that rejection releases Bond from the castration-threat whose ultimate source was Vesper's treachery.

2. The Cultural Fit

Probably the most important function of the literary shaman is the timely creation of a hero. The figure of the hero, his imaginary powers and accomplishments, represents, as I argued in Chapter III, the literary shaman's dream-solution to the perplexities of his actual or desired clientele. If this hypothesis is useful, then a reading of the internal psychodynamics and structure of a work such as Casino Royale provides important clues to the possible sources of audience response to the work. Additional evidence must come from studies of the work's critical and popular reception, especially the affective dimension of that reception.

In the case of the James Bond books, both the dimensions and the background of audience response are matters of common knowledge and recent memory. Bond is certainly one of the best-known characters of recent popular fiction, which suggests that he somehow taps strong emotional responses in large numbers of people.

From the psychoanalytic point of view, then, the possible sources of this popular appeal derive from the hero's ability to relieve anxieties, symbolically, and to satisfy, vicariously, commonly unacknowledged desires. Bond undoubtedly qualifies well on both points. As anti-Communist
knight, his repeated victories over the Communist enemy not only reduce the anxiety of those who feel threatened by Communism but also affirms their own sense of the validity of anti-Communist values. Bond was created at a time when anti-Communist paranoia was particularly intense; Bond's popularity reached a peak about ten years later, when anti-Communism was far less intense in England and America, but still vividly remembered. Bond's ability to escape from risky situations in one piece and to survive seemingly innumerable devastating wounds is, psychodynamically, even more potently anxiety relieving than his ideological victories. Castration-anxiety has been shown to be a prominent part of the psychological makeup of large numbers of men. Any viable symbolic reduction of this anxiety would likely have wide appeal.

The wish-fulfilling aspects of Bond's character are perhaps even more significant than the anxiety-reducing. Bond is handsome, strong, decisive in the face of danger, and gets to live much as a wealthy man might. His 007 number, which indicates his permission to kill in the line of duty, gives him an apparently godlike power over life and death, allowing him to act out on a whim impulses which ordinary men must keep far from action, or, even, sometimes, conscious thought. Finally, Bond almost routinely seduces numerous beautiful women, few of whom cause him anything like as much trouble as Vesper, though almost all have a
touch of the fascination of forbidden fruit. All of Bond's women are subordinate to him, and thus prove far easier to handle than real women are found to be by ordinary men. Finally, Bond is said to be cold, ruthless, and cruel—qualities he rarely exhibits—which appeals to the commonplace male desire to deny feeling and to appear tough. Almost every facet of Bond's character is thus calculated to appeal to some characteristic male fantasy or vanity, with only enough imperfections left in the picture to make the appeal more binding.

By following up the antecedents and corollaries of the James Bond figure, it would be possible to write an unusually complete cultural history of one facet of the 1950's. Fleming's genius, in addition to the creation of the hero, undoubtedly consisted in his ability to connect the image of his hero to so many dominant wishes and anxieties of the time. The converse assertion, that the anxieties of the '50's created Bond, explains better the creations of Fleming's many imitators than the unequalled popularity and affective resonance of Bond. Far more important, still, than the tailoring of the outlines of the Bond-figure to fit the urgencies of group anxieties in the '50's is the persistent, multifaceted appeal to Oedipal fantasy which is the ultimate basis for the continuing popularity of this literary figure.
With the insights provided by the bi-dimensional analysis argued for in this essay, the critic can begin to explore in finer detail whatever aspects of the Bond figure most provoke his curiosity. The flexibility of the psychoanalytic approach advocated here allows the critic to move outward to the most superficial cultural phenomena associated with a work of literature without losing sight of the basic psychodynamic pattern of that work. This openness and flexibility gives the psychoanalytic approach a decided advantage over rival critical approaches. Psychoanalytic critics were the first to recognize the pervasive importance for literary study of such patterns as the Oedipus complex. The psychoanalytic approach remains better able than its competitors to deal with such unconscious material in literature, especially in its disguised forms. But the psychoanalytic method here proposed is not limited to the traditional psychoanalytic focus on the persistent shapes of affective fixation which emerge in literature; it can also show how the large scale facts and accidents of history and culture are assimilated to the basic fixations which works of literature embody. In its examination of the models of this assimilation, psychoanalytic criticism opens itself to information and insights from a multitude of related disciplines. The ultimate benefits for the study of literature will come, I believe, from the systematic way in which psychoanalytic criticism can synthesize
influences from literary and non-literary sources into a single, informing vision.


14. Modern physiological dream-research has supported certain correlaries of Freud's findings: see W. Dement and C. Fisher, "Experimental Interference with the Sleep Cycle," Canadian Psychiatric Association Journal, 8(1963) 400-405, which tends to confirm Freud's drive-release theory of dreams. See also the comments of Paul Kline on this and other empirical studies of Freud's dream-theory in Fact and Fantasy in Freudian Theory (London: Methuen, 1974).


