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THE MEDIATING FUNCTION OF FORM: A STRUCTURAL STUDY OF "TOM JONES", "BLEAK HOUSE", AND "ULYSSES."

RICE UNIVERSITY, PH.D., 1978
RICE UNIVERSITY

The Mediating Function of Form:  
A Structural Study of Tom Jones, Bleak House, and Ulysses

by

Christine van Boheemen-Saaf

A THESIS SUBMITTED  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis Director's Signature:

Houston, Texas  
April, 1978
Acknowledgments

I wish to thank Dr. Terrence Doody without whose kind and dedicated supervision this dissertation could not have been completed, and Dr. Wesley Morris whose thorough knowledge of the history of literary criticism helped me to clarify my thoughts.
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CHAPTER I

FORM AND MEDIATION
In examining Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Dickens' *Bleak House*, and James Joyce's *Ulysses*, I shall propose a theory of the generic modality of the novel. The theory itself consists of two parts. First, that the formal function of the novel is to mediate between opposing categories in an attempt to suggest the possibility of totality without division. The specific form this function takes in *Tom Jones*, *Bleak House*, and *Ulysses* is that of a return to origin. Secondly, that in the course of the last two hundred years the locus of mediation has changed from plot to other devices, in step with the decrease in credence given to the Judaeo-Christian worldview.

While this discussion will be concerned with the relationship of society and fiction, its approach will be different from the tradition of Anglo-American scholarship of the novel. Instead of asking what aspects of contemporaneous social organization influence literature, as for instance Ian Watt does in *The Rise of the Novel*, we shall be concerned with the question: What function does fiction have for society? Rather than a concern with purely sociological data, the latter approach tends towards psychology and psychohistory; and instead of pointing to a direct causative effect of society upon fiction, the question of function brings out the mutual interdependence of fiction, society, and what I shall call "ideology."²

In fact the intellectual outlook informing this thesis is that of French structuralism. In respect to the
relationship of novel and society the point of view of this discussion is similar to that of Pierre Macherey's theory of fiction in Pour une Théorie de la Production Littéraire. Macherey points out that the central critical question to ask of a work of literature ought to be: What kind of necessity does it embody? Or: What gives it its "reality"? He concludes his essay "L'Analyse Littéraire, Tombeau des Structures" with an explanation of the "structure" of a work of literature. This explanation is important here because it clarifies what is meant in this argument by a "structural" approach towards the function of the novel. According to Macherey the structure of fiction resides, paradoxically, outside the work itself. It is the ideology shared by author and reader, that complex of thought, those assumptions which seem so self-evident that they are never articulated. It is this ideology which gives a work of literature its sense of "reality."

Before we can begin to discuss how ideology gives form to the work of literature, I must first explain how I understand the function of ideology for society. An ideology is a way of thinking, a belief, myth, or religion which is structured in such a way that it breaches the discontinuity of human life. The fact is that each human being is separated at birth from the previous generation. The moment of birth is the moment of taking on individuality and of separation from the mother. Of one's "identity" before birth or after death a human being can have no knowledge. This lends an intrinsic uncertainty to human life. It is,
therefore, a basic human need to come to terms with this lack, this absence at the center of human existence. The act of coming to terms with this fundamental problem can take many forms. We may accept some sort of explanation or revelation of those things which are of necessity concealed in darkness, or one may search for a way of suspending individuality and of returning to the other. In fact, as Géza Róheim and others have maintained, the supreme threat against which humanity has evolved culture is that of "object loss," the acute realization of being "left alone in the dark." Thus not only is the individual confronted with this desire for totality, a society as a whole has the need for an ideology. The discontinuity of human life affects society too. Each new generation is confronted with an inexplicable heritage of the past which entails the need to account, for instance, for the existence of poverty and evil. It is the characteristic quality of such well-known ideologies as Judaeo-Christianity, Marxism, Freudianism, etc., to account for the blind spots in human knowledge, and to make life coherent and sensible for their believers, in explaining away what is felt as a lack. The function of an ideology, therefore, is to impart a suggestion of wholeness, unity or totality which is lacking in unmediated reality. An ideology transforms the beginning of history or human life which is always flawed, into an origin, a perfect Eden.

It is precisely because ideologies provide life with
a sense of totality that they are impossible to refute. Not only are they hard to refute, they are often hard to detect, especially in oneself or one's own society. Since an ideology is the unarticulated matrix of thought, it only calls attention to itself when confronted with an alien conception of reality. Therefore, if novels are structured according to an ideology, every novel must have a "blind spot," a central failure to make rational sense, best perceived by someone whose ideology is different. A structuralist approach, then, is directed towards discovering what the novel does not say, what it can leave unarticulated because it belongs to the ideology of the author and his audience. Just as the purpose of psychoanalytical enquiry is to discover a personal subconscious, the aim of a structural investigation of the novel is to come to an understanding of the function of the ideology in determining the form of the work of art.

This intention implies consequences with regard to critical method. We shall have to concentrate on the irregularities in the design instead of interpreting the beautifully ordered surface of literary texture. In psychoanalysis the personal subconscious of the patient can be made manifest to the analyst by means of the interpretation of dreams, the symptoms and the free associations of the patient. We lack these tools in our search for the ideology informing a work of literature. However, with regard to novels written some two hundred years ago there is the
advantage of the existence of differences in ideology brought about with the passage of time. Looking back at *Tom Jones*, published in 1749, we discover a number of points at which the novel seems contradictory or lacks sense, because the ideology which structures our thought is no longer that informing this eighteenth-century novel. Moreover, we can investigate these novels as if they were dreams or fantasies, and be alert for evidence of displacements and distortions, betraying the nature of the ideology. In the following analyses I shall apply what psychoanalysis has taught us about condensation and decomposition to the organization of narrative structure. In consequence of this critical method, the later chapters of this dissertation leave out of discussion much of the realistic and mimetic aspects which make these novels great works of literature. In fact, the analysis will leave unmentioned such achievements as Fielding's satire of human affectation, Dicken's humour, and Joyce's style and psychological penetration. It should be understood, however, that this is due to the limited scope of this critical enquiry, which fails to encompass these concerns. It is certainly not my intention to belittle the richness of these works of literature.

What I hope this discussion will make evident is that the psychological function of the novel is to give a local habitation and a name to ideology. In structuring human life according to the principles of an ideology, the novel
"proves" its viability. The final aim of the novel, therefore, is to give an impression of life without discontinuity, to suggest the possibility of true love, perfect happiness, a return to Eden, or of leading a rational human life without contingency. In fact I shall assume that the function of the novel is not dissimilar to that of myth. While fiction as a rule does not explain the world, it does lend a form of "reality" and historical objectivity to life structured according to the requirements for totality of an ideology.

The idea that the novel as literary form aspires to achieve a sense of wholeness absent in human life is not new. It has been put forward most notably by Georg Lukács in *The Theory of the Novel*, published in 1914. However, whereas to me it seems that discontinuity is inherent in human existence, to Lukács the unity lacking in modern life was at one time historical reality. The epoch which represents Lukács ideal of totality is that of ancient Greece, since its art and literature show a harmonious image of humanity. The sense of balance, proportion, and harmony expressed by ancient Greek art, testifies to the fact that human values and ideals were at that time not yet disproportionate to the possibilities of social organization. The literary form which expresses this totality is the epic. However, this totality was lost, and epic ceased to be a major form of literature. In the modern, debased world, it is the novel which "seeks, by giving form, to uncover and
construct the concealed totality of life." To Lukács the novel is the "epic of a world without God."

What is interesting to our purpose here is that Lukács points to the subject matter of the novel and shows that the novel's intention to uncover a concealed totality has been made concrete in the structure of the action:

The given structure of the object (i.e. the search, which is only a way of expressing the subject's recognition that neither objective life nor its relationship to the subject is spontaneously harmonious in itself) supplies an indication of the form-giving intention. All the fissures and rents which are inherent in the historical situation must be drawn into the form-giving process and cannot nor should be disguised by compositional means. Thus the fundamental form-determining intention of the novel is objectivised as the psychology of the novel's heroes: they are seekers.

For Lukács the action of the novel becomes the record of a search for authentic values in a world which no longer has the harmony and immediacy expressed in the ancient epic. This search for more authentic values is conducted by a character who is himself alienated from society, yet influenced by it, and whose very search is irremediably doomed. From this basic theme Lukács derives a typology of the novel, and distinguishes four kinds, based on the configuration of the differing relationships between self and world: 1) The novel of abstract idealism, e.g. Don Quijote, where the protagonist is simplifying the complexity of the world since his soul is too "narrow" in relation to reality; 2) The inverse situation of romantic disillusionment, where reality is not enough to satisfy the demands of the protagonist's
too "broad" soul, e.g. L'Education Sentimentale; 3) A synthesis of the earlier positions, where the education of the protagonist ends with the acceptance of a measure of limitation as in Wilhelm Meister; 4) Tolstoy's novels which are offered as possible precursors for a newly integrative literature approaching the totality of the epic. 10

My objection to Lukács' theory is primarily to his historical bias. He regards the discrepancy between the desires of the hero and his actual status in society as the reflection of inadequate social organization. He does not consider that the impetus of a search pattern in the novel may be owing to a more fundamental sense of lack, the metaphysical homesickness of mankind, which has given rise to the occurrence of the same search in the epic itself. The homecoming of the protagonist in Homer's Odyssey seems to imply above all that the basic motivation for the presence of a search pattern in fiction is not the search for values Lukács assumes, but a search for totality. It is the desire to bend the inevitably straight line of human life which stretches between birth and death with the unknown at either end, into a circle ending at its point of origin; it is the dream of a world without the great Unknown.

The novels which I shall discuss in the following chapters illustrate my hypothesis, in the same way as Lukács' examples illustrate his. The action found in Tom Jones, Bleak House, and Ulysses is not the search for the romantic idea of selfhood. It is more similar to the action of the
Odyssey, a return to a new totality, a quest for origin. This may take the form of finding a hidden consanguinity and a return home as it does in Tom Jones, or, as in Bleak House, the necessity to discover the identity of the parents before a new home can be found. These two possibilities have been disunited in Ulysses, where we find Stephen's search for a new father, and Bloom's return home. These novels are similar then in this respect, that they exemplify in their subject matter the preoccupation of the literary genre itself. The attempt to overcome the discontinuity between parents and children, the search for a new home (a place without strangers, hence without the Unknown), is the visible representation of the novel's search for totality. Like the Odyssey, the narratives under discussion here suggest the possibility of a return home. They try to prove the viability of epic unity in the modern world.

Though the mimetic differences between the Odyssey and these novels are too obvious to need elaboration, I think, nevertheless, that with regard to psychological function there is no fundamental difference between the novel and earlier narrative. Novels as well as epic and romance are forms of fiction. Though the novel is commonly distinguished from earlier forms of narrative because of its commitment to historical truth, the commitment to history is only partial because the novel remains fiction.\(^{11}\) The etymology of the noun "fiction" testifies to the age-old awareness of the special nature of narrative. Related to the Latin verb
fingere, "fiction" has the double meaning of "fashioning" and "feigning." However, much of the fascination of the novel resides in the illusion of historical actuality it provides. It is not surprising, therefore, that critics, no less than lay readers, should wish to discount the fictional elements of the novel, especially not because to a modern audience the distinction between "true" and "false" is extremely important. This is reflected in the fact that the word "craft" itself may nowadays carry overtones of deceit. Nevertheless the realization that the novel is make-believe is as old as the form itself. Bunyan in "The Author's Apology for his Book" which prefaces The Pilgrim's Progress, opposes the objection that his story is feigned with the statement that "Some men by feigning words as dark as mine, / Make truth to spangle, and its rays to shine."¹²

The supreme example of the long history of the recognition of the fabulous element in fiction is the figure of Don Quixote. Standing at the beginning of the course of the novel and towering majestically over its later development, this knight regarded the figure of the narrator as that of the master of enchantment. This word is derived from the Latin verb incantare, "to sing against," or "to cast a spell upon by chanting." While it would be convenient to modern scepticism to do so, it is impossible to attribute Don Quixote's fear to his madness; in this and other respects, the knight's idiosyncrasies are but an exaggeration of our own. Cervantes' recognition of the
charm and power of fiction, and his elaboration of it in the theme of his novel, plays on an anxiety we all share. With our modern self-consciousness, our allegiance to historical truth, and especially our belief in the supremacy of the rational ego, we distrust fabulation and fabrication; we resist being carried away or taken in. Some of us may even pride themselves on the fact that we have escaped the madness of Don Quixote, and have finally discarded all myths and illusions. What appeals to our modern sensibility is the novel's solidity of specification, the thick layer of fact. The irony is that if one lays too strong an emphasis on the historical truth of the novel and discounts the fabulous element, one deludes oneself in the same manner as Cervantes' knight—-one believes that fiction is real.

The distinction between the categories of fictive and real may seem to suggest a dilemma. Beyond this distinction, however, there is a realm of significance in which the "truth" of fiction lies in what Freud thought of as "psychical reality"; it is that level of meaning at which both a fairy tale and a novel by Henry James can have a comparable effect on the human psyche. It operates at a less conscious, less ego-dominated level of human psychology. As Jeffrey Mehlman points out, the word to indicate this kind of reality is conspicuously absent in Anglo-American criticism. Following his example, I shall use the word "fantasmatic" to indicate this psychological domain in which "the distinction true/false is irrelevant." It is
at this level that the epic narrative of the *Odyssey* is comparable with the story of Tom Jones; and it is with reference to this level of reality that I shall call the *Odyssey*, *Tom Jones*, *Bleak House*, and *Ulysses*, "romance" plots, plots which have as "fantasmatic" function the retrieval of the Unknown in a search for totality.\textsuperscript{14}

Since my point of view is so radically different from the tradition of scholarship which has outlined the history of the English novel, it seems necessary, in order to do justice to Anglo-American criticism, to state why I should have chosen a new approach. The reason is my feeling that criticism based on a sociological understanding of the novel, and founded on the assumption of the supremacy of the ego, with as literary touchstone the kind of realism practised in the late nineteenth century, is in fact tautological. In applying to the novel the same standards and assumptions which have given rise to the existence of the genre in the first place, we do not explain anything, we merely outline that the novel is what it \textit{is}.

In order to make this clearer I shall try to point out the problem in methodology which strikes me in Ian Watt's study of the origins of the novel.\textsuperscript{15} Because of its outstanding scholarly qualities this book is still the most widely accepted view of the origin of the novel in England. Its argument is that the novel, with its "formal realism," is so different from previous literature that one may speak of a discontinuity with earlier literature and the rise of
a new genre. Watt specifies the differences as: the use of real individuating names, e.g. Clarissa Harlowe instead of Mr. Badman; individual characters instead of types; the creation of new intrigues and plots; and the particularity of circumstance, time and place. Watt ascribes the sudden rise of a form of narrative fiction with these specific features at this particular point in time to the rise of the middle classes and the increasing spread of individualism and empiricism.

Watt is not alone in his assertion that the novel is a radically new form of writing fundamentally different and better than earlier forms of narrative such as dramatic poetry, medieval romance or saints' legends. While it may seem clear to us now that the plot of Pamela shows structural similarities to that of the Old English narrative poem Juliana, or that the structure of Tom Jones, as Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg have pointed out, shows similarities to Greek romance, 16 Walter Allen shares Ian Watt's realistic bias, and begins his survey of the English novel with an emphatic condemnation of those who have seen a relationship between the novel and earlier narrative:

"Literary historians, horrified it seems by the newness of the form, have commonly thought it necessary to provide the novel with a respectable antiquity, much as the genealogist fits out the parvenu with an impeccable family tree." 17

The central problem with these views on the origin of the novel is their insularity. If the rise of the middle
classes were the direct cause of the novel, the development of the genre in other countries ought to have shown the same pattern. This, however, is decidedly not the case. In *The Evolution of the French Novel 1641-1782*, E. Showalter points to the large body of Spanish and French fiction of the seventeenth century which arose in both countries without the occurrence of a bourgeois revolution. Indeed, a French novel might be the product of those same aristocratic circles which, in our common thinking on the subject, are related to the romance. There was, moreover, in the eighteenth century, as in the Middle Ages, a great "traffick" in literature between England and the continent, and Showalter suggests that the rise of the novel in England may owe a debt to French example. Thus Watt's notion that there is a direct relationship of cause and effect between the sociological changes affecting England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, on the one hand, and the rise of a "new" literary genre, on the other, is limited.

In fact the attempt to explain the origin of the novel in terms of social change raises more questions than it answers. While Harry Levin's statement that "realistic fiction has been a characteristic expression of bourgeois society" is a statement of fact, as is his observation that the novel's subject matter deals with contemporary social problems, it is also incontestably true that the Japanese narrative, *The Tale of Genji*, which has all the characteristics of a novel, is the literary product of an
aristocratic culture. Similarly, and nearer home, we find the example of the Russian novel. Tolstoy, Dostoevski, Turgenev, and Gogol wrote at a time when serfdom was still an accepted Russian institution. Though there was a small middle class, it seems impossible to relate the rise of the Russian novel to the rise of the bourgeoisie. It would seem more fruitful for critical enquiry, therefore, to regard the changes in social and literary organization as not directly dependent on each other. My suggestion in the course of this introduction will be that both literature and society are affected by the same underlying cause, a change in the psychohistory of the western world.

To my knowledge the only critic writing in the Anglo-American tradition of scholarship who speaks of the "fantsasmatic" function of the action of narrative is Frank Kermode in The Sense of an Ending. Since there are superficial similarities to his work in this argument, it seems necessary to outline the differences here. To Kermode the function of fictions or, more precisely, plots, is to provide a satisfying concord of beginning and end. Plots are images of the "grand temporal consonance" (p. 17), the central Judaeo-Christian myth of Western culture, which explains history from Genesis to Apocalypse. He cites Alkmaeon's observation "'that men die because they cannot join the beginning and the end: What they, the dying men can do is to imagine a significance for themselves in their unremembered but imaginable events'" (p. 4). What seems to
fascinate Kermode is the idea that death is the mother of beauty"; the image of the end prefaces his thought. Like the poetry of Wallace Stevens, his theory is grounded on the desire to come to terms with death: "They fear it, and as far as we can see have always done so; the End is a figure for their own deaths. (So, perhaps, are all ends in fiction, even if represented, as they are for example by Kenneth Burke, as cathartic discharges)" (p. 7).

Though my thesis is comparable to the ideas of The Sense of an Ending in that it ascribes the central impulse to fiction to a fundamental human need, the difference resides in the fact that I see the desire to create a concordance or consonance of beginning and end not as the result of a fear of death, but of a need for continuity and totality. When a novel typically ends, as Henry James mentions in his Preface to Roderick Hudson, with the dispensation of money, spouses, and offspring, there is in this end also an aspect of regeneration or recreation of the beginning.23 Drawing an analogy with Kermode's paradigmatic myth which is the linear development of time between Genesis and Revelation, my concept of fiction is best exemplified by the idea of Paradise Lost / Paradise Regained.

However, the fundamental contrast with Kermode occurs in our views on the distinction between myths and fictions. In fact Kermode is rather muddled on this point. He fails to indicate a formal or structural distinction between myths and fictions, but mentions that fiction shows a greater
skeptical adjustment to reality and frustrates our stereotypical expectations. Since the assumption of his theory and worldview is that a fundamental difference between myths and fictions exists, he suggests that this difference is psychological. Thus he draws a line of demarcation between myth which requires "absolute consent" and fiction which asks for "conditional assent" (p. 39), and implies that the reader of fiction or the true believer of a myth are consciously in control of the difference between these two types of assent. I cannot share Kermode's view that we deliberately contrive and control our fictions, but prefer the structuralist point of view of Northrop Frye, Macherey, Foucault, Lévi-Strauss and others, who maintain that fictions and myths structure our lives and thought, and are not subject to our conscious awareness. 24

The actions of Tom Jones, Bleak House, and Ulysses which describe the movement of a return to origin are to my thinking not consciously modelled on a mythical prototype. It is highly unlikely that Fielding and Dickens had the intention to let their novels conform to a Christian archetype--I leave out James Joyce since Ulysses was written as a comment on the ideology which inspired these earlier works. Yet Tom Jones and Bleak House derive their structure from the central ideology of Western culture. The successive steps and stages of the development of the action by means of which the authors steer their narratives towards a (re)union, fall within the pattern prescribed by Christian
tradition. This is so because an author, however he may try cannot escape being subject to the ideology of his culture—in fact, it is possible that his popularity depends on the successful embodiment of this ideology. If this is true the extreme popularity of Tom Jones may not be due entirely to its reputation for salaciousness, but may owe something to the fact that the novel confirmed the basic assumptions of its audience. Tom Jones was published by Andrew Miller in 1749, and was sold out before the day of publication; it subsequently went through four editions totalling ten thousand copies within one year. Bleak House enjoyed comparable acclaim. Dickens writes in a letter of 8 May 1852 to W. F. de Cerjat, discussing the reception of this novel, that it "was a most enormous success; all the prestige of Copperfield falling upon it, and raising its circulation above all my other books." Conversely, the outrage against Ulysses may not have been due entirely to its salaciousness, but may be owing, at least in part, to its comment on the Judaeo-Christian worldview.

The reason I have selected Tom Jones, Bleak House, and Ulysses is that they conform structurally to the mythic archetype of our tradition. The quest for totality, in principle, need not be limited in its formal expression. In our culture, however, the central myths have taken the form of a homecoming or the search for atonement with the parent. Notable is the fact that these two forms exist side by side. As Erich Auerbach has shown us, we should regard our narrative
tradition as ultimately deriving from a Hellenic and Hebraic root, just as Christianity is a blend of Jewish and Hellenic thought. Auerbach begins his study of the representation of reality with the comparison between two myths which have structured our literature more than any others: the homecoming of Odysseus, and Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac to maintain his relation with God the Father. The fantastmatic function of each of these myths is to mediate between known and unknown. Claude Lévi-Strauss has shown us that the structural features of Greek myth have the function of relating maternal or autochthonous origin to paternal descendence, mediating the discontinuity between earth and sky. On turning to the Hebraic part of our cultural heritage we notice that the desire for a return to origin is phrased exclusively in terms of atonement with the father. Both the Old and the New Testament are centered around the need to provide a way back to the unknown and unseen Father who lives in Heaven. The Old Testament deals with the history of a whole people (the favorite of its heavenly father), concentrating on its progress towards atonement; the New Testament relates the quest of one semi-divine individual representative for its people. Christ’s successive death and rebirth are, as Northrop Frye implies, a typical feature of the quest myth. It would seem, therefore, that in the Judaeo-Christian tradition the "Father" has represented both a state of origin and the Unknown which keeps mankind from reaching this blissful
state. Thus atonement with the father in Christian terms implies simultaneously a new Edenic state of origin and the neutralization of the central lack or absence affecting human existence. The concept of the mother is conspicuously absent in Christian dogma; though there is the Roman-Catholic cult of the Virgin, her function is only one of intercession and she does not symbolize the state of origin.

Thus our Western cultural tradition has given form to its desire for totality in a dual way. Its myths suggest either the possibility of a return home, or the viability of atonement with the father. In a later chapter of this thesis we shall have occasion to ask ourselves if in fact the notion of atonement with the father is not being supplanted by that of a homecoming. However, here I only want to point out that the concept of atonement with the father especially has modelled our thinking to a degree of which we may as yet not be fully aware. The example I should like to adduce is that of the theories of Sigmund Freud.

Living in Vienna around the turn of the century, Freud inherited the positivistic ideas which characterized the thought of his age. His lifework was to give a rational explanation for psychological ill-health. He found a cause in the child's inability to reconcile the sexual desire for the parent of the opposite sex with the fact that this desire, if given expression, would entail the wrath and retribution of the parent of the same sex. The correct way
to solve the problematics of this Oedipal triangle is, in the traditional American interpretation of Freud's writings, to move beyond the conflict by identification. For a boy this would mean the repression of the desire for the mother, and the identification with the father. What we should notice is the fact that the notion of coming to terms with the father is no less centrally important when it is in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. The difference is that it has become the hinge of mental health instead of salvation. More recent interpreters of Freud's theories have deemphasized the positive adaptive tone and the notion of progressive ego-development related to the successful repression of the Oedipal problem, and shown that this conflict extends beyond the limited context of the biological father to the perennial problem of a desire for totality. 28

The novels we shall study in this thesis have in common with Greek myth, the Bible, and Freud's theories, the fact that they represent the problems of a return to origin in terms of what Freud has called the "family romance." In all these narratives we find the triangular structure of fathers, mothers, and children. 29 If these myths and stories manage to suggest the viability of a return to origin, they do so by means of transformations in the relationships within this basic structural triangle. What we shall study in the following chapters is, first of all, how each novel individually manipulates this triangle for its own purposes of mediation, and secondly, the diachronic shift in emphasis
away from the Judaeo-Christian concept of atonement of the father as exemplified in Tom Jones, through a Romantic return to mother in Bleak House, to a new static conception of the triangle in Ulysses.

What lies behind this diachronic transformation is, it seems to me, a shift in ideology which has occurred in our culture, and which is our increasing allegiance to the order of history rather than that of myth. The order of history, which is the matrix of our contemporary thinking, has as fixed points the notion of linear time or chronicity and the concept of empirical, scientific and objective fact. What is "real" in the order of history is what actually happened. Another way of thinking about "reality" is possible, however. A description of this pre-modern way of thinking which is still the way in which rural and "primitive" societies in the non-industrial world apprehend themselves, may be found in Mircea Eliade's The Sacred and the Profane. He points out that the difference between a historical understanding of reality and a mythic understanding lies in the fact that in mythic thinking there is a direct participation of the individual or society with the surroundings. What falls within the circle of participation is experienced as "sacred." "The sacred is saturated with being. Sacred power means reality and at the same time enduringness and efficacy" (p. 12). Thus pre-modern man experiences his body, house, marriage, his labor, nature, and time as a participation in the sacred. What falls outside
the immediate circle of familiarity is regarded with deep fear and abhorrence as the chaos of the "profane." Our modern concept of linear time is felt as devoid of sacrality, whereas circular time with its periodical ritual recreation of the cosmogony is felt as sacred. Narrative in a society of this type is traditional, oral, and mythic.

What Eliade points out is of importance to our understanding of literature, though I think we should keep in mind that the difference between a pre-modern, "sacred" conception of reality, and a modern "profane" sense of reality is never found in an absolute way. It is impossible to draw a line separating the two, since one shades into the other. Within a modern society we may find traces of pre-modern thinking, and even in our own psychological make-up the two ways of thinking are mixed. Yet Eliade's distinction is useful because it helps, in general terms, to pinpoint the transformation which has taken place in our thought and literature over the last thousand years.

Eliade's contention that pre-modern man has a different conception of reality is, though couched in different terms, also the major thesis of D. W. Robertson, Jr.'s *A Preface to Chaucer.* When this study of medieval art and literature was published in 1962 it met with great resistance among scholars because its basic thesis, that the medieval way of looking at the world was fundamentally different from ours, in fact more "sacred," upset the realistic preconceptions with which medieval literature
had been approached. In anthropology it had long been recognized that in taking our own twentieth-century ideas as the yardstick by which to measure other cultures, we severely limit our perception of the subject, and stereotype what is merely different as "primitive"; in literary circles, however, earlier literature was still mostly read through modern glasses.

Robertson showed that to medieval man the non-material metaphysical universe—comparable to the abstract realm of Plato’s ideas—was the normative and intelligible reality. The everyday environment, the physical and contingent world of phenomena in which we live, was understood as the reflection, the shadow of metaphysical reality. Hence what was "real" to the medieval mind is precisely that which we now regard as intangible and speculative.

This different conception of what constitutes reality entails a difference in the relationship of literature and physical reality as we experience it. Because the natural world was regarded as the direct reflection of metaphysical reality, it participated in the overwhelming significance and meaning of the latter. Thus nature, in the widest sense of the word, was experienced as emphatically present with an impenetrable, inexhaustible, radiant yet interpretable abundance of meaning. In contrast to modern man who cannot relate his personal experience to nature, since nature is indifferent to him, to medieval man nature, since it participated in metaphysical reality, spoke of his deepest
self. The interpretation of nature in the widest sense of the word was therefore very important; it was an act of deepening contact with reality or "being." While we now think of interpretation as symbolic since we experience no real intrinsic identity between ourselves and the cosmos, at that time when "dissociation of sensibility" had not yet set in, interpretation of the world was an act of participation in reality. Thus the myths, epics, and plays of pre-modern society reflect the ways of the world in its general laws: they speak of what is considered to be the truth at all times. Pre-modern narrative manifests the ultimate structure of reality as it appears to the particular society to which the narrative belongs. Consequently the act of telling or listening to a story meant a participation in the ultimately real.

The best way to clarify this is by drawing a parallel to the way in which the Gospel has functioned in our society. The Word of God was once the absolute truth. Medieval Scholastic philosophy may be read as a footnote to the Bible. While to us the dispute about the number of angels who can find room on the tip of a needle--to take a well-known example--is meaningless or even ridiculous, to the Medieval Church this problem was real and therefore important. Similarly, interpretations of the Gospel such as sermons, shared in the significance which radiated from their central text. However, as we move to modern times, we notice that sermons, instead of amplifying the meaning found in the
Bible, try to lend meaning to the text. The nearer we come to our own days, for instance, the more physical or psychological explanations for miracles we find. The implication is that to us the Gospel has lost its intrinsic meaning, and makes sense, if at all, on a symbolic level, while in earlier times the Word was experienced as an immediate reality. With the rise of the order of history, we see the exclusion of wider and wider areas of life from the "ultimately real." Life becomes subdivided into different frames of reference.

Though critics seem to be fairly united in their opinion that at one time in the past there must have been a tempus aureus at which the dissociation of sensibility characterizing the order of history had not yet set in, opinions of precisely when and how this change took place vary greatly. While T. S. Eliot locates the split in reality around the seventeenth century, Lukács speaks of epic unity in ancient Greece, Foucault sees a number of changes in the relationship between culture and reality, and Erich Kahler sees a gradually increasing tendency for literature to concern itself with the mental instead of the physical, mirroring the increasingly profound split between mind and world. Since we cannot point to a certain date at which the change of consciousness began to take place, the best way to look at this matter, as it seems to me, is to see it as the gradually developing process of secularization. Since secularization progresses at different speeds
in different cultures—and, as Eliade tells us, even today among rural populations the feeling of the sanctity of nature occasionally survives—we need not point to a particular date as the breaking point in time.

Though we cannot set a date for the time when secularization began, it seems to be coeval with the rise of the novel. Instead of being the direct result of sociological changes, the novel is, like the shifts in contemporary society, a reflection of the changing ideology. If we approach the novel from this point of view, those characteristics of the form such as the use of real names, probability of action, psychological truth of characterization, etc., to which critics have pointed as the distinctive features of the form, seem devices to give narrative added significance, to make up for a loss of participation with the intrinsic "reality" of narrative. If this "reality" is no longer apparent, displacing a story to the level of contemporary reality, may make it easier for the reader to identify with the action. The rise of the novel then is no sudden occurrence; the process by which the novel separates itself from earlier forms of narrative such as romance and epic, in which meaning is still immanent in dramatic action, takes place in the course of centuries, in step with the change of ideology which it reflects.

Let us have a brief, very general look at the ways in which the novel differs from the types of narrative which precede it in our literary tradition. Epic and romance are
structured serially. Epic deals with a number of adventures within an overall framework, for example, *Beowulf*. The fabric of romance, as, for instance, Arthurian romance, is made up of a number of interrelated stories; it is a criss-cross interweaving of adventures which repeatedly break off, to be followed by another incident, and another again. There is no finality to this kind of narrative. C. S. Lewis has remarked that in reading romance the impression grows upon us that we are in the middle of a wide forest where quests and encounters go on wherever we look, that they were there before we looked, and will keep occurring after we are gone. We wander in the world of cyclical romance and experience it as a fabric of unbroken unity of infinite extension without centre. Though a generalization, it would seem possible to say that the structure of cyclical romance reflects the unbroken unity of being of the pre-modern world.

Gradually, however, this unity breaks apart. Myths are found in groups centering around a town or a person, e.g. the myths dealing with the city of Thebes, or the adventures of Ulysses. This organization is mirrored in medieval romance, which has, for instance, series of romances dealing with the "matter of Thebes," or with the search for the Holy Grail. Even tragic drama, related in subject matter to myth, was written and performed in series; whereas medieval drama took its serial form from the Christian Gospel it enacted. However, the concept of distinctive individuality,
of a separation of reality into discontinuous levels begins
to make itself felt in Renaissance thought. An example is
the separation of Church and State. This notion also seems
to influence narrative. We watch the first steps in the
direction of the unique and individually created plots of
the novel. Thus, in the fifteenth-century nouvelle, epi-
sodes become detached from the web of stories to which they
formerly adhered and stand complete in themselves. 34

Slowly prose narrative develops into an art form which
delimits itself to recounting one central action in the
Aristotelian sense of the word. Moll Flanders and Joseph
Andrews, though commonly considered novels, have great
affinities with the picaresque. Similarly, notwithstanding
Coleridge's high praise of the plot of Tom Jones, critics
have long been baffled by the interpolated tales of "The
King of the Gypsies" and "The Man of the Hill," which are
very tenuously related to the main action of the novel.
However, if we regard them from the perspective of the
cyclic nature of romance, we recognize that these "tales
within a tale" clarify the main action. Thus the history
of the "Man of the Hill" is an alternative or counterpoint to
that of Tom Jones. Lacking Tom's saving grace, generosity,
but sharing his lack of prudence, "The Man of the Hill"
becomes a misanthropic hermit. Along the same lines the
dispensation of justice among the gypsies is a touchstone
of the degree or type of justice Tom and Partridge have
experienced on the road to London. With regard to a lack
of unity in the early novels, we might also be struck by the coexistence of practical advice and religious reflection in Robinson Crusoe, the encyclopedic nature of Tristram Shandy, and the combination of narrative theory of literature in Tom Jones. If we, as readers, notice a lack of organic form in these novels, that is because we have lost the "double vision" by which different levels of reality are brought into one focus. This will become clearer in our later discussion of Tom Jones. Thus, if we take a long view, the process of the rise of the novel is that of the gradual crystallization of the organic unity of form which reflects the modern conception of the "reality" of only one level of experience, the physical.

Simultaneously with the detachment of the episode from the web of narrative we see the rise of "interpretation" or commentary, as an internal feature of narrative. Critics agree that at one time in the past narrative meaning resided in the action itself—what happened in the narrative re-enacted an important and recognizable aspect of what the audience experienced as sacred and real. If, however, the possibility of participation with the reality of narrative is lost as secularization proceeds, meaning must or may be provided in other ways. As Eugene Vinaver tells us: "What a good romance writer is expected to do, then, according to both Gottfried von Strassburg and Marie de France, is to reveal the meaning of the story (its meine), adding to it such embellishing thoughts as he considers appropriate;
by doing this he would raise his work to a level of distinction which no straightforward narration could ever reach."³⁷ Thus the narrator of romance becomes commentator, his explication of the story is an intellectual substitute for the loss of intrinsic meaning.³⁸ No longer does the "author" of narrative merely recount and recreate the traditional plot. He tries to write new sense into his matière by means of a moral or ethical application. In a very crude form we find this exemplified in Moll Flanders. Moll's change of heart and her eventual prosperity are tacked on to a long series of incidents which have no moral implications whatever. Yet, by tacking on a Christian moral, Defoe lends this narrative a certain retrospective significance, that of the cautionary tale.

