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THE MEN WHO WOULD BE KINGS:
THE IMPERIAL METAPHOR IN BRITISH FICTION

"this thing of darkness I / Acknowledge mine."

by

ELLIN HOROWITZ

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1977

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

Criticism generally shares Jeffrey Meyer's conviction that the colonial novel was virtually invented by Kipling and that its subject is the political and social conflicts which develop when Europe imposes its values upon native life. My assumption, however, is that the major colonial writers were less interested in cultural conflicts than they were in their own, that the alien world was not a place to examine ideologies but a place to will dreams, and that fantasies of white kingship long antedated Kipling.

Even before there were colonies men dreamed of uncharted regions where they held dominion over the wild barbarians and noble savages they found in themselves. This study places the colonial novel among the imaginary voyages of myth and literature, and uses Otto Mannoni's psychological study of colonization to demonstrate that the less real social world of the colony offered the imperial voyager and the colonial writer the nearest psychological equivalent of the archetypal island without men, the Eden of childhood dreams. While rulers as varied as Kipling's would-be kings, Greene's Scobie, Cary's Rhubeck, and Wells's Moreau act out dreams of power and license in empty worlds their fantasies can control and, like Prospero and Robinson Crusoe and the mythic heroes before them, they confront their mortal limits and come to terms with reality in the end.

This fantasy, shaped by a specifically nineteenth and twentieth-century response to the eternal conflict between

secular and divine power, determines the characteristic protagonists, settings, themes, and images of colonial fiction. For an age obsessed with power and guilty about its transgressions the ruler exposed as a savage is a particularly suitable symbol; however, the major colonial writers could expose the impiety of modern imperialism precisely because they were using the imaginary world to act out and to expiate their own imperial dreams. Through the exposure of would-be kings like Tuan Jim, Rajah Laut, El Rey de Sulaco, and the august Benevolence, Conrad could explore the demi-urgical aspirations of his rebellion and his art; Kim as a half-caste street urchin fulfills Kipling's attraction for the darkness beyond the pale, while Kim the secret agent fulfills his even greater need to submit to imperial order; and Forster's Passage to India ends with a rejection of union in a mystical world beyond social restraints because beneath the impossible dream of anglo-Indian relationships lies Forster's more dangerous dream of male relationships.

Finally, an examination of the effect of imperialism on the ethos and techniques of the novel reveals that with the acquisition of a border world and dark aliens the British novel acquired characteristics traditionally associated with the Adamic fantasies of classical American fiction. Although different social contexts produce somewhat different visions, explorers on their frontiers, imperialists in their colonies (and writers in their books) all use uncharted space "to be a saint or to be a devil," and the spectre of the black man and the wilderness, in each case, exposes potentially tragic human limits.

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I. The Island Without Men

This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection . . .

Nineteenth-century imperialism opened the world to the English novel at the time when the novel was struggling to emerge into the modern world. As the cultural revolutions of the Victorian era were shattering old certainties and with them the values and forms of the traditional novel, an expanding empire was exposing "this little world" to alien forms of experience to be confronted and absorbed. Discussing the contemporary breakdown in the structure of the novel, Erich Auerbach points to the incredibly rapid widening of horizons of knowledge and experience which undermined the traditional modes of the novel;¹ Auerbach does not, however, specifically consider imperialist expansion, the influence of which was somewhat different from his account of improved cross-cultural communication in a shrinking world. The imperialist world did not diminish; England aggressively magnified her dimensions until "red lines" were imposed on the farthest corners of the globe. Moreover, imperialism led not to closer communication among men, but to a relationship between ruler and ruled based upon the dominion of a white king who identified himself with reason and exalted his task

as a divinely empowered mission to surpress the forces of barbarism.

Clearly such dominion would be a superb defense for an age overwhelmed with barbaric forces. In response to the subversions of Darwin, Marx, Frazer, and Freud, that dissolved the firm barriers between civilization and savagery and shook the authority of ruler, father, and God, imperialism offered a new faith to challenge despair and a deification of bewildered man alone in a random universe. To be sure, the colonial adventurer got more than he bargained for. In the "heart of darkness" or the "inscrutable East" he found himself particularly vulnerable to the forces of chaos, which he discovered also within himself. And if imperialist activity captured the imagination, that was probably because it so dramatically resolved the conflicts of an age caught between the awareness that reality wasn't reasonable, and the need to maintain that it was--and all the Jingo's assertive bravado and the protective taboos of the Sahib's code were really admissions of the secret knowledge that those savages were "not inhuman" after all. In effect, the settings and relationships of imperialism provided a readily available metaphor for the culture shock of an age.

Certainly the relationship between fiction and the colonial experience was more profound than imperialism's contribution of political subject matter and exotic locales. By creating a new kind of world and a new relationship with

that world, imperialism offered the writer new terms in which a story could be told.

By now it's a critical truism that the classic English novel operates within a fixed frame of social reference and public value, and that its characteristic setting is the provincial community where we can know everyone and everything. Man is never alone and society is unquestioned and inescapable--when an Emma insults an old lady at a picnic she is confronted with the sin daily. But Lord Jim, unlike the traditional novel's hero, need not be educated in adjustment between conformity and desire. He can attempt to escape his past in all the ports of the East until, free of the restrictions of social reality, he is reborn as ruler of savages on a fantasy island.

Before imperialism the English novel has no equivalent of the American frontier where a hero is reborn, like Gatsby, "from a Platonic conception of himself." There is no outpost of civilization, idyllic wilderness, or dark terrain in which to localize the forces beyond order. Indeed, there was no serious need for them. In the homogeneous cast in the nineteenth-century English novel there is no one whose divergence poses a threat. Even villains operate by the rules and can live in society if taught to mend their ways--and the world outside doesn't exist. Occasionally a Dorothea Brooke is sent off to Italy for culture, but the tourist carried England with him and his descent into his origins went no farther than the Golden Age of Greece. Even Italy is too pagan for Dorothea.

For as long as possible, then, the "infected" world was resisted. As Susanne Howe indicates, in Novels of Empire, the colonies made their earliest appearance among the eclectic clutter of the Victorian novel without affecting the novel's social values and external forms;² they merely served as a nether region in which to deposit characters who had forfeited their place in society, or their use in the plot. Rejected in love, Trollope's John Gordon threatens to "kill beasts in Buenos Ayres or take a tea farm in Tibet," much as America takes care of George Eliot's problem with Hetty Sorrel. And if the corruption of the East had been known to seep into the English villages of The Moonstone, Edwin Drood, or Sherlock Holmes, these were just mysteries and the threat could be dismissed. But after the imperialism of the eighties, the sun literally does not set on the new territory of the English novel, and the darkness of the jungle and the mystery of the East must be confronted.

In the white man as an alien trapped between his claims as ruler and discovery of inadequacy, the Victorian novel found an embodiment of the new awareness that man is not at home in a benevolent universe, but a stranger in an obscurely threatening environment where he does not know the rules. Knowing the rules of regional locality and social group had always determined the rules of the novelist's technique, and these too were affected when it was no longer possible to heed Jane Austen's injunction to "stick to bath."³ David Daiches, in fact, suggests that the modern novel comes into

being when "public machinery is no longer used to achieve the plot pattern, and the true inwardness of a character's moral and psychological problem can be revealed only by removing him from the distorting mirror of a public sense of significance and exploring the truth about himself in an isolation either real or symbolic."⁴ And Conrad, as one of the first modern novelists to ask whether social order rests on lies, sets his vision of dislocation in a colonial world where the white man is forced to confront the savage within as well as without.

Of course, this is not to imply that it was imperialism that transformed the novel; rather that the novel was changing in response to the same phenomena that impelled imperialism itself. However, as the social values and objective forms of the traditional novel were coming to seem increasingly inadequate, imperialism exposed certain English writers to all the pluralistic ambiguities of the modern world, and provided new structures, characters, and symbols through which these could be explored. In the white man in the jungle, imperialism may have offered the novel some of its first truly modern subject matter, and out of this new discoveries necessarily emerge.

Still, serious critics have generally ignored imperialism as a literary theme and the few studies on the subject have generally ignored the serious novel. Susanne Howe's Novels of Empire, one of the rare attempts to treat the colonial novel as a genre, focuses upon popular fiction;

Benita Parry's Delusions and Discoveries,⁵ though often perceptive, is chiefly concerned with the colonies' effect on English values; so she too is at her best with novels that are, admittedly, trash; and Allen J. Greenberger, in The British Image of India, explains that minor literature is invaluable as documentation for period and place--great literature tends to become unreliable by transcending them.⁶

Perhaps it is the appallingly large number of popular novels written by lonely ladies at isolated hill stations that has dissuaded the serious critic. Certainly most novels of empire are minor enough to be of interest only as sociological evidence. But such an approach, because it is not really concerned with literary values, tends to oversimplify and misinterpret when confronted with a serious work of art that has a colonial theme. Assuming that the real task of the critic is to explicate the text, not the political situation or the national ethos, I will deal with the colonial world as a special kind of imagined universe.

Admittedly, not the least of the problems is that of finding those serious works of art with a colonial theme, and Arnold Kettle is correct when he observes that even during the years when imperialism was the major fact of world history only two English writers, Conrad and Kipling, confronted the issue.⁷ In part, this scarcity of first-rate material may be understandable if only because the imperialist phase in English history was very brief. After the Boer War the initial shock of multi-cultural contact had been absorbed

and England's claim to inviolable power exposed as a sham; then World War I completed the dethroning of authority and the terminology of ruler and ruled had become discomfiting, if not obsolete. But more significant reasons probably lie in the particular response to order and chaos that gave rise to both imperialism and colonial novels. With the twentieth-century dissolution of the tentative borders between civilization and chaos, the abyss was acknowledged in Highbury, and jungles, now only hours away on Air Uganda, were no longer necessary to evoke it. Certainly the dream of ruling savages on distant islands recurs throughout literature and will continue to recur, but the unique form it took at the end of the nineteenth century seems to have required the special conditions of this age of transition.