17. Freud, Dreams, p. 177.


21. Freud, Dreams, pp. 296-

22. Freud, Dreams, p. 305.


27. Freud, Dreams, p. 318.

28. Freud's example in Dreams, pp. 325-6 is particularly instructive.


31. See Freud, Dreams, pp. 350-404. Freud's theory of sexual symbols has received striking confirmation from modern empirical research. See the discussion in Kline, Fact and Fantasy, pp. 208-226.

32. Freud, Dreams, p. 490.


34. In Freud: The Mind of the Moralist, p. 140.

36. See the references to this story and its numerous analogues in Iona and Peter Opie, The Classic Fairytales (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 134-152.

37. In what I regard as one of his few gaffes as an interpreter of Freudian thought, Rieff insists (in Freud, p. 136) that "the Freudian interpreter [of literature] tends to view plot with suspicion. The unformulated preference is for verbal analysis . . ." The present chapter will, I hope, serve to refute Rieff's assertion.


CHAPTER II. NOTES


3. Exceptions, in addition to the already-noted Zeus-Kronos myth, include the ending of Light in August and the opening sequence of a recent best seller, Dorothy Urnak's Law and Order. In recent popular narrative, especially in the cinema, explicit representations of castration have become more commonplace, as the representation of violence and sexuality has become more explicit, a development which fits basic Freudian assumptions about castration anxiety. See Irving Sarnoff, Testing Freudian Concepts (New York: Springer, 1971) pp. 162-181.

5. This outline of oral-sadistic fantasy derives from Abraham's paper cited above.

6. C. S. Lewis's *Screwtape Letters* might conceivably fit this definition of positive oral romance.


9. The classic psychoanalytic study of male fantasies about women, which includes anthropological and literary as well as clinical material is Wolfgang Lederer's *Fear of Women* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Janovich, 1968).

10. See Fenichel, pp. 79-80.

11. See, for many parallel examples, Lederer, pp. 35-60.


13. e.g., Kate Millet's assertions to this effect in *Sexual Politics* (New York: Random House, 1970).

14. For this reason, Lederer's objection (in *Fear*, pp. 214-5) that Matrist Earth-Mother cults show little evidence of penis envy in their myths and icons is idle. The pertinent question is,
whose collective fantasies do the myths and icons represent? If those of men, we should expect to find castration or devouring as predominant themes (as we actually do in many such cases: the Kybele cult); if of women, then imagery derived from penis envy might appear, as it does in the case of the immature male consorts of fertility goddesses, who may represent the phallus according to the symbolic equation baby = penis. The dismemberment of the young god would then function as a compromise formation between the unconscious interests of male and female cultists.

15. Or the eponymous hero of Portnoy's Complaint, a book which incidentally, shows the transformation of neurosis into Fate quite clearly.

16. In many Dragon-Killing stories, the dragon, beast, or villain may really represent the child-figure in the Oedipal triangle (since, in the iconography of Romance, ugliness usually stands for lustfulness). The dragon-slaying hero then represents the Father, and social authority generally.

17. This hole is, of course, a disembodied vagina dentata; other details in the story, such as the red-hot, contracting walls of the torture chamber, also suggest the vagina dentata motif. See Lederer, pp. 44-52 for related examples.


CHAPTER III. NOTES

1. I am using here not the specific doctrines of Ransom, Tate, et al but rather the diffuse academic dogma which their work inspired, the working assumptions of a teacher presenting a poem to freshmen, who would be put off by elaborate and nice historical scholarship. Among psychoanalytic critics, Norman Holland, in his Dynamics of Literary Response (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), appears to regard the literary work as largely self-enclosed—this, despite his emphasis on unconscious determinants of reader response. Simon O. Lesser's view, as explained in his Fiction and the Unconscious (New York: Vintage, 1959) has some resemblance to the model outlined in the present chapter.


4. I. A. Richards, Science and Poetry, cited in Smith and Parks' Great Critics (New York: Norton, 1932) p. 753. Richards notes the cognitive secondary gain of the magical view in a passage just below the one quoted: "It gave life a shape, a sharpness, and a coherence that no other means could so easily secure." What I later call a protective system would be equivalent to an organized system of pseudo-statements in Richards' terms.
5. Richards, in this passage and elsewhere, appears to lump together the meanings of 'magical' and 'religious.' See La Barre, p. 117n.

6. This aspect of Frye's thinking reflects Jung's influence. See, for instance, Joseph Campbell's *Hero With a Thousand Faces* (New York: Pantheon, 1949), the immediate source of Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*.