However, Moll Flanders should not be compared to medieval romances; the novel lacks the courtly refinement with which this earlier type of literature interpreted bare action. Nevertheless, Moll Flanders has virtues all its own, and these point to another kind of displacement which has taken place with the rise of the order of history over that of myth, a displacement in subject matter. This novel describes low life. Though in classical literature low life was also presented, literature dealing with such material was understood to belong to the comic mode. Convention prescribed that it was to be presented as first-person narrative, to indicate the author's refusal to accept moral responsibility for the content of the work. Yet, in Moll
Flanders and other eighteenth-century novels we find first-person accounts of low life in which there is no reason to believe that their authors faked the serious moral intentions which they professed. What we have then, is a displacement in subject matter which makes a less aristocratic milieu and a more directly observed environment an acceptable feature of literature. The subject matter which characterizes both romance and novel is, of course, romantic love. Ironically so, because romantic love—which is, according to Denis de Rougemont, unknown to previous cultures—is itself a displacement of the participation in the sacred, and a debasement of the idea of divine love.39

We must also point to another development of this epoch in literary history, the introduction of the author in the modern sense of the word. Whereas in epics such as the Iliad or Beowulf, the sagas, folktales and fabliaux there is no single consciousness which deliberately originates the work of literature, in later romance the "teller of tales" becomes an author. No longer is the recreation of traditional plots the primary impulse of literature, no longer is the narrator "the instrument through which the tradition takes on a tangible shape as a performance."40 Now the preconditions are existent for the author in the later romantic and modern sense, who interprets, teaches, and tries to bring back out of his own experience something of that community with the primeval radiance of being in the shape of a work of literature. It is, as Robert Scholes
and Robert Kellogg point out, the very existence of the author which allows the irony which so appeals to us in the novel. In oral literature the tradition itself is the author as well as the story. "For the performer to encourage the intimacy of the audience at the expense of the story would amount to setting himself up as an author who uses the tradition merely to advance his own individually conceived ends." Accordingly, our modern way of looking at the novel from different aspects, and our custom of analyzing characterization, theme, or point of view as distinct features of the form, is itself a reflection of the very process of secularization which informs the novel.

Since the change in ideology which has given impulse to the rise of the novel is a gradual and still ongoing process, I hope my choice of Tom Jones (1749), Bleak House (1852), and Ulysses (1922), will allow us to chart the development of this process of secularization. We shall find this process reflected in the increasing difficulty with which the authors must struggle to complete their commitments as novelists, and lend their novels a suggestion of totality. With the progress of secularization the experience that a sense of totality is lacking in life itself becomes stronger, while the central myth of our culture and the plots modelled on them, are less and less able to command credence and participation. For Fielding, who imagines a world where the social order is still apprehended as the copy of the divine model as organized in the
"Great Chain of Being," the displacement of the archetypal plot of atonement with the father is relatively easy. Though this displacement creates some problems of adaptation to the requirements of probability which apply to the novel, neither Fielding nor his audience reads the novel with the disenchanted, sceptical eye which we cast on his work.

Approximately one hundred years later Dickens begins *Bleak House*. From the initial development of the action one gets the impression that Dickens must have thought of Mr. Jarndyce as a type of Allworthy, the eighteenth-century figure of the benevolent gentleman whose goodness is a displacement of divine providence. However, as the novel develops we notice that the mere existence of a Jarndyce can no longer lend the plot a sense of totality. Dickens changes the return to origin which was a return to the (metaphysical) father in *Tom Jones*, to a return to biological origin, the mother and the secret of birth.

Whereas Dickens, notwithstanding the many problems with which he is faced in doing so, still wants to provide the reader with the suggestion of a totality at the end of the action of the novel, James Joyce deliberately frustrates the reader's expectations for totality deriving from narrative action. He includes in his novel the suggestion that the feeling of totality provided by literature is no more than a feat of form. Thus *Ulysses* reflects the extreme scepticism of the order to see how the movement of the action, whether
in myth or novel, can suggest a totality absent from un-
mediated life. Looking at the matter in an abstract way,
I shall argue in the following pages that the suggestion of
totality of the novel is dependent on the mediating func-
tion of the action. The overall psychological movement of
a complete novel is one of circularity. When we begin to
read a story we raise psychological tension. The suspense
of the story disrupts the stability and equilibrium of our
mood before the action began. In the process of reading, the
story evolves towards a resolution of tension in a new and
different situation of stability. Whether this is a
marriage, the discovery of the culprit, the adaptation to
reality, or the death of the protagonist, it is essential
that the situation at the end of the story recaptures and
resolves the tension inherent in the beginning. The end of
the action is the repetition of the beginning with a differ-
ence.\(^2\) Thus, while the reader may experience some agita-
tion in his identification with the reversals of fortune of
the characters in the story, he will probably end the reading
in a state of peace of mind. Though there are exceptions,
by way of generalization we may say that the emotional
effect of fiction is usually circular and cathartic.\(^3\) The
movement towards a discharge of the very emotion incited by
the beginning of the plot itself is a movement going back to
origin, to a state of wholeness without division. A love
story, for instance, the novel's most characteristic form,
mediates the exposition between two persons, sexes, families,
etc., in the union of marriage. The wedding at the end of the novel is not merely a social arrangement, it is also an atonement, a return to that state of undifferentiation before the novel—or life—began. Northrop Frye has termed the "mythos or narrative of fiction . . . a verbal imitation of ritual"; and the essential function of ritual is to let the participants enter the unified realm of the sacred.

As the example of a wedding implies, this effect is achieved by the mediation of a binary opposition in the course of the action itself. The prototypical action of the novel creates a fusion or synthesis between opposites. This fact has been widely recognized, and there are many critical theories which define the novel in terms of a paradigmatic set of opposites. A central factor in our understanding of action as mediation is our willingness and ability to see that on a "fantasmatic" level characters represent qualities and ideas. Literary personages can be what Claude Lévi-Strauss has called "things to think with." Freud and others have convincingly shown that to our subconscious people and objects may represent the repetition of a situation in our past. The connection between the real person and our subconscious apprehension of him is, in such a case, one of association. Similarly, we understand literary personages not only in their individuality, but also as standing for those qualities with which they are associated. What we shall find then in Tom Jones is that the action of the novel mediates the polar opposition in
connotation between Tom, who represents everyman, and Squire Allworthy, who represents his prototype in the hierarchy of the "Great Chain of Being," the Almighty.

A study of this mediating effect of narrative has been made by Claude Lévi-Strauss, though his study is concerned with the structure of myth, there is no essential difference in structure which would forbid our application of his theory to the novel; in fact, his ideas are very illuminating of what goes on in the plot of a novel such as Tom Jones, which is in structure still very close to the mythic archetype. Lévi-Strauss points out that the ultimate human problem to which myth addresses itself is that of the fundamental antinomies present in human thought. Beyond the problem of life and death, our thinking is riddled with such mutually exclusive but paired opposites as male and female, same and different, young and old, human and superhuman, etc. The typical action of myth "progresses from the awareness of oppositions toward their resolution." Its function is to mediate between these opposing categories, and thus to "provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction."

Very interesting is the actual narrative process by which mediation is achieved. Claude Lévi-Strauss's finding is that "we need only assume that two opposite terms with no intermediary always tend to be replaced by two equivalent terms which admit of a third one as a mediator; then one of the polar terms and the mediator become replaced by a new
triad, and so on. Thus we have a mediating structure of
the following type.\textsuperscript{49} This diagram should be read from left
to right and from top to bottom at the same time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Pair</th>
<th>First Triad</th>
<th>Second Triad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Herbivorous animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Carrion eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>animals (raven;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>coyote)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>Beasts of prey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warfare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Death

Here we should distinguish first of all the two categories
in the first column, which stand in inverted relationship
to each other, and between which the other terms of this
equation mediate. These mediators in the second and third
columns are characterized by their ambiguity—they can either
be looked at from different points of view, or they may have
a double function or identity. "Hunting," for instance, is
the infliction of death in service of the perpetuation of
life. So, in a sense, is "warfare." Thus we find in myths
fabulous monsters, incarnate gods, and virgin mothers,\textsuperscript{50}
in fairy tales loathly ladies, frog princes and cinderellas,
and, I may add, in the novel, trickster figures, twins,
doubles or sibling pairs, and married couples. The charac-
teristic function of these ambiguous characters is to mediate
the discontinuity between two polar terms; whether they
appear in myths or novels, the difference is not one of
function but of displacement. We will not find in a novel a messiah figure whose death and resurrection mediate the opposition between life and death. We do find characters like Esther Summerson whose repeated confrontation with death in the course of her redemptive quest is the displaced version of that theme.

The crucial issue of this type of structural mediation is that it only *seems* to provide a resolution of the contradiction inherent in the initial categories. Myth is, almost by definition, paradoxical. The peculiar "logic" with which myth narrows and bridges the abyss between life and death is contained in the process of narration (or reading). It is a feat of form only possible by virtue of our human capacity for symbolic thought, the capacity to use things as "things to think with." Since the mediation is contained in the form itself, it will not extend its fascination beyond the time in which the myth is spoken or the novel read, unless the ideology of the reader happens to be structured in the same way, in which case the fallacious logic of the narrative will go unperceived. Just like the incarnation of ritual, the incarnation by means of the word must be repeated over and over again. Hence we find the same myths told and retold in slightly different versions, and in literature the same detective story, western, or fairy tale in numerous versions. The reader, viewer, or listener may not be consciously aware of the psychological satisfaction he receives, nor apprehend the
nature of the message he picks up on a "fantasmatic" level.

Since we shall concern ourselves in the following pages with the form taken by the quest for totality in three novels, it is interesting that Leach's analysis of the book of Genesis and Lévi-Strauss's study of the Oedipus myth uncover identical structural features. Both myths are concerned with the polarity known/unknown, same/different, earth/sky. Both have monsters of half animal, half human dimensions as mediators, the sphinx and the serpent. With regard to the Oedipus myth Lévi-Strauss shows that the myth provides a "logical" tool for a society believing that mankind is autochthonous to assimilate the knowledge that children come from the union of man and woman. With regard to Genesis, Leach shows that the juxtaposition of Eve to Adam, and later the pairing of Cain and Abel, arise from the same impulse to explain or overcome the threat of incest (i.e. "born from same") of the cosmogony; both myths try to lay a connection encompassing the idea of an undifferentiated state of origin as well as the experiential state of beginning. Moreover, Lévi-Strauss points out that even Freud's positivistic explanation of the Oedipus complex functions according to the same principles as the two myths mentioned above: "Although the Freudian problem has ceased to be that of autochthony versus bisexual reproduction, it is still the problem of understanding how one can be born from two."51

Since myths from such different cultures and times, and even Freud's deliberately "unmythic" interpretation of them,
all follow the same structural pattern of mediating beginning and origin, it should not surprise us to find the identical structural pattern, displaced according to contemporary interpretations of it, in the novels under study.

However, this is not merely a study of structure, it is also a study of displacement. The suggestion of totality dependent on the mediation of form can only exist in the novel's subject matter, and subject matter is influenced by contemporary society and thought. Every novel is a fusion of the paradigmatical mythic structure and contemporary reality, ideology and history. Since it is impossible to separate these closely interwoven aspects from each other, we shall in the following pages try to trace the gradually shifting silhouette of this fusion, focussing on the basic structure of father, mother, and child. We shall find that the kind of mediation operating within this structure is that of the ideology informing the contemporary world.
CHAPTER II

TOM JONES
Much of our delight in reading Tom Jones stems from its description of eighteenth-century England. In reading the novel we cherish the illusion that we participate in English life before the advent of the Industrial Revolution. This suggestive power of the novel derives from its historical accuracy in describing the manners and morals of its society. To add specificity to his novel Fielding even included allusions to the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. In the speech of Squire Western and his sister we overhear the voices of another epoch, while the plot ensures that we get an extensive but accurate impression of contemporary manners, and gather specific information about, for instance, the ministration of justice at that time. However, saying this is, in fact, no more than pointing out that Tom Jones is a novel--its plot is displaced and reflects contemporary historical reality with accuracy and detail. What I should like to put central in the following discussion is the "fantasmatic" function of the plot, the fact that this story has a deeper, more mythic function. Underneath all its mimetic precision, it gives a local habitation and a name to the ideology of its author and its society. The narrative action of the story lends viability to their conception of a return to origin. In setting up two radically opposed categories, symbolically representative of God and man, and mediating the abyss which separates them through the development of the narrative action, the novel suggests the viability of a return to God. In fact, the mythic archetype which
informs it is that of the Fortunate Fall.

It may be difficult for us as modern readers to accept the fact that Fielding's outlook on life was different from our own. We tend to impose our own sense of reality on other people, times, and cultures. Yet, that there were great differences in eighteenth-century understanding of the world and ours is apparent in our failure to comprehend that our ancestors could keep slaves and colonize the East and West in perfect keeping with their conscience and religion. The cardinal difference between those times and ours would seem to be that we no longer think of ourselves as better, higher, or holier than others. In fact, what seems to have disappeared is the authority we used to derive from the Judaeo-Christian tradition, the certainty of being created in the image of God, and the knowledge of belonging to the "elect," the "chosen," or the "saved." In literary criticism we have isolated this earlier construction of reality as "The Great Chain of Being," or "The Elizabethan World View."¹

Because *Tom Jones* as a novel strikes us as "realistic," we do not readily think of its author as belonging intellectually to a different epoch. Yet Henry Fielding (1707-1754) is much closer to someone like Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) whose polyphonic music strikes us as very different from our own. There is in fact a parallel between their intellectual products. Bach's compositions were the apotheosis and summary of the musical tradition which
flowered in the preceding epoch. Just so Fielding's novel *Tom Jones* constitutes not merely, as we see it from our point of vantage, the advent of a new literary form, it is the crowning glory of the narrative tradition up to Fielding's time. In this novel Fielding tries to affirm the traditional hierarchical and patriarchal ethic of the "great Chain of Being," and to make the tradition of romance viable for the ideology of his own time. This is in contrast to Richardson, whose novels are the product of the Puritan, individualistic and rationalistic strain in the ethic of the age, which eventually displaced the other, more traditional way of thinking. Fielding was mainly concerned with maintaining a continuity with previous literature; this concern is evident, for instance, in the prefatory essays of *Tom Jones*, and his introduction to *Joseph Andrews*. He takes great pains to explain to his readers how his way of writing relates to other forms of literature such as epic and romance. His definition of the type of fiction he writes as "a comic epic poem in prose" indicates more than literary self-consciousness. For his audience, familiar with the classical distinction of literature into genres with their own conventions, it was an accurate description of the ways in which his narrative related to the authority of the tradition. Thus Fielding links himself deliberately to the long line of narrative tradition going back to ancient Greece, and his story embodies the worldview of the order of myth.
The contrast between Fielding's adherence to the tradition and Richardson's emphasis on the individual self may be related to the differences in social stature. Richardson, a printer, belonged to a social class which had everything to gain from the subversion of the patriarchal model of the "Great Chain of Being." Fielding's social background must have given him a radically opposite outlook. The "Great-grandson of an earl, son of a general, educated at Eton and (briefly) at the University of Leyden," Fielding was, especially in his formative years, embedded in the spiritual soil productive of a respect for the traditional hierarchies. His essentially Cavalier attitude is one of noblesse oblige, advocating the subordination of individual interests to the benefit of the existing social order. No wonder that Pamela should have incensed him. Not only is the rise of a maid to the rank of a Lady a subversion of the social order, the gratification of Pamela's vanity and the meretricious love between her and Squire B. trample orthodox Christian ideas about love. Above all, Pamela brushes aside traditional moral and religious conceptions of the insignificance of the individual. Like Clarissa, the novel implies that the purity of the individual is victorious over the hierarchical distinctions of the social order. This order is according to Judaeo-Christian thinking divinely ordained. In writing Shamela and Joseph Andrews, therefore, Fielding's aim may also have been to confirm the importance of the order of the "Great Chain of
Being," in an age of intensive change from a predominantly religious to a more secular awareness of the world.\textsuperscript{3}

This difference in worldliness is of importance with regard to characterization. Fielding's characters are notoriously flat compared to those Richardson presents. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that Fielding strove to create this latter type of character, or to berate him for his failure to achieve this goal. This very mistake was made by Samuel Johnson who preferred Richardson, "who knew how a watch was made"—to use the author's own words—over Fielding's type of realism which would merely "tell the hour by looking on the dial-plate."\textsuperscript{4} If one expects from Fielding the representation of the psychology of the human soul, one judges him by a yardstick scaled on the norm of the importance of the individual self, whereas Fielding's own literary practice is based on less rationalistic, more Aristotelian concepts of plot and characterization. Gerard Else, who annotates the Poetics, tells us: "Aristotle does not believe that literature exists for the display of character, anymore than life itself does."\textsuperscript{5} What Johnson and Richardson no longer apprehended is that to Fielding the Aristotelian action is semiotic in itself. To him the visible movement of the face of the clock is more significant than the way in which the mechanism of the clock operates. As long as nature and the world are meaningful in themselves, there is no need for the mind to penetrate behind the visible phenomena. Unlike Richardson, whose very choice of metaphor
speaks for the truth of my assertion, Fielding did not live in a Newtonian clock-work universe. His mental perspective, judging from the worldview implicit in the novel Tom Jones, was nearer to the traditional Ptolemaic world picture.

The suggestion made by the action of Tom Jones is that true identity lies in finding our place in the social hierarchy. The novel moves from biological origin, the physical birth from the mother, to the discovery of consanguinity with the patriarch Squire Allworthy. Though Bridget, Tom's mother is the character we would consider the true villain of the story since she fails to make her motherhood to Tom known, the novel itself does not blame her as an unnatural mother. This is because the type of origin given by the mother, biological origin, is not the true concept of origin in the world of the novel. True origin is the status one receives from the father. What is important in the story is not that Bridget proves to be the mother, but that Bridget is Allworthy's sister. Thus the central lack in this novel is that of the name of the father, and the return to origin in Tom Jones is the movement from biological to social identity. The really important relationship in this history is that to Allworthy, whose authority derives, by means of the analogy of the "Great Chain of Being," from the Almighty. The relationship to the mother is of as little importance as it is in the Christian myth.

What characterizes the worldview informed by the
structure of the "Great Chain of Being" is "double vision." The natural order and the metaphysical order are seen in one continuous metonymical frame of reference. Within that frame the natural order is analogous to the metaphysical order, a copy of it, and thus a model for it. Consequently, what is of this world, can be perceived as belonging simultaneously to the other, metaphysical world. It is with this essentially mystic point of view that Fielding saw the romance action of Tom Jones. As the following analysis will make clear, there is an analogy between the way in which Tom Jones finds his true destiny and the way in which the Latitudinarian Church to whose doctrines Fielding adhered, interprets the process of mediation between the human and the divine.

However, Fielding's "double vision also plays a part in the thematic structure of the novel. It is very apparent for instance in the play upon the word "fortune" which occurs more than one hundred and fifty times in the novel. The importance of the concept for the plot itself is obvious: Tom is a child of fortune; Tom needs money—that is, a fortune—to marry Sophia, and fortune in the sense of good luck to acquire it. The story itself hinges on fortunate coincidences. Thus "fortune" is used in two senses in the novel. In one sense "fortune" is material and means money, in another, fortune is spiritual and means destiny, or even, as the narrator implies, metaphysical design.

Though the novel uses the word "fortune" indiscriminately
for both signifieds, one may conclude from the narrator's comments that he condemns the purely materialistic conception of fortune. He presents, for instance, the goddess Fortuna in the most vulgar personification he can think of: "And thou, much plumper Dame, whom no airy Forms nor Phantoms of Imagination cloathe: whom the well-seasoned Beef, and Pudding richly stained with Plumbs delight. Thee I call; of whom in a Trekschuyte in some Dutch Canal the fat Ufrow Gelt [Du. "Money], impregnated by a jolly Merchant of Amsterdam, was delivered: in Grubstreet School didst thou suck in the Elements of thy Erudition" (XVIII, i). The outcome of the novel "proves" that it is possible to detach oneself from the whirl of Fortune's wheel by recognizing Divine Providence as the ultimate cause. When Tom finds his true fortune, Sophia, the meaning of the word begins to take on spiritual overtones. In retrospect those characters in the novel who only think of fortune as "money" or "luck" are shown up as lacking in insight, since the action of the novel ratifies the feasibility of a vision in which terrestrial affairs have a metaphysical significance. Thus Fielding's interpretation of Fortune is very similar to the explanation of the concept given by the medieval philosopher Boethius in The Consolation of Philosophy.

Fielding's "double vision" is also very apparent in his handling of the metaphor with which he presents the novel to the reader, that of eating. The title of Chapter I is "The Introduction to the Work, or Bill of Fare to the Feast."
The whole of Chapter I is an elaboration of this idea, and the author presents himself rather banteringly as the host who satisfies our physical appetites (the analogy is to delicacies such as Bologna ham). It is not until we come to the end of the novel, the wedding banquet of Tom and Sophia, that the reader realizes that the supper of which he has partaken is sacramental in nature, that the desire to satisfy his appetite—that is, his curiosity about the story—has led to his participation in what resembles ritual. Thus the metaphor of food is turned over, and proves to have a spiritual side as well as a purely material one. This use of the concept of eating is very similar to what one finds in the Mass, where the drinking of wine and the eating of bread are sacramental acts.

However, it also seems to me that one of the great critical problems of the novel is related mostly to Fielding's "double vision," his power to see in one single focus the physical and spiritual interpretations of such concepts as "fortune" and "food," for the major objection to the novel has been its rather loose morality. Tom's sexual adventures are taken too lightly. There is no proof of his reform, nor is he adequately punished, and the novel seems to condone his immorality. Yet Fielding himself had another opinion. In the "Dedication" to George Lyttleton we read: "From the Name of my Patron, indeed, I hope my Reader will be convinced, at his very Entrance on this work, that he will find in the whole course of it nothing prejudicial to the
Cause of Religion and Virtue; nothing inconsistent with the strictest Rules of Decency, nor which can offend even the chastest Eye in the Perusal." What we have then is a direct difference in opinion on the moral tone of the work between author and critics.

Yet Fielding is not ironically amoral. Later in the novel we read the narrator's thoughts on the difference between appetite and love. He distinguishes sharply between carnal appetite and love as a sacred consummation:

That what is commonly called Love, namely the Desire of satisfying a voracious Appetite with a certain Quantity of delicate white human Flesh, is by no means that Passion for which I here contend. This is indeed more properly Hunger; and as no Glutton is ashamed to apply the Word Love to his Appetite, and to say he loves such and such Dishes; so may the Lover of this kind, with equal Propriety say, he hungers after such and such Women.

Thirdly, I will grant, which I believe will be a most acceptable Concession, that this Love for which I am an advocate, though it satisfies itself in a much more delicate Manner, doth nevertheless seek its own Satisfaction as much as the grossest of all our Appetites.

And, lastly, That this Love, when it operates towards one of the different Sex, is very apt, towards its complete Gratification, to call in the Aid of that Hunger which I have mentioned above; and which it is so far from abating, that it heightens all its Delights to a Degree scarce imaginable by those who have never been susceptible of any other Emotions, than what have proceeded from Appetite alone (VI, i).

Thus, contrary to what one might expect, the narrator does not seem unaware of moral distinctions. However, the distinction he makes is not between licit and illicit sex, but between appetite and love. The conclusion we must draw, therefore, is that to the narrator Tom's adventures were inspired by love rather than appetite. This seems rather
tenuous, especially if one thinks of Tom's relationship with Lady Bellaston. Nevertheless, if we do not want to call Fielding a hypocrite, the only way in which we can explain this problem is in ascribing to Fielding a "double vision" in which Tom's actions have a significance which transcends their literal meaning; in believing that the symbolic implications of his story are more important and more "real" than the literal and displaced level of the narrative.

The "double vision" is also apparent in the persona of the narrator. We have in Tom Jones a narrator who can "see" more than his characters as well as his readers. He seems to have a very privileged insight into the way things are, both in his own design and in God's creation. This is evidenced by the narrator's self-assurance and the sustained comic tone. Even when the novel threatens to turn into tragedy when Tom is in prison in London, or when the reader becomes critical of Tom because of his involvement with Lady Bellaston, the note of control and authority in the narrator's voice reassures us. In fact, the narrator openly claims the authority of Providence for his use of coincidence in the plot: "here an Accident happened of a very extraordinary kind; one indeed of those strange Chances, whence very good and grave men have concluded that Providence often interposes in the Discovery of the most secret Villainy, in order to caution Men from quitting the Paths of Honesty, however warily they tread in those of Vice (XVIII, iii).
Though with our modern sensibility we find it hard not to suspect irony, Fielding speaks here, as in the following passage in a "straight" voice: "Notwithstanding the Sentiment of the Roman Satirist, which denies the Divinity of Fortune, and the Opinion of Senecato to the same purpose; Cicero, who was, I believe, a wiser Man than either of them, expressly holds the contrary; and certain it is, there are some Incidents in Life so very strange and unaccountable, that it seems to require more than human Skill and Foresight in producing them" (XIV, viii).

Fielding's faith in the intervention of Providence in terrestrial affairs even led him to write Examples of the Interposition of Providence in the Detection and Punishment of Murder, a collection of actual cases of coincidence explained as divine interference in human affairs. What we should postulate then, is that to the narrator himself, in his "double vision," the progress of Tom Jones towards good fortune constituted the confirmation and proof of his own metaphysical belief. If we, from our secular perspective, recognize the inconsistencies and paradoxical nature of this story, we owe this insight to the fact that for us Fielding's worldview has lost its meaning. What one must be careful to avoid, however, is the retrospective imposition of our own scepticism on the intentions of this Christian author. We should not ascribe to Fielding the "bad faith," hypocrisy, or irony characteristic of the modern writer who uses this type of romance plot. The mediating structure of the novel which
bridges the dichotomy between Tom and Allworthy creates, on a formal level, the paradoxical and mystical mediation between God and man in which Fielding believed. The narrative structure of the action provides its author with the opportunity to show that between the material and spiritual conceptions of eating, a reconciliation can indeed be found.

The question which this analysis of Tom Jones raises is that of the relationship of the author to his work. Unlike James Joyce who, modelling himself on his conception of the deity, wants to remain invisible behind his creation, Fielding begins his novel with the discussion of the author's task: the words "An Author" begin the book. Throughout the novel the author remains prominent and omniscient. In fact, it is clear from the terms in which he describes himself that he models his role as the puppetmaster of this metatheatrical on his understanding of the divine analogue. Unlike Thackeray, writing from a more secularized point of view and refusing responsibility for his omniscience, Fielding maintains absolute and benevolent control. Whereas Thackeray deserts his puppets and leaves final authority to society, Fielding regards himself as one of the "registers" of the "grand lottery of Time" (II, i), as "admitted behind the Scenes of this great Theatre of Nature" (Vii, i). He identifies his role as author with God, the Author of all, to the point that he wants to defend his literary Eden against the "satanic" intrusion of the critics as the metaphor of the following quote implies: "This Work may, indeed, be
considered as a great Creation of our own; and for a little Reptile of a Critic to presume to find fault. . . ." (X, i).

Most indicative is the fact that Fielding, in his role as author, issued the warning to his readers that their insight into the total design of his literary creation is of necessity limited. Just like the human being who has no insight into God's design, the reader is likely to misjudge the action of the novel: "First, then, we warn thee not to condemn any of the Incidents in this our History, as impertinent and foreign to our main Design, because thou dost not immediately conceive in what Manner such Incident may conduce to that Design" (X, i). Thus Fielding, as the narrator of Tom Jones, is the analogue of God, the author of Adam. The bibliocosm of the novel relates to its author as the macrocosm to the divinity. The relationship of the reader to the author is therefore analogous to the relationship of humankind to God. The reader of Tom Jones must be initiated into the workings of this creation: "For as I am, in reality, the Founder of a new Province of Writing, so I am at liberty to make what Laws I please therein. And these Laws, my Readers, whom I consider as my subjects, are bound to believe in and to obey. . . ." (II, i).

It should be evident that Fielding's novel is dependent on the "double vision" of its author, and on analogy with the hierarchy of the "Great Chain of Being," in more senses than one. In fact the centricity of the Ptolemaic universe seems to inform many aspects of the novel. Thus the problems we
as modern readers have in interpreting or accepting the novel are the result of the fact that we have a different, more sceptical and less inclusive concept of reality. This is most apparent in our problems with the ambivalence of Squire Allworthy's character. The plot requires that Allworthy first banish Tom from his sight and then later reverse this judgment and accept him as morally good. Allworthy excuses himself: "I am . . . ashamed of my past behaviour to him; but I was as ignorant of his Merit as of his Birth" (VIII, ix). The question rises, nevertheless, how could Allworthy be so ignorant if Fielding, throughout the novel pictures him as the personification of wisdom and compassion and keeps emphasizing the analogy between Allworthy and his divine prototype in the "Great Chain of Being," especially with regard to the two traditional attributes of the deity, mercy and justice: "For such was the Compassion which inhabited Mr. Allworthy's Mind, that nothing but the steel of Justice could ever subdue it" (III, vii). Fielding himself comments on Allworthy's sudden change of mind:

As the answer which Mrs. Miller made may lead us into fresh Matters, we will here stop to account for the visible Alteration in Mr. Allworthy's Mind, and the Abatement of his anger to Jones. Revolutions of this Kind, it is true, do frequently occur in Histories and dramatic writers, for no other reason than because the History or Play draws to a Conclu-
sion, and are justified by Authority of Authors; yet though we insist upon as much Authority as any Author whatever, we shall use this Power very sparingly, and never but when we are driven to it by Necessity, which we do not at present foresee will happen in this Work" (XVIII, iii).

Thus Fielding tries to gloss over Allworthy's change of mind,
and ascribes it to the letters from Thwackum and Square which are instrumental in letting Allworthy revise his earlier opinion of Jones. Fielding's comment, however, does not make Allworthy's character less dubious.

The ambiguity of Allworthy's character has given rise to two radically different interpretations of this figure. One view taken by a considerable number of critics is that Fielding was ironic in his presentation of the goodness of this character. On the other hand there are critics who maintain that though Allworthy is somewhat less than all-wise, it is the plot itself which requires him to give credence to the villains and send Tom away from Paradise Hall, "and the plot is designed to carry larger meaning." 

This critical stalemate seems unnecessary if we recall that the structure of the narrative equates Allworthy with the Almighty on a symbolic level. God can send Adam from Paradise after the "original sin," and is not accountable to human conceptions of justice. Allworthy, who sends Tom from Paradise Hall, and who is the Alpha and Omega of Tom's quest, is, however, a personage in a narrative, and therefore subject to the requirements of realistic human behaviour. The problem of ambiguity would seem to result then from the existence of a mythic structure underlying the narrative and the inadequate displacement of this structure by the author. At the level of myth a god can have contradictory attributes. He may be good and bad at the same time. Yet at the level of realistic narrative we are not prepared
to accept the coexistence of these mutually exclusive qualities in one person.

A similar problem is the plausibility of Tom's moral reform before his marriage to Sophia. Though Tom, towards the end of the novel, has uttered many professions, he has as yet shown only minimal proof of reform. He is accepted by Sophia in the belief that mere assimilation to her world will neutralize his undesired qualities. This is especially clear in the scene where Sophia, still hesitating to accept Tom in marriage, distrustful of his future constancy, seems convinced when Tom, after pointing to her reflection in a mirror, guarantees her: "Can the Man who shall be in Possession of these be inconstant? Impossible!" (XVIII, xii). Notwithstanding the long "middle" of the novel, and Tom's quest for prudence, it is the very sacrament of marriage itself which shall bring about the transformation of the protagonist. Tom does not really change; the marriage to the divine Sophia has the almost supernatural power of transforming Tom's willingness into change. Similarly, earlier in the novel we have seen that the recognition of Tom by Allworthy is perceived by Tom as a favour of which he is not worthy: "Alas, Sir, I have not been punished more than I have deserved; and it shall be the whole Business of my future Life to deserve the Happiness you now bestow on me . . . " (XVIII, x). We are faced here with another instance of inadequate displacement of the same mythic level. It is through the "grace" of the Lady, and
the "mercy" of the Almighty, rather than his own deserts, that everyman is deemed worthy of a return to Paradise Hall. In order to read this novel without losing some of our enjoyment because of the many inconsistencies and ambiguities, we shall have to perform an act of literary archeology. We must try to reconstruct the novel as it appears to eyes more entuned to the "double vision" of myth. In order to do this I shall in the following pages pay attention to the archetypal aspects of characterization as well as try to show in a more general way that the romance plot of this love story resembles in structure the mediating structure of myth as outlined by Claude Lévi-Strauss.

The structure of Tom Jones has teased the thought of many critics. Coleridge's remark "I think the Oedipus Tyrannus, the Alchemist, and Tom Jones, the three most perfect plots ever planned." has as often been contested as confirmed. Yet, that Fielding's narrative is in some sense or other symbolic is something on which many critics agree. Even Ian Watt who is partial to Richardson realizes that ". . . by a great variety of devices, of which the chapter headings are usually significant pointers, our attention is continually drawn to the fact that the ultimate cohesive force of the book resides not in the characters and their relationships, but in an intellectual and literary structure which has a considerable degree of autonomy." David
Goldknopf finds that "... the high degree of formalism in the plot of *Tom Jones*—balance, dichotomy, reciprocity—is part of the plot's meaning. It embodies the kind of sense which the author is trying to read into human existence. ..."¹⁵ John Preston agrees that "It will have to be in the shape of this action that we discern the shape of human behaviour."¹⁶ Finally, Martin Battestin is of the opinion that "Fielding organized his novel schematically, choosing his characters and shaping his plots so as to objectify an abstract moral theme which is the germ of his fiction."¹⁷

Though many critics have spoken of the symbolic qualities of Fielding's plot, the only analysis which tries to account for its unifying idea is that of R. S. Crane. In consists in

... the dynamic system of actions, extending throughout the novel, by which the divergent intentions and beliefs of a large number of persons of different characters and states of knowledge belonging to or somehow related to the neighbouring families of the Allworthys and the Westerns are made to co-operate, with the assistance of Fortune, first to bring Tom into an incomplete and precarious union, founded on an affinity of nature in spite of a disparity of status, with Allworthy and Sophia; then to separate him as completely as possible from them through actions that impel both of them, one after the other, to reverse their opinions of his character; and then, just as he seems about to fulfill the old prophecy that 'he was certainly born to be hanged,' to restore them unexpectedly to him in a more entire and stable union of both affection and fortune than he has known before.¹⁸

Crane points in a rather elaborate way to the basic shape of the action, which can, as it seems to me, be defined with more precision.
In order to do this I shall regard the characters of this novel not as people, but as signifiers. Fielding's deliberately two-dimensional characters seem to require this approach. Fielding's characterization bears great resemblance to the graphic illustration of an abstract concept as found in the then very popular practice of emblematic art. Indeed, the relationship between his own artistic process and the allegorical designs of the famous Hogarth is frequently pointed to by Fielding himself. In Tom Jones the author again and again helps the reader to interpret his intentions by referring to a specific Hogarth print which might illustrate a particular person or situation (I, xi; II, iii; III, vi; VI, iii; X, viii). Martin Battestin finds that Fielding's "emblemizing technique" is "one of the most distinctive resources of his art as a novelist," and can be compared to "the poet's device of personification." Even the names of the characters testify to the fact that what we should expect to be presented with in the novel is a spectacle of abstract values or concepts crossing the stage. Names such as Allworthy, Sophia, Thwackum, Square, and Parson Supple, are almost allegorical in purport.