But Kettle may really be asking about no more than a failure of humaneness and the answer would be that, by itself, righteous indignation usually impels propaganda, not art. The imperialist theme would be of use to a serious novelist only if the political phenomena had touched upon his experience and could be used to fulfill his private needs and artistic purposes. Such conditions are rare.

Choice of theme may be as simple as opportunity for use and the capacity to use it; more provocative problems are: who chose the imperial theme? why did they respond to it? and the varying ways in which different writers drew what they could use from a common public experience. Thus, Forster tests the need to connect the seen and unseen, first

in England and then in Italy, until it reaches a culmination in the two-world view of colonial India. Or Conrad can be seen working out the opposition between order and barbarism and exposing the flawed man, using terms he discovered as a colonist in works that do not specifically employ a colonial setting. And then it is easier to understand why Kipling, who, like Conrad was bi-national and bi-lingual, should also have found bi-racial India a logical sphere to externalize his duality.

Here we can use sociological investigations like Greenberger's that indicate the way novels reflect changing social attitudes. Obviously, Kipling, the psalmist of the great age of imperialism, operates within a different frame of social reference from Forster, the Bloomsbury liberal, or Orwell, the champion of the oppressed. Kipling confronts the abyss in the cave of The Nahlakha and preserves his faith in civilization, while Forster confronts the same mystery and is silenced by it, and Stanley Cooperman calls the distinction between the two "the definition of an age."⁸ Orwell identifies with the underdog, preaches rebellion, and rejects the mask of the Sahib because he sees himself as an outcast with a scar, while Kipling, feeling a similar sense of divergence, seeks the mask that guarantees identity. But the real distinctions are more complex than that one began writing during "The Era of Confidence (1880-1910)" and the other during "The Era of Doubt (1910-1935)."⁹ Certainly the national ethos can't explain why the Kipling of Kim would

abandon his mask and violate the Sahib's most sacred taboos. Nor does it explain how Conrad, who wrote during Kipling's "Era of Confidence" and sought solace in the same "simple ideas," could use the colonial experience to confront the terrors Kipling chose to evade. And when we come to deal with the way the roads, bridges, and machines of Kipling's imperial dream are left to rot in Conrad's jungles we are back, where we belong, with the tools of the novel.

Allen Greenberger traces a progression from confidence through questioning to doubt; Susanne Howe classifies writers as "The Defenders, the Doubters, and the Attackers,"¹⁰ and Jonah Raskin in The Mythology of Imperialism, categorizes his as apologists, racists, and revolutionaries;¹¹ but a political stand is not the purpose, or even the subject matter of the major colonial novels. In fact, what actually happens in many of these works is that imperialism becomes of real interest only when the rendered social conflict is also realized symbolically, and the political issues themselves tend to be subordinated as the work achieves depth and complexity. Thus, Burmese Days is a poor political novel because Orwell has failed to root the issues in fully realized human emotions or to expand the terms symbolically. Perhaps this is a failure of the creative imagination, or perhaps the result of Orwell's self-confessed unwillingness to see writing as anything beyond an opportunity to deal with issues.¹² In any case, a novel like this has inherent limitations for critical scrutiny because it can evoke little

beyond a restatement of its political ideas. Conrad, on the other hand, is rarely concerned with the political side of imperialism at all, although many of his most important works use the colonial world as a donnée, and imperialism provides the central metaphor for the relationship between man and the world in many Conrad novels.

When dealing with works worthy of critical attention, the vocabulary of politics and sociology soon becomes inadequate. Arnold Kettle's limitations are characteristic. That he discusses imperialism at all is significant; critics rarely do unless they have been attracted to these works out of an interest in political issues, yet this often distorts their perception of fiction. Kettle, in fact, discusses imperialism only because his particular bias goes beyond asserting a relationship between society and art to imposing upon art his own political criteria. While he never openly insists that fiction devote itself to causes, and he makes the important point that good realist literature achieves itself symbolic quality by taking the tensions of a social situation to their most extreme point;¹³ still he limits those tensions to problems of injustice and can wholeheartedly support only those works which offer a measure of hope, if not a concrete solution, for social redemption. Thus, Forster and Conrad fail for Kettle by acquiescing to mistiness, mysticism and despair.¹⁴ Kettle can admit that Forster is writing "a novel about personal intercourse and not a tract about the political situation"; however politics

and friendship are "intertwined" and "the ugly realities" of political imperialism should not have been ignored.¹⁵ But he fails to see that the novel is finally about that area beyond the reach of kindness in personal relations. India embodies a mystery, beyond the ken of the reasonable British liberal, that keeps men forever separate, and that is why an Englishman and an Indian can't be friends; ultimately, good will is as irrelevant as good politics.

Because Kettle cannot deal with this area, he cannot deal with Conrad's failure, in Nostromo, "to use the word imperialism." While he picks up, in Mrs. Gould's remarks on the degrading effect of action, the sense that "something in the very nature of things, something beyond human control (yet never defined) is responsible for the tragedy of Nostromo,"¹⁶ he still can't conclude that Conrad doesn't use the word 'imperialism' because he didn't mean imperialism. Apparently Kettle is badly torn between his realization that these novels have no political purpose and his wish that they had. If only Fielding would renounce "more than he was prepared to renounce of the imperialist attitude";¹⁷ yet Fielding is offered as the good man and he is doomed to failure. If only Conrad didn't acquiesce in "the cruel futility of things." No, death as a "romantic triumph" is hardly a solution to the problems of Sulaco,¹⁸ but we can't go to artists for social solutions--they have problems enough of their own.

Of course we can use the Marxist view that the class

relations of a culture help determine the shape of its communal fantasies, but the most profitable approach would be to take the public issues as a point of departure and to deal with the fantasies in their artistic form. If Fielding failed to renounce his imperialist attitudes, why then did Forster need to put them in? And if "loyalty to the British Empire prevented Conrad from coming to an objective understanding of imperialism,"¹⁸ then the real questions would seem to be, what did the Empire mean to Conrad, how were its needs his needs, and how do they affect the values and techniques of his art?

First Conrad exposes the evils of colonial expansion and then writes of the "vast amount of red" on the map where England is doing some "real work" (105).²⁰ Naturally this would discomfit critics concerned with a humanitarian cause. But those red lines should be accepted only within this specific symbolic context, where they are a function of Conrad's own conflict between order and chaos. In any case, the protective possibilities of imperial values are only one element in Heart of Darkness and are not being offered as a recommendation for social action. That they were hopelessly inadequate is demonstrated in the story itself, which demolishes any possibility of community, action, and red lines.

At its most extreme, the attitude that berates an author like Cary for "ignoring the rising tide of African national consciousness"²¹--try testing this criterion, for example, on Heart of Darkness--becomes the ultimate absurdity

of Jonah Raskin's New Left cliches. "Third world consciousness" did introduce conflict into the English novel;²² however, the real confrontation with the new world is not that of "the revolutionary peoples" and "the imperial powers."²³ Certainly, the Conrad who called colonizers "not agents of trade" but "instruments of recorded destiny" (139)²⁴ wasn't using the Third World to explore "the extension of capitalism" and "the exploitation of the peasants."²⁵

But the approach that concentrates upon cultural conflicts in colonial fiction also includes Jeffrey Meyers's ingenuous conviction that colonial fiction offers "a valuable humanistic approach to problems of colonialism"²⁶ and Avrom Fleishman's doggedly literal attempt to synthesize a consistent colonial policy from Conrad's novels. Apparently Germans do some "real work" but are condemned, while the British redeem exploitation with "the idea"--sometimes. Bad imperialists are bad, but good ones also interfere with tribal patterns and that isn't admirable either.²⁷ Such confusion is the just dessert of critics who go to artists for colonial policy. Symbolic actions are seldom the province of people who have any real faith in political action and Conrad, in any case, is a particularly unreliable source. Irving Howe has noted Conrad's suspicion, even hostility, to political causes,²⁸ and Conrad himself warns against "personal impulses disguised into creeds."²⁹

When Conrad sets white men against natives in the jungle he is not only studying the process by which colonialism

destroys native tribal patterns, he is also using colonialism to act out the emotional detribalization of his own life as a "straggler." But of course, Conrad's symbol reverberates precisely because he was able to root his own dislocation in a psychologically acute perception of colonialism, and to expand the situation symbolically until it became the alienation of an age. Actually the relationship between public experience and art is somewhat different than Kettle's questions imply. Resolving human conflicts, not political problems, is the purpose of the major colonial novels; that is why Conrad didn't "use the word imperialism." Still, political issues, shaped by human needs, are the way in which human conflicts are expressed.

Alan Sandison's The Wheel of Empire approaches this kind of understanding when Sandison examines Conrad, Kipling, Buchan, and Haggard within the context of nineteenth-century thought. The problem, he concludes, is not political but moral, the terrain is not that of Empire but of individual consciousness, and imperialist expansion is essentially a translation of Hegel's conception of knowing and activity as "ways of divesting the world of its strangeness, re-integrating self and object, and overcoming alienation."³⁰ Sandison's approach is provocative in that it implies a conception of political activities as symbolic and suggests ways in which they are central to artistic vision. However, "cognitive conquest" is hardly the motive for art, and a philosophy like Hegel's would seem to be a less effective

critical tool than a psychology like Freud's if only because it is one step farther removed from "the foul rag and bone shop of the heart." Using philosophical systems for literary explication, it is too easy to end, as Sandison does, with windy intellectualizations that reduce literature to philosophical systems. Thus, we get Conrad's tormented imagination producing, not his books, but his "few simple ideas," while that moral code, far from being the end of the creative act, is only one element in a fictional context. Moreover, it is one he alternately proposed and negated within the same work, making the very state of ambivalence his meaning.