10. The idea of a projective system has been implicit in Freudian thought since the distinction between primary and secondary process thinking was first elaborated in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Two crucial Freudian precursors of the projective systems hypothesis can be found in *The Psycho-pathology of Everyday Life* trans. by Alan Tyson (New York: Norton, 1965), pp. 239-279; and *Totem and Taboo*, trans. by James Strachey, (New York: Norton, 1962) pp. 75-99.

11. Folklore, for instance, typically becomes literature of notably high quality when set down in writing: Grimm's fairytales.


16. Cognitive anthropologists disagree with this point, I am well aware. For a Freudian, the myths and folklore of a culture make up a large-scale dream-series (see Calvin Hall, *The Meaning of Dreams*), showing the unconscious preoccupations of that culture. This view does not exclude the possibility of elaborate and ingenious secondary revisions of the sort elucidated by Levi-Straus, but it does insist that cognitive motives cannot completely account for such structures. To a large extent, the structuralist and the psychoanalytic approaches operate on different levels of discourse, which makes it difficult to contrive decisive tests for deciding which theory is superior when they disagree.


18. If real objects become aesthetic only by virtue of specific psychological processes operating between artists and audiences, any real object can become aesthetic when it is incorporated into these processes, as Cubist art trouvée has reiterated.


21. Apparently on the basis of complex affective rapport with Greek culture, Nietzsche was able to anticipate intuitively—in *The Birth of Tragedy*, published in 1876—the findings of the laborious anthropological research of Jane Harrison and Gilbert Murray done more than three decades later.
22. In his New Apologists for Poetry (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963) p. 91. The essential point of disagreement between Krieger's position and the one advanced here has to do with his insistence that the activity of the poetic imagination is different in kind from the ordinary psychological activities involved in dreaming, daydreaming, or fantasy-making.

23. La Barre, pp. 387-432.

24. See, for example, Robert C. Elliott's Power of Satire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959) which equates the satirist with a magician exorcising moral evil from society with a curse. Elliott does not use the term shaman, however.

25. La Barre, p. 161.

26. Frazer is, of course, partly right in his insistence that magic is a primitive technology, but this can only be partly true at best, since if magic represented embryonic technology, it would change more rapidly and readily than it does. (See Sir James George Frazer, The Golden Bough (New York: Macmillan, 1951) pp. 12-55. Frazer's "public profession of magic" is, of course, Shamanism in one of its manifestations.

27. The progression from the vaguely-discriminated objects of magical projective systems to the more acutely delineated objects of religions reflects the change in object-discrimination in infantile development from pre-Oedipal to Oedipal phases. Affective and cognitive development are here intertwined. See La Barre, p. 112, and Peter H. Wolff, The Developmental Psychologies of Jean Piaget and Psychoanalysis (New York: International Universities Press, 1960).

28. See La Barre's bibliography of major studies of this figure, arranged by region, p. 189.

29. La Barre, pp. 162-164.


32. Projective-process solutions to conflict are psychotic because they endeavor to construct a substitute-reality rather than merely suppressing group awareness of unpleasant realities (which would be neurotic) or trying to change reality to make it more satisfactory (technology). See Freud's paper, "The Loss of Reality in Neurosis and Psychosis" in Collected Papers, V.2., pp. 277-282. The formulations in this short paper still provide the foundation of contemporary nosological differentiation between neurosis and psychosis.


34. For those who require multiple emotional comforts, technology cannot replace religion, magic, or other projective systems — though it does, in fact, replace some of the functions they purport to carry out. Thus religious and magical systems persist in technologically adequate societies despite the replacement of religion and magic by technology as a technique of coping with real problems. See La Barre, They Shall Take Up Serpents (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1962).

35. This correspondence takes on immense significance with the recognition that possession by or manipulation of more or less sharply-discriminated spirits is the sine quo non of shamanism in all societies in which this phenomenon has been studied. Y. S. M. Shirokogoroff, The Psychomental Complex of the Tungus (London: Kegan Paul, 1935), pp. 117-240.

36. Apology, 22 c.

characteristics which is best exemplified by the changes in sex actually occurring with the shamans of certain Mongolian tribes." Kris' discussion has influenced my treatment of inspiration throughout.

38. La Barre, p. 189.

39. La Barre, p. 106.

40. See Kris, loc. cit. I have in mind here, too, statements like those of Rilke concerning his ecstatic mental state when he was writing the Duino Elegies or Faulkner's "There are times when a writer is hot."

41. e.g., Joyce's oft-quoted remark that all he demanded of the reader was that he devote his life to studying Joyce's work.