In fact Fielding's literary technique is specifically directed towards representing the general rather than the specific. He regards each character through the lens of his general knowledge of human nature and disregards anything purely individual, following the Aristotelian principles
that character should reveal moral purpose, not individuality, and art should be an imitation of nature. These are principles which were still strictly adhered to by most of the Augustan literary critics and philosophers.  

21 Fielding himself declares in his Preface to Book VII that "It may seem easy enough to account for all this, by reflecting that the theatrical Stage is nothing more than a Representation, or as Aristotle calls it, an Imitation of what really exists. . . ." In Joseph Andrews, written before Tom Jones, Fielding explains his "new province" of writing. He assures the reader that his characters are not like those of some authors whose "heroes are of their own Creation, and their Brains the Chaos whence all their Materials are collected" (III, i).  

22 He insists that his characters are copied from Nature, and that a faithful copy of the general, characteristic qualities of human nature is preferable above unrepresentative fancies: "... is not such a Book as that which records the Achievements of the renowned Don Quixote, more worthy the Name of History than even Mariana's: for whereas the latter is confined to a particular Period of Time, and to a particular Nation; the former is the History of the World in general, at least that Part which is polished by Laws, Arts and Sciences; and of that from the time it was first published to this day; nay and forwards, as long as it shall so remain" (III, i). Thus Fielding's concepts of characterization and mimesis are rooted in the old hierarchical world order and hold that
the essence of the nature of man is unchangeable. In Tom Jones Fielding even appeals to the authority of nature to justify his kind of fiction: "Though as we have good Authority for all our Characters, no less indeed than the vast authentic Doomsday-Book of Nature, as is elsewhere hinted, our Labours have sufficient Title of the Name of History" (IX, i).

From this use of the word nature, it should be evident that to Fielding nature is still the "Grand Alternative" for Christian revelation as Basil Willey calls it; that in contrast to our modern attitude of indifference, to Fielding nature still manifests the sacred, it still exemplifies the working of eternal law. As Pope phrases it in An Essay on Criticism, I, 70-71: "Unerring Nature, still divinely bright, / One clear, unchanged, and universal light." Therefore characters "taken from life" imitate nature and embody nature's sacred laws. Hence it would seem to follow that Fielding's characters in their existence and their interaction make visible and manifest the truths of "being" rather than "existence." If we want to understand what this "truth" of the history of Tom Jones is, a formalistic approach overlooking the specific for the general would seem most appropriate.

Approaching Tom Jones from this point of view, the first thing we perceive is the striking symmetry and parallelism of the book. The key in which Tom Jones is composed is the systematic use of thesis and antithesis. It
is as if the doubleness of the identity of Tom, one apparent and one real, is reflected as in a chamber of mirrors and shapes even the minutest aspect of the novel. One moral position or point of view is set over against another, in a systematic contrasting and pairing off. We meet Thwackum and Square, Tom and Blifil. Molly Seagrim is morally and socially the reverse of Sophia. Squire Allworthy is paired off and contrasted with his double Squire Western. Partridge is to Tom what Mrs. Honour is to Sophia. Bridget Allworthy equals in social position Aunt Western. In town Lord Fellamar is to Sophia what Lady Bellaston is to Tom. We meet a Dr. Y. and a Dr. Z., and even Mr. Nightingale has a brother who is in all respects exactly his reverse. At the end of the book when the marriage of Tom and Sophia signals the conjunction of opposites Fielding pairs off all the characters with their deserved fortune or mate except for Blifil who is banished with an annuity of two hundred pounds sterling, lives two hundred miles from London, and saves two hundred pounds a year. 24

Not only is there symmetry in character, symmetry pervades all aspects of the novel. The narrative is, at times, controlled by the presentation of contrasting scenes. This is most evident in the alternation of scenes between Twackum and Square. The narrator divides his attention between them; his dramatization of the way in which these pedagogues educate their pupils and vie for the attention
of Allworthy gives the reader insight into their character, and it prepares for the central binary opposition which dominates the last half of the first part of the novel, that between Blifil and Tom. This contrast has its cause in the dual actions of Bridget at the beginning of the novel, which determine the shape of what follows. She fails to make Tom's parentage known, and she marries Captain Blifil. The rivalry between Thwackum and Square for the favours of Allworthy is comparable to Tom and Blifil's rivalry for the affections of both Allworthy and Sophia. Books III, IV, and V describe the differences in character of these young men. They show how Allworthy's high opinion of Tom falls lower and lower, while Sophia's opinion of him rises. This movement is directly inverse to what happens to Blifil. He is detested by Sophia with increasing vigour, while Allworthy is more and more impressed with the boy's good sense. Later in the novel we admire the symmetry and precision with which Fielding plots the almost farcical incidents at Upton. Here the novel changes its structural method from the contrasting of scene and character to the theme of pursuit. The characters follow one another to London. Once in London the radical of presentation is again a contrast. Fielding balances Tom's adventures with those of Sophia.

Finally, it is not surprising that the thematic tonality of the book is likewise one of contrast. The novel is dominated by the contrast between appearance and reality. Beyond Tom's dual identity this central theme dominates the
two meanings of the word "fortune" Fielding uses, as well as the play on the concepts of coincidence and design. Fielding's intention to laugh people out of their follies and vices is directed primarily at the vices of hypocrisy and deceit. He rewards honesty and openness in the novel. Another, related contrast is that of town and country. Fielding ridicules the affectation and pretense of the fashionable town. In the course of the action these dualities are resolved into unity, just as the marriage of male and female at the end of the narrative is a coincidentia oppositorum.

That the whole novel is pervaded by dialectics is not owing primarily to the fact that Fielding is a neoclassic author. In the following statement of the narrator one overhears an element of deliberate choice; he even suggests that his use of binary contrast as the principle of composition of the novel is something new, not to be found in earlier authors.

And here we shall of Necessity be led to open a new Vein of Knowledge, which, if it hath been discovered, hath not, to our Remembrance, been wrought on by any antient or modern writer. This Vein is no other than that of Contrast, which runs through all the works of the Creation, and may, probably, have a large Share in constituting in us the Idea of all Beauty, as well natural as artificial: For what demonstrates the Beauty and Excellence of any Thing, but its reverse? Thus the beauty of Day, and that of Summer, is set off by the Horrors of Night and Winter. And, I believe, if it was possible for a Man to have seen only the two former, he would have a very imperfect Idea of their Beauty (V, i).

In fact Fielding's "discovery" is not new, but very old. The mode of perception governing myth is that of binary
opposition. It seems to me, therefore, that Fielding, in writing the story of Tom Jones which has the plot structure of the traditional romance,\textsuperscript{27} was attracted to it because it shows, in displaced form, the binary structure of myth. He uses this mediating structure because it "proves" his own belief in the possibility of Tom's return to Paradise Hall.

This displacement of a mythic structure is apparent in \textit{Tom Jones} in the fact that we may discover in the contrasts governing the novel a central division into two categories, two different worlds of connotation, identifiable through metaphor with that of God and that of man. In the characters and their actions the novel sets up a contrast between the realm of order of "being," and the world of chaos or "existence." There is a binary opposition of the spirit of measure with its connotations of order, immutability, stability, coherence, and discipline on the one hand, against the principle of anarchy with its concomitant concepts of change, chaos, disruption of order, and vitality on the other. This contrast is one of the fundamental structuring devices of human perception. Its dynamism informs the organic world as well as physical phenomena.\textsuperscript{28} Since one category centers around the immutability of the absolute and the other manifests the indeterminacy of the individual, these categories in themselves seem to overlap with what Eliade calls the "sacred" and the "profane," and what Northrop Frye calls the two dialectical structures of the
apocalyptic and demonic which govern myth, or what Nietzsche in his analysis of Greek drama has called the apollonian and dionysian. Tom Jones is not a myth, there is, on the contrary, in this narrative a strong illusion of verisimilitude, and plotwise it is nearer to Greek romance. Therefore the mythic polarities of the apocalyptic and demonic worlds are not found in the clear-cut way outlined by Frye.²⁹ There are in this novel no gods or demons; the contrast is between two classes of human beings whose metaphorical connotations make them suggestive of the divine and unregenerate. Fielding establishes these categories through the repeated contrasting of reason with passion, logos with feeling, fortune with absence of fortune, high social rank with absence of social rank, generosity with hypocrisy, benevolence with greed, chastity with incontinence, Paradise Hall with London or "the road."

This division into an apocalyptic and daimonic category is morally not as simple as it is in myth. Good and evil, desirable and undesirable, are not as clearly distinguished as in the gods and demons of myth, or the evil stepmothers and fairy godmothers of the fairy tale. Fielding graduates his characters on a moral scale of "good" and "evil"; this scale ranges from the supernatural goodness of an Allworthy who is benevolent, fortunate, wise, chaste, just, and generous, down to the almost satanic qualities of Blifil who is greedy, hypocritical, scheming, passionless, and intent on acquiring a fortune. In between these two extremes of
goodness and evil we find, for example, Squire Western. He is too passionate a hunter, and too attached to his bottle, he represses his daughter Sophia, and fights with Tom in the bushes. Notwithstanding this behaviour which disrupts the order of Paradise Hall, he remains, because of social status and absence of hypocritical pretense, closely allied with Allworthy's apocalyptic connotation. It would seem that to Fielding social rank is, at least for the purposes of the novel, the final and vital criterion. Squire Western's antics, because he belongs to the ruling class, cannot upset the hierarchy of the "Great Chain of Being"; it is the foundling Tom's disruption of order, and later the hypocrisy of Blifil who tries to better himself, which are to be purged from the world of the novel.  

In referring to these two clusters of opposites in the rest of this analysis, I will use the terms "apocalyptic" and "daimonic," since the latter spelling of the second term avoids the associations with the devils of Frye's term. This is necessary because Fielding, with his displacement of the mythical pattern, wants to make the point that Tom, though he belongs to the daimonic category, is not a devil. Though at the beginning of the novel he suffers from a lack of prudence as well as social status, in the course of the novel he discovers his real place in society. The statement Fielding wants to make is that Tom's eventual assumption into Paradise Hall is not merely the result of the discovery of his identity, but is dependent on a recognition of his
lack of prudence.

Let us now see how the action is structured by this opposition. Though the title of his book is *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling*, Fielding begins his narrative proper by outlining the qualities and characteristics of another figure. "In that Part of the western Division of this Kingdom, which is commonly called Somersetshire, there lately lived (and perhaps lives still) a Gentleman whose name was Allworthy, and who might well be called the Favourite of both Nature and Fortune. . . ." (I, ii). Though on first reading the significance of this passage may not be immediately clear, anyone familiar with this novel will be struck by its implications. Allworthy is here presented as possessing those very attributes Tom lacks. His name itself indicates that the reader should credit him with the virtue of prudence, the quality which Tom sadly needs. Though Tom has, like Allworthy, the qualities of heart and head which nature bestows, the great difference is that Allworthy has power; he is prudent, and socially established as the possessor of an estate with the identity of country squire which goes with it. Allworthy, seen as a character opening a novel is curiously complete and stable. In adding the phrase "and perhaps lives still," the narrator even gives the suggestion of immutability. Having introduced Allworthy to the reader, Fielding then turns his attention to the description of the squire's female "better half," his sister Bridget. On first reading, the plot does not seem to
need the introduction of her character at this point. On
the other hand, it fulfills the function of completing
Allworthy's portrait by giving him a female counterpart
without introducing the suggestion of sexuality; and on a
subliminal level the sequential introduction of adult male,
adult female, infant Tom, has the effect that Allworthy--
whose name is also Thomas--is apprehended as the true father
of the foundling child.

Thus the novel opens with the presentation of
Allworthy, and introduces Tom after two chapters directed
towards establishing the "character" of the former gentle-
man. These chapters also indicate the depth of the social
abyss which separates them. Since the novel pays so much
attention to giving information about Allworthy before
bringing Sophia into the world of the novel, it seems to me
that Tom Jones is not so much a "boy gets girl" story, as a
comic instance of the traditional "son seeks father" plot in
which the father plays a more important role than has hither-
to been recognized. While Tom is, of course, the hero of
the book, Allworthy is very important as the referent, the
touchstone, according to whose standards Tom's actions have
to be judged. If Tom is ever to marry Sophia, he has to
gain the approval of Squire Western; and it is abundantly
clear that the latter only smiles on the idea of a son-in-
law with ample financial resources. Therefore, as long as
the reader does not know Tom's true identity, gaining the
good favour of Allworthy seems necessary not only because of
Tom's love for him, but it is also essential in order to find the fortune necessary to obtain the hand of Sophia in marriage. Thus Squire Allworthy's opinion of Tom is the gauge of Tom's fortunes. Initially high, when Tom is a little lad, Allworthy's opinion falls very low when Tom is in a London prison, and then rises at the close of the book, to unprecedented heights. The movement of Allworthy's esteem for Tom describes the same circle as the latter's position describes on the Wheel of Fortune, and is inseparable from the course of action of the novel. Thus Allworthy's bosom represents the alpha and omega of Tom's adventures. More significantly than his union with Sophia, Tom's reconciliation with Allworthy means the story has ended.

Though Fielding nowhere states that Allworthy is to be associated with the immutable qualities of a god, through analogy, metaphor, imagery and function, this identification is transmitted to the awareness of the reader. In this respect the elaborate description of Paradise Hall, the place where Squire Allworthy resides, is striking because of its elaborateness and symbolic implications. Not only is the name "Paradise Hall" itself a giveaway of the deeper significance the reader is to attach to Squire Allworthy, the estate is located on a hill, so as to have a charming prospect of the valley beneath. There is a grove, with a lawn sloping towards the house, and out of the lake, "which filled the Center of a beautiful Plain, embellished with
Groups of Beeches and Elms, and fed with Sheep, issued a River, that, for several Miles, was seen to Meander through an amazing Variety of Meadows and Woods, till it emptied itself into the Sea; with a long Arm of which, and an Island beyond it, the Prospect was closed" (I, iv). In this locus amoenus Squire Allworthy finds himself on a hill overlooking a prospect which leads the eye across several different kinds of landscape to the distant sea. Yet this description seems not to satisfy the narrator because he continues: "The Left Hand Scene presented the View of a very fine Park composed of a very unequal Ground, and agreeably varied with all the Diversity that Hills, Lawns, Wood, and Water, laid out with admirable Taste, but owing less to Art than to Nature, could give. Beyond this the Country gradually rose in a ridge of wild Mountains, the Tops of which were above the Clouds" (I, iv). Thus Squire Allworthy surveys all possible varieties of landscape, and, because no mention is made of other human beings, one assumes he is the sole governor of it all.

In this description Fielding makes use of several archetypal images. The water which bounds the prospect is a traditional image for the unconscious, the realm of existence below human life and the state of dissolution which follows death. In addition to this the fact that Allworthy lives on a hill is of significance when one remembers that a hill, just like a mountain and other high places, is the symbolic representation of "the point at which the undisplaced
apocalyptic world and the cyclical world of nature come into alignment, and which we propose to call the point of epiphany." 32 Or, we might, thinking in Eliade's terms, refer to the idea of the axis mundi, the link between heaven and earth. Moreover, Paradise Hall, situated exactly in between water and mountain, is experienced as lying at the center of the inhabited world, and can be understood as an imago mundi. 33

The representation of Squire Allworthy himself adds to the symbolic dimension of the description of Paradise Hall:

It was now the Middle of May, and the Morning was remarkably serene, when Mr. Allworthy walked forth on the Terrace, where the Dawn opened every Minute that lovely Prospect we have before described to his Eye. And now having sent forth Streams of Light, which ascended the blue Firmament before him, as harbingers preceding his Pomp, in the full Blaze of his Majesty up rose the Sun; than which one Object alone in this lower Creation could be more glorious, and that Mr. Allworthy himself presented; a human Being replete with Benevolence, meditating in what Manner he might render himself most acceptable to his Creator, by doing most Good to his Creatures. Reader, take Care, I have unadvisedly led thee to the Top of as high a Hill as Mr. Allworthy's, and how to get thee down without breaking thy Neck, I do not well know. However, let us e'en venture to slide down together. . . . (I, iv)

Allworthy is here described as more glorious than the sun in all its majesty, the archetypal symbol of enlightenment and logos, which is identified with growth, wisdom and God. Indeed, the reader experiences Allworthy, on a "fantasmatic" level, as a deus-figure, a kind of sun-god. The idea of sun-god is, moreover, in complete accordance with Allworthy's social function of justice of the peace: the ancient idea
of a sun-god had already in mythological times been associated with the character of "judge," the *Sol Iustitiae*.

Not only does Fielding's presentation of Allworthy give him godlike characteristics, but in the course of the work he is repeatedly addressed in language which keeps the association alive. When Tom, on his way to London, encounters a landlady who pretends to know Allworthy, he does not for a minute disbelieve this: "'The Fame of his Goodness indeed,' answered Jones, 'must have extended farther than this; but Heaven only can know him, can know that Benevolence which is copied from itself, and sent upon Earth as its own Pattern. Mankind are as ignorant of such divine Goodness, as they are unworthy of it. . . .'

(VIII, iii). Near the close of the novel it is Mrs. Waters who "fell upon her Knees before him, and, in a flood of Tears, made him many most passionate Acknowledgements of his Goodness, which as she truly said, savoured more of the divine than human Nature" (XVIII, viii). In addition to this, John Preston shows that the image of the Deity as set forth in Shaftesbury's *Characteristics* (I) has many of the features of Allworthy, among which his worthiness and goodness are striking.

Thus the first person whom Fielding presents to the reader, whose "grace" is seen to control the action of the story, and whose double attributes of justice and mercy are stressed throughout the book, may be perceived as the displacement of a god—and Squire Allworthy, who maintains
peace and order, and who rules benevolently at a distance, incarnates the principles of the apocalyptic category.

Like Allworthy, the other person whose opinion of Tom is of importance is also the incarnation of apocalyptic virtues. Though Sophia is a character of considerable importance in *Tom Jones*, Fielding gives her scarcely any individuality. Richardson remarks: "Why did he draw his Heroine so fond, so foolish, and so insipid?" And Arnold Kettle, insensitive to the appeal of the archetype, observes that the "ironical opening description of Sophia is really a way of not describing her." It is true that the extended mock heroic passage in which Fielding characterizes her may seem ironically directed against the overt meaning of the passage. I quote the last sentence in which Fielding's use of epithets resembles that of Pope in *The Rape of the Lock*. "For lo! adorned with all the Charms in which Nature can array her; bedecked with Beauty, Youth, Sprightliness, Innocence, Modesty, and Tenderness, breathing Sweetness from her rosy Lips, and darting Brightness from her sparkling Eyes, the lovely Sophia comes" (IV, ii). Though this is the portrait of a flawless ideal never found in real life, we should be careful not to interpret Fielding's intention as our modern conception of irony. When we are ironic, there exists somewhere a discrepancy between what is stated and what is really meant, or between the amount of information and insight possessed by the speaker and the audience, when we interpret the preceding mock heroic passage
as ironic in the modern sense, we imply that Fielding is deflating the pretensions of the ideal and playing with the discrepancy between the real and the ideal. I believe, however, that Fielding's irony is different. It is not debunking. Rather than wanting to deflate the heroic and ideal, Fielding takes a cosmic and Christian perspective, in which what is, though falling short of the ideal, still participates in the ideal of the archetype. His irony is that Sophia is both an individual English girl, and the incarnation of archetypal womanhood, the anima. Like Allworthy, Sophia is the embodiment of virtues and aspirations which lift human life above the merely material, to a spiritual level.

That Sophia represents more than just a girl is first of all apparent in her name, "wisdom." In Tom's quest for prudence, marrying her signals the attainment of his goal. Tom's love for her is so idealized that he speaks of her as "my goddess," declaring to Mrs. Honour, "as such I will always worship and adore her while I have breath" (IV, xiv). Sophia is full of "divine Goodness" (V, vi). She possesses a "heavenly Temper" (V, vi) and is Tom's "divine Angel" (XVIII, xii). In the inn at Upton, Sophia is known as "the Somersetshire Angel" (X, vii). She is referred to as "an Angel upon Earth" (XI, iii); and Tom describes her to a landlady as surpassing angels in heavenly characteristics: "Angels are painted fair to look like her. / There's in her all that we believe of Heaven, / Amazing Brightness, Purity
and Truth, / Eternal Joy, and everlasting Love" (VIII, iii).

Even Sophia's beauty is so much beyond the average that it can hardly be pictured by the human mind: "'No Breath ever yet durst sully her Reputation. The sweetest Air is not purer, the limpid Stream not clearer than her Honour. She is all over, both in Mind and Body, consummate Perfection. She is the most beautiful Creature in the Universe; and yet she is Mistress of such noble, elevated Qualities, that though she is never from my Thoughts, I can scarce ever think of her Beauty; but when I see it'" (XV, ix). Thus Tom recognizes in Sophia those very qualities which mark her as belonging to the moral order of an Allworthy, and loves her for her apocalyptic virtue. Blifil is merely infatuated with her fortune.

The apocalyptic Sophia is the reward Tom will receive at the end of his "quest." The fact that she is the daughter of the neighbouring squire points again to the fact that this novel is structured around binary opposition. Not only is there the opposition of apocalyptic and daimonic; there is, within the apocalyptic category evidence of primary process thinking; the doubling of characters. This process is most clearly explained by Ernest Jones.

The most interesting of these mechanisms of myth formation is that known as "decomposition," which is the opposite of the "condensation" so characteristic of dreams. Whereas in the latter process attributes of several individuals are fused together in the creation of one figure, much as in the production of a composite photograph, in the former process various attributes of a given individual are disunited and several other individuals are invented, each endowed
with one group of the original attributes. In this way one person of complex character is dissolved and replaced by several, each of whom possesses a different aspect of the character which in a simpler form of the myth was combined in one being; usually the different individuals closely resemble one another in other respects, for instance in age, a great part of Greek mythology must have arisen in this way. A good example of the process in the group now under consideration [i.e. Oedipus et var.] is seen by the figure of a tyrannical father becoming split into two, a father and a tyrant.\textsuperscript{38}

This principle of decomposition which Jones describes is a structural principle of narrative, myth, and dreams which lends representability to an ambiguity since it splits the opposing characteristics of a problematic entity into two discrete halves. Thus it is used as a device in the displacement of myth or the psychopathology of the individual, to come to terms with a problem which baffles human reason, the fact that one entity can contain opposing characteristics. We are here concerned with the way in which decomposition functions as a principle of narrative, however. What we notice is that decomposition, in separating opposing qualities into two different characters in a story, is also a principle which makes mediation between opposing categories possible. According to Claude Lévi-Strauss the purpose of "dioscuric pairs"—that is doubles or twins—is to "mediate between conflicting terms."\textsuperscript{39}

With regard to \textit{Tom Jones} the principle is very simple to illustrate. If there is an opposition between Tom and Allworthy which the narrative wants to mediate, the easiest way to do this, without changing the characteristics of
these characters, is to decompose Allworthy, and create a double, Squire Western, whose daughter Tom marries at the end of the book. Because we, as readers, subconsciously apprehend Allworthy, Western, and Sophia as belonging together, the narrative suggests, on a "fantasmatic" level, the achieved mediation between Allworthy and Jones.

It is evident that this kind of narrative "logic," though it makes sense at a "fantasmatic level, is fallacious if seen in the light of our conscious reason. One of the principles on which our science and philosophy are based is that A cannot be A and not-A at the same time. However, this is the very fallacy Fielding uses in this novel to suggest the mediation between his opposing categories. As we shall see, this happens not only in the doubling of Allworthy and Western, but also in the splitting of the daimonic hero into Tom and Blifil.

Decomposition, though not always referred to by Jones' term, is a well-known principle of narrative. Therefore, we find in myths examples of doubling which are similar to what happens in Tom Jones. J. E. Cirlot has pointed to the mythical twins such as the Dioscuri, Romulus and Remus, Apollo and Artemis, which are always born from an immortal father and mortal mother. They usually symbolize soul and body or good and evil. This opposition between good and evil is suggestive of the contrast between Tom and Blifil. C. F. Keppler finds that in narrative twins and doubles often function as representations of the opposition between the
introvert, who achieves by rational powers, and the extrovert, with his dominant characteristic of action.  
This opposition seems to fit the characters of Allworthy and Western.

We tend to think of Squire Western, to use Robert Alter's words, as the example of the "classic comic senex, the father who insists on marrying off his daughter for money and who therefore is the roadblock in the way of the natural union that is the comedy's destined end." Squire Western's exuberance, drunkenness, and foul language would seem to contrast sharply with the cerebral composure of Allworthy, who is the other senex in the story. Yet, if we look at these characters from a functional point of view, they are not so different as they seem. Both are widowers, both have organized around them their own little "court" including a resident priest, both have an unmarried sister presiding over their households, and both are justices of the peace. The cardinal difference is that Allworthy is primarily seen as the governor of his estate, whereas Mr. Western is characterized as a fervent hunter. This latter difference is reminiscent of the traditional mythic differentiation between shepherd and hunter. The differences in characterization also point to the traditional dichotomy of "soul" and "body" or "superego" and "id." Thus even the differences between Allworthy and Western, in their diametrical opposition, seem to point to a tie between the two characters. Squire Western, who controls the access
to Sophia, is split off from the figure of Squire Allworthy; and Tom's quest for Sophia is the displacement of his quest for Allworthy.

Decomposition is even more apparent in the daimonic category. Here the antipode of Sophia is Molly Seagrim, and the antipodes of Squire Western and Squire Allworthy are Blifil and Tom. Not only do the two youngsters appear in the world of the narrative almost simultaneously, they are half brothers of approximately the same age and, most significantly, rivals for the love of Sophia. The single principle which differentiates them is similar to the contrast between Allworthy and Western: the absence of passion in Blifil versus the prevalence of passion in Tom, of which their respective hypocrisy and generosity are manifestations. However, since Tom and Blifil are daimonic, these qualities, unlike those of their elders, are in need of redirection.

Northrop Frye describes the "demonic human world" as a "society held together by a kind of molecular tension of egos,"\(^4\) in which there is no personal fulfillment possible. In *Tom Jones* the daimonic category is, in addition, characterized by mutability and the disruption of order. The older figures are anchored immutably in their social authority, and it is the lack of social status of Tom and Blifil which sets the plot in motion. The peace in Paradise Hall is turned into a period of upheaval with the introduction of Tom and the birth of Blifil. We all like Tom,
and think of him as a generously good-natured boy; nevertheless, his actions show him breaking the social rules of his society, and following the leads of his passions. Thus Tom is found poaching in Squire Western's domain in more senses than one; he also gives in to impulse when he sells his Bible and horse to provide for the starving family of Black George. Though guided by a generous passion, it is passion nonetheless. Tom, who does not have a fixed place in the hierarchy of the "Great Chain of Being" and whose actions upset the existing order, contrasts sharply with Squire Allworthy, who is governed by reason and embodies the very logos itself.

Tom shows himself governed by passion pur sang when he falls for Molly's charms and is tempted to a licentious sexual relationship, manifesting daimonic characteristics of freedom and unrestraint. Fielding puts the final touch to the portrayal of Tom's impulsiveness and lack of control when he shows him, after having received the news that Squire Allworthy's illness is not fatal after all, walking in a grove and daydreaming about the unattainable Sophia's charms, when suddenly he finds at least some of those charms embodied in the very tangible Molly Seagrim. The whole scene, written in mock-heroic style, is topped off by a brawl, involving Tom, Blifil, and Thwackum, which is finally settled after Squire Western has added his share to the general upheaval. It is clear that Tom and Blifil are far removed in moral as well as social status from the
apocalyptic Allworthy. In their fallibility they symbolize the human rather than the divine.

What is central to the novel is not the fact that Tom falls in love with Sophia, but the presence of a fundamental contrast in nature as well as fortune between her apocalyptic world and Tom's daimonic qualities. The major part of the novel is the overcoming of this contrast. Though the foundling Tom, with his lack of status is not the appropriate mate for Sophia, at the end of the novel Tom and Sophia are married. The difference between apocalyptic and daimonic is seemingly mediated by a union of opposites.44

However, if the contrast between apocalyptic and daimonic is as fundamental as I have maintained, while the narrative nevertheless ends with the assumption of mutability into immutability, the process of Tom's change must be fallacious. In fact, Tom's marriage is not based on his reform of the "wantonness, wildness, and want of caution" (III, vii) to which Allworthy objected; it is, in essence, based on the revelation of Tom's hidden identity, the fact that he really belongs to the same level of society as Sophia. The words Squire Western uses to apologize for his persecution of Tom describe the situation with the down-to-earth bluntness we have learnt to expect from this character: ". . . as Allworthy here knows, nay dost know it thyself, I took thee for another Person. . . ." (XVIII, xi). Selfhood and identity are, in this world centering around the concepts of the "Great Chain of Being," based entirely upon
one's position in the hierarchy.

Nevertheless, though Tom's secret identity is the ultimate justification for his marriage to Sophia, Fielding, in writing this novel, wants to inculcate a moral message. His intention, as set out in the Dedication, is to "inculcate that Virtue and Innocence can scarce ever be injured but by Indiscretion; and that it is this alone which often betrays "good men" into "the Snare that Deceit and Villainy spread for them" (p. 8). To him, Tom's change of status alone is not enough to warrant the writing of the novel. In his "double vision" Tom's social change is identical with a moral change. Throughout the narrative the author ridicules the vices of hypocrisy, greed, and deceit; and from the statement concerning narratives in which there is no consistent moral development, one gathers the implication that he thinks Tom Jones does not belong to the category he criticizes so severely. In the Preface to Book VIII we read: "our modern Authors of Comedy have fallen almost universally into the Error here hinted at: Their Heroes generally are notorious Rogues and their Heroines abandoned Jades, during the first four Acts; but in the fifth, the former become very worthy Gentlemen, and the latter, Women of Virtue and Discretion: Nor is the Writer often so kind as to give himself the less Trouble, to reconcile or account for this monstrous Change and Incongruity." Thus Fielding implies that Tom Jones is different from other comedies in that there is plausibility to his hero's moral
change.

Let us have a look, therefore, at the devices Fielding uses to suggest that Tom's final acceptance into the apocalyptic category is morally justified. One device is the skillful presentation of Tom to the reader. On the one hand the narrator emphasizes that Tom is flawed. "As we determined when we first sat down to write this History, to flatter no Man, but to guide our Pen throughout by the Directions of Truth, we are obliged to bring our Heroe on the Stage in a much more disadvantageous Manner than we could wish; and to declare honestly, and even at this first Appearance, that it was the universal Opinion of all Mr. Allworthy's family, that he was certainly born to be hanged" (III, ii).

Fielding must emphasize Tom's flaw because it is necessary for the development of the plot. There must be a reason for his dismissal from Paradise Hall. Though Allworthy proves gullible and is deceived in his judgment of Tom by the schemes of the envious Blifil and the outraged Thwackum, Fielding cannot make this decision seem too arbitrary. Allworthy must be given some precedent and evidence for his opinion of Jones's behaviour. Similarly, the later complications of the intrigue, once the setting has shifted to London, are impossible without Jones's indiscretions. Yet, on the other hand, the narrator also emphasizes Tom's good nature, his generosity towards Black George, his chivalry towards Molly and Sophia, and his intense affection for
Allworthy. In fact Fielding makes Tom's great elation at the news that Allworthy's illness is not fatal after all the occasion which will lead to his fall from grace. Thus, in reading the novel, one feels sympathy for Tom's ironic fate, and does not take the "universal opinion" that Tom was born to be hanged, very seriously, since the narrator has balanced Tom's venial sin with the saving grace of generosity.

The structural device Fielding uses to create the impression that his hero's eventual union with Sophia is prepared for by a moral change is his use of the quest. After his expulsion from Paradise Hall, Tom falls in despair. In romance the motif of such a "break of consciousness" often introduces the theme of "descent to a lower world." Though Tom does not descend into hell, we see him move further and further away from the apocalyptic category. The occasion which initiates the descent is reminiscent of the expulsion from Eden. Though Tom thinks his misplaced love for Sophia is the direct occasion for his dismissal, it is in reality his fall for the temptress Molly Seagrim who is in every respect the daimonic inverse of the noble Sophia. Not wise but cunning, not perfect but slovenly, not chaste but promiscuous, she tempts him in the daimonic counterpart of the apocalyptic garden, the uncultivated bushes. Tom's fall from grace awakens echoes of the Biblical fall. Immediately after this expulsion from Paradise Hall, the narrator mentions that "The World, as Milton phrases it, lay all
before him; and Jones, no more than Adam, had any Man to whom he might resort for Comfort or Assistance" (VII, ii). This passage echoes a Biblical illusion in the preceding Book: "... and people said he was sent naked from the House of his inhuman father" (VI, ii). In a sense Tom's fall is a true break of consciousness. He enters a fallen world for which he is completely unprepared. Instead of the bonds of love of the apocalyptic world of Paradise Hall, the basic social relationship is now one of exploitation: hunt or be hunted, eat or be eaten. No wonder Tom proves to be completely disoriented and inexperienced. He immediately loses all his money. He loses the way and receives contradictory directions. He becomes involved in a dangerous scrape with the rogue Northerton. On this pilgrim's progress to prudence Tom stays at inns, not houses. This indicates his isolation and the instability of his position. 46

Part of Tom's quest is the necessity of acquiring insight in the increasingly sinister aspects of his sexual adventures, which are a series of inverted "marriages" leading him further and further away from the immaculate purity of Sophia. Molly Seagrim, though socially and morally the inverse of Sophia, is still the picture of a young, healthy girl from the country, and therefore not altogether inexplicable as a sexual partner for Tom. On the road to London Tom meets Mrs. Waters, who will later appear to be Jenny Jones, his reputed mother. Old enough to be his mother then and sexually experienced, she is a less natural
contact than Molly. However, Tom's escapades do not end with Mrs. Waters. Fielding suggests that he exchanges sexual favours for financial reward with the even older and—Fielding implies—repulsive Lady Bellaston. Tom comes to prostitute himself for worldly goods, that is fortune. Instead of acquiring prudence—"the Duty we owe ourselves" as Allworthy calls it (XVIII, x)—Tom disregards his spiritual "self" in the exploitation of his body. Physically and spiritually, he becomes farther and farther removed from the divine Sophia.