The notion of Conrad and Kipling using imperialism as a Hegelian "embarkation of the self in its rapacious cognitive conquest to overcome the world's otherness"³¹ fails to come to terms with the desperate action of the work of art. Neither Kipling nor Kim are seeking ideas they can live by but acting out struggles, and Kim's imperialism and Kipling's novel are a ritualistic reordering of experience no more cognitive in intent than the ritual of the primitive, who doesn't care to know why the sun rises as long as he feels he has a way to make certain it does. And when Sandison says of Kipling's and Conrad's "attempt": "Compared with Hegel's objective, it is, of course, a scaled down self-consciousness and its mechanics are those of a psychological expedient rather than a philosophical system,"³² he reveals his assumption that novels are inadequate philosophical systems, while Hegel's philosophy was simply

a different sort of psychological expedient. Perhaps this is why Sandison remains more imaginatively involved with his methods than with the text. The heavy artillery yields no new insights on Conrad, we hardly need Hegel's "alien other" to call Kipling lonely, and turning Darwin, Marx, Hegel, and Fichte onto King Solomon's Mines is a critical insensitivity to tone. Certainly imperialism should be considered in terms of contemporary ideas, but the more direct approach to the imperial metaphor would see the myth itself as a symbolic action resolving certain human needs, the same needs that are being resolved in political and philosophical ideas.

What is clear is that the colonial world is not simply subject or setting, but the world vision within which these works operate, and the fundamental symbolic action behind imperialism is indeed a mode of control. However, when writers like Sandison speak of empire as a defense against darkness, they confuse the myth and the reality and slight the other side of the story. Sandison assumes that Kim is seeking to understand the universe and discovers his identity by ordering the chaos of India.³³ But this doesn't explain why Kipling chose to live in India or why Kim should spend the entire book living as a black-white child beyond the pale; it explains how they got away with it. Kim doesn't "discover" his identity by becoming a Sahib; he always has the best of both worlds as a Sahib-spy. Nor is Conrad seeking a precarious affirmation of self with his

"simple ideas."³³ For all his disclaimers, Conrad was far more fascinated with abomination than he was by simple ideas, and he is quick to spot the same motives in all his colonists.

In fact, the Freudian image of a struggle to reclaim the ego from the Zuyder Zee of the Id is a far better analogy for the imperial metaphor than "cognitive conquest." The Freudian vision, our best account of modern man born of the romantic rebellion, does set him in a jungle, precariously balanced between civilization and chaos; in the eternal contest between culture and instinct, he is both ruler and ruled, colonizer and savage. Whether the real enemy is savagery, or the unbearable restrictions of civilization, still imperialism offered the attractions of both paths--the "fascination of abomination" and the opportunity of control.

Writers like Sandison, Greenberger, Meyers, and Parry concern themselves with the devastating confrontation between the alien world and English values, but pay insufficient attention to the reasons why the colonist was sitting in a jungle at all. Parry observes that colonial novelists project their own fantasies of loathsome lepers, deformed fakirs, human sacrifice, perverse sexual rites, and unspeakable horrors onto the dark world of India.³⁵ She also observes that exposure to "primordial instincts"³⁶ that violated English values created a psychological crisis because the colonist was "involved in the betrayal."³⁷ Yet she doesn't conclude that that might be precisely why they were there.

Late Victorian dreams of inhabiting nether regions and taming savage breeds were carried out under the aegis of a religion of empire that acquired its peculiar form against a background of philosophic and scientific naturalism; but the dream itself seems to conform to certain unconscious schemata, for it recurs throughout myth and art. Even before there were colonies and dark aliens to dominate, men dreamed of journeys to Edenic islands peopled by wild barbarians and noble savages, and mythic voyages merged with accounts of historical explorations as dreams of escape to worlds without limits were acted out by God-defiant challengers or epic heroes identified with a national cause.

The colonial novel properly belongs within a literary tradition that includes mythic night journeys over the sea, Robinsonades, Oriental tales, Utopias, the adventures of seagoing picaros and pirates, the adventures of real-life travelers, the lies they told about them, their fantasies of the primitive, and the imaginary voyage. The voyage, Philip Gove notes, can lead anywhere, even on into space,³⁸ though he doesn't take it to the American frontier or the English colony where the passage and alien world realize the same dream. Each age, genre, artist, and work reveals a different image of uncharted space, a different moral stand and ideological justification, but constant is that dream of power and escape.

In Prospero and Caliban, a remarkable book on the psychology of colonialism, Otto Mannoni explains the compelling

appeal of colonialism in bringing to the point of greatest tension certain fundamental human needs present in all mankind, and this, in part, can clarify the persistence of the fantasy and its symbolic resonance in art.³⁹

Even before they had seen black men,⁴⁰ Europeans had racial fantasies projecting their fears and desires onto sacrificial aliens and even before there were colonies to rule, they longed for imaginary islands where they held dominion over the creations of dreams. The colonial mentality, Mannoni explains, existed before colonists; thus Shakespeare and Defoe could draw upon psychological equivalents in their own unconscious to create, in Prospero and Robinson Crusoe, prototypical colonial rulers.⁴¹

But the colony in reality supremely fulfilled the requirements of the dream. Conrad writes: "The dominant race looked upon native life as a play of shadows" that it could "walk through unaffected and disregarded in pursuit of its incomprehensible aims and needs" (167).⁴² And Mannoni explains that dark men, because they are less "real" to the colonist, become receptive vessels for projections, and the native state thus serves as the nearest psychological equivalent of the archetypal "island without men," the Eden of childhood dreams.⁴⁴

It's common enough. We all dream of empty worlds unlimited by reality and manipulated by desire, but Mannoni's colonizer is specifically the man who has chosen to reject the world as it is and to live in the infantile dream. Of

course there were also economic and political motives for colonization, but these, Mannoni insists, were brought to bear on minds psychologically prepared and economic exploitation is perhaps a less compelling motive for colonialism than the need for an area of escape from the pressures of reality and a relationship the ruler can dominate by virtue of his position and symbol charged whiteness.⁴⁵ The colonist, Mannoni continues, prefers lazy slaves to efficient workers because he is less hungry for profit than for the emotional satisfaction his kingship over expiatory victims affords.⁴⁶

Furthermore, the colonial situation, where two cultures and opposing psychologies meet face to face, exacerbates the gulf of misunderstanding present in all human relations and permits the fantasy to flourish. When the white man, driven by European values of self-reliance, action, and will, comes in contact with a native culture encouraged to depend upon magic, ancestors, and gods, the colonist is often worshipped in his fantasy role as Great White Father and God From The Moon.⁴⁷

A colonial situation is created, so to speak, the very instant a white man, even if he is alone, appears in the midst of a tribe, even if it is independent, so long as he is thought to be rich or powerful or merely immune to the local forces of magic, and so long as he derives from his position, even though only in his most secret self, a feeling of his own superiority.⁴⁸

However--and there's a catch--the white man who goes among natives can only be King or be eaten.⁴⁹

Variations on this fantasy kingship are enacted, with a greater or lesser degree of awareness, in all the would-be kings of the colonial novel. Even if the writer doesn't recognize that colonists are men who choose "an isolated outpost in a hostile country where they could repulse, by force of arms, those same terrifying creatures whose image was formed in their own unconscious,"⁵⁰ he has chosen the alien world precisely because it offers a different level of reality on which to project dreams. Certainly nothing the contemporary psychoanalyst says would surprise Conrad, who clearly perceived that a Jim, thwarted by reality, could act out his ego ideal as king over savages, and that Patusan is the tabula rasa of dreams, where the subversions of the unconscious can be controlled and the errors of the past symbolically unwritten. All of these colonists are dreamers. Jim triumphs because he is "alone of his kind there," (166) and when his kingship is exposed, he too is revealed as mortal and sacrificed.

But psychology is limited in dealing with literature because it isn't interested in variants and because it is prone to confuse art with reality and call it symptomatic. Mannoni's observations on Robinson Crusoe and The Tempest can be used suggestively if we remember what he sometimes forgets, that while Crusoe and Prospero act out fantasies realized in the imperial dream, Shakespeare and Defoe were artists, not colonists. Mannoni is using fiction to examine interracial problems created by the neurotic need for power

and escape in the colonial personality; we are interested in the way artists have drawn upon these recurring fantasies so that even when they have been shaped by the ideological needs of a very different age, the same characters and key elements remain central to the colonial novel.

The similarity between The Tempest and Robinson Crusoe clearly supports Mannoni's suggestion of an archetype. Prospero and Crusoe are both white kings who defy authority and social responsibility for greater power in an empty world their desires can control; and their subjects, Ariel and Caliban, and Friday and the cannibals, are the familiar helpers and enemies of dream, the dangers and temptations we find in ourselves.⁵¹ Fantasy kingdoms are often peopled with them: Kim's fairy tale India has a good Lama and bad Russians, Jim has a good double in Dain and an evil one in Brown, and Leslie Fiedler finds pairs like Queequeg and Fedallah or Jim and Injun Joe throughout that other colony, the American frontier.⁵² The action Mannoni describes is also familiar: both kings bemoan the perils and miseries of exile that we hear from Adam through Ulysses to John Bull and Lord Jim, but both triumph precisely because they are "alone of their kind." And finally, both renounce their kingship, submit to a greater power, and come to terms with reality in the end.⁵³

Mannoni's observations on race relations in The Tempest can also be usefully applied to its literary descendants. The bully Prospero is a child's image of parental magic and

and his relationship with Caliban is the Oedipal paternalism of colonialism in its quintessential form. Mannoni may even be right in suspecting Prospero of projecting his own desire for Miranda onto the dark rapist, that his unreasonable hatred is self-hatred, and that this, in turn, provides Prospero's justification for enslaving Caliban.⁵⁴ Certainly Caliban's monstrous ambition against Prospero's authority is the dark side of Prospero's splendid sin, and race relations, particularly those in fiction, have been eternally complicated by "This thing of darkness I / Acknowledge mine."