42. Plato was the first literary critic to notice this phenomenon (in the Ion), and since then many others have discussed it. The Aristotelian concept of Katharsis clearly implies the operation of an atypical psychological process in the audience-member. Coleridge's "willing suspension," Eliseo Vivas "rapt intransitive attention" discussed in Creation and Discovery (New York: Noonday, 1955) pp. 132-133, the discussions of reader response in Stanley Fish's Self Consuming Artifact (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), and Norman Holland's Dynamics of Literary Response all reflect varying degrees of awareness of this phenomenon, to cite a few of many similar examples. Psychoanalytic theory--unlike most other theories of reader response--denies that this process can have epistemological authenticity because the audience member necessarily experiences the work of art in a psychological state opposed to reality testing, a state of regression. The psychoanalytic concept of regression makes possible a greater precision in the study of reader response than non-psychoanalytic theories can offer, permitting sharp discriminations in the depth of regression occurring in different aesthetic circumstances. Finally, the concept of regression brings reader response into relation with the inspired state of the poet, dreaming, neurotic symptoms, and other related phenomena.

44. As examples, one might point out the monomania-cal worshippers of a great writer—in Shakespeare's case we have the term bardolatry—or students of a minor writer who get completely immersed in his work: e.g., Howells scholars.

45. For basic psychoanalytic discussions of omnipotence of thought, see Freud's paper "Two Principles in Mental Functioning" in Collected Papers, IV; Sandor Ferenczi's "Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality" in Sex and Psychoanalysis (New York: Dover Books, 1960) pp. 181-203; and Fenichel, pp. 296-304.


47. Two obvious examples: Shelley's Defense and Coleridge's attempt to establish an independent mode of poetic cognition in the Biographia and elsewhere.

48. See La Barre on failed messiahs, pp. 613-635. The analogous case of the artist manque deserves more attention than it has received; the only important study is Rank's highly idiosyncratic Art and the Artist, excerpted in The Myth of the Birth of the Hero and Other Writings, ed. by Phillip Freund (New York: Vintage, 1959).

49. Assertions found in literary folklore—and too often heard in classrooms—that certain great writers were little-known in their own lifetimes must be examined with great care. For instance, Keats—whose self-serving epitaph has been echoed by many sad chapters in literary histories—was known to a circle of some hundreds of admirers in his own lifetime and within ten years of his death was one of the most widely-imitated poets in England. Keats, like most other great writers for whom such claims are made, was obscure only by comparison to the most popular writers of his age.

51. See La Barre, pp. 239-247 for one of many similar examples.

52. See Kris, op cit., pp. 291-318.

53. Eric Berne's elaboration of Freudian ego-psychology, Transactional Analysis, makes possible a more precise description of this paradoxical personality structure. In MTA jargon, the writer's child is highly confused (i.e., psychotic) but his Adult has good functioning, at least in literary areas.

54. La Barre, op. cit., p. 107. Note that La Barre's description could be applied to the Romantic poet virtually unchanged.

55. For instance, Ted Roethke's greenhouse poems, whose object-systems are pre-Oedipal and animistic in La Barre's sense of those terms. Pre-Oedipal object-systems are characterized by vaguely-defined, impersonal spirits, presences, or powers; whereas, Oedipal object-systems have more sharply-defined, personal objects—gods, heroes, demigods, and so on. In general, the use of plot in a literary work implies an Oedipal level of object-discrimination; its absence, pre-Oedipal object-discrimination.

56. La Barre, pp. 108-109.

57. See Erik Erikson, Childhood and Society, pp. 85-108.

58. Freud, Dreams, pp. 533-549.

59. Fenichel, p. 56.


61. My account here and throughout this section is based on Fenichel, p. 426 and passim.

62. Fenichel, p. 417. The "objects of childhood" are the ur-objects of later projective systems.
63. Fenichel, p. 426.

64. Fenichel, p. 425.


67. Structurally speaking, this realistic quality of delusional systems is due to the extensive participation of the superego in their formation. See Fenichel, p. 431.


69. For instance, Schreber's "disappearing" internal organs. Freud, Collected Papers, III, p. 396.


72. Schreber's belief in his emasculation closely resembles the beliefs and practices of certain extremist Christian cults, like the 19th-century Russian Skoptoz.


74. Norman Holland has pointed out the presence of a similar pattern in the reader's process of appreciation in his Dynamics of Literary Response (New York: Oxford, 1968). The trauma-regression-restitution pattern appears also in what Roheim calls the basic dream in his Gates of the Dream, pp. 1-133.

75. See La Barre, pp. 318-319. The decisive psychic crisis may, of course, occur after adolescence, as in the case of St. Paul.
76. On the dynamics of this paranoid reality-distortion, see Fenichel, p. 428.

CHAPTER IV. NOTES

1. I have in mind the advances noted by Kline, *op. cit.*


4. See Kline, pp. 106-7.

5. Other examples from recent series-fiction: Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* (1939), Ross MacDonald's *The Moving Target* (1949), and John Munro's *The Man Who Sold Death* (1967).


8. See Fenichel, pp. 91-101 and La Barre, pp. 100-101.


10. Note that both these adjectives are appropriate to phallic competition.


14. Fleming, p. 120.