The point of greatest depth in this romance theme of descent is reached when Tom is physically and spiritually at the furthest remove from Allworthy, in prison in the town of London. Though London itself is not a hell, Tom comes here into contact with the underworld of society when Lord Fellamar's gang is out to kidnap him, and Tom ends up in prison for the suspected murder of Fitzpatrick. It is here that Tom finally falls into despair, believing himself a murderer, knowing that Sophia has been shown his letters to Lady Bellaston, and living under the impression he has committed incest.

Though Tom's situation is potentially tragic, it lays the foundation for the final comic ending of the novel. Owing to the gravity of his situation Tom is forced to look the consequences of his acts in the eye. He can no longer live in ignorance, but must come to a recognition of his responsibility and guilt. The narrator suggests that Tom
faces up to the fact that his daimonic characteristics, when not governed by prudence and love, will make him a murderer or lead him to commit incest. Like the protagonist in *Oedipus the King*, Tom Jones is confronted with his own guilt; unlike Oedipus, however, Tom Jones assumes responsibility for his own actions and stops blaming fortune and bad luck: "'Sure,' cries Jones, 'Fortune will never have done with me, 'till she hath driven me to Distractions. But why do I blame Fortune? I am myself the Cause of all my Misery. All the dreadful Mischief which have befallen me, are the Consequences only of my own Folly and Vice'"

(XVIII, ii).

However, Tom's insight is too sudden to seem convincing to us. We do not believe in his moral change. To the modern psychological understanding of the human heart sudden changes of character such as the conversions one finds in the Newgate novels or the occasional Victorian novel, are no longer convincing. They seem too facile. We have come to understand that psychological change is a slow process. It is, however, quite likely that Tom's moral conversion was taken seriously by the narrator.

In addition to the quest pattern suggesting the moral transformation of the hero at the point of deepest descent, the narrator employs a structural device to lend his novel the suggestion of the possibility of a return to origin. In order to make Tom's eventual acceptance into the apocalyptic category seem the more likely, he uses
decomposition in the daimonic category. It is the rivalry with the half brother Blifil which informs the action of the early chapters of the book. While Tom gives the impression that he is "born to be hanged," Blifil is universally liked for his discreet and pious disposition. The only exception is Sophia, who prefers the generous, good-natured Tom to his hypocritical brother. Her estimate of Blifil's true nature proves prophetic; at the end of the novel Blifil is shown up as the villain whose machinations have caused Tom's fall.

Thus Fielding's use of Blifil as a character is directly inverse to his use of Tom. Whereas the latter is introduced as flawed but proves to be of the moral mettle worthy of a Sophia, Blifil's fortune shows the reverse movement, and he is banished from Paradise Hall at the end. This direct opposition in their fates is matched by a direct contrast in their moral character. Though Blifil possesses the prudence Tom lacks, he severely wants the latter's generosity. His show of prudence is not based on the control of his passions. It is a hypocritical mask, covering a Faustian drive to get ahead. Blifil is, in fact, characterized by the complete absence of passion. Wanting to marry Sophia, the epitome of all conceivable female graces, he is not so much enticed by her person as by her fortune: "The charms of Sophia had not made the least Impression on Blifil; not that his Heart was pre-engaged; neither was he totally insensible of Beauty, or had any Aversion to women; but his
Appetites were, by Nature, so moderate, that he was able, by Philosophy or by Study, or by some other Method, easily to subdue them..." (IV, iv). Fielding objects to the self-enclosure of Blifil's intellectualism. The supreme ideal in the context of this novel is that of love. Without passion and generosity, however, love is impossible. Passion, though it needs to be governed by reason, is the instrument and prerequisite for mediation.

It is Blifil's outward show of prudence which eventually causes Tom's banishment. The faithful pupil of Thwackum and Square, he is an expert at manipulating the word, or Word, and at enforcing the letter of the law. Allworthy, who does not perceive the absence of the spirit in Blifil's prudence, is deceived. Blifil, whose name may have been formed by means of a contraction of the words "black evil," is almost literally a scheming devil. He bears resemblance to the archetypal antihero, Satan, whose machinations threaten to bring the hero to perdition. At the end of the story it is Allworthy himself who recognizes this truth when he describes Blifil to Mrs. Miller as "that wicked Viper I have so long nourished in my bosom" (XVIII, viii). It is, of course, Fielding's point in the novel that "Blifilism," the dissociation of body and soul manifested in a hypocritical pretense at virtue, though it may deceive even an Allworthy, will eventually be unmasked, and must be unmasked for the mediation between apocalyptic and daimonic to take place. The revelation of Blifil's true nature coincides with the
discovery of Tom's true identity.

The effect of the rivalry of these two young men is that Tom appears so good in contrast to his evil half brother that the reader is willing to take his acceptance into the apocalyptic category unquestioned. The slight flaws of Tom appear negligible next to the blackness of Blifil's actions. Thus the novel uses a paradoxical structural principle of mediation. We are confronted here with the problem of mediation between two categories as irreconcilable as God and man. Since the distance between them is only mediable through death, a myth could present the mediation by means of the death and rebirth of one mythological character, by a descent into the underworld, or "Harrowing of Hell." In literature, however, the use of these devices would constitute a breach of the laws of probability governing literature and life. Therefore, a novel, if it insists on the mediation of these two irreconcilable opposites, will have to displace the death-rebirth sequence to the level of realism. One way of doing this is by means of doubling of type figures. By dividing the daimonic category into two halves and letting one of those halves die—symbolically or in reality—and moving the other half towards the apocalyptic category, the narrative can maintain a "death-rebirth" sequence, even if not in one person.

This is, it seems to me, the function of Blifil in the story. Blackened to almost diabolical dimensions,
Blifil, Tom's half brother, functions as the scapegoat on whom the author piles a mountain of evil characteristics, compared to which Tom seems innocent. The final unmasking and banishment of Blifil marks the banishment of the undesirable daimonic characteristics from the world of the novel. The exclusion of Blifil from the presence of Allworthy functions in the story as the excommunication of the daimonic category, and prepares for the "salvation" of Tom. Along these lines the process of narrative itself "solves" through the symbolic action of the characters a problem insoluble by logical means.

It is significant that the particular form the process of mediation takes should confirm Fielding's own religious beliefs. I have pointed repeatedly to the logical inconsistencies in the mediation between apocalyptic and daimonic: though the process requires the "conversion" of Tom, this is neither convincing nor enough; also required is the dismissal of Blifil, his double. Even then the marriage remains dependent upon the discovery of Tom's true identity, and, finally, upon the "grace" of the apocalyptic Sophia. These problems in mediation, though rooted in the literal level of the narrative, make more sense when we think of Fielding's own religious beliefs.

The Church of England, to which he belonged, had always stressed in the Articles man's original sin, the salvation by faith, the inadequacy of good works, and predestination. This traditional belief, steeped in the thought of Augustine
and Calvin, was in the eighteenth century subject to modification. From its modern, anthropocentric point of view, the age regarded the orthodox process of mediation between God and man as unjust to the natural goodness, or, at least, to the perfectibility of the human soul. Martin Battestin tells us: "Within the Church, the latitudinarians, though never expressly admitting to it, were engaged in promulgating an extreme form of Arminianism, which after 1720 became scarcely distinguishable from Socinianism or Pelagianism, 'the classic example of a Christianity stressing God too little and Man too much.'" Fielding read the works of Latitudinarian divines such as Isaac Barrow, John Tillotson, Samuel Clarke, and Benjamin Hoadly with interest and admiration. Although these churchmen "might acknowledge man's weakness since the Fall and admit the requirement of faith, yet these concessions to orthodoxy were merely perfunctory. The recurrent drift of their writing was the naturalness of the social affections and man's capacity for moral perfection. Human nature, they repeatedly affirmed, was inherently noble, but corrupted through bad education and custom." Thus the attempt to solve the problem of mediation between God and man, which was the main impulse behind mysticism and the great scholastic systems of thought, was in Fielding's time looked upon as less dependent on divine volition and susceptible to the influence of human action.

This idea informs, it seems to me, Fielding's working
out of the plot of Tom Jones. Though Tom is, like Adam, expelled from paradise (or heaven) after the fall, and eventually reunited with the godhead after the expulsion of the fiend from the divine presence, yet the process of medi-a-tion is not orthodox. Fielding manages to have it both ways. Whereas Adam is saved through Christ's redemption, and Tom Jones through the grace of Sophia, Tom is also saved, in part, through his own powers. First of all, he is related to Allworthy all along, which suggests symbolically that he is divine in nature and without original sin. Secondly, his salvation is partly the result of his own generosity to Mr. Anderson, since the incident is instrumental in regain-ing Allworthy's favours. Thus the plot of Tom Jones sends us the "fantasmatic" message that man, though flawed, does not labour under "original sin," but is essentially divine in nature and will discover this divinity after gaining insight into his daimonic qualities.

In the text of the novel itself there are two passages which discuss this very idea. The illegitimate birth of Tom has, as it has for Ester Summerson in Bleak House, wider implications. Mrs. Miller tells Tom: "'No, Mr. Jones; the Words 'dishonourable Birth' are Nonsense, as my dear husband used to say, unless the Word 'Dishonourable' be applied to the Parents, for the Children can derive no real Dishonour from an Act of which they are entirely innocent'" (XIV, v). The final word about "original sin" devolves upon Allworthy himself. He is, in this instance, it seems to me,
the author's spokesman. Answering Captain Blifil who argues that Tom should be "visited with the sins of his Father," Allworthy thinks,

That, however guilty the Parents might be, the Children were certainly innocent: That as to the Texts he had quoted, the former of them was a particular Denunciation against the Jews, for the Sin of Idolatry, of relinquishing and hating their heavenly King: and the latter was parabolically spoken, and rather intended to denote the certain and necessary Consequences of Sin, than any express Judgment against it. But to represent the Almighty as avenging the Sins of the Guilty on the Innocent, was indecent, if not blasphemous, as it was to represent him acting against the first Principles of natural Justice, and against the original Notions of Right and Wrong, which he himself had implanted in our Minds; by which we were to judge, not only in all Matters which were not revealed, but even of the Truth of Revelation itself. (II, ii)

What we have in Tom Jones, then, is not just a story. Fielding, apprehending the mediating structure of this romance plot, expressed by means of it his own, deeply held, religious beliefs. Sheridan Baker points out that the plot fulfills for the reader "what may be his deepest psychic need, to find his identity, and with it the dream of recognition, riches, and the beautiful princess." However, the novel rises beyond the concern with biological and psychological identity; Fielding's "imitation of nature" exemplifies the way in which the ideology of the author conceived every man to find his metaphysical identity.

That Fielding took his theme very seriously indeed, and regarded Tom Jones as a modern incarnation of the epic hero, is evident in the parallels the narrator suggests. The title page of the fourth edition carries a motto, taken from Horace's
Ars Poetica 141-42, where he echoes the beginning of the Odyssey: "Dic mihi, Musa, virum captae post tempora Trojae /
Qui mores hominum mutorum vidit et urbes." "Tell me, Muse, of the man who, after the times of captured Troy, saw the customs of many men and their cities."\textsuperscript{53} Sheridan Baker comments that Fielding may have wanted to associate Tom with Odysseus, as he learns the ways of the world, searching for his proper home and the place from which he started. Not only in the motto, but throughout the novel, Fielding seems to have had the epic poets in mind. Partridge recites Milton, whose \textit{Paradise Lost}, composed to "justify the ways of God to man," attempts thematically what I take \textit{Tom Jones} to try structurally. The narrator refers to Milton twice, apart from directly invoking Milton's muse: "Thee, whom \textit{Maeonia} educated, whom \textit{Mantus} charm'd, and who, on that fair Hill which overlooks the proud Metropolis of \textit{Britain}, sat'st, with thy \textit{Milton}, sweetly tuning the Heroic lyre. . . ." (XIII, i). The narrator even seems to consider his theme of equal epic stature with that of the \textit{Odyssey}, or \textit{Paradise Lost}, when he states that "Homer and Milton, who, though they added the Ornament of Numbers to their Works, were both Historians of our Order, and Master of all Learning of their Times" (IX, i). Beyond these associations there are, in the verbal texture of the work itself echoes of the Bible, and allusions to \textit{Paradise Lost}. Thus Fielding, in writing the history of Tom Jones had, no less than in writing \textit{Joseph Andrews}, the tradition of Christian epic in mind.\textsuperscript{54}
In the last analysis Tom Jones is based on an anterior idea and an anterior text. It is the worldview of the Bible which gives it significance. The authority of the novel and its authorship are based on the original authority of the Bible with its laws of mediation. The rock on which Paradise Hall is built is that of the Word: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1, 1). To Fielding himself the mediating function of the plot incarnates a new version of the Word. To its author the possibility of the existence of Tom Jones is the confirmation and affirmation of the unity, the "splendid wholeness," the epiphany produced by the collapse of signifier and signified. The signifying romance plot of the novel constitutes a return to its signified literary origin—the Word. Thus the novel enacts the return to origin as conceived of in eighteenth-century ideology; and it provides the contemporary reader with a suggestion of achieved totality.

It should be understood that Fielding's achievement is historically determined. To us Tom Jones cannot and should not mean the same thing it did to Fielding. Writing in the eighteenth century when credence in the mediation between God and man as set forth in the Bible was still widespread, and when the structure of the "Great Chain of Being" still fit social reality, Fielding could displace the romance plot because its structure was similar to coeval ideology. With regard to Bleak House, which tries to use the same type of
structural mediation as Tom Jones, we will see that the historical conditions of Dickens' world have made the displacement of this structure all but impossible. Fielding's precarious balance is a unique, unrepeateable achievement.
CHAPTER III

BLEAK HOUSE
The "double vision" which allowed Fielding to view physical and metaphysical reality as ultimately identical was already an anachronism when he published Tom Jones. In the middle of the nineteenth century the identification of the social stratification in a narrative with the metaphysical order of the "Great Chain of Being," which accounts for the symbolic effectiveness of Tom Jones, has become problematical. Dickens writes in and about a world in which the process of secularization is much more advanced than in Fielding's time. Bleak House describes the effects of this loss of a viable metaphysic, and addresses itself to relieving this loss of origin. It wants to create an imaginative vision in which both the destructive effect of secularization, and the restorative action of Esther's return to origin can be seen steadily and whole.

The problem is, however, that there is a profound ambiguity in Dickens' thought on what will or can provide a new sense of totality. It would seem that at a deeper level of consciousness neither Dickens nor his audience believed any longer in the return to origin which we find exemplified in Tom Jones, and which is based on the authority of the central text of Western culture, the Bible. Though Victorian England was carefully observant in its religious practice, one need only think of the popularity of Tennyson's In Memoriam to realize that experience of the sacred was more secular and more open to intellectual doubts than it had been. Thus Bleak House provides two returns
to origin, just as it features two narrators, one sentimental, one disenchanted. One form of the return to origin in *Bleak House* is the sentimental, Victorian notion that duty, responsibility, and perseverance will redeem us. This is the articulated content of Esther's narrative, of that side of Esther's personality which wants to atone for her illegitimacy to her substitute father, Mr. Jarndyce. However, implied in the reversals of the action and in Dickens' use of symbols we also find another suggestion: that the return to origin is only possible if one discovers one's biological identity and the sexual reality of human existence. This entails a return to the mother and to the discovery of the Primal Scene. Thus we find a traditional, now sentimental conception of a return to origin, side by side with a post-Romantic, modernist idea. What we shall discuss in the following pages is, first, the state of loss of origin in the world of *Bleak House* and its effects on the people who inhabit it, then the dual personality of Esther Summerson, and the implications of her redemptive "quest."

Opening *Bleak House*, we enter a setting radically different from the pastoral setting of *Tom Jones*. In the century between the writing of these two novels, the world has changed. Instead of Paradise Hall the narrator sets us down in what was the "hell" of Tom's descent: LONDON. Printed in capital letters, this indication of place is the first word of the book. It states that we are in the city,
no longer in nature. This means that we are in a world of artifice which hides or replaces the organic and the natural with the products of human activity. No longer is there a prospect from Paradise Hall; around us are the brick and stone, soot and smog, the people and carriages of a human community. What we see is ourselves, our mirror image and creation. The uninterrupted view to both nature and the supernatural is blocked.

This loss of a viable metaphysic is one of the things *Bleak House* is about. Whereas *Tom Jones* begins with a protracted description of the years Tom spent at Paradise Hall, and presents the city only as a point of passage in the circle of Tom's quest, to Dickens the city, this fallen world, is the supreme historical reality. The doubts about Tom's identity can be solved by giving him a place in society, and his quest can symbolize a metaphysical search because the stability of the eighteenth-century social structure still reflects the hierarchical concepts of the "Great Chain of Being." In Dicken's novelistic world, however, the assumption that social relationships are based on religious prototypes can only be maintained by the anachronistic Lord Dedlock whose name and rigidity clearly show him a fossil of an earlier age.

The fact that the return to origin as outlined in the Old and New Testament has lost its significance is symbolized in the case of Jarndyce vs. Jarndyce. Instead of a living word, there is bickering over a "will." People's occupation
is the interpretation of its meaning in an interminable lawsuit. Instead of discussing the wages of sin, the issue is the costs of the suit. In short, we see here a complete severance between microcosm and macrocosm. Dickens' London is Kafkaesque, its most striking characteristic is the absence of meaning, the absurdity and incoherence of everything that takes place.² Bleak House begins with the "death of God."

However, Bleak House is more than the portrait of a world without God. In juxtaposing Esther Summerson's character and actions to the dismal reality of London, Dickens suggests the possibility of an alternative to the vision of the impersonal third-person narrator, the spokesman for a desacralized world. Esther's private, first-person narrative, concerned with domesticity and human relationships is a counterpoint to the darkness called up by the omniscient narrator's voice. More than that, the success of Esther's quest for identity, with which the novel ends, suggests by sympathetic magic the redemption of the whole society. Just as in myth or romance the success of one hero may lift the ban of infertility or end the spell cast on a whole society, it is possible to feel that the private quest of Esther, the representative of all orphans in the novel, exorcises the evil connected with a lack of origin throughout the world of the novel; it is even possible to feel that Esther's happiness nullifies the terror and alienation of the impersonal narrator. The problem with Bleak
House is, of course, the same as the problem with Tom Jones. Since mediation is a feat of form, Esther's quest provides no "real," or logical mediation of the problem or origin; though the many twists and turns of the plot testify to the fact that Dickens tried his utmost best.

Before we have a look at Esther's quest, we must first outline the characteristics of the world of London, in order to show that Esther's lack of parentage is the symbol epitomizing society's lack of a metaphysical parent. Just as Fielding opens Tom Jones with the description of the apocalyptic Allworthy, Dickens begins his novel with the description of the Lord High Chancellor. His functions mirror some of those of his metaphysical prototype: he is the "most important judge in the Court of Chancery" (one might understand "Court of Chancery" as a metaphor for human life); he determines rightful inheritance under wills whose meanings are in doubt; he is the official guardian to the "wards of Chancery," the keeper of the Great Seal, the keeper of "her Majesty's conscience," and the protector of infants, lunatics and idiots. Unlike Allworthy the Lord High Chancellor is not the direct representative of God on earth. Though he has the function, he seems to lack the power. Instead of the suggestion of divinity given to Allworthy by means of the sun symbolism, the Lord High Chancellor sits indoors, with a "foggy glory round his head, softly fenced in with crimson cloth and curtains" (p. 5). In fact, the figure of the Lord High Chancellor illustrates
the absence of the direct hierarchical connection between microcosm and macrocosm exemplified by the figure of Allworthy. Dickens' Lord is an inversion exemplifying the absence of spirit: "the Lord High Chancellor looks into the lantern that has no light in it" (p. 5). He and the rest of the court are engaged in action which has no direction, power or purpose: "here they are . . . mistily engaged in one of the ten thousand stages of an endless cause, tripping one another up on slippery precedents, groping knee-deep in technicalities, running their goat-hair and horse-hair warded heads against the walls of words" (p. 50). Even the title of the suit with which they are engaged gives an indication of the solipsistic isolation of their pursuit. From "Jarndyce vs. Jarndyce" it is impossible to expect any issue. Dickens hints at the fact that this court of law is a daimonic inversion of God's justice. In using the words "suffer any wrong that can be done to you, rather than come here!" (p. 6), there is a significant reverberation of the fearsome words over the entrance to Dante's Inferno:

Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrare.

This awareness of the absence of spirit in a religious sense is not limited to the Court of Chancery. When Esther comes to London she is led to a building which has a broad flight of stairs, like the entrance to a church, with a churchyard next to it. This former church is now the location of the law office of Kenge and Carboy. The debilitating influence of the lack of a moral foothold spreads
even to the country. Mr. John Jarndyce explains that *Bleak House* had at one time been called "The Peaks." In terms of the religious connotation of high places, it is significant that "The Peaks's" previous owner, after becoming involved in the suit, should have given the house its present name. The supreme example of the loss of a religious absolute is Dickens' description of the orphan Jo: "And there he sits, munching and gnawing, and looking up at the great Cross on the summit of St. Paul's cathedral, glittering above a red and violet-tinted cloud of smoke. From the boy's face one might suppose that sacred emblem to be, in his eyes, the crowning confusion of the great, confused city; so golden, so high up, so far out of reach. There he sits, the sun going down, the river running fast, the crowd flowing by him in two streams—everything moving on to some purpose and to one end—until he is stirred up, and told to 'move on'" (p. 238).

The irony is that this description does not apply to Jo alone. Everyone in the novel, with the possible exception of Mr. Jarndyce and Esther, has the illusion that the world around him moves to some purpose or end which he is unable to understand. The people in the novel are unable to accept reality as it seems at the beginning of the novel: the omnipresent fog blurring all distinction, the soft black soot covering all outlines, the mud reducing all appearances to a blurred suggestion of that prehistoric event, the flood. On a less literal level this would seem to mean that social, moral, and ethical distinctions have become equally blurred.
There is no absolute to hold on to, no foothold for any stance, no foundation for self or society. The characters in *Bleak House* live in a world in which they can only grope for some meaning guided by the light of their private understanding. As Sir Leicester Dedlock concludes: "'... then upon my honor, upon my life, upon my reputation and principles, the floodgates of society are burst open, and the waters have--a--obliterated the landmarks of the framework of the cohesion by which things are held together'" (p. 539).

Though the fog penetrates everything, just as the mud covers all things without discrimination, the levelling influence does seem to emanate from a center. "The raw afternoon is rawest, and the dense fog densest, and the muddy streets are muddiest, near that leaden-headed old corporation: Temple Bar. And hard by Temple Bar, in Lincoln's Inn Hall, at the very heart of the fog, sits the Lord High Chancellor in his High Court of Chancery" (p. 4). In relating the degeneration of the social and moral system to the figure of the Lord High Chancellor, Dickens' suggestion is that the loss of spiritual power, the severance of the bonds between microcosm and macrocosm is at the heart of the crumbling structure.

Because of the absence of a root in something larger than itself, the Court of Chancery, the Lord Chancellor, and the law have become evil institutions with no other purpose than the perpetuation of their own existence. Rather than extend care to the orphans under its protection, the
court destroys their lives in a never-ending suit of which the only profits go towards maintaining the system of the law. The interminable case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce exemplifies the fact that of the two traditional qualities of the deity, mercy and justice, only justice is left. And justice without mercy is evil. In the novel it leads to the death of the soul, it converts people into things and spirit into matter.

The daimonic qualities of Chancery are presented to the reader in an indirect though concentrated form in the figure of Krook, the double of the Lord High Chancellor. This old man is the owner of a rag and bottle warehouse filled with dusty decomposing objects. In his shop, called the Court of Chancery by his neighbours, everything seems to be bought and nothing to be sold. It is a place of stagnation. The owner accumulates around himself objects with the sole purpose of hoarding them. Their proper use and function are forgotten; they merely serve as an extension of their owner. Just so the court sees the case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce only as a "monument of Chancery practice."

The suggestion of stasis and death implied in the notion of hoarding is brought out poignantly in the fact that Krook deals in skins and hair. Whereas Chancery sacrifices human lives to the harrowing process of an interminable lawsuit and leaves them the mere hulls of people, just so Krook stretches out his hands to Ada's lovely hair. On visiting Krook's shop, Richard, one of the victims of Chancery practice,
whispers to Ada his fantasy that "yonder in a corner, piled together and picked very clean, were the bones of clients. . . ." (p. 51). Indeed, this twin brother of the Lord High Chancellor seems like Polyphemus in Homer's *Odyssey*, a cavedwelling ogre living off human flesh. Even his cat, Lady Jane, is ever watchful for the opportunity to eat Youth, Hope, and Beauty, or the other birds in Miss Flite's cage. Krook's death by spontaneous combustion seems therefore entirely appropriate. Though it is impossible from a realistic point of view, this death symbolizes the fact that eventually Krook himself has become an object; the self-consumption of his soul and body mirrors his relationship to the world.  

Dickens tells us: "The Lord Chancellor of that Court, true to his title in the last act, has died the death of all Lord Chancellors in all courts, and of all the authorities in all places under all names soever, where false pretences are made, and where injustice is done. Call the death by any name Your Highness will, attribute it to whom you will, or say it might have been prevented how you will, it is the same death eternally—inborn, inbred, engendered in the corrupted humours of the vicious body itself, and that only—SpontaneousCombustion, and none other of all deaths that can be died" (pp. 430-31).

Since God the Father is perceived as an Absence in the world of *Bleak House* where we only find the daimonic perversion of the Lord High Chancellor, everybody is an "orphan." It is not merely the seven orphans of the novel (Jo, Esther,
Ada, Richard, Charley, and her little brother and sister) who have to find a way of life without the fostering care or identity given by a parent. In the book each individual of the fifteen sets of parents and children has to find or create an "identity," a continuous way of relating to the world, without the ancient role model of the father to hold on to. What we see in Bleak House, as far as personal relationships are concerned, might be called an anatomy of the ways in which it is possible to pervert a loving or charitable relationship between people.

According to the Church the hierarchy in the family is based on the way in which God relates to his Church. One of the most curious inversions of this relationship found in Bleak House is the abdication of responsibility and the switching of roles in marriage. Mr. Snagsby lives in terror of his wife. Mr. Jellyby is bereft of speech and will, by the hyperactivity of Mrs. Jellyby. Mrs. Bayhem Badger's favourite topic of conversation (like the Wife of Bath's) is the nature of her former husbands. Though the Bagnet family should probably be understood as coming nearest to Dickens' ideal of family life, even here traditional relationships have been switched. Mrs. Bagnet is the one who takes care of things. With the help of her umbrella and raincoat she can set everything right. Mr. Bagnet's function is to look on approvingly. It should be noted that the implied author does not disapprove of this situation, because the traditional hierarchy is still maintained. In the relationship
of the Bagnet marriage it is understood that however formidable Mrs. Bagnet may be, she will never receive any recognition of her effectiveness. The tacit assumption is that what she does cannot be acknowledged by her husband who has the final word. His stock phrase to the world is "discipline must be maintained." Thus the inversion of the traditional relationship is glossed over by the jovial determination of the family to conspire to a sentimental mock-traditionality.

Most people in *Bleak House* relate to the world in a way which we, since the advent of structural analysis in psychology, have come to call "playing games." People achieve an inauthentic way of being in the world. A glaring example of this is old Mr. Turveydrop. This narcissistic character models himself on the Prince Regent; in dress and in manner he is the foppish incarnation of deportment. However, his exaggerated style and breeding are no more than an appearance, a facade which hides the fundamental perversity, parasitism, and irrationality of his character. Behind the smooth exterior rests the rotten fact that Turveydrop exploits son and daughter-in-law with his grandiose demands, without giving anything more than his benignant approval in return. It is, in fact, Caddy's work which provides for the family; she takes the responsibility Mr. Turveydrop shirks. Ironically, this moral child will only give his consent to Caddy's marriage when she and Prince promise to "always make you--of course--our first consideration. You must ever be the Head and
Master here father; and we feel how truly unnatural it would be in us, if we failed to know it, or if we failed to exert ourselves in every possible way to please you" (p. 313).

The most telling example of a parasitic adaptation to the world is the character of Harold Skimpole. His public personality is that of the puer aeternus, his way of avoiding the care and responsibility of adulthood is the refusal to grow up. Skimpole's conversation is paradigmatic of the childishness, irresponsibility, and parasitism of the narcissistic concentration on enjoyment: "We are escaping from the counting-house world into the happy golden age. Cold forms are vanishing. I am growing young again!" (p. 72).

Thus Harold Skimpole, like Mr. Turveydrop, escapes the dis-enchanting awareness of physical, moral, and metaphysical inadequacy which comes with adulthood, by means of a narcissistic exploitation of others.

There are, of course, countless minor characters in the book who adapt to the world in similarly distorted ways. There is, for instance, grandfather Smallweed, who sits like a spider in his dark retreat, sucking George's "life-blood." His own impotence vents itself in rage against his invalid wife. Similarly Wholes, the lawyer, consumes Richard like a vulture or a beast of prey. The opposite of "consuming" a person is obliterating him with exaggerated care. This is what Mrs. Pardiggle does. She forcefully distributes pamphlets to the bricklayers at St. Albans and berates these poor illiterates for their inattention to her precepts.
Mrs. Pardiggle's philanthropy leaves no room for personal interaction. It is systematic, hardworking, and impersonal; as an "inexorable moral policeman" (p. 107), she defeats the purpose of her own charity. However, this does not faze her since, like Harold Skimpole and Turveydrop, she derives an identity from her activities. Apparently that is all she is interested in.

Mrs. Jellyby's philanthropy fulfills a similar purpose. In directing her attention to Africa, she can ignore her family at home. Her children are neglected through her dedication to the care of the natives of Borrioboola-Gha: her eyes have a "curious habit of seeming to look a long way off" (p. 37). This habit of disregarding the immediate environment for distant goals has as advantage that she is able to disregard the incredible chaos of her home in looking straight ahead at the cosmic cause. Her fight for the ethical well-being of other children than her own is an escape from the pain of adult responsibility. This is clear from her own words: "'Now, if my public duties were not a favorite child to me, if I were not occupied with large measures on a vast scale, these petty details might grieve me very much. . . ." (p. 317).

The state of society, bereft of the care of a metaphysical parent and a coherent ideology, is also exemplified by Mrs. Jellyby's house. Countless objects, without any apparent relatedness or similarity of purpose, come tumbling out of closets. Bits of decaying food, books, garbage, junk,
cutlery, clothes and candles clutter space. It is as if, with the hierarchy of the "Great Chain of Being," the order of the material world has completely disintegrated, and communication between people has broken down. At Caddy's wedding breakfast the guests live in the isolation of their own ego: "none of them seemed able to talk about anything but his, or her, own subject, and none of them seemed able to talk about even that, as part of a world in which there was anything else. . . ." (p. 401). The epitome of the disintegration of society, and of the isolation of the individual, is the figure of Jo, the crossing sweeper. It is interesting to note the words about Jo Dickens puts in the mouth of the preacher Chadband, himself an example of inauthentic identity achieved by means of the vicarious identification with something else. Chadband maintains that Jo is without "'parents, devoid of relations, devoid of flocks and herds, devoid of gold, or silver, and of precious stones, because he is devoid of the light that shines in upon some of us. What is that light? What is it? I ask you what is that light? . . . 'It is," says Chadband, 'the ray of rays, the sun of suns, the moon of moons, the star of stars. It is the light of Terewth'" (p. 341). "Terewth" is, of course, a perversion of "truth." In the world of Bleak House, any ideology or construction of a metaphysics is a perversion, and Chadband's type seems of a particularly odious kind.

In this blighted world without absolute standards, precepts, and role models, Chancery and its evil influence
dominate the lives of the characters of *Bleak House*. The effects of the suit insinuate themselves into the lives of the most insignificant characters of the story, though its unsettling spell especially affects the major characters. One might say that "chancery" is another word for the blighted condition of human existence in the novel. In a world without absolute, life may be experienced as an interminably protracted lawsuit, a suit which has its origin long before the individual enters the domain of its sway, and which obviates the possibility of settling down. Life under the shadow of a lawsuit is life as process. Whereas Esther and Mr. Jarndyce do not let themselves be influenced by the fact of the suit to deviate from what they regard as their purpose in life, the weaker characters in the novel identify with it. Thus they change what should have been the background of their lives into the foreground. Richard Clare adapts more and more to a "temporary condition." In the course of his fascination with the workings of Justicia, who is as blindly destructive as the Goddess Fortuna in Medieval literature, his moral character becomes unsettled. He begins to suffer from mood swings, and he irrationally sacrifices his friends, his jobs, his wife and her inheritance to his addiction to the practice of the law. His defense to Esther echoes his inability to tolerate the absence of an absolute: ". . . but how can I be more settled? If you were condemned to leave everything you undertook, unfinished, you would find it hard to apply yourself to anything; and yet
that's my unhappy case. I was born into this unfinished contention with all its chances and changes, and it began to settle me. . . ." (p. 307). To Richard, the temporariness of his condition becomes an obsession, he has "no care, no mind, no heart, no soul, but for one thing" (p. 583-84). In fact, Richard's obsession mirrors the laws of operation of Chancery. Just as the suit evolves concentrating only on its own internal mechanism of operation, Richard's life courses towards its end in a narcissistic focussing on the very pre-conditions of its existence. Richard's death, like Krook's death, is an inevitable conclusion.

Richard is not the only one unable to accept life without definite outline. Tom Jarndyce blew his brains out in despair; the foolish Miss Flite has dedicated herself to the expectation of a judgment. "I expect a judgment. Shortly. On the Day of Judgment. I have discovered that the sixth seal mentioned in the Revelations is the Great Seal. It has been open a long time!"(p. 33-34). This parody of a wise virgin has, like her brother and sister before her, nothing but death to look forward to. "'My father expected a Judgment,' said Miss Flite. 'My brother. My sister. They all expected a Judgment. The same that I expect.' 'They are all--' 'Ye-es. Dead of course, my dear,' said she" (p. 470). Chancery the "valley of the shadow of the law" (p. 418) is truly the valley of the shadow of death.

We see in Bleak House a complete inversion of Tom Jones. The apocalyptic category has become evil. It no longer
radiates the meaningful significance which makes it vital and important. Instead its influence on society takes the form of the spreading of a deadly contagion. Dickens' use of the concept of Chancery might be compared to Nietzsche's description of the death of God in *The Gay Science*. His madman cries, echoing the disorientation of the characters in *Bleak House*, "Whither are we moving now? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there any up or down left? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night and more night coming on all the while? Must not lanterns be lit in the morning? Do we not hear anything yet of the noise of the gravediggers who are burying God? Do we not smell anything yet of God's decomposition?"  