Shakespeare's portrayal of race relations is remarkable; however, there is more to be considered than the symbolic equivalents in the author's unconscious and this is why the play reveals more than Shakespeare's alleged hostility to the world and his desire to dominate. Shakespeare is not a misanthropic neurotic who longed unconsciously "to possess power over men";⁵⁵ but an artist who had power and is demonstrating the power of creation in his play. Prospero is, above all, an artist-magician using his dark inwardness and lyric gifts to create tempests and order, and his colony is the imaginative world of the play where Ariels and Calibans are controlled by the omnipotence of the artist's desires--"Spirits, which by mine art / I have from their confines call'd to enact / My present fancies." Thus, Prospero's return to reality does not renounce infantile fantasies for social adjustment, it admits the distinction between reality and art, and even further suggests that we

are all actors in the "insubstantial pageant" of a greater magician.

All mythic passages end with a submissive return that resolves desire and conformity, and the pattern is inherited in the structure of most of our fictions, even those set in Middlemarch. Naturally it will be more pronounced in works which use kingship on fantasy islands to act out forbidden dreams. But nothing in this play suggests that Prospero's return is anything but the end of a beautiful, impossible, dream. That is, Prospero looks so much like a colonist not because Shakespeare was a neurotic, but because the colonist, the neurotic, the dreamer, and the artist use the same empty world, imaginary creations, and symbolic mode of control. This colony is the artist's and, not so surprisingly, the imperial metaphor in many colonial novels is much the same. Conrad, at least, described "the writing of a book as "the conquest of a colony,"⁵⁶ and his last colonist is Axel, Villier's symbolist artist, as Prospero himself.

Furthermore, Shakespeare was drawing upon contemporary travelers' reports that reflected Renaissance attitudes towards colonial conquest. Frank Kermode describes the reports themselves as largely fantasy, colored with allegorical justifications and rent by the effort to see the new world as a fruitful paradise peopled by noble savages, while at the same time contending that the natives were uncivilized and that colonization spread the true faith.⁵⁷ Views of the primitive, Mannoni explains, vary much as we vary in our

view of our instinctual selves and the Renaissance traveler, like his imperialist descendants, appears to have been divided between a desire to correct the rebel id or to identify with it in pursuit of the innocence of childhood dreams.⁵⁸ Whatever the reality, emotional and economic needs, as usual, triumphed; noble or ignoble, the savage was exploited all the same.

This ambivalence towards expansion and the natural man would remain of greatest importance to the literature of voyaging and colonizing; but no Renaissance audience would question the vision, supported by Aristotle and contemporary rationalizations, of the natural man as anarchic nature, born to be ruled by a pukka Sahib like Prospero. Out of his own fantasies, and the needs of his age, Shakespeare created an unformed savage that could be used for the purposes of a play in which Prospero's art is opposed to Caliban's bestiality as man's power over nature and himself.

Shakespeare's dream colony reflects the Faustian spirit of the Renaissance discovered and manifested in its great explorations, and Prospero is its characteristic super-hero triumphant in knowledge and power. In Conrad, Jim's dream of controlling savagery and becoming "one of us" (27) is a more ambiguous splendid impiety, but again, man's dreams and his art are related to the aspirations of conquest and shaped by the needs of an age.

Similarly, Robinson Crusoe may be Mannoni's story of "The long and difficult cure of a misanthropic neurosis,"⁵⁹

still it is somewhat misleading to insist that Defoe was a misanthropic neurotic compensating for powerlessness. Better to say that Defoe drew upon his own experience of powerlessness to write the most compelling escape fiction in literature and--since the shoe fits too many--ignore Mannoni's remarks about its similarity to the fantasies of the European who is "more or less infantile in character."⁶⁰

Certainly Robinson Crusoe appeals to a longing we all recognize for a world without men. Mannoni observes that it isn't the solitude that terrifies Crusoe, but the footstep, the fear that solitude will end.⁶¹ A body of literature, Robinsonades, have fed this dream. Walter de la Mare calls "man as an island" an image of alienation: "The inmost self of each one of us is a livelong recluse"; and, curiously, he uses the Prospero image: "The moment falls, unforseen, inexplicable, and as if at the insidious wave of an enchanter's wand, the faces, the voices of the believed in and beloved seem to be nothing but the creation of our own fantasy, and we are enisled."⁶²

D. H. Lawrence's "Man who Loved Islands" is this sort of misanthropic colonist doomed by his egocentric dream of kingship; Decoud, isolated from community and action, merges into the solipsism of a Robinson Crusoe island; and Kipling, terrified by the same void, writes: "Few people can afford to play Robinson Crusoe anywhere--least of all in India."⁶³ Still, misanthropic isolation is not the chief purpose of island escape, certainly not its chief purpose in novels.

Even Mannoni observes that the real attraction of solitude is that it can be filled with imaginary creations subject to human control.⁶⁴

The magic here lies in the barrier Crusoe erects between the compound he rules and the cannibals outside. It is the central metaphor for Crusoe's colony, the symbolic equivalent of the book, and a recurring image throughout the colonial novel. Thus, Kipling describes himself as a powerless child playing "The Robinson Crusoe Game" in a dark corner of the basement: "The magic, you see, lies in the ring or fence that you take refuge in," and all the taboos of the compulsive little ritual are carefully spelled out because if it isn't done right "you have to begin the magic all over again."⁶⁵ Kim's "Great Game" is this Robinson Crusoe Game, and Kipling himself would use the imperialist ritual and the protective ring of the Sahib's code to defend himself against Calibans throughout his life. Robert Louis Stevenson, who also knew about the Caliban-Mr. Hyde, continued to search, on real and imaginary islands, for the innocent Eden behind the barriers of his nursery where he had manipulated armies as the King of Counterpale. He too imagines a Robinson Crusoe island:

I should like to rise and go
Where the golden apples grow;--
Where below another sky
Parrot islands anchored lie,
And, watched by cockatoos and goats,
Lonely Crusoes building boats;--

and the dream world vanishes when "all the children, sweep or prince" are "grown to manhood ages since."⁶⁶ But Conrad's

colonists also live within "the magic circle of another existence" (99)⁶⁷ where they can be kings, and when Forster's colonists take refuge in their club, they are erecting the same Robinson Crusoe barrier against chaos. No doubt this is why the delightfully stuffy narrator of The Moonstone returns to his pipe and his Crusoe whenever the mystery of the East intrudes upon his reasonable world. Countless readers have done the same.

Like all white kings, Crusoe creates an empire, becomes "the monarch of all he surveys," and a visitor even thinks he is a god; but the real appeal lies in the way he fulfills the childhood dream of power in a world without parental restrictions, and the exact rightness with which Defoe has recaptured a child's game of pretend. Seating his animals with the imperiousness of a child playing "dolly," Crusoe relishes his dominion:

There was my majesty, the prince and lord of the whole island: I had the lives of all my subjects at my absolute command. I could hang, draw, give liberty, and take it away, and no rebels among my subjects.

Then to see how like a king I dined, too, all alone attended by my servants; Poll, as if he had been my favourite, was the only person permitted to talk to me. My dog, . . . sat always at my right hand; and two cats, one on one side of the table and one on the other, expecting now and then a bit from my hand, as a mark of special favour.⁶⁸

Obviously Harvey Swados is right in taking issue with Walter de la Mare's praise of Defoe's rational normality. Paranoid systems do have Robinson Crusoe's sort of specificity;

indeed they also have its magic circles, rituals, and taboos. Still, it is not so much that Defoe "normalized the abnormal,"⁶⁹ but that he was working from fantasies common to the child, the primitive, the neurotic, the colonizer, the dreamer and the artist--and a little of all of the above in us all.

Ian Watt, in fact, places Crusoe among the great mythic heroes in pursuing a characteristic aspiration of his culture,⁷⁰ and this emphasis upon the way social conditions have shaped the central myth goes beyond psychology to suggest ways of handling the fantasy of kingship when it appears in colonial novels. Exaltation of power shaped Shakespeare's Promethean heroes, but Crusoe is not a powerful magician; he is a practical empire builder, his magic is commonplace skill, and he justifies his dominion in very different terms.

Still, like heroes from Adam and Ulysses to Lord Jim and John Bull, Crusoe defies his father, rejects the middle way and pursues "undertakings beyond my reach," in a "rash and immoderate desire of rising faster than the nature of things permitted."⁷¹ Actually, Selkirk's original mutiny had been such a parricide, but if it hadn't Defoe would have invented it; indeed, Crusoe speaks of his "breach of my duty to God and my father"⁷² as an "original sin."⁷³ Again we hear Mannoni's complaints and miseries of exile--"Ah, how much better it would have been"⁷⁴--but it wouldn't. Crusoe betters his father, replaces God, and dutifully atones so that he can have his cake and eat it in the end.