The image of Chancery as a corpse from which life has gone extends itself to the way in which the novel deals with the concepts of writing and text. The Bible, if it can no longer command belief, turns from the living Word and Testament into a mere material book. Just so writing in *Bleak House* has become intrinsically meaningless. The codices of the law, the written will of the community, merely issue in more stacks of paper. The Chancery suit itself ends in tons of paper being carried out of the courtroom. Mrs. Jellyby's philanthropy channels itself into the perpetual production of letters—apparently without effect. Krook, the Lord High Chancellor's double, cannot read. He ominously writes
capital letters on the wall, which might mean Jarndyce. Through his action the name Jarndyce itself acquires the connotation of prophetic doom of the Biblical mene tekel upharsin. Also, at the heart of Esther's history are the letters between Lady Dedlock and Captain Hawdon. The bonds and spirit of love to which these letters testify has been betrayed in order to contract a marriage with the socially desirable Lord Dedlock. The letters themselves, no longer meaningful to the people concerned, have become merely objects, and are stacked away among the heaps of old paper generated by the law, in Krook's warehouse. It seems significant that the revelation of Esther's origin should take its beginning in Lady Dedlock's startled recognition of the handwriting of one of Mr. Tulkinghorn's lawpapers. Again Dickens uses the figure of Jo, the most abandoned orphan in this world of children abandoned by their metaphysical father, to exemplify the condition of all: "It must be a strange state to be like Jo! To shuffle through the streets, unfamiliar with the shapes, and in utter darkness as to the meaning, of those mysterious symbols, so abundant over the shops, and at the corners of streets, and on the doors, and in the windows! To see people read, and to see people write, and to see the postmen deliver letters, and not to have the least idea of all that language--to be, to every scrap of it, stone blind and dumb! It must be very puzzling to see the good company going to church on Sundays, with their books in their hands, and to think . . . . what
does it all mean, and if it means anything to anybody, how come's it that it means nothing to me?" (p. 213).  

The central metaphor under which Dickens subsumes all the implications of the "death of God" in the novel is that of darkness. The absence of light and the falling of shadows are, throughout the whole novel, related to the fog emanating from chancery and the extinguished lantern of the Lord High Chancellor. The imagery is so closely woven into the verbal texture of the novel that even scenes which at first sight might not seem directly related to the menacing presence of Chancery are brought into its sphere of influence by the use of these metaphors. To illustrate the point I shall give one example taken at random from the novel: Richard and Ada Clare pass into the next room, "on which the sun is shining": ". . . they went on lightly through the sunlight, as their own happy thoughts might then be traversing the years to come, and making them all years of brightness. So they passed away into the shadow, and were gone. It was only a burst of light that had been so radiant. The room darkened as they went out, and the sun was clouded over" (p. 176). Since darkness is synonymous with the evil influence of Chancery, this passage foreshadows the outcome of Richard's involvement with the suit of Jarndyce vs. Jarndyce.  

The antidote to the darkness of Chancery is the light connected with Esther Summerson. Unlike Tom Jones, where Squire Allworthy was the source of light and sun imagery
since he was the highest ranking person in the Summerset World, in *Bleak House* the source of light is the private, individual self in the form of a defenseless orphan girl. In a sense Esther is the female counterpart of Tom Jones, the son of Mr. Summer. The difference between them resides in the fact that Tom's "quest" is the suggested transformation of the evil qualities of his own nature in order to adapt himself to the higher world. Esther's "quest," on the other hand, is meant to suggest the extension of the goodness and light of her individual self as a counter to the evil of the surrounding social world. Like *Tom Jones*, *Bleak House* uses the archetypal romance quest motif, the association of the enemy with "winter, darkness, confusion, sterility, moribund life, and old age, and the hero with spring, dawn, order, fertility, vigor, and youth." The differences in the ways Dickens uses the themes have their origin in his changed experience of the world. Yet, however changed the world may be, it is structured and given form by means of a version of the immemorial romance motif.

What we have then, in *Bleak House*, is an "Oedipus situation" on an enlarged scale. The search for identity extends to most members of society. The fact that one finds oneself in a deficient social structure without the possibility of pinpointing a particular cause of the present darkness and degeneration leads to the sensation that there must be a secret cause somewhere. The blight of disintegration which has fallen on *Bleak House* leads, like the plague
of Thebes, to the idea that the contagion must stem from a cause hidden in the past. Just as a child, unable to accept the world for what it is, may think adults are keeping a vital secret from him, it seems natural that one ascribes the imperfections of the present to a hidden occurrence in the past. The significance of this conception extends beyond *Bleak House* to other literature. The detective novel, for instance, is a typical development of the later nineteenth century. This literary type makes the process of search for a hidden cause the major feature of its form. Even in *Bleak House*, written in 1852, the search for Tulkinghorn's murderer and the creation of the detective Bucket may be thought to exemplify structurally the Oedipal situation of contemporary society. Related to this is the fact that in the nineteenth century science was largely preoccupied with the explanation of causes. The theory of evolution, for instance, does not merely describe the world, it explains the present by means of patterns already established in the past.

Many inhabitants of the world of *Bleak House* are engaged in the act of discovering secrets of others, or covering up their own. People seek or fear some kind of clarity, and society as a whole practices repression. Krook thrives on mystery and tries to read the secrets of his documents. Nemo, his lodger, has an earlier identity as Captain Hawdon. Trooper George is secretly Mrs. Rouncewell's son. Snagsby hides from his wife the nature of his
involvement with Jo, while Mrs. Snagsby tries to unravel the activities of her husband. Guppy is searching for the documents which will prove Lady Dedlock's involvement in Esther's history. Hortense tries to cover up her murder of Mr. Tulkinghorn; and finally Esther, the heroine of the novel is ignorant of her own identity. Connected with the existence of secrets is the mysterious sensation of impending doom. Just as repression may cause anxiety in the individual, in the novel the repression of something that happened in the past causes the sensation of mystery and impending doom.

One wonders if the analogy with Oedipus may not extend even further. In Sophocles' play Oedipus has repressed the knowledge that he killed his father. Notwithstanding his frantic search to find a cause for the plague affecting Thebes, he is unwilling to recognize the cause as related to himself. Similarly the people in Bleak House suffer from anxiety for which they try to find a solution in tracing back a cause in the past. In trying to assign the cause for the inadequacy of the present to actions in the past, they are in fact creating what amounts to the concept of original sin. However, this is an undogmatic kind of original sin, since the responsibility for the act devolves entirely upon the past, whereas the Church maintains that all descendants of Adam are equally flawed. The present generation of Bleak House, therefore, represses or denies its participation in the act of mind which amounts to the killing of God. Just like Snagsby, every member of this society is "party to
some dangerous secret, without knowing what it is. And it is the fearful peculiarity of this condition that, at any hour of his daily life, at any opening of the shop door, at any pull of the bell, at any entrance of a messenger, or any delivery of a letter, the secret may take air and fire, explode and blow up..." (p. 337). The fog and mud which obliterate all distinctions and prevent clear vision in the novel are not only an indication of the state of society without the clear light of metaphysical guidance; they indicate just as much the moral blindness of these people who refuse to take responsibility for the state of their environment. Oedipus blinds himself after the act of discovery to give a concrete and ineluctable representation of his former state of mind. The fog in Bleak House may indicate more than the impossibility of moral vision—it may indicate also the repression of those who live in its shadow.

Since the fog emanates from Chancery, we may even go one step further and describe the particular form this repression takes. The function of Lord High Chancellor, as the world of the novel indicates, is no longer vitally related to a cosmology. It has become a dead form. The position of the highest Lord in Chancery is devoid of organic significance for society. It is merely the incarnation of an appearance which hides the absence of reality and meaning. Life under the influence of Chancery then is a life of forms and appearances, disguising the hollowness at the core. Whereas Esther and Mr. Jarndyce, the "good" characters of
the novel, recognize the bankruptcy of the system and create their own society in *Bleak House*, the majority of the characters in the novel are engaged in participating in or maintaining the forms and institutions of society, thus actively covering up or preventing the realization of the hollowness and emptiness left by the death of God."

Of all the characters in the novel the person whose actions best exemplify the concept of repression is Lady Dedlock. The narrator describes her "... as so long accustomed to suppress emotion, and keep down reality; so long schooled for her own purposes, in that destructive school which shuts up the natural feelings of the heart, like flies in amber, the feeling and the unfeeling, the sensible and the senseless" that "... she has subdued even her wonder until now" (p. 709). Miss Flite, the "crazy Jane" of this novel whispers: "... in my opinion ... she's the Lord Chancellor's wife. He's married, you know. And I understand she leads him a terrible life" (p. 467). The narrator points out at the beginning of the book that the Court of Chancery and the aristocratic circles in which Lady Dedlock moves are very similar. "Both the world of fashion and the Court of Chancery are things of precedent and usage; oversleeping Rip Van Winkles, who have played at strange games through a deal of thundery weather; sleeping beauties, whom the knight will wake one day ..." (p. 9-10). Though the image of these institutions as sleeping beauties hints at the break of a continuity of consciousness between present
and past, and suggests a future awakening to reality, in themselves these references to fairy-tale figures do not communicate their threatening nature. This suggestion is communicated by the haunting resonance of the ghost on the terrace of Chesney Wold. Its uncanny sound indicates that the "great old Dedlock family is breaking up" (p. 741).

Sir Leicester, whose social function mirrors the judicial place of the Lord High Chancellor in the "Great Chain of Being, still "supposes all his dependents to be utterly bereft of individual characters, intentions, or opinions, and is persuaded that he was born to supersede the necessity of their having any" (p. 84). His confrontation with reality takes the form of the occurrence of the original, sexual sin in the bosom of his own family. However, his relationship with Lady Dedlock is the mainstay of his life. However, he is confronted with the fact that her present behaviour hides the existence of an illicit love in the past. Thus, the foundation of his character and position crumbles at the realization of the deceit on which Lady Dedlock's character is founded. It becomes evident that the impressive facade of the Dedlock family hides the same rotten core as the institution of Chancery. Just like the function of the Lord High Chancellor, Lord Dedlock's eminent social position is based on the suppression of the fact of an "original sin."

What is repressed, however, will out. It is a fact observed in psychoanalysis that the material from the past which has been denied entrance to consciousness will fester
and erupt in the form of undesirable symptoms. In fact it is only the existence of these irrational symptoms which points to a hidden cause. In the world of _Bleak House_, the mode in which the repression of the fact that the worldview inspiring its social institutions is defunct manifests itself is in the corruption and disease of Tom-all-Alone's. Notwithstanding all the plans to remedy the existence of this evil, no action has been taken. In revenge for being ignored, the place spreads contagion, fever and corruption over society. "Even the winds are his messengers, and they serve him in these hours of darkness. There is not a drop of Tom's corrupted blood but propagates infection and contagion somewhere. It shall pollute, this very night, the choice stream (in which chemists on analysis would find the genuine nobility) of a Norman house, and his Grace shall not be able to say Nay to the infamous alliance. There is not an atom of Tom's slime, not a cubic inch of any pestilential gas in which he lives, not one obscenity or degradation about him, not an ignorance, nor a wickedness, not a brutality of his committing, but shall work its retribution, through every order of society, up to the proudest of the proud, and to the highest of the high. Verily, what with tainting, plundering, and spoiling, Tom has his revenge" (p. 590). Like Sophocles, Dickens uses the concept of contagion to indicate the evil nature of the suppression of the fact that the said structure is hollow at the core.¹⁴ The supreme victim of the contagion spread by Tom-all-Alone's is Esther. She suffers from a
deadly disease which is never given a name in the book. Though the disease may be mysterious in origin and nature, its effects are visible. It marks forever the beauty of her face.

Because of its repression of a sexual secret, the social order under Lord Dedlock is as corrupt as the legal order under the Lord High Chancellor. These two Lords fulfill together the function of what in Tom Jones was the apocalyptic category of Mr. Allworthy and Mr. Western. The difference is that what was regarded as the incarnation of goodness in Tom Jones has become the epitome of evil and darkness in Bleak House. There is more to Bleak House, however, than the portrayal of a corrupt social world. Dickens also gives his readers a view of what he considers the ideal alternative to the evil of the social world. Contrasted to Chancery and Chesney Wold there is the private moral order of Bleak House. If Chancery and Chesney Wold, because of the absence of love and responsibility, have become "daimonic," the order, light, love, music, intimacy, and cultivated gardens of Bleak House make it the counterpart to what in Tom Jones was the apocalyptic Paradise Hall. In Bleak House the occurrence of doubling is even more fundamental than in the earlier novel. Against the evil backdrop of the world of public institutions, there is in the foreground another, private world in which the apocalyptic qualities which have disappeared from the public world are still existent.

The counterpart of Squire Allworthy in this apocalyptic
world is Mr. Jarndyce. He is the substitute father for Ada and Richard, who are wards of Chancery, as well as for the orphan Esther Summerson. Instead of shirking responsibility he extends his care and love beyond the point of obligation. He can always be counted on to right the wrongs of society as far as that is in his power, as in the case of Charley Neckett and her brother and sister. Yet he resolutely keeps to himself. He avoids any involvement with the Chancery suit of Jarndyce and Jarndyce, though he is implicated in it, and he refuses to take it seriously or to grant it power over his life. Jarndyce, who represents of the two characteristic attributes of the deity the quality of mercy, creates around him his own private society, his "green world" which is the opposite of the deadly pattern of life in Chancery. If the involvement with the judicial apparatus of Chancery means an inescapable death, the adherence to the merciful laws of Bleak House results in regeneration and life. For instance, Richard's death could not have taken place if he had stayed in the atmosphere of Bleak House, and Ada's loving gesture of following him into the world is felt by Esther and Mr. Jarndyce as a supreme sacrifice. Jarndyce is described by Esther with what might be considered the displacement of a halo: "As I sat looking fixedly at him, and the sun's rays descended, softly shining through the leaves, upon his bare head, I felt as if the brightness on him must be like the brightness of the Angels" (p. 805). Thus the world of Bleak House is the antidote to the contaminating
influence of Chancery.

However, the mere fact of the side-by-side existence of Chesney Wold and Chancery on the one hand, and the private world of Bleak House and Mr. Jarndyce on the other, does not constitute a mediation between these two irreconcilable categories. The suggestion of mediation is brought into the novel in the form of Esther Summerson and her "quest." It is the ambivalent nature of Esther who has a dual identity which makes the suggestion of mediation possible. Esther is, on the one hand, the illegitimate daughter of Lady Dedlock and Captain Hawdon. She is the embodiment of the very original sin which lies at the heart of the fog, its direct and tangible result. On the other hand, Esther represents the very virtues of order, cleanliness and charity related to the moral order of Bleak House. Just as Tom Jones has two identities, one apparent as a foundling, one real as a relation to Mr. Allworthy, Esther has two identities. However, in her case there is no distinction between apparent and real, they coexist within one person. She remains throughout both the Mistress of Bleak House as well as the daughter of Lady Dedlock. What we should notice is that in Bleak House it is the private identity which is undesirable not Esther's public role. In fact her excruciating sense of being unworthy impels her to prove herself morally worthy of the honour of living at Bleak House. As we will see later, Esther overachieves; the daimonic nature of her birth cannot be disregarded, but must be assimilated
into consciousness before Esther can become the mistress of the new Bleak House. Thus the dichotomy between private and public which structures the novel is mediated in Esther's character. The implied suggestion of Dickens' novel is that ultimately human nature is not divine or apocalyptic as Fielding's plot wanted us to believe. Dickens' "fantasmatic" suggestion, implied in the structure of Esther's "quest," is that the deepest human reality is biological, or sexual, and daimonic. However, the overt suggestion of the novel is that Esther's typically Victorian, ideal qualities of unwavering dedication to duty, and self-sacrifice circumscribe the evil attached to her birth. Thus Dickens has it both ways. While seeming to ascribe the return to origin at the end of the novel to Esther's dedication, the new beginning which closes the narrative is, in reality, dependent upon Esther's return to the Primal Scene.

Esther's double identity is one of the many instances of doubling in the novel. It is as if the linking opposition of public and private, open and concealed, conscious and unconscious, though these extremes are uneasily united in Esther's character, breaks apart in the rest of the novel and gives rise to scores of pairs of doubles. First of all, looking at the structure itself, there is the striking fact of the two narrative voices: one domestically intimate, one coldly impersonal. One relates the story from the inside in the small personal voice of retrospection, the other reports the action in an objective mechanical third-person
continuous present. There are other examples of doubling. There is the suit of Jarndyce vs. Jarndyce. The Lord High Chancellor has his double, Krook. There are two Bleak Houses, two wills. Esther suffers two illnesses. There are the Smallweed twins. Mrs. Jellyby is paired to Mrs. Pardiggle. Mrs. Rouncewell has two sons. However, the plot thickens when we come nearer to Esther herself. In her childhood she is taken care of by two equally Calvinistic "godmothers," Miss Barbary and Mrs. Rachel. When she goes to school it is at the establishment of the two Miss Donny's. Later on she herself as a substitute mother takes care of Caddy and Charley. Even in the two wives of the brick-layers in St. Albans, there is a doubling of the mater dolorosa figure.

Taylor Stoehr points out that Mademoiselle Hortense's murder of Mr. Tulkinghorn is the acting out of the wishes of Honoria, Lady Dedlock. On learning of the murder, Lady Dedlock's horror and fear could hardly have been more intense had she been the real murderess. "Typical dream devices connect her desire with Mademoiselle Hortense's act. They are lady and maid; each disguises herself in order to be mistaken for the other; each acts out of excessive pride, yet each finds herself a supplicant to Esther at some point in the novel . . . . Both hate Tulkinghorn, both visit his chambers on the fatal night, and so on. In the chief difference between the two lies a clue to the true meaning of the doubling: the violence Lady Dedlock has suppressed
is fully embodied in Mademoiselle Hortense's character and action . . . "16 However, apart from allowing the author to represent Lady Dedlock's unconscious wishes, Hortense also serves another function. Her actions lead to the shattering of Lady Dedlock's self-confidence and the lifting of her repression. Stoehr's conclusion is that the representation of these two characters as symbolic twins results from the "projections onto separate characters of the conflicting impulses of the dreamer. Through them Dickens conveys the ambivalence and complexity of his dream meaning without expressly stating it."17 What we find then in our analysis of Esther's quest is not only the fact that the split between private and public has given rise to the repeated doubling of characters, but that doubling also fulfills the function of allowing the author to express both the conscious and unconscious sides of his own stance with regard to the central issue of Bleak House. The complexity of the plot of Bleak House, with its many twists and turns, is partly due to Dickens' own ambivalence about the real implications of his vision.

An example of this is the doubling of the figures of Tulkinghorn and Bucket. Both pursue Lady Dedlock. Together they are the detectives whose actions constitute the search motif of the novel. What is interesting about them is the difference in their characters and the differing ways in which they fit in the Manichean world of the novel. Tulkinghorn belongs to the world of Chancery and Chesney Wold. He is
the trusted confidante on whom Lord Dedlock relies completely to take care of his affairs. He is also the most powerful lawyer in the legal world of Chancery. Dickens shows us, by means of Tulkinghorn's surroundings, that Tulkinghorn embodies the very qualities of his world. His rooms are dark and gloomy, his clothes never shine, everything he owns is behind lock and key, he hoards secrets and even words, like Krook: "His interest in Lady Dedlock is not disinterested. As Fradin suggests, it serves to confirm the repression of his own sexuality." Tulkinghorn, then, is the real villain of the story. Not only because he threatens Lady Dedlock, but the repression and secrecy of his character exemplify the disease of society itself. In giving him his prominent position in society, Dickens points to the fact that in a world like that of Bleak House, it is repression and hoarding which lead to success. Yet, like Krook, Tulkinghorn is destroyed by his own rottenness. His death is necessary for the further action of the novel. It allows Dickens to continue the search pattern of the novel and to bring it into the private sphere of Esther. Tulkinghorn's death is the incident which gives rise to the unification of the two separate narrative threads of the novel. Now the search for the secret of Lady Dedlock becomes the physical search for her whereabouts. Sir Leicester's confidence, formerly only given to Tulkinghorn, is now placed in Bucket: "Of all men upon earth, Sir Leicester seems fallen from his high estate to place sole
trust and reliance upon this man" (p. 716).

If Tulkinghorn is the arch-villain of the story, Bucket is in a sense the real hero. His power is equal to that of Tulkinghorn, though in a different way. He controls the territory between St. Albans and London, and wherever he and Esther go in their search, they are surrounded by Bucket's ever-present mysterious attendants. He is no less acute than Tulkinghorn in piercing the secrets of Lady Dedlock and recognizes her ploy of changing clothes with Jenny. "Angel and devil by turns" (p. 698), Bucket seems to other characters in the novel an almost supernatural figure. To Snagsby he suddenly appears ex nihilo. Thus, while Tulkinghorn embodies the qualities which make for success in the daimonic society of London, Bucket, since he is in Esther's confidence, probably incarnates those qualities which Dickens admired as a counterweight to the secrecy of Tulkinghorn. Bucket is a public figure who solves secrets and dispels "fog" on a wide scale. If Tulkinghorn, like Krook and the Lord High Chancellor, creates an ambiance of ambiguity by hiding secrets, Bucket, in shedding light on these mysteries in the interest of society, is the masculine counterpart to Esther Summerson.

However, the process of Esther's search is a private one. The discovery of her identity and her acceptance of its nature cannot be missed in the novel. The problems of the society of Bleak House cannot be solved merely by the public actions of detectives like Bucket. In Tom Jones the
discovery of Tom's identity in itself would not have been enough to make him morally worthy of Sophia; in **Bleak House** the resolution of the problems of a world without God require a change in the human heart itself. This change, I take it, is what Dickens tries to imply in Esther's "quest."

Like the other characters in the novel, Esther is a "child of the universe" (p. 72). Her plight in the story exemplifies what applies to everyone, the fact that the universe "makes rather an indifferent parent" (P. 72). She grows up deprived of the social background, moral support, love and identity parents normally give to their children. Her mother as well as her father have given up their identity to become someone else. Her father's assumed name is "Nemo," "no one." The notion that "nobody" is one's father suggests of course the motif of virgin birth. The irony of Esther's situation is that she will have to discover that her conception was anything but immaculate. In fact, it is laden with the worst opprobrium society can attach to it, illegitimacy. Just as the child faced with the Oedipal realization that his own birth did not come about without sexual act, Esther and the other orphans of this family romance will be confronted with Lady Dedlock's sexuality.

Instead of acquiring an identity from growing up in a family, Esther is given a negative or inverse social identity by the aunt who raises her. Esther is taught to perceive her existence as related to and dependent upon a hideous event in the past. Her birthdays are the occasion for lamenting
the sin which she must try to make undone: "For yourself, unfortunate girl, orphaned and degraded from the first of these evil anniversaries, pray daily that the sins of others be not visited upon your head, according to what is written" (p. 19). Since her godmother keeps Esther isolated from society because of the moral stain clinging to her, Esther soon realizes that her situation is the inverse of the fairy tale. Though she is brought up by a godmother she realizes that she is different: "only I was not charming" (p. 17). Because she believes what her godmother teaches her, Esther acquires a negative self-concept, and the real, private "self" which might have been had she grown up under different circumstances is repressed. Instead Esther defers to the precepts of her environment. She looks up to her godmother and Mrs. Rachel, whom the reader perceives as religious fanatics, as truly good women and is crushed by her own unworthiness. She even tells us her own understanding is weak, which is obviously not the case.

The "real" self is projected upon her doll, her only source of comfort. "I seldom dared to open my lips, and never dared to open my heart, to anybody else" (p. 16). This real self is never born, it conforms to the injunction of her godmother: "It would have been far better, little Esther, that you had had no birthday; that you had never been born!" (p. 18). Thus Esther's personality is split from the very beginning. When she leaves to go to the boarding school of the Miss Donnys, she definitively buries her doll,
and her other self.

After doing this, Esther makes the resolution to "repair the fault I had been born with (of which I confusingly felt guilty and yet innocent)" (p. 19). As she grows up she will strive to redeem the mysterious blight clinging to her name by being "industrious, contented and kind-hearted, and to do some good to someone, and win some love to myself if I could" (p. 19). After her stay at school, where she develops into the self-sacrificing, dutiful person she had set out to become, she finds her place at Bleak House.

Here she deliberately and obsessively creates order out of disorder. She jingles her housekeeping keys to the refrain of "Esther, duty, my dear," and extends her own already overdeveloped sense of responsibility to the lives of Caddy Jellyby, Charley Neckett, and the bricklayers' wives. By Mr. Jarndyce, Richard and Ada, she is accepted at her own valuation of her dutifully redemptive identity.

"They said there could be no East wind where Somebody was; they said that wherever Dame Durden went, there was sunshine and summer air" (p. 403). Even Harold Skimpole, whose whole life is the effort to dodge responsibility, cannot help but express his admiration for Esther's organizing capacities. Esther's efforts to make up for the "original sin" which has given her her identity are seemingly completely successful. Mr. Jarndyce accepts her as the woman of the Child's Rhyme: "'Little old woman, and whither so high?'--'To sweep the cobwebs out of the sky'" (p. 97). She is, in short, what
even Mr. Bucket calls her, "a pattern" young lady (p. 753).

Yet, the narrative suggests that her efforts at creating an identity have been only too successful, and that the success of her role prevents her psychological growth. For instance, in her early days at Bleak House Esther lets Jarndyce know that she is satisfied to live without knowing the secret of her identity. "... if there were anything I ought to know, or had any need to know, I should not have to ask you to tell it to me. If my whole reliance and confidence were not placed in you, I must have a hard heart indeed. I have nothing to ask you; nothing in the world" (p. 99). She seems to abdicate the responsibility for her own identity to the fatherly Mr. Jarndyce. However, later in the novel, she will have occasion to come back on this decision. The secret of her birth will out.

Another problem with Esther's conformity to the atmosphere of Bleak House is that the level of interaction of its inhabitants and the tone of conversation are rather infantile. Jarndyce's character is that of the friendly giant who neutralizes his fearsome qualities by speaking and acting childishly. Thus his stock phrase, whenever something disagreeable happens, is the "wind blows from the east." There is a "growlery" in Bleak House; and Mr. Jarndyce refuses to accept others' expressions of gratitude for his generosity. Though one realizes that this way of behaviour, like the games of the Bagnet family, are sentimental representations of family life, one cannot fail to
notice that personal interaction remains limited to "playing games." Though not psychologically destructive, they do not contribute to Esther's emotional development.

A further indication that the atmosphere at Bleak House tends to confirm Esther in her habit of suppressing her true nature is her comment on the use of nicknames: "This was the beginning of my being called Old Woman, and Little Old Woman, and Cobweb, and Mrs. Shipton, and Mother Hubbard, and Dame Durden, and so many names of that sort, that my own name became soon quite lost among them" (p. 98).22

Another way in which the environment proves to be static, if not growth-inhibiting, is in the stereotyping of Esther as an old maid, implied in her nicknames. Though Esther is attractive and likes Richard from the first meeting, as Alex Zwerdling points out, Esther is put down as the chaperone for the romance of Ada and Richard.23 Even Jarndyce confides to her his expectations of a possible marriage between Ada and Richard. It is as if Esther, in burying her doll, had buried her sexuality: Jarndyce's disclosure sets her mind wandering back to the days of her childhood. However, she immediately dispels her trembling speculations about the extent of Mr. Jarndyce's knowledge of her past, with the jingling reminder of her duty.

The repressed identity tied to her childhood doll does not disappear completely. At moments of emotional crisis the image of the doll and her childhood days comes up from her unconscious. When Guppy, the vulgar young lawyer, proposes
to her in the chapter the author calls "Signs and Tokens," Esther refuses him without a moment's consideration. Nevertheless this incident seems to have awakened some buried feeling: "But, when I went up-stairs to my own room, I surprised myself by beginning to laugh about it, and then surprised myself still more by beginning to cry about it. I was in a flutter for a little while; and felt as if an old chord had been more coarsely touched than it had ever been since the days of the dear old doll, long buried in the garden" (p. 124-25).

The doll, and Esther's former self, crop up again when she sees Lady Dedlock for the first time in church. At her entrance she receives a shock. "And, very strangely, there was something quickened within me, associated with the lonely days at my godmother's; yes, away even to the days when I had stood on tiptoe to dress myself at my little glass, after dressing my doll" (p. 240). Though she does not know this is her mother, her childhood identity is reawakened by the appearance of this figure.

Consequently the premonition of a buried self becomes stronger and rises to consciousness when Esther starts out to see Jo at the bricklayers' in St. Albans. Standing outside in the clear expanse of night sky, she sees on one side the "pale dead light both beautiful and awful" where the sun has set. On the other is the "lurid glare" of London. Esther comments: "the contrast between these two lights, and the fancy which the redder light engendered of an
unearthly fire, gleaming on all the unseen buildings of the
city, and on all the faces of its many thousands of wonder-
ing inhabitants, was as solemn as might be" (p. 406).
Clearly Esther has to make a choice. She has the "undefin-
able impression" of herself as "being something different
from what I then was. I know it was then and there that I
had it" (p. 406). The road she takes leads away from the
lurid glare of London in the direction of the setting sun.
She goes to the poor cottages where Jo lies ill. Her
impression of herself as really being someone else is
mirrored by Jo's fright at seeing her. "... she looks to
me t'other one. It ain't the bonnet, nor yet it ain't the
gownd, but she looks to me t'other one" (p. 407).

Esther's subsequent illness represents her confronta-
tion with her repressed, "true" identity. This can be
deduced from the pattern of events only, since Dickens does
not present his readers with the articulated psychological
conflicts of his personages. Somewhat like ritual or dream,
a Dickens novel consists of scene and action, and it is left
up to the reader to distill a rational interpretation from
the succession of events. Esther's illness and recovery
are, according to Northrop Frye, the low mimetic displace-
ment of the "structural pattern of the death and revival of
the heroine."24 And Esther's report of her illness suggests
the quest motif: "... in falling ill, I seemed to have
crossed a dark lake, and to have left all my experiences,
mingled together by the great distance, on the healthy
shore" (p. 460). Her quest is laborious and endless, as her dream indicates: "... it seemed one long night, but I believe there were both nights and days in it—when I laboured up colossal staircases, ever striving to reach the top, and ever turned, as I have seen a worm in a garden path, by some obstruction, and labouring again" (p. 461). She complains to Charley of the "never-ending stairs," "piled up to the sky" (p. 460). In the course of this quest she is stricken with blindness, from which she recovers. However, like other survivors of a death-rebirth sequence in myth and literature, Esther remains disfigured. Her face is permanently marked by the scars of the disease which she catches indirectly from Jo.

It is the disease itself which suggests the meaning of Esther's quest. The disease, which remains conspicuously unmentioned in the novel, originates from the rat scurrying from Captain Hawdon's grave in Tom-all-Alone's. Mark Spilka and Taylor Stoehr suggest that Esther's illness is symbolically a sexual one. Her bright and dutiful self is finally confronted with the exact nature of the secret surrounding her birth. No longer can she ignore her own involvement in the original sin of Captain Hawdon and Lady Dedlock. Her blindness might be seen to signify the acknowledgment of her own guilt, as it did for Oedipus. The objection can be raised that Esther's illness occurs before she even knows the identity of her mother. However, what Dickens has Esther tell the reader, and what he communicates
by means of the structural features, are two different things. Moreover, Esther has had a premonition of her mother's identity in church. At any rate, Esther seems to accept the implications of illegitimacy in showing her marked face to the world: "I hope I can do without my old face very well" (p. 463).

The only person she cannot face is Ada, for she is terribly afraid to lose Ada's love because of her disfigured features. This irrationality in Esther's behaviour points again to the fact that Dickens uses the structure of the novel to communicate subconsciously what he cannot or will not speak of directly in words. Ada Clare is Esther Summerson's double in the novel. From the moment Esther meets her, Ada functions as the substitute for the buried doll, an idealized self. Esther projects upon her all her unrealized romantic wishes. Ada, beautiful and an heiress, provides the perfect foil for Esther's vicarious identification. Thinking of herself as predestined to become an old maid, only fit to marry a paternal figure like Mr. Jarndyce, Esther participates intensely in the romance between Ada and Richard. "I was to live with them afterwards; I was to keep the keys of their house, I was to be made happy for ever and a day" (p. 177). She is driven wild with grief when Ada leaves Bleak House to go to live with Richard. At night she secretly goes to their house and stands outside listening to the sounds inside. Yet Esther is too repressed to realize that her behaviour comes very near to voyeurism. Without her
vicarious identification with Ada, Esther cannot live. She confesses, "... indeed, indeed, she is like the light to me--" (p. 466). This is most evident during Esther's illness. Though Esther is not at all concerned about communicating her disease to Mr. Jarndyce, her narrative expatiates extensively on all the precautions taken to prevent the spread of the disease to Ada. Ada must be kept unblemished and intact at all cost. Esther repeats, "keep her out, Charley, if you love me truly, to the last; Charley if you let her in but once, only to look upon me for one moment as I lie here, I shall die" (p. 418). If Ada represents Esther's alter ego, the implication is that her attempt to keep Ada free from the disease is, indirectly, an attempt to still protect the most precious part of her self from the implications of sexual guilt attached to the disease.

As W. J. Harvey observes, the chapter which has as its central event the meeting between Lady Dedlock and her daughter ends climactically with the reunion of Esther and Ada. The reunion with Ada, which Esther has feared, is represented with much greater emotional intensity than the recognition scene between Esther and her mother. There is, moreover, the curious fact that Ada at this point functions as a substitute mother. She accepts Esther's scarred face, "bathing it with tears and kisses, rocking me to and fro like a child, calling me by every tender name that she could think of..." (p. 488). It is also interesting that Esther does not mention her engagement to Mr. Jarndyce to her
friend. It is as if Esther, on a deeper level of her personality, does not want to acknowledge her promise to become the wife of Mr. Jarndyce. Thus Ada functions in the structure of the novel as a device to point to Esther's self-deception and inner conflicts. Eventually, when the novel ends, the switching of roles of Ada and Esther suggests that Esther's "true self" has finally come into its own. Whereas Ada moves back to take care of Mr. Jarndyce, it is now Esther's turn to have a romance. She definitively leaves Bleak House for her marriage to Alan Woodcourt, which can only take place after Esther has acknowledged her biological origin.

Though Esther's illness would seem to indicate that she has understood the nature of the stain clinging to her identity, her subsequent acceptance of Jarndyce's proposal shows that her identity problems have not yet been solved. In burning Alan Woodcourt's flowers she cannot annihilate her own sexuality. Nor can she repress the fact that her existence is a danger to the safety of her mother, or even worse, that in keeping Lady Dedlock's secret hidden, she is in fact a party to her deceit. She falls into a heavy depression, and begins to believe it were better she were dead. "I was so confused and shaken, as to be possessed by a belief that it was right, and had been intended, that I should die in my birth; and that it was wrong, and not intended, that I should be then alive" (p. 484). Walking on the ghost walk at Chesney Wold, Esther frightens herself
with the realization that she herself is the ghost threatening the integrity of the Dedlock family. The curse of her evil godmother "it were better that she had not been born," which Esther has always kept at a distance by duty and cheerfulness, must finally be confronted.

This confrontation is presented in two parts, first Esther's account of her own thoughts, and subsequently the search for Lady Dedlock. The significance of each of these episodes in the novel has a radically different implication. Let us look at Esther's words first. On achieving the insight that she is the ghost, she gradually comes to the rationalization that she is not to be blamed for the past: "For I saw very well that I could not have been intended to die, or I should never have lived: not to say should never have been reserved for such a happy life. I saw very well how many things worked together, for my welfare; and that if the sins of the fathers were sometimes visited upon the children, the phrase did not mean what I had in the morning feared it meant. I knew I was as innocent of my birth, as a queen of hers; and that before my Heavenly Father I should not be punished for birth, nor a queen rewarded for it" (p. 486). The Esther who speaks here is the Esther who wants to marry the asexual and fatherly Mr. Jarndyce. It is the Esther who represses her sexuality because she is afraid of the stain attached to it. Frightened by the sexual sin of her mother, Esther has wanted to avoid adulthood in an excessive order and purity. Esther's situation, though rather
unlikely on a realistic level makes sense symbolically. After all, every girl has to confront her hostility to her mother, arising from sexual rivalry for the father. Esther's marriage to Jarndyce, her despair of winning Alan Woodcourt, and her guilt at being a threat to her mother, might be read as the result of the failure to confront an "Oedipal conflict." Though the words quoted above may lead the reader to think that Esther has finally come to terms with the past, the subsequent journey to London with detective Bucket proves that her adaptation has been false. It is only through looking the evil in the face that Esther will come to terms with her identity.

This moment comes at the end of her journey with inspector Bucket. They search for Lady Dedlock who has left home to disappear and die. The figure made by Lady Dedlock's trip is, like Esther's, that of a circuitous return to origin. She goes to Tom-all-Alone's to the grave of Captain Hawdon her former lover who "should have been her husband." Thus Esther's mother goes back to the place from which the contagious influence of the unmentionable illness took its origin. Since Lady Dedlock's secret represents the "sin" from which all corruption in Bleak House starts, her death at the steps of the gate might be read as the return of the plague to its point of departure, hence its end. Thus on one level Lady Dedlock's death is an atonement for her sin, and delivers Esther and the rest of the society of Bleak House, of the secret cancer consuming its core.
There is, however, an ambiguity in Lady Dedlock's death with regard to Esther's quest. Again, we find a significant difference between what the novel articulates and what it implies. Reading the novel superficially one might take Esther's confrontation with her dead mother to mean that she is now "absolved" from her hereditary guilt. On the other hand, however, the "night journey" under the guidance of Bucket suggests that Esther acquires insight or experience which, judged from the different situation in which we see her at the end of the novel, must have crucial importance.27 This journey, like the earlier illness, is structured like the archetypal descent. It takes place during two nights and a dark day. Like Dante in the Inferno, Esther is accompanied by a guide who leaves her side before the final moment of vision, which she must experience alone. The descent involves the passage through a labyrinth of the darkest and smallest streets of London. Often she does not know where she is. Like the journey of the soul after death in Greek myth, Esther's journey involves the crossing of a river. At the close of this descent she finds herself in Chancery Lane, the focus of all the misery in her world; and the end leads her to face death in Tom-all-Alone's, from which the sickness and corruption which have affected her originated.

Since the journey represents a change in Esther's consciousness, the trip is appropriately described as having an unreal feeling: "I was far from sure I was not in a
dream" (p. 724). In the course of the journey her imagination becomes feverish and reality as she has always known it is changed. She finds that "the stained house fronts put on human shapes and looked at me; that great water-gates seemed to be opening and closing in my head, or in the air; and that the unreal things were more substantial than the real" (p. 762). Though Dickens does not let Esther tell the reader about the changes in her deeper feelings in so many words, as J. Hillis Miller has pointed out, the central image of the whole quest is the opening of water gates and the melting of snow, which are symbols of transformation. One thinks of the unblocking of emotion, the typical Dickensian conversion of the frozen heart into a feeling and sharing participation with humanity.

Before this can happen, however, Esther has to face her own repressed evasion of the cruel truth. When she comes to Tom-all-Alone's she does, at first, not relate the facts to herself. "The gate was closed. Beyond it, was a burial-ground—a dreadful spot in which the night was very slowly stirring; but where I could dimly see . . . houses . . . on whose walls a thick humidity broke out like a disease. On the steps at the gate, drenched in the fearful wet of such a place, which oozed and splashed down everywhere, I saw, with a cry of pity and horror, a woman lying—Jenny, the mother of the dead child" (p. 762). Esther does not recognize that the woman, polluted with the fluid which has sown the seed of "original sin" throughout the world of the novel, is her
mother. Just as she has mistaken her own identity, she ironically mistakes this figure for the mother of a child who has already died. However, the realization that this fearful figure is her own mother follows soon. "I passed on to the gate, and stooped down. I lifted the heavy head, put the long dank hair aside, and turned the face. And it was my mother, cold and dead" (p. 763). At last, Esther has unveiled the truth and looked it in the face. She has "seen" that her own ultimate origin is sexual, not social. It derives from the secret activity of the mother, rather than the absence of a father. In Esther's realization, then, Dickens implies the inverse of Fielding's suggestion in Tom Jones that ultimate human identity derives from the father. Since in Victorian England ideas of evolution were floating in the air, it seems to me not impossible that Dickens in Bleak House anticipated the conclusions of science and reflected the changing views of his epoch in the story of Esther's identity, though on a "fantasmatic" level.

The effect of her discovery is liberating to Esther. The acceptance of the sexuality of her mother liberates her own suppressed sexual feelings. The felt realization that the woman, however tainted she may be, is not the "mother of the dead child" sets Esther free to live. Finally Esther herself is ready to marry. Moreover, in the search guided by Inspector Bucket, Esther and her mother have switched roles. Formerly it was Lady Dedlock who said of her daughter
"I must evermore consider her as dead" (p. 481). Now Esther has witnessed the death of her mother. Since in Freudian theory the presence of the parent of the same sex always contains the threat of castration, the death of Esther's mother, just like the "slaying of the father" in the monomyth, also signals the moment of Esther's sexual maturity. Thus one might understand Esther's journey with Inspector Bucket, whose rationality and extended forefinger characterize him as the epitome of masculinity in Bleak House, as the process of Esther's initiation into her biological and sexual identity. Having seen the reunion of her father and mother, and the nature of her mother's disgrace, Esther can grow into a woman and avoid her mother's mistakes. She does not marry the elderly Jarndyce as her mother married Lord Dedlock; instead she finds at the end of her quest her first love, Alan Woodcourt.

The best proof that Esther has changed after her trip to London is the difference in her relationship to Ada. At the close of the book the positions of these doubles have been inverted.29 Now it is Ada whose husband neglects her for the Court of Chancery. Meanwhile, as Esther herself points out, Alan Woodcourt proposes to her in the same room through which Ada and Richard have passed earlier: "We were in the very same room into which I had brought my blushing girl, when her youthful lover, now her so altered husband, was the choice of her young heart; the very same room, from which my guardian and I had watched them going
away through the sunlight, in the fresh bloom of their hope and promise" (p. 782). It is as if Ada, Esther's idealized self, had lived and failed, while Esther's identity was still dormant; but that now when Ada, like the prodigal son, is about to return to the bosom of Mr. Jarndyce, Esther is freed to set out. It seems significant that Jarndyce tells Ada to address him as Esther had hitherto. Esther relates: "Ada called him her dearest cousin, John,' But he said, No it must be guardian now. He was her guardian henceforth, and the boy's; and he had an old association with the name. So she called him guardian, and has called him guardian ever since. The children know him by no other name.--I say children; I have two little daughters" (p. 822).

Though it may not seem directly pertinent to my argument, I have included the last sentence of this quote, because the sudden shift from Ada to her own two little girls seems to me to indicate Esther's continuing identification with Ada. The confluence of their identities even enters the relationship with their own children. "Sometimes when I raise my eyes and see her, in the black dress that she still wears, teaching my Richard . . . I call him my Richard! But he says he has two mamas, and I am one" (p. 824). Though at the end of the novel Esther can speak of Ada's beauty with more detachment, while her husband guarantees her that she is regaining her own, yet the identification between Ada and Esther remains a functional part of the novel till the end.

Whereas in Tom Jones Blifil, the scapegoat figure on
whom the daimonic qualities of the novel were projected, was removed from society, thus suggesting its purification of undesirable characteristics, in the world of Bleak House the function of doubling is more problematic. It would seem that the death of Lady Dedlock, who is, as Taylor Stoehr points out, another double for Esther, fulfills the cleansing function comparable to the demise of Blifil. The function of Ada is to suggest the shift in constellation in Esther's personality itself. It will be remembered that the central opposition of the novel is between a private green world and a public daimonic world, of which Esther's two identities are representative. At first Ada, an heiress, the idealized and beautiful part of Esther, is free to move and act in the social world, whereas Esther herself feels socially inferior and tries to win some affection in the private world of home, to make up for the blame society casts on her origin. In the world of Bleak House, public action and involvement with Chancery lead to death, however; and Ada's marriage to Richard is a fateful mistake. At the end of the novel Esther, whose virtues are of the private and domestic kind, finds the social function and happiness Ada lacks. Since Ada's experience is vicariously also Esther's, the participation in Ada's downfall and participation in the world of Chancery, gains Esther experience she will not have to acquire herself. Ada's fate is Esther's gain. Her vicarious participation frees her from confronting reality herself. It is the shift in position of Esther and Ada
which indicates the mediation between the categories of the private and the public.

Though there are in *Bleak House* three figures whose "downfall" frees Esther to marry Alan Woodcourt (Ada, Lady Dedlock, and Richard) whereas in *Tom Jones* the disgrace of Blifil suffices, yet the ending of this later novel is even less satisfying. For Dickens, writing in a more secularized world, the hierarchy of the "Great Chain of Being" is no longer based on ultimate reality. Consequently, creating an acceptable plot which answers to requirements of verisimilitude, while also providing the satisfaction of a return to origin, is harder. The simple story of a return to father as found in *Tom Jones* is no longer satisfactory. Though he changes the story into a return to mother, and the quest is a discovery of biological origin, yet Dickens' handling of the family romance raises even more questions than *Tom Jones*.

The first and foremost problem is the fact that the superficial or apparent meaning of the story does not fit the deeper significance suggested by the action. On a superficial level, the meaning of *Bleak House* is that duty and responsibility in the domestic sphere will redeem the world. However, as we have seen, Esther, who exemplifies this moral value at the beginning of the novel, develops in the course of the action insight into the cause of the original sin affecting society. She grows in experience and awareness and feels the constriction of her earlier existence. Yet Dickens never suggests that Esther's sense of responsibility
has a different basis at the end of the novel. Even the vocabulary and tone of Esther's retrospective account suggest the sweetness and innocence of the child. In using metaphor and the romance quest structure to suggest the moral and sexual development of Esther, Dickens can communicate at two levels of consciousness. Though he never takes public responsibility for the sexual overtones of Esther's quest, he manages to convey them to the reader on a subconscious level.

Related to this problem is that of the position of Mr. Jarndyce. Throughout the narrative he has been the "... descendant of the eighteenth-century stereotype, the gruff, good-natured, but shy gentleman. ..."31 Like Mr. Allworthy he is a character from romance, the displacement of the apocalyptic divine virtues, and the source of goodness, happiness, and wealth in the world. The problem resides in Esther's relationship to him. She regards him as her "father" (p. 229), the source of her happiness. Appropriately in connection with the importance of the theme of "writing" in the novel, he proposes to her by means of a letter. Esther, overcome by gratitude, accepts him. The connotation this marriage carries is somewhat incestuous, and it is implausible on a realistic level. If Mr. Jarndyce were as good as Esther makes him out to be he would never have proposed to the young orphan. On a deeper level, reading Jarndyce as a *deus*-figure, the proposal makes partial sense in that it suggests Esther's devotion to the "god" of
this narrative.

However, Esther's subsequent quest is a move away from the Edenic innocence of Mr. Jarndyce in the development of her "self." In discovering her identity she has eaten from the tree of knowledge, and now knows good and evil. No longer can her marriage to Mr. Jarndyce be seriously entertained as a future possibility. Nevertheless, Dickens does not follow up the implications of his story. The logical consequence would have been for Esther herself to break the engagement to Jarndyce. Yet, somehow Dickens has not wanted to suggest so much independence in his heroine. First of all, this would openly suggest that Esther has changed. Secondly, if we read Jarndyce as representing his metaphysical prototype, it would amount to a rejection of God. Though Esther's search for her mother implies that ultimate reality is biological rather than metaphysical, Dickens does not want to make this meaning too overt. What Dickens does, like Fielding before him, though for a different reason, is to make the change of heart dependent on the apocalyptic figure itself. Since Mr. Jarndyce arranges Esther's marriage to Mr. Woodcourt, Esther herself does not break her allegiance to her guardian, whose role as the dispenser of happiness is maintained, and Dickens can have it both ways. The novel ends with the continued benevolent protection of Mr. Jarndyce. He even creates for the benefit of Esther and her husband a replica which is the microcosmic equivalent of his own Bleak House. Thus the novel ends with the creation of a new green
world; and it is as if Esther's "quest," notwithstanding its nihilistic implications, were no more than a preparation for this final situation of equilibrium between her and Mr. Jarndyce. Moreover, the fact that Ada still lives with Jarndyce suggests that Esther never really leaves her guardian at all.

The ending of Bleak House is unequivocally ambivalent therefore. This novel was written before Great Expectations. It is not until this later novel that the ambiguity which Dickens manages to sustain in Bleak House owing to his use of the romance quest and creation of doubled type figures, breaks apart into two separate endings. The great difference with the later novel is also that Joe, the central father figure, comparable to Mr. Jarndyce in function, lacks social status as well as authority. The deus-figure as benevolent gentleman has disappeared from the novel. Rather, those figures on the higher rungs of the social hierarchy, such as Mr. Jaggers and Miss Havisham, have become daimonic; and Pip's quest, which teaches him the criminal origin of his great expectations, never leads him to a permanent return to the forge.

However, apart from the ending of Bleak House, there are numerous other instances of the wishful thinking of romance. In the novel itself there are a number of instances which make little sense from a logical point of view. One instance in which Dickens
resorts to fantasy to avoid the implications of his realistic diagnosis of the evils of contemporary society is in the problem of the origins of love. Not only does Dickens want to perpetuate the myth of Esther's sexual innocence, he also maintains the fantasy of the loving and innocent orphan. Jo, the crossing sweeper, though he never received the love which is indispensable for moral growth, nevertheless grows into an innocent, good person. From the point of view of modern psychology, it is a truism that a child, lacking protective love during the crucial years of childhood, will never develop into a mature loving adult. According to Humphrey House, Dickens has shown himself aware of this fact in his discursive writing, where his social criticism emphasizes that environment determines personality.32 Yet, in his novels, Dickens overlooks the irreversible damage early psychological abuse can do and creates for his readers the fantasy of the good orphan. Thus Esther is not permanently scarred by lack of love, but grows up winning love and affection from all around her; though she is affected by her upbringing, the damage is not permanent. Dickens suggests that human goodness survives everything. Since Bleak House is concerned with the problems of a world without God and original sin, the reader can only wonder where Esther's and Mr. Jarndyce's goodness come from. One is almost forced to conclude that Dickens attempts to remedy the evil of the modern secular world with the old-fashioned conception of a benevolent deity whose goodness radiates throughout the
world.

In fact Esther's goodness would seem to reside in her religious belief. In contrast to the omniscient narrator Esther believes in God. She senses the supernatural powers in nature and explains the fortunate course of her life as the result of divine providence. Though the form taken by her return to origin suggests that Esther's ultimate reality is not metaphysical, yet Dickens wants to eat his cake and have it. He pretends that Esther's divine goodness redeems the impersonal world without God. Thus he solves the contrast between Bleak House and London by means of a return to an earlier world view, already overtaken by the implications of his own narrative.

Consequently the mediation in the novel amounts to no more than the suggestion. The novel does not solve any problems. Nor does it bring Bleak House and London in conjunction. This is also evident in another, technical aspect of the novel, the double narration. Though the book ends with Esther's narrative and the establishment of a new green world, this ending does not close off the account of the impersonal narrator, except through pride of place. Because Esther's narrative comes last, it suggests that this romantic solution is the ending of all the problems in the novel. However, London and Tom-all-Alone's are still in existence, and only minimally changed through Esther's actions. Though Esther's marriage to Woodcourt may be a personal redemption, it does not have the power to influence
the world. Unlike the magical redemption of a Christ figure, or the purification by means of a scapegoat, Esther's triumph does not extend beyond herself. The final impression on the reader, after the emotional reaction to Esther's marriage has worn off, is the continued existence of two points of view, two narrative threads which have not been intertwined nor mediated. *Bleak House* in its totality, for all its recourse to romance character and plot structure, does not provide the wholeness of romance. However much Dickens as he set out to do, "dwelt upon the romantic side of familiar things," the novel cannot present or construct a totality of life. Behind *Bleak House*, unlike *Tom Jones*, there is no longer a coherently rounded worldview equally informing all its parts.

As we have seen, even the ideas informing Esther's half of the narrative are to be separated into those communicated by the openly verbalized account of the action and those implied by structure and metaphor. The "fantasmatic" suggestion of Esther's narrative is that knowledge of the self and its past leads, almost in a Freudian sense, to the liberation from its shackles. The conscious meaning of the narrative is different; Esther's religiosity, and Mr. Jarndyce's personality suggest the eighteenth-century outlook of Fielding. Suggestive of Fielding's "double vision" is Mr. Jarndyce's advice: "Trust in nothing but in Providence and your own efforts. Never separate the two, like the heathen waggoner" (p. 175). Moreover, the rather modernist
glorification of Inspector Bucket, whose powers of intellect let him solve the secrets of the world, jar against the Augustan admiration for the benevolent Jarndyce, whose philosophy is one of sustained isolation from the corrupting world of *Bleak House*. We find in *Bleak House*, therefore, beyond the discontinuity between the two narrators, a discontinuity in the outlook which informs that part of the story describing the romance quest itself.

It is as if, though Dickens consciously adhered to the old-fashioned values suggested by Esther's narrative, his subconscious sympathies were with the view of the impersonal narrator. According to Angus Wilson, for Dickens "the contemporary idea of domestic happiness as the resolution of, or perhaps more fairly one should say, the counterpoise to social evil, was a strongly held personal conviction."[^35] He expressed this belief in the efficacy of the domestic virtues in a letter to Emmely Gotschalk of February 1, 1850, written while he was at work on *Bleak House*.[^36] The problem with these domestic virtues is that they are based on a sentimental concept of reality. Norman Holland has pointed out that popular literature often unites Oedipal fantasy and sentimentality.[^37] Without attempting an analysis of Dickens the author, it would seem possible to think that the writing of this novel provided Dickens himself with the means of mediating his psychological conflicts. Though Esther's story is less autobiographical than *David Copperfield* or *Great Expectations*, Esther, Jo, and Charley are orphans, and
as such fit the gallery of neglected children in whom Dickens has mirrored himself. Moreover, his personal life at the time of the writing of *Bleak House* was conducive to the reactivation of any problems he may have had. He suffered a kidney ailment, and witnessed three deaths: those of a friend, of his daughter Dora, as well as of his own father. What I want to suggest is that at a less conscious level, Dickens himself may already have outgrown the sentimental worldview still informing Esther's narrative; that *Bleak House* represents the beginning of the change in outlook on the relationship of society and self which will inform his later novels. According to Northrop Frye, "For all its domestic and sentimental Victorian setting, there is a revolutionary and subversive, almost a nihilistic, quality in Dickens' melodrama that is post-Romantic, has inherited the experience of the French Revolution, and looks forward to the world of Freud, Marx, and the existential thriller."³⁸

If we want to speak of mediation then, with regard to *Bleak House*, it would seem to have taken place between different points of view of the author himself. It is owing to the traditional structure of the sentimental, romance plot of Esther's narrative, with all its traditional characters, doubling of type figures, and metaphorical suggestion, that the author can circumscribe his vision of the grim reality of contemporary life, while shielding himself, and possibly the Victorian reader, from the implications of his vision. In doing this the novel fulfills its commitment to create a
sense of totality, since it provides a vision in which ideology and grim reality can be seen steadily and whole, in one single perspective.
CHAPTER IV

ULYSSES
After *Bleak House*, it is interesting to see that Joyce's *Ulysses* does not try to further modify the structure of the quest for paternity Dickens and Fielding use to create a suggestion of totality. Instead Joyce tries to erase altogether the structure and the pattern of thought which endorses it. Though *Ulysses* is, like *Tom Jones* and *Bleak House* a novel about a child's search for a parent, it is simultaneously the search of a father for a son. Thus it creates a mutuality. No longer is one category ideal and desirable. Now daimonic and apocalyptic are intrinsically independent and of equal worth. This means that the suggestion of totality as it was given at the end of *Tom Jones* and *Bleak House* by means of the fusion of the two categories operating in the novel can hardly take place. In *Ulysses* we do not find the closure comparable to Tom's assumption into the apocalyptic category at his marriage to Sophia, and Esther's recreation of a green world at her marriage to Alan Woodcourt. If father and son are discrete, independent and autonomic entities equal in worth, the relationship between them, as it is in *Ulysses*, will be one of mutuality. The fusion, the *coniunctio oppositorum*, dependent on the great difference between its categories, cannot occur in *Ulysses*. Therefore, instead of suggesting that a certain course of action, a certain quest, may lead to the achievement of wholeness and totality, it frustrates our expectations and tries to undercut our habit of thinking in terms of the reward at the end. Instead of the hierarchy of the "Great
Chain of Being," Ulysses presents the equality and interdependence of the physical and metaphysical, body and soul, being and becoming.

In doing so, Ulysses speaks for its age as much as Tom Jones and Bleak House. As Virginia Woolf has told us, after the first decade of this century the world changed.¹ The concept of search and the idea of becoming which informed Bleak House are no longer viable. We no longer believe in finality, the idea that there is something to be found out. The twentieth century is the age of relativity, indeterminacy and incessant, hence static, change. No longer is there an "above" or "under," or rigid boundaries between conscious and subconscious. The distinctions between social classes, primitive or civilized, are difficult to draw. Similarly, the separation into "good" and "bad" characters, which is almost too clear-cut in Bleak House, is blurred in Ulysses. As a result critics can take opposite positions in their interpretations of the characters of Bloom and Stephen, while still remaining true to the text of the novel.²

The most important difference, it seems to me, is the fact that Ulysses does not work towards the establishment of certitude. Both Tom Jones and Bleak House try to order the world according to an ideology and to make it viable and comprehensible for human understanding. The romance structure in these novels is an instrument in making the world intelligible and meaningful. Joyce, however, was a fervent disciple of Ibsen. Still in his teens Joyce published an
article in which he enthusiastically admired the master. This article was a discussion of *When We Dead Awaken*, Ibsen's last play. In this play Ibsen suggests the process of a transvaluation of values which ends trailing clouds of ambiguity. Joyce learnt from Ibsen to avoid the closure of traditional plot structure, and to leave his works of literature open-ended, and thus open to different interpretations. Lionel Trilling has pointed out that Joyce's superhuman drive to create arose not only from the "impulse to resist nullity but also, and equally, from the impulse to make nullity prevail."^3^ This is evident throughout *Dubliners* in the stripping of the ideals and rationalizations which protect people from the realization of the true state of their "paralysis" and culminates in the ambiguous ending of the story "The Dead." Especially reminiscent of Ibsenite ambiguity is the destruction of convention and certitude in Joyce's play *Exiles*, which owes much to *When We Dead Awaken*. Most indicative of Joyce's desire to erase pre-existing structures determining human thought and human lives is his later work. Beyond *Ulysses* which decries the traditional duality of Western thought, we dimly discern the "decreation" of language itself in *Finnegans Wake*.

The word "decreation" was coined by Simone Weil, but has since become part of general critical vocabulary. The word itself is a paradox, and it denotes a paradoxical activity, the making of something which is simultaneously an unmaking. With regard to *Ulysses* this means, among other
things, that the writing of this novel is, simultaneously, a recreation of the traditional theme as well as an analytical act designed to break the spell of magic attraction emanating from the traditional mythic story. In a sense all creation is, of course, decration; but in Ulysses the aspect of unmaking is especially strong since it is proportionate to the ambition of undertaking to write a divine comedy for the twentieth century. This entails the "erasure" of all Western literature.

In a letter to Linati, 21 September, 1920, Joyce explained his intention: "It is the epic of two races (Israel-Ireland) and at the same time the cycle of the human body as well as a little story of a day (life). The character of Ulysses has fascinated me ever since boyhood . . . . It is also a kind of encyclopaedia. My intention is not only to render the myth sub specie temporis nostris but also to allow each adventure (that is, every hour, every organ, every art being interconnected and interrelated in the somatic scheme of the whole) to condition and even create its own technique." Important here is Joyce's realization that the rendering of the Odyssey in modern guise required the deliberate avoidance of the traditional story of a return to origin, as Dickens and Fielding had used. Though he chooses the Odyssey as prototype, Joyce does not intend to adapt the story to modern times, to merely give the old structure (and thus the old ideology) a new habitation and a name. He tries, instead, to let his subject matter
crystallize into its own organic form, determined by a new, physical not metaphysical, skeleton, his scheme of hours, organs, arts, etc., which views the book in terms of a giant human body encompassing all reality.

In excluding the traditional rounded structure of the _Odyssey_ from his recreation, and with it its mediation and closure, Joyce is consciously the "alshemist" of the tradition, to use the term he employs to describe the writing twin in _Finnegan's Wake_. The pun on "sham" is very deliberate.

Since an analysis of all the small ways in which Joyce plays with the _Odyssey_ would be irrelevant to our purpose here, as well as requiring a study longer than this thesis, I will satisfy myself in the following pages with pointing to the most salient aspects of Joyce's decreation and select those examples which seem most significant in relation to _Tom Jones_ and _Bleak House_. In the following pages I shall discuss first the Homeric parallels, to show how Joyce employs the tradition to decreate it, then the "quest" of Stephen and Bloom, before arriving at Molly and the ineluctable question of what it all means.

The expectation raised by the title of Joyce's great Dedalian epigram is that of the recreation of the ancient theme of the adventures of the wily Odysseus. Belonging to a long tradition of literary elaborations of this quest by such famous authors as Sophocles, Euripides, Dante, Calderon, Shakespeare, Giraudoux, and Kazantzakis, the reader who
takes up *Ulysses* anticipates another version of the hero. The baffling thing is, however, that on opening Joyce's Homer, *Ulysses* seems to have disappeared. In the text of the novel there is no trace of the familiar names of places marking the stages of Odysseus' return to Ithaca. It is true that the novel consists of eighteen episodes which might be seen to correspond with the eighteen books of the epic, with the exception of "Wandering Rocks," which is derived from the legend of the Argonauts. Nevertheless, it is almost impossible to see how these large, brimful chapters relate to the clarity and distinctness of Homer. In fact, apart from the title and Buck Mulligan's reference to *"epi oinopa ponton,"* the novel may, conceivably, be read without bringing Homer to mind at all. This is not to say that the novel has no relationship with the epic; merely that at first sight the connection between content and title seems mysterious. Rather than making a statement, it makes a suggestion; the title seems directed towards letting the reader guess.

The idea of an "innocent" reader who comes to *Ulysses* without the *Bloomsday Book*, Stuart Gilbert's schema of parallels, or at least the knowledge that Bloom is Ulysses, Stephen is Telemachus, and Molly Penelope, is rather hypothetical. The sad truth is that enjoyment of *Ulysses* comes only after hard work. Learning to read *Ulysses* is like learning a new language. Yet even the knowledge of parallelism in the characters does not clarify the relationship of title to content--past to present, epic to novel. The
question remains, for instance, how does Bloom relate to Ulysses. It should be clear that Bloom is not the heroic reincarnation of his mythic prototype. Nevertheless there are similarities. Bloom is curious like Odysseus, versatile like the Achaian, and he has a series of encounters which suspension of disbelief might let us regard as analogous to those of Ulysses. Bloom is both different from and similar to Odysseus. Therefore, the view that Bloom is the *homme moyen sensuel* whose actions show the impossibility of heroism in our age is as untenable as its opposite, the idea that Bloom is another Odysseus. After all, many critics have agreed that Bloom's gentle humanity is heroic in its powers of endurance. Therefore, if Bloom is only partly like Odysseus, and is heroic, though in an altogether unhomeric way, the question rises again, Why the correspondence with Homer at all?

In overlooking the fact that the relationship between the *Odyssey* and *Ulysses* is rather tenuous, and certainly not apparent to the uninitiated reader, T. S. Eliot's acclamation of Joyce's practice seems to miss its point: "In using the myth, in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him. . . . It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering of giving a shape and significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history." Eliot's view of Joyce's work, as it is expressed here, seems too simple. Joyce does not order
the chaotic experience of June 16th, 1904, by means of the analogy of Homer. Though the configuration of the characters in the different episodes might be seen as echoing the salient events of the *Odyssey*, the structuring principle of the novel is, in fact, time, and, beyond that, the geography of Dublin. What seems most important about *Ulysses* is precisely the fact that Joyce does not really impose any outside structure on what to Eliot is the "panorama of futility and anarchy" of the modern world. The truth may be that James Joyce, though aware enough of the moral entropy of Dublin to sentence himself to a life-long exile, was nevertheless capable of discerning meaningful qualities in this panorama itself. Unlike Eliot who tried to insert meaning into his own literary work by the imposition of a tradition, and by informing it with the values of the Church, Joyce was not seduced by the security of a traditional ideology. Considering the fact that Eliot refers in the same passage to the poetic practice of Yeats, it would seem safe to conclude that Eliot's much-quoted comment on the meaning of the Homeric structure of *Ulysses* is best applied to himself.

The best way to approach the Homeric correspondences, it seems to me, is to go back beyond the written book to the way they were employed by the author in the construction of his novel. It is here that they are important, not in the eventual structure of the novel itself. During the writing of *Ulysses* Joyce spent infinite time and ingenuity in the invention of parallels for Homeric attributes and incidents,
which would not seem contrived or artificial to the modern reader. In his letters to Frank Budgen he asks for advice and he outlines, for instance, his efforts towards finding a parallel for moly, the magical agent which protects Ulysses from the charms of Circe. Thus the transposition of the myth has become a double process. First Joyce has to make up his mind what moly signified in the Odyssey, then he has to find an unobtrusive modern parallel. The actual result in the novel of all this mental exertion is negligible. Is moly represented by Bloom's potato, is it the popping of his trouser button, or is he protected because of absence of desire? The Odyssey is important to Joyce in writing his novel. It is the archetype which he, as author, has to understand and appropriate as a preliminary to his own creation. He decreases the magic appeal of the structure of the return to origin by means of intellectual scrutiny, and translation into contemporary equivalents.

That the Odyssey is important to himself, more than to the reader, is also evidenced by Joyce's decision in one of his final revisions to erase the Homeric chapter headings. Like the fox burying his grandmother under the hollybush, Joyce tried to cover up the signs of the literary corpse over which he built his own living word. That we know the details of the Homeric schema is not owing to Joyce himself. In the strictest confidence he gave to Carlo Linati indications of his outline. Nevertheless the knowledge spread, and though Joyce still refused to give a copy of the scheme
to Edmund Wilson in 1928, he knew that he could no longer keep the information back, and he gave the desired information to Valéry Larbaud and Stuart Gilbert, whose study was published in 1930.

It seems to me that an understanding of Joyce's use of Homer as an archetype he was to dismantle before completing his novel, can help us come to terms with the ambiguity of Ulysses. To the reader the Odyssey is present as absence. In leaving the title Joyce raised expectations which are partly, but not entirely, frustrated. Unable to decide between an analogy or parody, we may accept the fact that it is both, simultaneously, as well as something new. Instead of confirming our habits of thinking in terms of "either-or," the net result of the juxtaposition of past and present as we have it in the novel, is to undercut dualism and to teach us to look with an inclusive eye. The suggestiveness of the parallels may be explored, but any single track will lead to a dead end, since the literary surface of the book is all there is. The distinction between micro- and macrocosm has been suspended. The solution to the problem of meaning, the Homeric counterpart which will give significance to this riddling modern surface was erased before this literary world came into being. No longer can we think of the present as deriving meaning from the past or vice versa. In both hinting at and erasing the external point of reference all meaning becomes immanent in the world of the novel itself.
This feature of *Ulysses* is attendant upon the removal of a previous structure. It could not have come about if Joyce had never referred to Homer at all. The past as both absence and presence is necessary to create the immediacy of *Ulysses*. By means of this strategy Joyce manages to include the problem of composing *Ulysses*, which was the problem of overcoming the dualism and schizophrenia of Catholic Ireland, in the text itself. The relationship of ideal and real, past and present, heroism and mediocrity, spirituality and materialism, signifier and signified, are the questions the novel presents to the reader. The reader is forced to suspend his dualistic habit of thinking in terms of antinomies in favor of the acceptance of what is.

Though Joyce decreates the *Odyssey*, it is still there in the novel as the presence of an absence. The quest structure of the hero's adventures and the return to origin which characterize the epic are present in similar form. The *Odyssey*, from which Fielding took his motto for *Tom Jones*, is the Hellenic version of the quest for origin which Hebraic and Christian tradition have given form as the parable of the prodigal son, or the atonement of God and man. Separating the particular from the essential, we might say that in all its manifestations the quest is concerned with the reconciliation of "existence" and "being," the major philosophical preoccupation of Western mankind. From the way Joyce manipulates these categories, he seems to advocate a radically new relationship between the two. Instead of Fielding's mediation
by means of the excommunication of the daimonic, and Dickens' separation of the two categories to maintain their autonomy, Joyce's decreation of the structure suggests that these categories are functions of each other. His point is not, as it is for Fielding, that the apocalyptic is "real," or, as Dickens' novel suggests, that the daimonic is ultimate reality. In decreating the quest Joyce creates a static amalgam in which apocalyptic and daimonic interrelate.