In an age of economic individualism, Watt observes, it

is significant that Crusoe's exceptional prowess comes from self-reliance, and his vitiating excess is the "inordinate egocentricity" that "condemns him to isolation wherever he is."⁷⁵ In this world the hero's argument with his father is not on morality but on profit⁷⁶ and he peoples his island not with dark Circes, but with a male slave who fulfills his greater need for cheap labor.⁷⁷ It's a delightful notion, and telling. On all those islands of dream, men have indulged their desires to be saint or devil; only Crusoe dreams of reproducing commercial middle-class England with the competition removed for certain profit. What is more, the conflict between secular and divine power, sanctity and success, is mitigated by a Puritan God who helps those who help themselves, with rewards as a sign of virtue.⁷⁸ Clearly, a perfect parable for man's conquest of nature through human resourcefulness and his somewhat guilty awareness that he was not meant to be divine, or quite that rich.

Then, for all Crusoe's mundane aspirations and practical tasks, Robinsoe Crusoe is the same presumptuous dream on another island without men. At its core, Crusoe's isolation is not Watt's isolation of economic individualism or the Puritan's moral isolation,⁷⁹ but the dreamer's. All of these rulers are "alone of their kind there" and the price of such power is alienation. Actually, Watt needn't be disturbed by Crusoe's manipulation of nature and Friday.⁸⁰ His colony serves a more profound need than the extension of capitalism or the exploitation of labor, and that is why

they are there. Friday is not asked, but given, a name because he is Crusoe's creation--there, like Ariel, just to say "Master." Prospero also taught Caliban language--"How to name the great light and how the less"--and named his creation. Crusoe is simply the first, but hardly the last, Adam of the colonial novel. Parry is similarly disturbed by the "thin" apprehension of natives when Kipling's would-be kings name natives "according as they were like men we had known in India";⁸¹ but they are also creating a world in their image and naming the creation. And all Conrad's colonies are projections of their hero's adamic dreams: Jewel "lived so completely" in Jim's contemplation that "she had acquired something of his outward aspect," (172) and Heyst, "original Adam," (163) names Lena.

Social and economic conditions shape Crusoe's fantasy and the properly lauded ballast of reality permits us to accept it, but we are really looking for the childhood dream of managing on our own. We enjoy Crusoe's lengthy accounts of making bread and building boats, not, as Watt suggests, because economic specialization has closed these occupations,⁸² but because Defoe has recaptured the child's sense of skill as a magical way of gaining adult control. Even Crusoe's incessant bookkeeping and stocktaking is more than a symptom of "economic individualism"⁸³--what, after all, is economic individualism but a ritual for keeping disaster at bay?

Crusoe doesn't want much, not as much as Kurtz or Jim, and he is small enough not to attract the attention of the

gods; still, managing on his own is Adam's splendid sin. It is because Crusoe is truly impious that the book demands his conversion. John J. Richetti argues that the story must provide a justification that purges the action of its secular impiety,⁸⁴ and he is correct. However, Crusoe's conversion is not integral to the novel in the way that Richetti suggests. To some degree "the moral vacuum" of the island may permit Crusoe to succeed without destroying competition,⁸⁵ but Crusoe himself insists upon his subjugated subjects because "absolute command" is the part of his life he enjoys. And Crusoe does not really "find God" in the act of helping himself;⁸⁶ he discovers God in order to go on helping himself. Actually Watt comes closer when he notes that the God Crusoe talks so much about has precious little effect on his behavior.⁸⁷ Crusoe remains absolutely unchanged and persistent in sin. He talks a lot about exile as penitence, and prays after every success or to ward off disaster, but only so that he and the reader, free of guilt, can enjoy the adventure. Surely the narrator of The Moonstone thought that he was reading Robinson Crusoe because it was such a virtuous book.

Crusoe, critics often note, is a symbol of the empire builder, and Watt is probably right in suggesting that his career was based upon the sixteenth and seventeenth-century traders who developed the materials, markets, and slaves on which modern capitalism depends.⁸⁸ Conrad, however, was quick to note that "no mere greed" (138) drove the adventurers

of Lord Jim to follow snakelike rivers into darkness, and Defoe was no less aware, if unconsciously, of the ambiguity of imperial dreams. "Whatever his specific objectives," Richetti insists, "the traveler is inescapably involved in the modern secular enterprise of conquering nature, of asserting human control in a new and total fashion,"⁸⁹ and such egotism is, by its very nature, impious.

In fact many of Richetti's remarks of the seventeenth and eighteenth-century travel narrative can be suggestively applied to those travelers' wandering descendants in colonial novels. The nineteenth-century colonist was, above all, a voyager, and his stories belong within a tradition of travel literature that reflects man's changing image of his own power in relation to the world. To the medieval mind, Richetti writes, the voyage was "a pious metaphor for the harsh journey of life" reflecting the conservative religious ideals of its age, but in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the journey had become "a metaphor for modern possibilities embodying the new ethos of change and conquest": "the possibilities of human achievement seemed to expand as a Copernican rearrangement of the world revealed new fields for action and provided fresh perspectives for European self-study." Naturally, the new commitment to adventure, merit, and a self-reliant hero would seem to contradict the older implications of the journey as a harsh pilgrimage or as Ulysses' painful exile for his sins; yet the old implications are retained in the daemonic implications of travel and in a

narrative voice that provides ideological justifications for the impious assault.⁹⁰ Europe responded, Richetti concludes, not simply out of curiosity about the new and strange, but because the travel narrative confronted and resolved the conflict between religious and secular values that obsessed an emerging modern world.⁹¹

Perhaps Richetti is too insistent upon the limits of the traditional stories--Ulysses' complaints are another sort of justification and the great mythic voyagers are nothing if not impiously self-reliant. Certainly Richetti is too narrow in limiting his conception of secular-religious conflict to that of the age. The conflict between man and god or father and son is central to all mythic voyages, and submission and justification are invariably required for atonement in the end. Still, many of Richetti's observations on the implications of travel and the modes of redeeming it have a good deal to do with the nineteenth-century traveler and his imperial myth.

John Bull also traveled uncharted regions like those "Travelers, Pirates, and Pilgrims" who reflected their age's uncertainty about the illicit, self-reliance of the new man⁹² and that pirate king of his society outside society, and the hermit in his more covertly anti-social retreat, are really more kings of islands without men. The merchant adventurer, Richetti notes, is kept from becoming his anti-type, the pirate, by "a system of motives which deny egotism and substitute a religious definition of man and nature";

still, his motives are much the same--as are the colonist's. The nineteenth-century colonist uses the imperial myth with its "traditional rhetoric of submission and petition to a supreme power" to purify his conquest of egotism and to provide its "unsubversive ideological meaning";⁹³ but Conrad, at least, was aware that Brown the pirate and Heyst the hermit were the other sides of the colonial king.

John Bull, the mythical nineteenth-century culture hero, is not a carefree picaro on the high road of adventure, no fire stealing Prometheus, lotus-eating Ulysses, powerful magician or outlaw. He travels not to escape but to bear civilization, and he carries its flag. In reality, he was all of those things; after all, he found a way to get to those islands where he could be a dreamer. Lord Jim describes the two kinds of men one finds in the colonies, the few "who preserved an undefaced energy with the temper of bucanears and the eyes of dreamers" who live in a "crazy maze of plans, hopes, dangers," and the lotus eaters with "a soft spot of decay" who "lounge safely through existence"; (8-9) but they are the same dreamers.

This might even explain why real people in the colonies often look astonishingly like fictional characters. Leonard Woolf, serving Empire in Ceylon, wondered whether colonials look like characters in a Kipling story because "Kipling had moulded his characters so accurately in the image of Anglo-Indian society or whether we were moulding our characters accurately in the image of a Kipling story?"⁹⁴--the answer

may be that they all were acting out the same dream. It was men like Carnehan and Dravot, who found no place in reality to fulfill their need for power and license, who sought "some other place where a man isn't crowded and can come into his own,"⁹⁵ an empty world where a man can be king.

Actually, reality produced fantasies as amazing as fiction, and the startling number of Prosperos who really did rule distant jungles would seem to support the contention that the role was there, waiting for the characters to play it. Motives vary, with varying degrees of pathology, from dreams of license to those of control; but men like Rajah Brooke, Burton, "The White Negro," and Lawrence, "The Uncrowned King of Arabia," look remarkably like mythic heroes because they were creating themselves in the same fantasy role.

This also makes problems of influence tricky. Parry suggests that Brooke inspired Kipling's would-be kings, and that Brooke himself was following a tradition of obscure adventurers who sought their fortune serving native states and often, like Brooke, became king. Tod chronicles such adventurers in his history of Rajasthan, and Kipling was familiar with Tod.⁹⁶ Who then, influenced the real life kings? One of them, an Irishman named George Thomas, who might be Kipling's Namgay Doola, the red-haired king of a Tibetan tribe, sounds familiar:

Here I established my capital, rebuilt the walls of the city long since fallen into decay, and repaired the fortifications. As it had long been deserted, at first I found difficulty procuring inhabitants, but by degrees and gentle treatment, I selected between five and six thousand people to whom I allowed lawful indulgence.⁹⁷

In any case, had the model not existed, Kipling could easily have invented him by playing "The Robinson Crusoe Game," in the same way Thomas, apparently, invented himself.

Then, does Kim extend his possibilities by journeys into blackness because men like Brooke and Burton had made such journeys before, or is it really because Kipling was fulfilling the same needs in himself through Kim? Kim of the Rishti uses his role as a Sahib-spy to act out and justify forbidden dreams before Lawrence created himself in the same fantasy role; yet Lawrence's ritualistic changes of name, dress, and identity, and his pranks and his playacting, look much like Kim's Great Game because Lawrence was also playing King of the Mountain in a child's game of pretend. More curiously, Lawrence conceals his spying by mapping Biblical routes much as Kim uses the Lama's pilgrimage as a cover for his Great Game. Yes, Lawrence really did map Biblical routes, following a tradition, familiar to Kipling, of adventurers who concealed their aberrant lives behind antiquarian or ethnological pursuits; however it is significant that Lawrence, as well as Kipling, saw fit to develop the theme to symbolic dimensions and to stress the impiety of the fantasy role.⁹⁸ That is why both kings, fearful of

unholy power, use the traditional rhetoric of submission and service and are reduced to a number in the end.

But the colonies were full of unlawful adventurers whose amazing kingships would fill the imaginative needs of a Jim. A Congo trader named George Antoine Klein is generally accepted as Conrad's model for Kurtz,⁹⁹ yet it might well have been that "White Negro" Burton. Burton was another rootless wanderer of many nationalities, identities, and professions--physicist, botanist, zoologist, archeologist, linguist, poet, and great raconteur--and a man of massive egocentricity, satanic looks, and similar appetities. Burton abandoned a chilly wife for a native mistress, and a society that had little regard for his unusual talents for priesthood in native cults, perverse sexual rites, and unspeakable horrors. Burton also used Africa to explore forbidden realms within and without, and it was Burton, though it might have been Kurtz, who wrote: "Starting in a hollowed log of wood--some thousand miles up a river, with only an infinitesimal prospect of returning! I ask myself 'Why?' and the only echo is 'damned Fool! . . . the Devil Drives'."100

But Rimbaud's "season in hell" is equally tempting as a model for Kurtz's dangerous descent;¹⁰¹ still, the influence need not have been conscious. "All of Europe" and a lot of Conrad himself, "contributed to the making of Kurtz" (123), and Kurtz and Jim may resemble men like Rimbaud, Klein, Lingard, Burton, Brooke, and Lawrence, because Conrad was

so closely in touch with mankind's fantasies through his own.

Conrad could hardly have modeled Lord Jim on Lawrence, yet Lawrence is Lord Jim, the hero in shining white, seeking self-conquest as ruler of savages and, in the end, exposed as mortal. And Conrad didn't need to know that the creator of British Nigeria had said, "All achievement begins with a dream and my dream as a young child was to colour the map red"¹⁰² in order to put his own hand on a map of Africa as a child and dream the same dream, or to send Marlow to follow the river on the map because "The snake had charmed me," (p. 71) or to know that imposing "a vast amount of red" on a map was that ancient impious dream.

Indeed, colonization had always served man's dreams of god-like conquest, and accounts of geographical explorations resemble accounts of mythical passages to forbidden power because, in some sense, they were. In his remarkable account of The Invention of America, Edmundo O'Gorman even places Columbus among the mythic heroes who penetrate uncharted regions, and suggests the ways in which man's relationship to God and the cosmos was transformed once he had reentered Paradise and was freed from a limited conception of his own power and the physical world. America, in effect, was a Fortunate Fall, and this determined her self-image as the home of freedom, the future, and the new Adam.¹⁰³

Of course, O'Gorman also suggests that men create the world they explore "in their image and likeness."¹⁰⁴ As

long as man sees himself in a fixed place, his world has unchanging limits and boundaries; but once he becomes capable of changing, the world itself becomes an "infinite field for conquest"¹⁰⁵ created by his effort, imagination, and technology. The Greeks, in their proper place, lived on an island bound by impassable seas, while the American, rebelling against old world limits, inhabits an endless frontier. The medieval mind saw the journey as painful exile from the Garden, while the modern one sees man's triumph in his capacity to transform the physical world; but, in each case, the rivalry between man and God realized in the Christian myth continues to inform man's vision of geographical conquest. And when we consider this profound reciprocal relationship between man's image of himself and geographical expansion, it becomes easier to understand how the great age of imperialism challenged modern thought and served the fantasies of its novelists.

What then must have happened to England's self-image when maps after 1880 reflect the same sort of changing relationship with the world that O'Gorman discovers in the cartography after Columbus?¹⁰⁶ when Conrad's "red lines" are imposed on the farthest corners of the globe and Kipling's Lord God Most High "hath smote for us a pathway to the ends of all the Earth!"¹⁰⁷ And what needs and self-image created the mythological geography of the imperial world and its redefinition of the Christian myth? White rulers like Kipling's would-be kings, Conrad's Jim, Lingard,

and Kayerts, Forster's Fielding, Orwell's Flory, Greene's Scobie, and Wells's Moreau, would continue to play Adam on uncreated Edens with the ancient conflict between secular and divine power, the need for order and the lure of chaos, taking a specifically nineteenth-century form.

Prospero, Robinson Crusoe, Lord Jim and John Bull are all kings of that archetypal island of dreams, but the needs associated with the role arose with peculiar intensity at the turn of the century when problems of power and loss of control became urgent. When the uprisings of modernism irrevocably exposed the monsters bred of dreams of reason, the colonist chose to project their images into alien jungles where the forces of civilization might control the tempting dangers he found in himself.

The Victorians hardly needed the shattering experience of a shrinking globe to expose their values. Men like Darwin, Frazer, and Freud had traveled the heart of darkness to reveal man's link with the savage, pagan gods behind Christian sacrifice, an anarchic id struggling against super-ego restraints, and the impossibility of demonstrating, not only the rightness of Western values, but the existence of a demonstrable universe itself. Even the increasingly insistent demands for social change and the erosion of the authoritarian order of class reinforced the impression of an underground rebellion, and by the end of World War I it had become unmistakably clear that the rebels, on all fronts, had won.

That brief period, the years between 1880 and 1920, saw the Victorian certainties of faith, community, action, and work, replaced by the subjective ambiguities of modernism. Describing the period, C. H. Bantock points to Acton's dictum about power corrupting as symbolizing "the unease of a generation" and quotes Forster's praise of A Rebours, that "blessed" period's book.¹⁰⁸ Even the shift in moral hierarchies after Freud can be described in these terms, from the conviction that "reason ruled the will in the interests of moral behaviour" to the notion that the super-ego distorts the ego with immoderate demands.¹⁰⁹ Now instincts, children, savages, and the masses are glorified, and the new hero is Oedipus ruling a subjective world of his own creation in rebellion against father, society, and God.

The contemporary voyager makes no secret of his attraction for the exotic, and the terminology of ruler and ruled, accordingly, becomes redefined. Graham Greene travels an Africa "shaped like a human heart"¹¹⁰ that he knew from dreams; Laurens Van der Post consciously seeks union with the black man as his Jungian "Shadow;"¹¹¹ and Joyce Cary's Mr. Johnson is a dark Ariel who creates Cary's art. Of course, the noble savages of our post-psychoanalytic romantic primitivism are no more real than the old fantasy of bestial rapists; they simply emphasize the dream of coming to terms with the instincts as creative and good. The contemporary voyager is permitted to glorify his reversion from culture

in the mystical maddness of his "trip," but the imperial voyager felt much the same struggle. Conrad's colonists retreat into "a past so remote that it was the common property" of all men,¹¹² and it was Kipling, though it sounds like Freud, who wrote: "The eternal question still is whether the profit of any concession that a man makes to his tribe against the light that is in him, outweighs or justifies his disregard of that light."¹¹³

In effect, late Victorian Empire building acquired its peculiar form at the moment when the Victorian was defying gods he still believed in, fascinated by an abyss he could not yet tolerate. Attracted by the suspicion that tempting dangers lurked in tropical jungles, but too close to the Victorian gods to take an open look, the colonist found a way to get to those jungles, protected by his Sahib's mask and messianic role.

It is natural that words like faith, myth, and magic are used to describe it. Imperialism offered just this--a faith to fill the void of transition. To control anxiety, it offered a ritualistic mode of control; and to overcome powerlessness, it made the white man a god. The appeal is inescapable, particularly when completed with exotic backgrounds, opportunities for penitential sacrifice, convenient expiatory victims, a reassuring community of initiates, codes, rituals, and taboos to maintain its sanctity, and a host of decorative items like flags, hymns, uniforms, and drums.

Even further, imperialism came complete with a fully articulated myth to replace the old gods and values. If Darwin had challenged man's divinity, the social Darwinism of popular misconception rectified this with a new creation story to replace the discredited Adam and Eve and the intolerable Origin of Species. Here the process of evolution could be seen culminating in the superior races of Western Europe, top dog on The Great Chain of Being, and from here it is only a short step to the Gospel According to the Protestant Middle Class--it is only fitting, following the law of nature and the will of God, that the fittest rule the weak. Any hesitation about such power is covered by The Errand in the Wilderness. The chosen people have been blessed with skill, prosperity, and virtue, and empowered with the privilege, nay duty, to spread the word of God and civilization to the far corners of the world.