In order to make this clearer we must have a look at the novel. Like Tom Jones, Joyce begins the novel with the presentation of a high place, a tower overlooking countryside and sea. Traditionally a tower has been the point of epiphany where the apocalyptic touched the daimonic. However, the Martello Tower does not justify its appellation "omphalos," "navel." If the navel, the place where the generations are joined, is the physical equivalent of the idea of totality, the reference here only functions to state a problem, not to indicate a fact. On the top of Martello Tower we do not find an Allworthy, nor his daimonic inversion, the Lord High Chancellor. Instead the author presents us with two young men equivalent to the doubled characters of the earlier novels, preoccupied with their relationship to these categories of experience: "Stately, plump Buck Mulligan came from the stairhead, bearing a bowl of lather on which a mirror and razor lay crossed . . . . He held the bowl aloft and intoned: --Introibo ad altare Dei . . . ."9 Buck Mulligan mocks the transubstantiation of the Mass, the
miracle which transforms profane into sacred. The only union of opposites he can endorse is that of the flesh. His substitution of the "veritable Christine" for Christ would seem to point to materialism and sensuality.

On beginning the novel one is inclined to interpret this passage as the author's attempt to awaken our critical judgment of Buck's profanity. Especially since Stephen, through whose consciousness most of the action is filtered, soon has the reader's sympathy, one is ready to reject and condemn Mulligan's attitude and stereotype him as the "bad guy," while identifying with Stephen as the "good guy." In the course of reading the novel, this stereotyping proves impossible. One standpoint from which one might denounce Buck's sacrilege is that of orthodox Christianity. However, orthodoxy is not endorsed by the tenor of the book as a whole, and in testing characters against an ideology rejected by the novel, we do not clarify the relationships within the novel itself.

The other approach, the rejection of Buck because he is inimical to Stephen with whom we sympathize, is equally untenable. After all, Stephen is in some respects very fallible. Though he does not utter profanities like Buck, who is a materialist incapable of spiritual experience, he is profane, precisely because he is troubled by his own ambiguous rejection of his mother's faith. The parodic version of the Apostles' Creed in "Scylla and Charybdis" is contained in Stephen's stream of consciousness. In "Oxen of
the Sun" Stephen's profanity inspires the medical students—
though Bloom never classes Stephen with his companions. The
meeting ends with the suggestion that Stephen abominates
"the Word" no less than Buck: ". . . so and not otherwise
was the transformation, violent and instantaneous, upon the
utterance of the Word. . . . Burke's! Outflings lord
Stephen, giving the cry. . . . (pp. 422-23). The time of
waiting for birth to occur is compared by the narrator to
another time of sacred birth: "The vigilant watch of
shepherds and of angels about a crib in Bethlehem of Juda
long ago" (p. 422). Thus the reader's expectations are set
for action which is decorous and elevated in tone, fitting
the religious overtones of the occasion. The moment of
birth, however, the climax which follows, is not the incar-
nation of the logos, but becomes a bathos. Stephen gives
utterance to "the Word," this word, however, proves to be
the name of a pub. The narrator draws our attention to the
discrepancy in tone between the occasion and Stephen's re-
action, by comparing Stephen's sudden mention of this name
to the violent discharge of a thunderstorm at the end of a
sultry afternoon. The narrator even emphasizes the defla-
tion of our expectations by an adroit placing of the words.
One paragraph written in Ruskin's style ends with "the Word."
"Burke's!" begins a new paragraph written in the style of
Carlyle. Thus the narrator emphasizes Stephen's deliberate
violation of the sacred mood which attends the mystery of
birth. Hence Stephen is no less profane than Buck, though
for a different reason. In this instance the reader assumes that Stephen wants to break the heavy emotional impact of the situation, precisely because he resents being sensitive to it. Buck Mulligan merely mocks. What we have then, at the beginning of Ulysses is not a simple inversion. Stephen's actions are not the contrary of Buck's. It is not a case of "fair is foul" like the fog in Dickens' London. Buck's profanity is not presented as a fact to be condemned; it is presented as a condition, a problem with which Stephen and the reader have to live. As Stephen's "evil" double, Buck is not used in this plot as a scapegoat. Doubling no longer serves the purpose of mediation.

The reader's problems with stereotyping Mulligan are given form in the novel itself in the character of Stephen. Stephen is the dispossessed son deprived of the identity and certitude of a spiritual and material heritage. In these opening chapters the reader sees him preoccupied with his problem and hurt at the fact that Ireland has sold herself to the value system of England. On the other hand we learn of his own rejection of the Church. Stephen's defiant decision not to kneel for "love's bitter mystery" has left him with the guilty conflict between the love for his mother and his need for spiritual autonomy. Stephen's problems, unlike the problem of Tom Jones or Esther Summerson, are not ones which will be solved in the course of the novel. Not only did Joyce mention to Frank Budgen that Stephen has a shape that cannot be changed, Stephen does not come to an
anagnorisis. In this post-Freudian world, no change of character occurs to obviate the difficulties of reality. Stephen's problems are reality. There is in *Ulysses* no higher outside reality to which one can refer, by means of which Stephen's conflicts can be solved. It is customary for an epic to begin *in medias res*. *Ulysses* begins and ends in what is perpetually the middle.

Thus the familiar aspects of the quest for origin as we have come to know it from *Tom Jones* and *Bleak House*—the contrast between apocalyptic and daimonic, the descent into a lower world, the doubling to make mediation possible, and above all the transformation of one category into another—no longer serve the purpose of change. The plot structure of the novel does not mediate between opposing categories, characters do not change substantially. Buck and Bloom, Stephen and Molly, remain largely the same throughout. Similarly, the problems of paternity are not introduced into the texture of the novel to be solved. They are there to give the literary surface resonance and to illuminate the situation in which the characters find themselves. *Ulysses* then is a novel of allusion instead of action.11

Earlier in this thesis I argued that the mediating function of myth, as outlined by Claude Lévi-Strauss could be recognized in a displaced form in the plot of *Tom Jones* and in an even more diluted way in *Bleak House*. Since *Ulysses* does not have an "action" or "plot" in the sense
these earlier novels have, it does not provide the reader with a comparable satisfaction. Joyce is a modernist, self-conscious author—too aware of the easy satisfaction of the desire for totality provided by these earlier plots to be able to employ it. However, the conscious realization that plot may provide the suggestion of a return to origin, does not invalidate or remove the desire for wholeness itself. Joyce's practice in decreating this structure is therefore to maintain the problems which the earlier novels "solved" in their plots. In Ulysses, however, they are not to be solved, but exist as part of the reality of Dublin. They enter the text in the form of the preoccupations of the major characters and the allusions in their stream of consciousness.

For instance, the union of opposites at the end of Tom Jones and the new green world at the end of Bleak House signified the viability of the desire for Eden. In fact, the exclusion of what opposes the unity of being of this ideal constituted the action of the novels discussed earlier. In Ulysses the desire for a perfect garden, a state of existence of unbroken bliss, is one of Bloom's major preoccupations. Next to his desire for his wife Molly, and interest in other women, Bloom's thoughts hover over different forms of the same wish for a return to the womb. Joyce makes this clear at the beginning of the novel when Bloom goes to buy his piece of kidney for breakfast. His stream of consciousness includes his awareness of the physical
attractiveness of a woman walking in front of him, as well as his thoughts on the possibility of a new garden of Eden. The advertisement for Agendath Netaim which he happens to read at the butcher's triggers a train of thought which explores the possibility of a historical green world, a new garden of tropical fruit on the soil of the Promised Land. Bloom concludes: "Nothing doing. Still an idea behind it" (p. 60). Thus the problem of a desire for totality which Tom Jones and Bleak House attempted to solve is part of Bloom's stream of consciousness and remains open-ended. Bloom does not reject the idea out-and-out. He recognizes the appeal and necessity of the idea, without, however, believing that it can be turned into an actual historical reality. In "Lotuseaters" Bloom accepts his own sensuality with the same detachment. He pampers his body, and when taking a bath allows it a temporary return to the state of existence before birth, "in a womb of warmth" (p. 86). His sexual organ appears a "languid floating flower." This direct tie between sex and flowers in the last words of the chapter is the culmination of a number of references to flowers in this chapter. The most significant of these is the fact that Bloom signs his self-indulgent correspondence with Martha with the name Henry Flower. Bloom dreams of the ideal world of fruit and flowers--Molly is "the flower of the mountain"--and of himself as the ideal romantic lover. Nevertheless he is sceptic enough to know these daydreams for what they are, ideals. His dalliance with Martha does not turn into
adultery, it remains a fantasy from which Bloom receives vicariously the gratification which "reality" denies him. Thus Bloom's stream of consciousness is preoccupied with the very problem of the possibility of a return to origin which was the impulse behind the action of *Tom Jones* and *Bleak House*.

Like Bloom, Stephen is also preoccupied with the need for totality. But, since Stephen is more intellectual than Bloom, we find his thinking on the subject contained in allusions to several aspects of the tradition of Western thought which have tried to come to terms with the need for totality. Stephen's desire for totality is stated in several different ways of which I can mention here only a few. One of these is the fragment of Yeats's poem, recited by his mother, which keeps returning to his consciousness: "and no more turn aside and brood." His thinking on the problems of the relationship between father and son, which informs both his preoccupation with scholastic theories of atonement and his theories on Shakespeare's relationship to Hamlet, both originate in Stephen's problems in structuring his identity—his inability to define the relationship between self and world. This problem is comparable to the problem of a lack of identity related to the lack of origin of the protagonists of *Tom Jones* and *Bleak House*. Stephen's problem is whether he is truly autonomous and separate from his world, or, on the other hand, determined by it and part of it. Through Stephen's consciousness float references to the concepts of substance and accidence, spirit and matter,
entelechy, etc., which are the terms in which philosophy and theology have dealt with Stephen's problem. Especially in the "Proteus" episode Stephen struggles with his inability to envision a satisfying relationship between these categories. Though the question "One or two?" (p. 192) keeps reverberating in Stephen's thought, in "Proteus" he confronts the formlessness and chaos which threaten if one tries to dispense with thinking in categories altogether. Thus the problems of origin in terms of which Tom Jones and Bleak House structured their quest for totality, though they do not structure Ulysses in a comparable way, are part of the consciousness of the characters populating the world of the novel.

Like Dickens, Joyce is aware that most people are not capable of the heroic patience of Bloom. They need some kind of ideology to function. The Roman Catholic Church and the way in which it meets specific human needs for closure figures prominently in the novel, especially in the stream of consciousness of Bloom. The novel also refers to a number of less orthodox ideologies. We hear, for instance, of the American evangelist "Elijah," J. Alexander Dowie, "restorer of the church in Zion" (p. 151). Bloom's companions have the mistaken belief that he is a Freemason. In a world where the orthodox, official ideology is not a living force, we find private ideologies. The nationalism displayed in "Cyclops" is a way of identifying with something larger than the self, a way of suspending the pain of being
a separate individual. It is, simultaneously, a device to increase the limited powers of the individual and lend them the prestige of the absolute. Blazes Boylan's vulgar materialism, Buck Mulligan's mocking physicality, and Simon Dedalus' self-indulgent nostalgia, though not ideologies in the strict sense of the word, nevertheless provide the secure identity which preempts incertitude and serve the same function. Mr. Deasy's preoccupation with money, Gerty McDowell's illusion of being a heroine from a pulp magazine, the social self-assurance of Bloom's fellow-travellers on the way to Glasnevin cemetery, the aestheticism of the literary clique from which Stephen is excluded, are only a few of the many examples in the novel. In fact, apart from Martin Cunningham, who seems to understand Bloom, Stephen, who is still facing the problem of finding an ideology, and Molly who IS and does not seem to need an ideology beyond her sexual role, people seem to have ordered the world around their own ideological conception of identity.

Another way in which Joyce brings the idea of mediation and the need for certitude into the text of the novel itself, is by means of allusions to other literature which deals with the same problems. Stephen uses Hamlet and the biographical facts of Shakespeare's life as the instrument to reason out his own problems. There is reference to Goethe's Wilhelm Meister and to Milton's Paradise Lost--"The Sorrows of Satan" as Stephen calls it. We should note,
however, that Joyce refers to Milton in a wholly different way from Fielding. Fielding adduced Milton because he regarded his own novel as similar, since it provided the same kind of mediation. Joyce, on the other hand, brings *Paradise Lost* into the texture of *Ulysses* to reinforce the central problem, the absence of mediation. This is also true for the references to Blake and Defoe, who each in his opposite way deals with survival. The search for origin is reinforced by the introduction of Sinbad the Sailor, Robinson Crusoe, the Ancient Mariner, the Flying Dutchman, the Wandering Jew, Lazarus, Moses, Captain Nemo and the Prodigal Son. Thus Ulysses' yearning for a return home is amplified by a tradition of exile and wandering which encompasses Western literature.

Another allusion which, in the form of an image, keeps cropping up to unite the novel with the earlier quests without lending it their formal mediation, is that to the sacramental chalice or grail. Beginning with Mulligan's mockery with his shaving mug, this image transforms itself in the same chapter into the bowl of "bitter waters" of Stephen's mother's deathbed, and then into the bowl of the sea. Characters in the novel are preoccupied with the race for the Gold Cup, a very displaced form of Stephen's spiritual desire for wholeness. In "Nausicaa" the monstrosity is lifted at approximately the same time that Bloom reaches ecstasy in contemplation of a more human vessel, Gerty McDowell. The chalice in the concluding chapter,
Molly's chamberpot, is filled with blood to recall the transubstantiation. Thus Joyce plays self-consciously with the traditional symbols of mediation. He does not use them to suggest mediation, but to indicate, with an irony almost bordering on satire, the principal need inspiring human action.

The novel as a whole undercuts the possibility of mediation. Though Bloom returns to Molly's bed, his point of origin at the beginning of the novel, there is no complete coition. The meeting of Stephen and Bloom which the reader hopes will turn out to mean that Stephen finds a substitute for his absentee father, and Bloom a substitute for his dead son, turns out to be even less convincing. Though the novel does not create a new Eden, the desire for it and the loss of perfect love are perpetually brought to mind. Just as in Tom Jones and Bleak House this novel is pervaded by the awareness of the blight of original sin. Part of the nightmare of history from which Stephen would like to escape is the fact that he himself is imperfect: "Wombed in sin darkness I was too, made not begotten" (p. 38). These words invert the "genitum, non factum" with which the Nicene Creed identifies Christ who was born without sin. Stephen's train of thought in Proteus continues along the same lines: "Hello. Kinch here. Put me on to Edenville. Aleph, alpha: nought, nought, one" (p. 38). The glaring omission here is that of the omega, the conclusion and end which gives meaning to
what precedes. Unable to think of a concord between
beginning and end, everything becomes "nought" for Stephen.
The only reality is he himself: "one." Like Shem in
Finnegans Wake, he is "self-exiled in upon his ego." Yet
Stephen, like Bloom, dreams of the temptation of creamy
oriental fruit.

The melons to which Stephen refers in his recollection
of the dream of the preceding night are for Bloom in
"Calypso" the citrons of Agendath Netaim. They hold the
promise of immortality: "... like that, heavy, sweet,
wild perfume. Always the same, year after year" (p. 60).
In this garden too, one's name will be "entered for life
in the book of the union" (p. 60). Joyce's ironic play
with the human desire for an absolute even extends to the
address of this agency advertising this new Eden: "Bleibtreu-
strasse 34." This means, translated literally "Stay true-
street." In addition to the idea of a garden of Eden
deriving from the myth or history of his race, Bloom has
his own historical Eden from which he has been exiled. It
is the sexual experience with Molly on Howth Hill--like "the
peak" of Gibraltar, the Martello Tower, and Nelson's Pillar,
one of the high places of the novel. The mutuality of that
experience, the chewed seedcake which she gave to him, keeps
haunting Bloom throughout the day; these memories are
counterpointed in his mind by the reality of his present
situation, the absence of "Plumptree's potted meat." Bloom
is not preoccupied with the "Fall" in its theological
significance as Stephen is, but he is fascinated by the physical aspects of falling: "Thirty-two feet per second, per second. Law of falling bodies" (p. 72). He wonders about the meaning of the word "love" in a fallen world: "Love loves to love love. Nurse loves the new chemist. . . . You love a certain person. And this person loves that other person because everybody loves somebody but God loves everybody" (p. 333). At the end of the novel Bloom falls asleep satisfying himself with the melons of Molly's posterior as a substitute for the Edenic fruit. Thus neither Stephen nor Bloom achieves a blissful Edenic state at the end of the novel. Bloom and Stephen will not live "happily for ever after." The only permanence in Dublin is the absence of the absolute, and the protagonists' continued struggle.

The structure of the action of Tom Jones and Bleak House is the interplay of two opposing categories, one of which is subsumed by the other at the end of the novel. As we recall, in Tom Jones these categories might be summed up as life and death, in Bleak House as light and dark. The interesting thing is that while in these two novels the opposing categories are intrinsically different and irreconcilable, in Ulysses we cannot draw a rigid line of separation between life and death, light and dark, agreeable and disagreeable, or even father and son. In Tom Jones the prison, the place where Tom is confronted with the most daimonic aspects of his own personality, is felt to be a
wholly different world from Paradise Hall; in Bleak House the graveyard in Tom-all-Alone's is the dreadful place where Lady Dedlock and Esther under normal circumstances would never have gone. In Ulysses, however, the funeral of Paddy Dignam is a part of everyday affairs. Bloom's descent to Hades is something to be done in between a bath and lunch. Similarly, for Stephen, death is present all around him, from the drowned man in "Telemachus," the dead dog in "Proteus," to the death of his mother which overshadows the whole day.

The difference between Ulysses, Tom Jones and Bleak House, however, is not so much the fact that in Joyce's novel death is omnipresent and a normal part of life. The difference resides in the attitude taken towards it. When Bloom sees a rat scurrying out of Glasnevin cemetery, his reaction is very different from the attitude taken by the narrator in Bleak House, whose romantic sensibility is shaken by the sight of a rat in Tom-all-Alone's. Bloom's train of thought in accepting death and decomposition as a part of reality shows no signs of agony about the fact of mutability. This is not to say that the thought of death is attractive to Bloom. Bloom, like his correspondent Martha Clifford, does "not like that other world." My point is that death is no longer part of the subconscious, but part of conscious reality. In Ulysses both Stephen and Bloom are clad in mourning throughout the day. Bloom can think at length about the decomposition of the human body and has acute experiences of nothingness, of the void. Immediately after his vision
of Agendath Netaim and the temptation of oriental fruit he realizes, "NO, not like that" (p. 61), and has a counter-
vision of the inertia and desolation of the Dead Sea. "Grey horror seared his flesh. . . . Cold oils slid along his veins, chilling his blood; age crusting him with a salt cloak. Be near her ample bedwarmed flesh. Yes Yes" (p. 61). Thus for Bloom the experience of death is part of everyday reality, just as its antidote, Molly's human warmth, is part of the here and now. The two extremes of the earlier novels, physical and metaphysical, have been redefined, and both are present and interplay in the reality of human life itself.

Just as Bloom has sudden flashes through the day that "No one is anything" (p. 164), or, later in "Ithaca," "Alone, what did Bloom feel? The cold interstellar space, thousands of degrees below freezing point of the absolute zero . . . ." (p. 704), much of Stephen's thought is preoccupied with the relationship of life and death. Most of it centers around his mother's death and its relationship to himself. He realizes that being born ineluctably entails dying, that life and death are opposite sides of the same mystery. Yet he lacks the moral fortitude of Bloom and regards death with the agony of the romantic self. "Bridebed, childbed, bed of death, ghostcandled. Omnis caro ad te veniet. He comes, pale vampire, through storm his eyes, his bat sails bloody-

ing the sea, mouth to her mouth's kiss" (p. 47-48). The Holy Ghost becomes the Angel of Death. Womb becomes tomb. His mother, who gave him life, becomes a "Ghoul! Chewer of
corpses! No mother. Let me be and let me live" (p. 12). Whereas Bloom accepts death, Stephen's thinking in "Proteus" is largely an attempt to reason it away, but he is confronted with it at every step he takes. For Stephen, as for Bloom, the antidote to death is sexual. Thus the tension between life and death, the two metaphorical poles, which caused in Bleak House and Tom Jones the discharge of one pole to another, is now no longer strong enough to do so. The two extremes of life and death, the two irreconcilable categories, no longer function as the impulse behind the action. No quest is possible or necessary. Both Bloom, the father figure, as well as Stephen, the son, are continuously preoccupied with the same problems. Moreover, the overall tenor of the book itself undercuts the possibility or necessity of metamorphosis as brought about by the quest pattern.

Yet we find in Ulysses the configuration of characters traditional in novels with the type of romance plot we have discussed in this thesis. There is the father, the son, and the person of the other sex to whom access is blocked. However, the doubling of the search into a search of the son for the father as well as the search of the father for the son, has brought with it a doubling of the traditional triangular pattern. Thus we have two triangles. One consists of Stephen, his double Mulligan, and Stephen's mother; the other is made up by Bloom, Boylan, and Molly. Though the suggestion of parallelism with the Odyssey has led us to
think of Stephen's need as a quest for fatherhood, this idea is not entirely accurate. We should distinguish between Stephen's desire for an absolute love, such as that of a mother on the one hand, and his thoughts about paternity and the past on the other.

In *Tom Jones* Tom's desire for union with Sophia, even though she is socially and morally elevated far above him, is still a union between people of equal age. It does not carry the suggestion of incest. Though the Freudian interpretation of Tom's story, since it is a family romance, would no doubt be that Sophia is a substitute for the mother, still the displacement of this fact is convincingly taken care of by Tom's union with Mrs. Waters; and the novel itself does not indicate that the final union may have moral dangers for the protagonist. In fact *Tom Jones* is better read as the displacement of a metaphysical desire rather than a physical desire. Precisely the emphasis on the absolute otherness of Sophia and Allworthy prevents our seeing the final marriage as incestuous. The situation in *Ulysses* is different, however. The dichotomy between metaphysical and physical is gone. This is reflected in Joyce's conception of Stephen's problem, which is his relationship with his mother. It is no longer merely a problem of achieving a union at the end of the quest, the lack of otherness at the end creates problems at the point of origin.

Stephen has concluded that *amor matris* is the only true mutual relationship possible. The father is uncertain or
absent, says Stephen, echoing Telemachus. Tom Jones had the example of Allworthy to live up to. For Stephen there is no role model or identity available to inspire him to relinquish his dependency on his mother. The identification with the mother is the only absolute available. However, the novel shows us that this relationship is ambivalent, and threatening as well as blissful. At the beginning of the book we are confronted with Stephen's fear of drowning, his fear of losing identity in submerging himself in the element from which all life springs. His fear of water is so great that he even foregoes washing himself. Part of this fear may be brought back to his guilt consequent upon his refusal to kneel at his mother's deathbed. Yet his guilt is stronger than the occasion requires and would not have been so intense if his love had not been so strong. The identification with his mother is so deep that he fears his act of defiance may have caused her death!

In "Circe" Stephen faces the ghost of his mother who accuses him of killing her. Though Stephen defends himself with pointing out that "Cancer did it, not I" (p. 580), his subsequent fantasy is that his mother accuses him of singing "Love's bitter mystery," but betraying this love, whereas she has always loved him with the absolute love of a mother. Thereupon Stephen's attitude to his mother veers to the other extreme, and he cries "The ghoul! Hyena!" (p. 581), and has a vision of her attempt to kill him: "(Her face drawing near and nearer, sending out an ashen breath.) Beware! (She
raises her blackened, withered right arm slowly towards
Stephen's breast with outstretched fingers.) Beware!
God's hand! (A Green crab with malignant red eyes sticks
deep its grinning claws in Stephen's heart.)" (p. 582).
In this vision Stephen's ambivalence towards his mother is
very evident. His love and fear balance each other. Though
Stephen is haunted throughout the day by the cream-fruit
smell of blissful union (where both the cream and the melons
suggest mother's milk), the danger of this union with a
devouring mother is equally present to his mind. His mental
activity throughout the day is an attempt to find a way
between the horns of this dilemma.

The mention of the colour green, which is the colour
for Ireland, in this same passage, as well as the reference
to God, indicate that Stephen's ambivalence to his mother
is carried through to his mother country and mother church.
He can neither accept nor reject his family, country, or
religion. Though he speaks disparagingly of things Irish,
he cares deeply about the usurpation of his country by the
English; though he rejects the formal belief of the Church,
his thought is structured by the terminology of theology.
In fact he tries to define his own position in the hierarchy
of things by the dogmatic and heretical definitions of the
Trinity. Unable to eradicate the love for his mother, unable
to suffer the obliteration of identity attendant upon giving
in to it, Stepehn is morally, spiritually, and emotionally
paralyzed.
Stephen's thinking about fatherhood is not only caused by the absence of a father to begin with, it is also an attempt to find an example to lead him through this Scylla and Charybdis. In the course of his thinking Stephen arrives at a spiritual concept of fatherhood. He denies the unique validity of biological paternity and substitutes for it the conscious relationship of the creator to his work, God to his creation. This is the only authority he recognizes. His long disquisition on the relationship of Shakespeare himself to his play, is the indirect justification for his attempt to become his own father by molding the material of his life into art. Even if Stephen should eventually succeed in becoming an author by writing about himself, this solution barely avoids being solipsistic. His life is subservient to the purpose of art. His interpretation of things recalls Mallarmé's thought that everything exists to end up in a book. In being determined by the end, Stephen's life will never have the immediacy or authenticity of Bloom's tragic existence. Compared to Tom Jones' surrender of selfhood to the absolute, and Esther Summerson's discovery of a self on the acceptance of its sexual nature, Stephen's choice is the evasion of both being and existence. Existence is overshadowed by its purpose as material for art; being is relegated to the realm of the book. While it is easy to criticize Stephen from the vantage point of the last quarter of the twentieth century, we should not forget, however, that he is representative of the intellectual problems facing early
twentieth-century thought. Stephen's aestheticism was shared by many authors and constituted an attempt to cope with the dilemma of having to choose between "matter" and "spirit."\footnote{14}

Stephen, unlike his earlier prototypes, does not change. There is no recognition of a hidden identity or truth about oneself, no sudden insight into one's daimonic characteristics. This is a post-Freudian world. Even the descent in "Circe" does not bring to consciousness material of which the characters themselves had previously been unaware. Stephen at the end of the day is not materially different from the way he was when leaving the Martello Tower, though it is possible that he has matured somewhat, and has decided on his course of action for the future. Joyce's remark to Frank Budgen that he preferred to write about Bloom because Stephen has a shape that cannot be changed, might at first be thought to suggest that Bloom, the father in this Irish epos, does change. However, the Bloom returning to Molly's bed is, apart from his request for breakfast, almost the same as the Bloom who stepped out of Molly's bed. What attracted Joyce in the character of Ulysses was its polytropic nature.\footnote{15} Odysseus is a character with many different roles and faces. It would be easy for the author to show his counterpart in different situations and roles in modern Dublin. But beyond this, it seems to me that the character of Odysseus fascinated Joyce because of its protean qualities. With the abolition of the old hierarchy, the old stable ego was erased.
also. Without a central figure or idea on which to model this ego, it cannot exist. With the loss of the myth comes the loss of identity. In Tom Jones, and in Bleak House too, identity was always seen in relation to the ideal identity as maintained by the tradition. Consequently there were two possibilities: right and wrong identities. However, in Ulysses, Bloom, as compared to the other Dubliners, has no fixed identity--right or wrong. Bloom's character is largely made up out of caritas and negative capability. He does not subscribe to any ideology, creed or social pecking order. Consequently people cannot place him. Unable to recognize in him the ideologies, games and prejudices which give outline to their identities, Bloom remains to them invisible. Their opinions of him are more indicative of their personal idiosyncrasies than of Bloom.

Thus Bloom is far different from the immutability of Allworthy, who is always the same; his caritas is dependent more upon impulse and occasion than the unchanging unreflecting benevolence of Mr. Jarndyce. For Joyce the apocalyptic has become human, and Bloom no longer represents the old metaphysical prototype. However, neither is he the inversion of the concept of the autocratic father figure, so often found in Dickens' novels. Bloom is unlike these weak, ineffectual, henpecked husbands and fathers, since he is acting out of choice. He refuses to accept other people's concepts of what he is. Bloom does not have the kind of negative identity of Esther Summerson. What characterizes
Bloom is his acceptance of personal limits, his willingness to tolerate incertitude. In terms of Jean Laplanche's interpretation of Freud, Bloom has opened up his life to death; or in terms of Jeffrey Mehlman's account of the analytic theory of Lacan, Bloom has accepted his castration.

This is present in the novel not only symbolically in Bloom's denial to play power games, but in his problems with sex and procreation. Since the death of his only son Rudy more than ten years ago, he has had no complete sexual relationship with Molly. Though he lives in consciousness of this fact, he does nothing to force a change in this situation. He seems not to deny the idea that he may never be the father of a son; and he can sublimate his paternal feelings into an interest in the comparative stranger Stephen. Walking by the horse in "Lotuseaters," he thinks "Gelled too; a stump of black gut tapercha wagging limp between their haunches. Might be happy all the same that way" (p. 77). In this instance, Bloom is not driven by an abstract notion like others, nor by instinct. The injunction of the Christian and Jewish God to be fertile and multiply is not an absolute command to him.

Bloom is the kind of person who forgets his key. Unlike Esther who jingles hers to give her a sense of importance, or Stephen who is forced to give his up to the usurper Mulligan, Bloom does not attach great importance to this phallic symbol. On the beach, after the encounter with Gerty, he wants to leave her a written message. He realizes
the futility of writing, and stops after. "I. AM. A." without completing the definition of himself. He even throws the wooden stick away, thus discarding another phallic symbol. Bloom chooses to be without the attributes, power and authority of the traditional father, but shows in his relationship to his daughter Milly different paternal virtues: moral concern, protectiveness, and charity.

Just as neither Bloom nor Stepehn conforms to the archetype of father and son, their relationship frustrates our expectations of a final union between these opposites. Consequently, the precise meaning to be attached to the meeting of Bloom and Stephen, has become the most discussed aspect of Ulysses. With Richard Kain, my preference is for the critical theory which holds that Joyce, in his manipulation of Bloom and Stephen, creates a deliberate ambiguity, in order to decrease the quest pattern.18 This ambiguity begins with the fact that Joyce, in his manipulation of his characters and their stream of consciousness plays with the reader's expectation of the autonomy of his characters as distinct personages in a novel. Though he gives them wholly different personalities, he nevertheless lets Stephen's thoughts intrude on Bloom's interior monologue.19 Sometimes Bloom and Stephen think independently along the same lines. In Bloom's hallucinations in "Circe" we encounter the reflection of the thoughts of the narrator of "Cyclops," which Bloom cannot have heard. Bloom repeats Lenehan's riddle. Indeed, there are numerous instances in
the novel of the intrusion of foreign thoughts or sayings into a character's consciousness. This draws attention to the fact that these characters are not "real," but exist in a medium in which their autonomy is suspended: language. Joyce seems to point self-consciously to the fictionality of his characters. But it seems to me that the fact that Bloom and Stephen are shown as existing in language is precisely what makes them "real" to our contemporary understanding of the human situation. We all exist in the symbolic systems of communication we inherit and enter inescapably at birth. By suspending them in the medium of language, Joyce would seem to say that the boundaries of the conscious ego of his characters is arbitrary per se. A meeting between Stephen and Bloom is not a union of opposites, not the miraculous occurrence of the fusion of apocalyptic and daimonic, since they are embedded in the same verbal matrix, and cannot exist as wholly discrete, separate entities. Thus Joyce undercuts the very basis of verisimilitude which allowed the readers of Tom Jones and Bleak House the vicarious identification which provided the wholeness of a return to origin.

Similarly the descent into the subconscious of the "Circe" chapter does not conform to the archetypal quest pattern. To begin with both "father" and "son" descend together. However, descent does not bring about a reversal in the plot, nor does it confront the characters with a crucial confrontation which completely changes their personality. In fact Joyce pulls the reader's leg, and plays with
our expectations of a meeting between Bloom and Stephen. At the moment when they both look into the mirror together, and Lynch refers to the traditional function of art as "The mirror up to nature" (p. 567), Shakespeare's face appears in the mirror. His dialogue recaptures aspects of both Bloom's and Stephen's character and preoccupations. It is as if Joyce were illuminating the fact that opposites never meet except in the mirroring medium of art. The result of the union of father and son in Ulysses is not the ordering of the whole world in a recaptured innocence, it is Shakespeare. 21

Like the end of Stephen's "Parable of the Plums," the notion of union of Bloom and Stephen remains a "Pisgah Sight." It is as unconsummated as Bloom's return to Molly that same night. Instead of leading to mutual adaptation, the meeting leads to the affirmation and definition of essential selfhood:

Did Stephen participate in his dejection? He affirmed his significance as a conscious rational animal proceeding syllogistically from the known to the unknown and a conscious rational reagent between a micro- and a macrocosm ineluctably constructed upon the incertitude of the void.

Was this affirmation apprehended by Bloom? Not verbally. Substantially.

What comforted his misapprehension?

That as a competent keyless citizen he had proceeded energetically from the unknown to the known through the incertitude of the void. (p. 697)

Both Bloom and Stephen are aware of themselves as mediators between past and future, micro- and macrocosm; and both have accepted the presence of an absence, a lack. Their departure
to the yard outside is, like Psalm 113 which Stephen intones, still in a modus peregrinus. Even after the coming together of Stephen and Bloom, life remains a pilgrimage, an exile from the fleshpots of Egypt. The best that can be expected from their meeting is the performance of parallel action. Their simultaneous act of urination is the typically Joycean manner of pointing this out.

Thus the search for paternity does not provide the kind of closure we expect from this theme. Similarly, Bloom's circular return to origin, setting out from Molly's bed in the morning, and returning to it at night, does not present us with a coniunctio oppositorum. Though the fact of return in itself suggests a measure of closure, and the yin and yang position in which Bloom and Molly share the bed suggests the symbol of wholeness of the universe, yet we should have wished a different end for Bloom. The fact that critics have wondered what the next day would bring for Bloom shows that the reader is not satisfied with the situation of "Ithaca."

Yet, while Joyce denies his characters a happy ending, and structures his book to make the reader realize that his desire for certitude is a falsification of reality, a fiction, he does provide a closure of the novel in Molly's final stream of consciousness. Molly is the third major character of the novel. Though the reader has learnt a good deal about her from Bloom's stream of consciousness, she only takes on her full importance and fascination in the
closing episode of the book. This is so, first of all, because Molly has the last word. By giving her soliloquy pride of place, the author lends it an aura of definitiveness. Secondly, since Molly is the third character whose most intimate thoughts we share, and belongs to the sex opposite to that of the other two major characters, the reader cannot help but feel that Molly is, somehow, the mediator between Stephen and Bloom. Together they form a new trinity. In fact her interior monologue, which is hardly punctuated, may be read as the levelling out of all oppositions and contradictions which orchestrate the novel. It encompasses Dublin and Gibraltar, past and present as well as future, at random. It fails to distinguish between desire and actuality in its reference to lovers, and is all-embracing in its acceptance of her biological role. Molly's last words "and yes I said yes I will Yes" (p. 781), indicate this affirmation of her own physical destiny. In accepting what she is, Molly's words exemplify the successful decreation of the traditional opposition between physics and metaphysics. "Penelope," in its timeless present, ends the nightmare of history. Molly's unpunctuated consciousness incorporates Stephen and Bloom, blurs the distinction between fidelity and infidelity, reality and desire. "She is the agent of reconciliation and its symbol."\textsuperscript{22}

This is indeed the way earlier critics have read the novel. However, there are different ways of interpreting the same idea. Since Molly's physicality, her lack of
gentility, and prodigious sexual appetite must have seemed larger than life to the upper-middle class interpreters of *Ulysses*, they understood Molly Bloom as an earth goddess, a Gea-Tellus, whose concluding presence in the novel made up for all the preceding frustration of closure in the text. This is, however, a romantic view of Joyce. It turns Molly into the archetypal mother who loves all her children without discrimination. It implies that at the end of seven hundred pages of undermining the structure and credibility of the myth upon which Western society is built, Joyce would turn around and substitute his own sentimental version of Robert Graves's *White Goddess*. Though Joyce's Irish, matriarchal and Roman Catholic background may have been pre-disposing to such a pattern of thought, *Ulysses* was written to overcome the paralysis of Dublin. It is more likely, therefore, that the character of Molly is a final attempt at decration of the habit of idealization, to arrive at a new unification of experience.