The new priesthood is trained, in suitably celibate public schools, in the values of the gentleman ruler. Indeed, Greenberger describes them as the values of an "overgrown public schoolboy"--masculine, honest, daring, and born to command¹¹⁴--while Edmund Wilson, less charitably, observes that Kipling's *Westward Ho!* converts the snobbery and bullying of schoolboys into the arrogance and aggression of Empire.¹¹⁵ In the imperial hero manliness is exalted over godliness, thought is distrusted, aestheticism feared, sentiment abhorred, and polo revered. The Bithia Mae Coker heroine of Diana Barrington: A Romance of Central India describes such an ideal:

I should hate a man who took an hour over his tie, lolled on a sofa reading poetry, or sat hand in hand with me looking at the moon, and criticised my dress like a milliner. I like to know that my husband is a man, and not an old woman. He shoots tigers, plays polo and rides races with my full approval.¹¹⁶

Orwell's Flory, with his scar and his taste for poetry, obviously isn't "pukka"; instead, the heroine, a fresh English girl with a taste for hunting and sadism, chooses Verrell, the polo-playing "martial rabbit" who shares her interests.¹¹⁷

Naturally the "pukka Sahib" is a member of the club, and this is important. The club is the Sahib's "Spiritual Citadel,"¹¹⁸ the magic circle that protects him from chaos and purges him from contact with the native world outside. Kipling's Ameera uses charms to protect her miscegenetic love affair; Holden returns to the club "to pull himself together."¹¹⁹ Here colonists wear dinner jackets, sing anthems to the Queen, ritually reenact life in England in the club play, play billiards under fire, drink libations in scotch, and invoke doom upon the mavericks who violate the Sahib's Code.

The code is the heart of it--a rigid system of taboos designed to maintain the sanctity of caste. Greenberger notes that when rule is by blood, blood must remain pure;¹²⁰ but the relationship is actually far more complex. After all, the White God recovers his innocence, identifies himself with reason, and maintains the myth of kingship precisely

because he has such handy expiatory victims on whom to project his less than immortal desires. Any violation of the line between "one of them" and "one of us," from miscegenation to an admission of common humanity, undeniably exposes the possibility that blackness might lie inside. The half-caste in Maugham is "The Vessel of Wrath."¹²¹

That is why Forster's colonials hold "bridge" parties that don't connect, and Kipling's hold tennis parties "where the English stood on one side and the natives on the other, in order to promote social intercourse throughout the Empire."¹²² And that is why the Maugham hero wears a dinner jacket in the jungle: "When a white man surrenders in the slightest degree to the influences that surround him he very soon loses his self-respect, and when he loses his self-respect you may be quite sure that the natives will soon cease to respect him"¹²³--remember, the king who has been exposed as mortal can be eaten.

Because any violation of the myth of kingship threatens every member of the group, the code demands that Sahibs "toe the line": "If you leave the line, you leave a gap in the line." (171)¹²⁴ Even when--particularly when--Forster's Adela or Lessing's Mary prove somewhat less than the mythic virgin violated by the bestial rapist of colonial fantasy, the community closes ranks to maintain the sacred image of English purity.

Fielding's image of the earth as "a globe of men who are trying to reach one another" negates Major Callender's

image of toeing the line, but Forster explains why Fielding is "not a Sahib really."

The feeling grew that Mr. Fielding was a disruptive force, and rightly, for ideas are fatal to caste. . . . The remark that did him most harm at the club was a silly aside to the effect that the so-called white races are really pinko-grey. He only said this to be cheery, he did not realize that 'white' has no more to do with a color than 'God save the King' with a god, and that it is the height of impropriety to consider what it does connote. (62)

These elements, with a greater or lesser degree of ambiguity, make up the world of the colonial novel. The Kipling heroine of The Naulahka really is a "fresh-faced" girl mocked by shameless Indian gods, pure and pretty as the Callenders would like Adela to be. Conrad's intolerable dandy as well as the Maugham hero maintains appearances in the jungle, and Brierly wants Jim to maintain the Sahib's code out of the colonist's terror of his own blackness. Even the same scenes and images keep appearing--the ubiquitous anthem, the storming of the club, the bestial native, the violated virgin, and the rapacious jungles opposed by English roads, bridges and machines. In a writer like Maugham they are taken quite literally; in a writer like Conrad they are charged to symbolic intensity; but one can no more have a colonial novel without them than an elegy without women weeping for Tammuz--they are the inviolable ingredients of the genre.

Much of this is, of course, deceptive. Imperialism was many things to different people at different times, and we are concerned only with its appearance in selected fictions, Economic and political motives, for example, crucial to the social phenomenon, generally aren't crucial to the major colonial novels. Novels are principally fantasies for escape and identification; the colonial novel, if anything, is even more so. These writers have chosen the alien world precisely because it offers a different level of reality in which to will dreams, so, of the many motives for colonization, role playing is the one that is stressed. Nor do the moral issues of the real world always play their anticipated part. Even writers as humane as Forster and Cary are charged with neglecting the reality of exploitation; but the black man is there to act out white dreams, so the fantasy relationship with the native is the one that is stressed. The heroes of colonial novels are guilty of emotional, if not economic, exploitation and when exploitation becomes an issue it is chiefly because it exposes the pretensions of the white ruler's dream. Nevertheless, even in reality imperialism was often a fantasy serving human needs, just as it serves those needs in novels. And it is precisely this tension between the myth of divinity and the reality of despotism and fraud that makes up the central conflict of colonialism and colonial novels.

Although we reject colonial premises and suspect colonial motives, there is no doubt that the white ruler was often

impelled by genuine conviction to acts of selfless devotion. Susanne Howe places novels about India "among the unhappiest books in the language,"¹²⁵ with some justification--homesick aliens trying to perform a mission they never quite understand for resentful natives with dubious results, the terrors of native life, burning sun, monsoons, damp shirts, prickly heat, and poor food at the club. Benita Parry also insists that the price of status came high: "The usually self-assured and often arrogant British, whose trade as rulers was to deal in moral certainties, were displaced persons in India."¹²⁶

But we never really believed in the brash self-confident Jingo. Sandison describes the late Victorian as "a very reluctant and defensive imperialist,"¹²⁷ indicates the outspoken opposition by leaders like Beatrice Webb, J. A. Hobson, and Ramsey MacDonald,¹²⁸ and quotes Churchill's marvelous summation of the paradox of Empire:

What enterprise that an enlightened community may attempt is more noble and more profitable than the reclamation from barbarism of fertile regions and large populations? . . . the act is virtuous, the exercise invigorating, and the result is often extremely profitable. Yet, as the mind turns from the wonderful cloudland of aspiration to the ugly scaffolding of attempt and achievement, a succession of opposite ideas arise . . .¹²⁹

In truth, the imperialist was far from certain he was meant to be king. It was Kipling, after all, who voiced the nation's fear of pride of power in his reminder that it is beneath God's "awful hand we hold / Dominion," and after

"The Captains and the Kings depart . . . all our pomp of yesterday / Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!"¹³⁰ Even if much of this is "the traditional rhetoric of submission," it is significant that Kipling felt it was necessary.

Nor was the imperialist certain about his motives. The assault upon the barrier between order and chaos demanded the fierce reassertion of will codified by imperialism, still its very frenzied intensity resembles a twilight of the gods. The strength of a prohibition, Freud insists, is an indication of the intensity of the desire to violate it, and the late Victorian protested too much. The other side of the jingo's bravado is the decadent's doubt; Plain Tales from the Hills was written during the same year as The Picture of Dorian Grey and was Kipling's answer to it.

In effect, the colonies were both social fact and communal fantasy, and the imperial myth and the novels that grew out of it redefine the ancient myth of heroic passage in a peculiarly fin de siecle form. For an age divided between distrust of will and fear of abandonment, the opposing dangers of Messiah and savage, the white ruler exposed by the jungle is a particularly suitable symbol. And this is what these novels are about. The colonial novel is not just a story set in the colonies; it is a specific human situation realized symbolically. Its setting is the scene of a specific human drama played by certain recurring human types, and a characteristic action develops its plot.

The would-be king is hardly new; Oedipus must be the

prototype of all men who discover that they aren't really ruler of Thebes, or even of themselves. However, once the white man had become ruler of many jungles, and problems of power and loss of control became urgent, the white ruler "going native" in the jungle suddenly became the standard material of popular culture. From Bithia Mae Croker through Maugham to dozens of pith-helmet movies came a deluge, not yet abated, of Sahibs trying to maintain their position in the jungle and going under in the end. Maugham capitalized on the fascination with the abyss by using the East-West theme to reveal nice refined people capable of unexpected passion or terrible things: "I was startled by the expressions in those fine sober eyes of his. . . . They betrayed a tragic depth of emotion of which I should never have thought him capable"¹³¹--"It was not a face, it was a gibbering hideous mask . . . and in a minute the face was cool and calm and unlined."¹³² And Sadie Thompson captured the public imagination by saying it so well: "You're all the same, all of you, Pigs! Pigs!"¹³³

And the would-be King undone by flawed mortality is central to the important works too. Conrad's Rajah Laut, Tuan Jim, Rey de Sulaco, and August Benevolence all aspire to be more than mortal only to be destroyed by the renegade within; Greene's Scobie rivals God in bearing the white man's burden and destroys his creation; Wells's Dr. Moreau is a satanic Prospero revenged by his Calibans; the plucky young imperialists of Ballantyne's Coral Island become the

savages of Golding's The Lord of the Flies; and Waugh's Basil Seal begins by bearing civilization to a native state in the grand tradition of Brooke adventurers--and ends by eating his girlfriend. Often the failure is specifically located in sexuality: Forster's Adela, Lessing's Mary and Godden's nuns are white virgin goddesses in whom the alien world arouses nasty sexual fantasies; Orwell's Flory can no longer play white ruler once his black mistress is revealed; and miscegenation unmans innumerable Kipling kings.

In fact, the themes and images characteristic of all of these stories are encapsulated in Kipling's ironic parable of colonial power, "The Man Who Would Be King." Here two of the dregs of European society are placed in a jungle where they can be kings, and the story questions the quality of their effort and achievement. Whether a Dravot is an aspiring Prometheus or a fallen Lucifer is a question that haunts all of these writers. The imperial aspiration is a pretense, but is the pretense, somehow, redemptive?