This is especially clear if we keep in mind Joyce's punning verbal consciousness. His attempt to decrerate the duality of the traditional structure of the novel is paralleled by his attempts to remove the distance separating signifier and signified. Therefore his text is best interpreted literally. In this instance, Joyce followed very literally the Apostle John's account of the incarnation: "And the Word became flesh." The mediating structure of the novel as we find it in *Tom Jones* and *Bleak House* is built on
the Word in two senses. In one sense this type of mediation, especially as found in *Tom Jones*, is modelled on the example of mediation provided by the Word of God, the Bible. In another, this type of mediation is dependent on the medium of literature in order to exist. As we have seen, it is his fallacious narrative logic which allows the author to suggest the eventual achievement of totality. Instead of a formal closure of the novel Joyce gives us Molly: in the character of Molly Bloom, describing her sensations while the menstrual blood flows into the chalice of the chamberpot, the word has indeed become flesh.

It seems to me that precisely Molly's physicality has awed and frightened earlier critics into removing her to the abstract level of goddess. More recent critics have deflated Molly as goddess, they have pointed out that she has a number of petty human qualities and is no more than a "distinctly lower-middle class adulteress." Specifically directed against the mythologizing of Molly is J. Mitchell Morse's conclusion that "Molly is not honest, she is not kind, she is not creative, she is not free, she hasn't enough *élan vital* to get dressed before three P.M., and her fertility is subnormal." What we have in Molly is, as Maurice Beebe calls her, a "character of love." "Penelope" is the answer to Gabriel Conroy's inability to see his wife as a separate human being and accept her individuality. Molly is presented in all her human frailty and vulgarity, yet she is still the mother. Though deprived of the aura of the ideal, her body
is the vessel for the biological immortality and continuity of human life. The fat figure of Molly is the only way of uniting past and present, father and son, sacred and profane, apocalyptic and daimonic. After all, Molly, a lower-middle class Dublin housewife, is a kind of "mythic" character then. However, this "myth" is nothing more than the recognition of the mystery of life itself. It certainly is not an explanation for it, and does not deny the particular and human for the abstract and ideal.

It seems then that we have come full circle. We began with the description of the eighteenth-century Allworthy, the human representative of his divine prototype. We end with the twentieth-century interior monologue of a vulgar woman, who represents nothing beyond the fleshly continuity of the human race. Though to arrive at this final figure Joyce had to decreate the quest structure related to the paternalistic concept of the return to origin, yet Joyce manages to arrive at another, new vision of origin and the One.

It is interesting that Joyce, no less than Dickens or Fielding, uses the basic human relationships of the family romance. Though not a return to origin, or the discovery of the parent(s), Joyce's novel ends, nevertheless, with a new crystallization of the basic family. In order to do so he has collapsed the two triangles of the male protagonists of the book, so that the novel ends with the suggestion of a new configuration of characters, Molly, Bloom, and Stephen.
Though the text itself denies this understanding of the story, the mere fact that Molly's chapter closes the book provides the reader with the emotional gratification which is denied by his intellectual knowledge of the lack of closure in the ending of the book.

Looking back over the novel, then, we must come to the conclusion that for Joyce it is not the structure of the quest with its mediating function which leads to a return to origin, but the very decreation of this quest. As we have seen the quest structure is based on the preconception of the existence of an absolute otherness. It requires the dualistic habit of thought which separates reality into physics and metaphysics. As Jacques Derrida might say, the "center" of this structure is the existence of God and the validity of the idea of the hierarchy of the "Great Chain of Being." Joyce, growing up in Ireland, hated the paralyzing schizophrenia to which this way of thinking had led. Still a student he was fascinated by the philosophy of Giordano Bruno, who held that all contraries coincide. For instance, love and hate are forms of caring which easily turn into each other. The opposite of both is indifference. Joyce assimilated this way of thinking which is also typical of Blake, and, looking at the two contraries dominating contemporary thought, recognized that materialism is the obverse of spiritualism. Just so, he sees being and existence as mutually dependent on each other, and anticipates the thought of Martin Heidegger in Identity and Difference. For Joyce
then, for whom reality is not the metaphysical as in *Tom Jones*, not the purely physical, as in *Bleak House*, "return to origin" is the revelation of the interrelationships of being and existence in everyday reality itself.

However, if Joyce had completely refused to shape his ideas in the traditional form because he no longer endorsed the values or ideas they illustrate, we would have had something like the French *Nouveau Roman*. Joyce's choice instead was to include the old structure in the novel, but to decræate it, not to parody it, which would according to Bruno's philosophy, have done nothing more than turn it into its contrary. Hence *Ulysses* is still related to the *Odyssey* but as the definition of the differences of the modern world, rather than its recreation.

In perpetrating this decræation, Joyce's aim, no less than Fielding's or Dickens' is still to provide a sense of totality in explaining the ultimate reality of human life. For Joyce this does not take the form of a quest to eliminate one of two categories; rather, it is the suspension of all dualism throughout the novel. Yet, in the end, *Ulysses* provides the reader with a satisfaction similar in kind to that of *Tom Jones*. In creating the final triangular configuration of characters, and letting the novel end with Molly's stream of consciousness, the novel describes a return to the origin of life, and to the absence of dualism before birth. Therefore, *Ulysses*, no less than the other two novels discussed in this argument, depends on the mediating function of form to create a return to origin.
FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I


2 With "ideology" I mean the structure of attitudes and beliefs which dominates all the aspects of society and culture of a particular epoch. Other words which denote the same idea are "Zeitgeist" and "Spirit of the Age," or Michel Foucault's coinage of "episteme" in The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences, trans. anon. (1966; rpt. New York: Random House, 1970).


4 Macherey, pp. 179–80. The definition here is different from, for instance, Jeffrey Mehlman's in A Structural Study of Autobiography: Proust, Leiris, Sartre, Lévi-Strauss (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1974). Mehlman discusses the transformations in a constant triangular set of relationships: father, mother, and child. While later in this introduction I shall have occasion to point to the fact that I use the same structure as Mehlman, I prefer to limit myself here to a very general definition of "structural." After all, I have taken upon me the obligation to show two things: first, synchronically, the quest for totality which entails showing how the novel is informed by a specific ideology; secondly, diachronically, to show how the form given to the quest for totality has changed over the last two hundred years. With regard to the first obligation Macherey's definition of structure is most appropriate, with regard to the second, Mehlman's.


6 This only applies to the North-American interpretation of Freud's theory. In France a reinterpretation has taken place in the works of Jacques Lacan and Jean Laplanche. A summary statement of their ideas may be found in Jean Laplanche, Life and Death in Psychoanalysis, trans. Jeffrey Mehlman (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976). Mehlman's A Structural Study is an attempt to open up these new ideas to the American reader.

8Ibid., p. 60.

9The following quotation is from p. 60.

10Similar to Lukács' theory is René Girard's Mensonge Romantique et Vérité Romanesque (Paris: Grasset, 1961). He speaks of an "idolatrous" search necessitated by the fact that the world itself suffers from an ontological malaise "mediatization," thus increasing the desire for the romantic and absolute. A marxist/structuralist study based on Lukács and Girard is Lucien Goldman's Towards a Sociology of the Novel, trans. Alan Sheridan (1964; London: Tavistock Publications, 1975). Goldman considers the novel form to be "the transposition on the literary plane of everyday life in the individualistic society created by market production" (p. 5). He discerns a "rigorous homology between the literary form of the novel . . . and the everyday relation between man and commodities in general, and by extension between men and other men, in a market society" (p. 7), in the sense that both are influenced by the "mediation of quantity, or exchange value."

11See E. H. Gombrich, Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation, Bollingen Series 35.5 (1960; rpt. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1972), pp. 1-90 on the fact that fiction, like other forms of representation must schematize and therefore "lie" in the historical sense. Edwin Muir brings out this aspect of fiction rather pointedly when he says that "Ulysses is less confusing than Dublin," in The Structure of the Novel (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1929), p. 11. An excellent discussion of the relationship of "reality" and "fiction" in the novel is to be found in Harry Levin, The Gates of Horn: A Study of Five French Realists (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966). Levin writes, p. 47: "The self-contradictory task of the novel had been evident from the beginning, in such paradoxes as Furetière's Roman Bourgeois and such apologetics as Fielding's 'comic epic poem in prose.'" He points out also, that it is a formal feature of the novel to disclaim its fictionality. Thus Defoe "prefaced each of his novels with a disclaimer, invidiously differentiating the facts he was about to relate from the fictions of other writers. Diderot boldly called one of his tales Ceci n'est pas un conte. Similarly, Thomas Mann warns us, 'Dies ist kein Roman,' and Henry Miller: 'This is not a book.'" Marthe Robert, Roman des Origines et Origines du Roman (Paris: Grasset, 1972), p. 32 states: "Le roman insistérait peut-être moins sur sa parenté avec la vérité s'il la sentait lui-même mieux fondée."


14 This use of the term romance is different from the generic use, where romance is a type of story, as in "medieval romance," or "Greek romance." It is also narrower than the meaning given to "romance" by R. Chase, The American Novel and its Tradition (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1957), who distinguishes romance from novel on the grounds of the degree of adaptation to laws of probability and the tightness of the plot. My use of the term romance plot is more concerned with function than Northrop Frye's definition of mode in The Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (1957: Princeton, N.J.; Princeton Univ. Press, 1973). It is interesting to note what Ben Edwin Perry, The Ancient Romances: A Literary-Historical Account of their Origin (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1967), p. 50, writes: "The Odyssey has often been called a romance and reasonably so. It has a definite plot with a background of private and domestic life, a long series of wonderful adventures undergone by the hero in struggling to achieve his goal, and a happy triumph and reunion at the end. Indeed, there may be no generic difference at all, as concerns content and structure, between the Odyssey or a romance of chivalry on the one hand and a late Greek or modern novel on the other."

15 The Rise of the Novel.


19 Ibid., p. 68.

20 The Gates of Horn, p. 4.

21 This point is made by Robert Alter, Partial Magic: The Novel as Self-Conscious Genre (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1965), p. 90.

Even in a tragic novel such as Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* the ending is a re-inception. *Tess's tragic death is the confirmation of the author's philosophical outlook which has informed the narrative all along. On the concept of origins and beginnings, see Edward Said, *Beginnings: Intention and Method* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1975).

Compare the latest developments in analytical psychology which, since the appearance of Eric Berne's *Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationship* (1964; rpt. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1967) has concerned itself with outlining other subconscious structural determinants such as "life scripts." For a difficult but interesting discussion of the changing relationships between coeval frames of thought and concepts of reality, see Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*.


See Mehlman, *A Structural Study*, esp. Appendices I and II, and Chapter I.

Here I mean structure as a self-regulating series of transformations of a constant system of relationships.


This point has been made by Michel Foucault, also by Erich Kahler, *The Inward Turn of Narrative*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, *Bollingen Series 83* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1973). The following pages owe to Foucault's argument.

Eugene Vinaver, *The Rise of Romance* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971). He quotes C. S. Lewis in his illustration of "the principles of the poetry of interlace." I take my idea from him. Vinaver argues that the acentrality and structural density mirror the essential features of contemporary romanesque art. Thus he draws a parallel between
literature and sculpture which is similar to the analogy of Erwin Panofsky's

There is in this process an interesting analogy to painting. Though
nineteenth-century painters often took exotic scenes, mythological tableaux, or
historical incidents as the setting for their pictures, thus using a
different kind of reality than their own, one no longer finds the earlier kind of picture in
which earth, heaven, and hell, co-exist within one frame, as they do in medieval art and
drama. Earth, heaven and hell have become discontinuous and different kinds of reality. No
longer is there a direct view into heaven as we still find it in baroque
painting. Our modern Western conception of reality is
characterized by the radical separation of the physical and
metaphysical. However, I do not want to seem to imply that
in medieval literature this discontinuity was not felt at
all. It was there of course, notably so in the dream con-
vention, which indicates a break in the level of reality of
the narrative. Yet the heavens could be open to the eyes
of mankind, as they are to Dante. Also of interest is the
fact that the representation of perspective succeeded in
placing the figure at a distance from his background at
the change of the middle ages into the renaissance.

Perry, The Ancient Romances, p. 119, speaking of the
digressions, and critical and philosophical essays of
Joseph Andrews, and Tom Jones states that these "non-organic
features signify in both cases that the novel, when it first
comes into the hands of authors trained in the intellectual
or classical traditions, does not yet stand on its own feet
as a work of art, and has not yet cut its connections with
those other forms which dominated the literary scene before
its birth." Thus Perry implies that the rise of the novel
is a gradual process of individuation.

Michel Foucault gives a brilliant interpretation of
Don Quixote. The knight's madness, in effect, consists in
maintaining the outmoded expectation that there is a unity
between the Word and reality. This "madness" of wanting to
find the characters of romance in real life, exemplifies the
mode of being of a previous worldview in which there are,
as yet, no breaks between the ultimate or absolute and every-
day existence.

The Rise of Romance, p. 17.

This structural change may also be related to other
aspects of contemporary culture. Vinaver points to the
common intellectual origin of the interpretative nature of
romance on the one hand and of the exegetic tradition on the
other.

Scholes and Kellogg, p. 53.

Ibid., p. 55. Other aspects of the novel which point to conformism to the order of history are: 1) the requirement of probability; 2) as Erich Kahler has pointed out an increase in psychological analysis inversely proportionate to the decrease in participation; 3) the novel's preoccupation with money, objects, and status; 4) the fact that the novel itself has become an object for financial profit and authorship a business.

This idea has been expressed in different forms by different people. Sheldon Sacks, Fiction and the Shape of Belief: A Study of Henry Fielding with Glances at Swift, Johnson and Richardson (1964; rpt. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1967), p. 26: "An action is a work organized so that it introduces characters, about whose fates we are made to care, in unstable relationships which are then further complicated until the complication is finally resolved by the removal of the represented instability." Rudolf Arnheim, Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye (1954; rpt. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1971), p. 26, indicates that the emphasis of all works of art is on a pattern of directed forces that are being balanced, ordered, unified." Tzvetan Todorov, "Structural Analysis of Narrative," Novel: A Forum on Fiction, 3 (1969), 75, argues that "the minimal complete plot can be seen as the shift from one equilibrium to another. This term 'equilibrium' which I am borrowing from genetic psychology, means the existence of a stable but not static relation between the members of a society; it is a social law, a rule of the game, a particular system of exchange. The two moments of equilibrium, similar and different, are separated by a period of imbalance, which is composed of a process of degeneration and a process of improvement." See also Scholes and Kellogg, p. 212.

There are novels which deliberately frustrate the reader's expectations and which lack closure. This is the case in Henry James' The Portrait of a Lady and The Ambassadors. After finishing the novel, the reader is left with the problem of the motivation of the protagonist. There are then novels which lack the cathartic effect I have postulated for the novel in general.


Most critics speak, with Harry Levin, of engaño and disengaño, Dichtung und Wahrheit, illusion and disillusion, appearance and reality (The Gates of Horn, p. 48). Lukács
mentions being and becoming, Ihab Hassan concludes that "the function of American fiction" is to "mediate between the hero's outrageous dream and the sadness of human mortality." He emphasizes that this mediation is a feat of form. Radical Innocence: Studies in the Contemporary American Novel (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1973), p. 329. Alan Friedman, in The Turn of the Novel (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966) sees the mediation of innocence and experience as basic to the novel; David Goldknopf's theory of the novel centers on the opposite categories of self and world in The Life of the Novel (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1972). There are, of course, innumerable categories one might list, such as subjective-objective, conscious-subconscious, past-present, art-nature, role-identity, temporality-universality, soliloquy-dialogue; every critic has his own, equally valid approach.

46 Edmund Leach, Genesis as Myth and Other Essays (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969), pp. 9-10 explains: Religion everywhere is preoccupied with the first, the antinomy of life and death. Religion seeks to deny the binary link between the two words; it does this by creating the mystical idea of 'another world,' a land of the dead where life is perpetual. The attributes of this other world are necessarily those which are not of this world; imperfection here is balanced by perfection there. But this logical ordering of ideas has a disconcerting consequence—God comes to belong to the other world. The central 'problem' of religion is then to re-establish some kind of bridge between Man and God.

This pattern is built into the structure of every mythical system; the myth first discriminates between gods and men and then becomes preoccupied with the relations and intermediaries which link men and gods together. This much is already implicit in our initial definition.


48 Ibid., p. 229.

49 Ibid., p. 222. The diagram belongs to the quote.

50 Genesis as Myth, p. 11.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER II


3 This point is also made by Martin C. Battestin, The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art: A Study of Joseph Andrews (Middleton, Conn.: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1959).


8 Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 215 remarks: "though the dramatized Fielding does serve to pull together many parts of Tom Jones that might otherwise seem disconnected, and though he serves dozens of other functions, from the standpoint of strict functions he goes too far: much of his commentary relates to nothing but the reader and himself."

the fact that he loves them, Allworthy seems to have no
intimate acquaintance with the people living around him,
some of whom, like Thwackum, slander him behind his back.
Though we are told near the end of the book that Allworthy
in reality had never esteemed Thwackum, this in itself points
to an inconsistency in the character of Allworthy, who takes
Thwackum's word as the foundation for his decision to send
Tom away without judicial hearing. Allworthy cannot "see
anything until the last situation of the last act, and then
sees it all at once," when he banishes Blifil, again without
careful investigation. Thus he undoes what has been done,
but in neither case does his behaviour correspond to "normal
human nature and conduct." Art and Artifice in Shakespeare:
A Study in Dramatic Contrast and Illusion (1933; rpt. New York:
Barnes and Noble, 1963), p. 67. Andrew Wright sees a dis-
crepancy between Fielding's glorification of Allworthy's
virtue, and the fact that Allworthy is not the pattern of
prudence he seems. Henry Fielding: Mask and Feast (Berkeley:

10 William Empson, "Tom Jones," The Kenyon Review, 20
Alan Dugald McKillop warns us against our tendency to view
the novel through the disfiguring lenses of our modern irony.
As he points out, not only is there no evidence that Fielding
thought Allworthy's homiletic discourses "tedious or expects
the unregenerate reader to find them so"; Fielding insists
on having patterned the wisdom of Allworthy on the characters
of Ralph Allen and George Lyttleton, his patrons and bene-
factors; and it is unlikely he would have done this if there
were so much as the suggestion of irony. The Early Masters
of English Fiction (Lawrence: Univ. of Kansas Press, 1956),
p. 129.

that the mental processes of the individual may ascribe
hostility to the father, creating an ambivalence by this
projection of its own hostility on another figure; just so
in myth hostility can be projected on the figure with
authority.

12 Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel, p. 286, regrets the
lack of Tom's inner development and the fact that we "can
only take on trust Fielding's implication, which is that his
hero will be able to control his weaknesses by the wisdom he
has learned of experience." John S. Coolidge, "Fielding
'Conservation of Character,'" in Fielding: A Collection of
Critical Essays, ed. Ronald Paulson, p. 162, states: "The
very principles upon which the world of Tom Jones is created
appear to preclude any such change in character."

13 I quote Coleridge from Frederic T. Blanchard, Fielding

14 The Rise of the Novel, p. 289.
16 Ibid., p. 806.
18 "The Plot of Tom Jones," p. 850.
19 Arnold Kettle, "Tom Jones," An Introduction to the English Novel, I (London: Hutchinson Univ. Library, 1951), pp. 76-81, rpt. in Fielding: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Ronald Paulson, p. 85: points out that these characters are not "in the fullest sense, people. They are almost all 'flat' characters in the tradition of the comedy of humours, that useful though unsubtle theory based on the crude physiological psychology of the Middle Ages."
24 This is possible because Tom has secretly added another
100 pounds to Blifil's annuity.


27 Sheridan Baker states: "this is the quintessential tale of romance, the oldest story in the world—that of an unknown but excellent nobody who becomes somebody at last," p. vii; see also Henry Knight Miller, Henry Fielding's Tom Jones and the Romance Tradition, ELS Monograph Series, No. 6 (Victoria, B.C.: Univ. of Victoria Press, 1976).


29 "First, there is undisplaced myth, generally concerned with gods or demons, and which takes the form of two contrasting worlds of total metaphorical identification, one desirable and the other undesirable. These two worlds are often identified with the existential heavens and hell of the religions contemporary with such literature. These two forms of metaphorical organization we call the apocalyptic and demonic respectively," Anatomy of Criticism, p. 139. One might also compare these categories to the Apollonian and Dionysian polarity found in Greek myth by Harry Slochower, Mythopoesis: Mythic Patterns in the Literary Classics (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1970), p. 73.

30 An exception should be made for Lady Bellaston and Lord Fellamar, who represent London, the "hell" of this novel.

31 Eliade, Sacred and Profane, p. 42.

32 Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, p. 203.

33 Sacred and Profane, p. 43.


36 From a letter to Astraea and Minerva Hill, 4 August,


38Hamlet and Oedipus (New York: Norton, 1976), p. 131. This idea was first published as "The Oedipus-Complex as an Explanation of Hamlet's Mystery: A Study in Motive," Am. J. Psych. 21 (1910), 105. I have chosen Jones's statement because it speaks clearly about the way in which decomposition comes about. He does not assign to it the psychoanalytical cause of, for instance, narcissism as Otto Rank does in The Double: A Psychoanalytic Study, trans. Harry Tucker, Jr. (1925; rpt. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1971), p. 86. Though compare Rank's later statement in "The Double as Immortal Self," in Beyond Psychology (1941; New York: Dover, 1958), pp. 62-76, where he suggests that man's desire for immortality and continuity is the impulse behind civilisation. The concept of the double, comparable to the primitive understanding of the soul as a kind of double or shadow, provides him simultaneously with a token of immortality as well as a pointer towards his death.


41The Literature of the Second Self (Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 1972). Furthermore, the prevalence of doubled characters in comedy and the Victorian novel has been commented on by Northrop Frye; and the heroes and villains in fairy tales are often explained in terms of the Jungian "persona" and "shadow." However, notwithstanding the variety of terms used to describe the manifestations of decomposition, its mechanics seem to be the same, and the phenomenon is triggered off by the existence of conflict, according to Robert Rogers, The Double in Literature: A Psychoanalytic Study of (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1970), p. 54. Northrop Frye, The Secular Scripture, p. 110 states: "The Narcissus theme helps to explain why the confusion of identity in romance is so often associated with the theme of twins."

42Fielding and the Nature of the Novel, p. 91.

43Anatomy of Criticism, p. 147.

44That the institution of marriage has wide symbolic
implications was probably more alive to Fielding's audience than to the modern reader. In Myths and Motifs in Literature, ed. David J. Burrows, Frederick R. Lapides, and John T. Shawcross (New York: The Free Press, 1973), p. 458, the archetypal significance given to marriage is: "The attempt to reconcile the original male-female opposition; to recreate the whole which was originally the living creature; to combine the Logos (man's knowledge) with Eros (woman's relatedness)." This archetypal reading of marriage as an almost mystic union of opposites is also evident in the fact that the Church has always regarded marriage as a sacrament.

45 Frye, The Secular Scripture, p. 129.

46 On the symbolic overtones of inns, see David Goldknopf, "The Failure of Plot," p. 800.

47 In earlier literature Fortuna was the fickle goddess who reigned over the world of mutability. Whoever fell into her realm through gambling, e.g., or belief in her supremacy, put himself under the Old Law of Justice—and deserved the death of the spirit. Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy, which was still read in Fielding's days, shows how, through detachment from the whirligig of the Wheel of Fortune, one enters the realm of Mercy and immutability. Since the fall into the realm of Fortune is a traditional feature of medieval literature, its earlier significance may illuminate the significance of the concept in Tom Jones.

48 With regard to the incest scare, Gerard Else's commentary on the Poetics is helpful: "What can be dispensed with is the act itself. The essential thing is the idea of a pathos, the intention of performing one. The pathos is in fact no more than the lever by which the tragic potentiality is converted into actuality; and for that purpose—at least so Aristotle gives us to understand—the intention can serve as well as the act. The ultimate root of the tragic is ignorance, and its actualization is the conversion of the ignorance into knowledge, but with the proviso that the ignorance must have led or threatened to lead to an act which runs counter to man's deepest moral instincts" (p. 420).


50 The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art, p. 15.

51 Ibid., p. 15-16.


53 Translation by Sheridan Baker, in footnote, p. 4.

54 For Joseph Andrews, see Martin Battestin, The Moral
Basis, pp. 38-40. J. P. Hunter suggests that The Odyssey, especially Pope's translation, and Fénélon's Télémaque (1699) provide the structural model for the novel. Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1975), pp. 130-39. Fielding refers to the Télémaque in his preface to Joseph Andrews, and compares it to the Odyssey. In Fielding's opinion, the modern epic, though in prose, is comparable to ancient epics. In this didactic work, portraying Telemachus' acquisition of wisdom, there are unmistakable parallels with Tom's acquisition of sophia.
FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER III

1Throughout this discussion reference will be to Charles Dickens, Bleak House, ed. Duane DeVries, Crowell Critical Library (New York: Thomas Crowell, Co., 1971). Subsequent references will be by page number in the text.


3I take these functions from a note by Duane DeVries, Bleak House, p. 4.


6Robert Alan Donovan, "Structure and Idea in Bleak House" in The Shaping Vision: Imagination in the English Novel from Defoe to Dickens (Ithaca, New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1966), p. 209 points out: "The corruption that marks the society of Bleak House may find its center and aptest symbol in Lincoln's Inn Hall, but its true origin is in the decay of the most fundamental social institution, the family." It is important to an understanding of my argument that I, in turn, describe the degeneration of the bonds of the family to the loss of an ideology.

7Eric Berne, Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationship (1964; rpt. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1967), or for "life scripts" such as Esther's belief that it were better that she were dead, What Do You Say After You Say Hello?: The Psychology of Human Destiny (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1973).


10. The only signs Jo can interpret are those of money. In a completely secular world the ties of money replace the bonds of love, as Marx has argued. This is one of the main themes of Great Expectations.

11. See Norman Friedman's extensive treatment, "The Shadow and the Sun."


13. Mark Spilka, "Religious Folly," p. 70, quotes George Santayana "Dickens," Soliloquies in England (New York: Scribner's, 1923), p. 61, stating that Lady Dedlock's secret is regarded "as if it were the sin of Adam, remote, mysterious, inexplicable."

14. Contagion is a traditional part of allegory. The Christian depiction of sin as spreading contagiously is also found in Greek thought. See Angus Fletcher Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1964), pp. 198 ff.

15. Just like the magic of contagion, the use of houses to represent topographically a moral condition is a time-honoured allegorical device. Spencer uses the House of Holiness and the House of Temperance. See Fletcher, Allegory, pp. 209 ff.


17. P. 167. Stoehr's main point with regard to Bleak House is that the separation into two narrative strands of the double plot keeps the sexual and social problems from inter-mingling. This is, of course, the opposite of my interpretation.


19. Ibid., p. 103.


William Axton has pointed out that these nicknames refer to figures like witches—which may relate to Esther's poor self-concept, or to names of old women who are substitute parents for deserted children or animals.


That the events in a Dickens novel can be explained in contradictory ways, has been pointed out by Taylor Stoehr. With regard to Lady Dedlock's quest he suggests, p. 232: 'The sequence of events has two organizations, the one designed to camouflage the other, which is structurally deeper and on which depends the whole meaning of Esther's self-discovery and acceptance of her own nature.'

Charles Dickens, p. 203.

I take this point from Broderick and Grant, p. 257. They quote the same passage from Bleak House.

Stoehr, p. 232.

Broderick and Grant, p. 257.

Alan Friedman, The Turn of the Novel (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), p. 24: "In Bleak House the two opposed patterns of conscience, open and closed, are played off against each other in the two plots as they intersect and pass each other." W. J. Harvey, "Chance and Design in Bleak House," p. 136 finds "The fact that the equipoise between part and whole is so precariously maintained is in itself a tribute to the energy here being harnessed." Barbara Hardy, The Moral Art of Dickens (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1970), p. 13: "The reconciliation is a part that will not stand for the whole, either intellectually, or emotionally." Fradin, p. 97: "In a word, Esther does not triumph, she merely saves herself. The new Bleak House arises not from the ashes of the old but (metaphorically) beside it and surrounded by the dust of the wasteland." C. Armour Craig, "The Unpoetic Compromise" in Twentieth Century Interpretations of Bleak House, ed. J. Korg, p. 63, finds: "In Bleak House Dickens rejected the ruthless shape of fantasy for the unpoetic compromise of two parallel and unmeeting narrative lines."


The Dynamics of Literary Response (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1958), pp. xiii-xiv points to the connection between sentimentality and "Oedipal fantasy." In his view most great works of literature deal with this subject. To justify my own practice here, I refer to Freud's saying, "Invented dreams can be interpreted in the same way as real ones," which is discussed by Holland in "Romeo's Dream and the Paradox of Literary Realism," Literature and Psychology 13 (1963), 97-104. With regard to Dickens' own Oedipal problems see Lawrence Jay Dessner, "Great Expectations: 'the ghost of a man's own father,'" PMLA 91 (1976), 436-449.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER IV

1 The ideas informing a period of time cannot be pinpointed to one particular cause or beginning. Just as one cannot maintain that material circumstances determine religious views, or vice versa, it is, for instance, equally impossible to believe that the developments of science and philosophy are the sole cause of changes in religion or the organization of labor and production. We have to do with a complex texture of factors which are reciprocal in their relationships and contemporaneous in their rate of change. Though I am aware of its vagueness, I will use the word "worldview" to denote this web of ideas informing a particular period.

2 For instance Hélène Cixous, The Exile of James Joyce, trans. Sally A. J. Purcell (New York: David Lewis, 1972), finds Bloom, who avoids life out of a fear of death, despicably weak. Stephen, in her opinion, at least takes action against death by means of his artistic activities. This French view is practically the inverse of that held by most Anglo-American critics.


4 For an analysis of the relationship of Ulysses to Dante see Mary T. Reynolds, "Joyce's Planetary Music. His Debt to Dante," Sewanee Review 76, 3 (1968), 450-77.


6 An exhaustive analysis of all the literary reincarnations of Ulysses may be found in W. B. Stanford, The Ulysses Theme: A Study in the Adaptability of a Traditional Hero, 2nd ed. (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1964).

7 Stuart Gilbert's James Joyce's Ulysses (1930; rpt. New York: Vintage Books, 1955) is largely concerned with pointing out the Homeric parallels. He makes especially much of Joyce's use of Victor Bérard's Les Phéniciens et l'Odyssée, published in 1912, which argues that the epic goes back to earlier Semitic literature, and tries to pinpoint the actual places where the episodes took place by the use of etymology. Contrast this with Morton P. Levitt, "A Hero for our Time: Leopold Bloom and the Myth of Ulysses," in Fifty
Years Ulysses, ed., Thomas F. Staley (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1972), p. 135: "In retrospect this entire argument about Homer is as irrelevant today as it once seemed inevitable." E. M. W. Tillyard, The Epic Strain in the English Novel, p. 190: "As to the parallels themselves, the better you know the book, the less you find them to matter; the more academic and the less fundamental they show themselves." A very interesting phenomenological view is that of Wolfgang Iser, The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1974), p. 227 ff. He sees present and past in the relationship of figure and ground.

9Thisand subsequent quotations are to the Vintage Books edition of James Joyce, Ulysses (1922; rpt. New York: Random House, 1961), p. 3-4. Subsequent references will be by page number in the text.


12Frank Budgen, p. 41.

13Ulysses on the Liffey (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972), pp. 159-176. Eliman argues that Joyce has replaced the Divine Trinity with a human equivalent. This seems to me the creation of a new ideology. Compare R. M. Adams, Surface and Symbol (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1962), p. 81. He points out "it is evident that Joyce's method of handling parallel myths is simply to mention names whenever they make or reinforce surface relatedness, and allow the reader to make his own connections."


16Jean Laplanche, Life and Death in Psychoanalysis.

17A Structural Study of Autobiography.

18The possible interpretations have been discussed in Richard Kain, "The Significance of Stephen's Meeting Bloom:
A Survey of Interpretations" in Fifty Years Ulysses, ed. Thomas F. Staley, pp. 147-60. Kain summarizes and discusses all the theories in extenso, then lists summarily (p. 159): "1. Isolation: the meeting is fortuitous and unimportant, a demonstration of modern keylessness or of the existential position of man. 2. Creativity: Stephen becomes a discoverer of mankind, through communion with Bloom. 3. Ambiguity: Joyce seems to indicate a subtle relationship of himself, Stephen and Bloom. 4. Trinitarian: Joyce seems to indicate a subtle relationship of Molly, Stephen and Bloom. 5. Classical Temper: the book reveals the wholeness and complexity of life. 6. Existential: Bloom and Stephen reach a point of crisis, the outcome of which is problematic. 7. Biographical Fact: Ulysses dramatizes a crucial personal experience of the author. 8. Psychological Projection: Stephen and Bloom are fictional surrogates for Joyce's own conscious and subconscious drives."

19 R. M. Adams, Surface and Symbol, p. 96-97, lists examples of this.

20 See The Book as World, pp. 188-89.

21 Marjorie French points out with regard to the reader's expectation for fusion (pp. 226-27): ". . . in fact, most of the correspondences or intersections between them are made not by them but by the narrator. It is the narrator speaking to us who works out the parallactic relations between their ages or who names them Stoom and Blephen. Their points of connection are thus not only unconscious but for the most part ludicrous: at this point the narrator is mocking the reader for his desire to find significance and convergences. For a number of chapters, the reader's emotions have been riddled with the same pellets used on the character; in Ithaca, as in Eumaeus, the reader's desire for meaning, for a purposeful relationship, is mocked even as the narrator offers him hundreds of relationships."


24 "Molly Bloom Revisited," p. 140. However, I do not agree with his view that Joyce lets Molly, like the character in a dramatic monologue, damn herself.


26 Frank Budgen, quoting Joyce, p. 21.


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