Obviously Kipling was aware of the fantasy nature of "some other place" where "a man can come into his own" and the dream of kingship as a dream of control: "We are not little men, and there is nothing we are afraid of except Drink, and we have signed a Contract on that. Therefore we are going to be Kings." All the same, "They certainly were too big for the office. Dravot's beard seemed to fill half the room and Carnehan's shoulders the other half"¹³⁴ and, for a while, they do become kings. As they fulfill

their grandiose plans, they grow in stature; lust for wealth and power becomes, first a desire for responsible kingship, and then the dream of creating an empire, until, caught between the illusion of being messiahs and the reality of savagery, they are destroyed.

It is not simply Adam's fleshly weakness that drives Dravot to violate the Contract by taking a woman; it is also Adam's dream of a rival creation. Dravot not only needs a woman, he aspires to a line of succession and immortality--and there is no mistaking the irony directed towards the impious Adam masquerading as a priest and naming his creation, the mangled Masonic rites, the "Twelve picked men who help Him govern,"¹³⁵ and mock Biblical language: "Go and Dig the land, and be fruitful and multiply."¹³⁶

But, inevitably, the king is dethroned by the revelation of the animal within. Dravot, bitten by his reluctant spouse, is exposed as flesh--"Neither god nor devil but a man!"¹³⁷--and can be eaten. Jim also aspired to be more than mortal and Stein observes: "He wants to be a saint, and he wants to be a devil . . . so fine as he can never be . . . in a dream. . . ." (130) Indeed, Dravot shares not only Jim's dream but his convincing showmanship, and he too dies in the role: "D'you suppose I can't die like a gentleman?"¹³⁸

Benita Parry is one of the critics disturbed by the parable, arguing that Kipling's sympathy for his rogues has obscured the moral issues, that his racism makes the black

men villains--"howling creatures" whose "furs stunk"--and that the kings fail, not through greed or ambition, but because "Dravot undermined the mystery of their rule."¹³⁹ She is right in suspecting Kipling of affection: his kings are loveable in their crazy dream; but she is reading Kipling the imperialist not Kipling the imaginative writer, and this is a parable. Peachy and Dan are pursued, not simply by natives, but by the rebellious forces of their own dark desires--howling creatures whose furs stunk. The howling creatures expose the folly of the imperial pretension, and it was Kipling, not Dravot, who "undermined the mystery of their rule."

The imagery reveals his attitude, and the story is particularly interesting because it uses the themes and images of the new naturalism characteristic of colonial fiction. Dravot, suspended between God and devil on a broken bridge over an abyss, recalls all that machinery rotting in the jungle, the rosary Kim uses for surveying, the transportation imagery that dominates A Passage to India, and even the benevolent Grand Trunk Road that unites England and India in Kim. Throughout the colonial novel, this kind of imagery reveals the ambivalence associated with man's passage beyond proper limits, and the sense of transgression that haunted the Victorians while they were assuming god-like power in the political sphere seems to find atonement in the fate of an Icarus-Dravot--"falling round and round and round twenty thousand miles" to be

"caught on a rock with the gold crown close beside"¹⁴⁰--in crucifixions like Peachy's or Kayerts's, and in repetitions of the white man corrupted and the white man exposed.

* * *

I will be discussing the colonial novels of Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling, and E. M. Forster, as well as touching upon works as seemingly far afield as D. H. Lawrence's "The Man Who Loved Islands" and H. G. Wells's science fiction. A common set of themes, figures, and images--"the imperial metaphor"--runs through these works, but subordinated in each case to the author's personal myth, and consistent with his use of that myth throughout his work. It is here, in the distinct variants of language symbols and theme, that the richest layer of each story is found, and what we find often takes us far from the politically imperial.

Criticism generally shares Jeffrey Meyers's conviction that the genre "was virtually invented by Kipling," and that its subject is "the cultural conflict that develops when Europe imposes its manners, customs, religious beliefs and moral values on an indigenous way of life."¹⁴¹ My assumption, however, is that the major colonial novelists were less interested in cultural conflicts than they were in their own, that the alien world was not a place to examine ideologies but a place to will dreams, and that the genre was hardly the invention of Kipling.

My method then is somewhat different than the usual approach to colonial novels. There is no effort to use a political approach or to isolate social issues; it is to read these works, like any work of literature, closely. Assuming that imperialism was not only a political movement set in history, but one manifestation of a central human drama, I expected the connection between political issues, archetypal fantasies, and the author's private needs and symbols to emerge naturally. And it does. A work like "The Man Who Loved Islands" arrives at the typical imperial metaphor without the slightest interest in political imperialism; one like Heart of Darkness begins by talking about political imperialism and ends by acting out Conrad's personal drama.

Of necessity, the political and social aspects of these stories tend to be slighted. Sometimes this is because others have covered this area; more often it is because the political and social approaches have left many questions unanswered. When Nostromo's imperialist's turn into geese laying golden eggs and ghostly gringos, or when Forster's Hindu ritual doesn't fit with questions of Anglo-Indian friendship, the critics concerned with "issues" generally ignore the problems.

All novels are about the central human conflicts of man in society, and the line between political novels, social novels, and novels of private sensibility is chiefly a matter of emphasis. Still, if we must have a definition of political novels, Irving Howe's definition of novels "in which political

ideas play a dominant role or in which the political milieu is the dominant setting"¹⁴² would seem to be the most useful-- particularly when one stresses, as Howe does in his discussion of Conrad, that politics are functions of emotional needs,¹⁴³ and that such questions are only meaningful when "the relationship between politics and literature is interesting enough to warrant investigation."¹⁴⁴ Even so, we can't avoid problems. Yes, Conrad sees human issues through political life, but it is doubtful whether political ideas receive "the dominant emphasis" in Conrad's colonial novels, and more than doubtful whether they are the most fruitful approach to any of the major colonial novels. Eloise Knapp Hay insists that "Everything" in Nostromo "illustrates the author's theory of history, from the anecdotes of the damned treasure-seekers . . . to the characters of its heroic double, Gould and Nostromo, who but illustrate the anecdote."¹⁴⁵ But what is Conrad's theory of history if not that "the way of even the most justifiable of revolutions is prepared by personal impulses disguised into creeds"?¹⁴⁶

Actually all lofty theories about method ignore the practical matter of writing criticism. What, after all, impels a critical article but the critic's realization that he has noticed something that others have ignored. Limits of time and space force most critics, even the good ones, to ride their own hobby horse, perhaps to the ground. Stanley Hyman hypothetically constructs the ideal critic who "would do everything possible with a work of literature,"¹⁴⁷

Most critics simply stake out a territory assuming someone else will take care of the rest, and are most successful when dealing with material their method is best equipped to handle.

This critical study is based upon the conviction that imperialism as an archetypal symbol is the most fruitful approach to these particular novels. It resolves problems that have resisted both the critics involved with political issues and those who dismiss the imperial theme as "merely political."

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Chapter I

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34. Ibid., p. 138.

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36. Ibid., p. 3.

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38. The Imaginary Voyage in Prose Fiction (New York, 1941), p. 3.

39. Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization, trans. Pamela Powesland (New York, 1956).

40. Although the natives in these works are African, Indian, Malayan, and South American, I will use the term "black" when the authors in question use the term or treat all natives as symbolically "black."

41. Mannoni, pp. 97-9.

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43. Mannoni, p. 111.

44. Ibid., p. 105.

45. Ibid., p. 104-05.

46. Ibid., p. 203. Mannoni contends that it is not enough to denounce the colonial situation as one of economic exploitation. Although they sought converts, not profit, missionaries decimated entire populations in the Pacific (p. 203), and black workers in America are treated badly, not because it is profitable, but because they are black (32). "Economics," Mannoni continues, "can tell us how a man can dominate other men to acquire greater profit, but it has little to say about a man who uses economic superiority simply for the pleasure of enslaving other men." (204) This is what is uniquely colonial about the colonial situation. However, it would be an error to suppose that Mannoni reduces all colonial problems to psychological ones; he is the first to admit that "the search for psychological solutions can too often be an alibi for those who refuse to confront true political problems." (Author's Note to the Second Edition, p. 8). Mannoni stresses the psychological aspect of colonialism because that is his field; I stress it because it is the aspect of colonialism most relevant to the major colonial novels.

47. Ibid., pp. 61-88.

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75. Watt, p. 86.
76. Ibid., p. 65.
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87. Watt, p. 80.
88. Ibid., p. 67.
89. Richetti, p. 118.
90. Ibid., p. 62.
91. Ibid., p. 63.
92. Ibid., p. 60-118.
93. Ibid., p. 118.
94. Growing: An Autobiography of the Years 1904-1911 (London, 1961), p. 46.
95. "The Man Who Would Be King," Kipling: A Selection of His Stories and Poems, II, 120. Although Mannoni's is the only serious study of the psychology of colonization, historical studies generally share Alan Greenberger's assumption that the material and intellectual needs of the West determined their image of the colonies and this image, in turn, determined the way that reality was seen (p. 7). Errors range from comic attempts to farm the arid Sierra Leone in anticipation of a tropical paradise (p. 7, note) to the tragic suppression of imagined rapists, but in each case it is clear that the colonies were invented to conform to Western dreams. See also Philip D. Curtin, The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action 1780-1850 (London, 1965), pp. 127, 132, 254. The historians and sociologists, however, don't seem to know what the writers knew, that the colonies attracted men who were prone to such dreams.
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143. Ibid., pp. 76-113.
144. Ibid., p. 17.
145. Eloise Knapp Hay, The Political Novels of Joseph Conrad (Chicago, 1967), p. 175.
146. Conrad, The Secret Agent, p. 77.
147. The Armed Vision (New York, 1948), p. 399.

II. Joseph Conrad; To be a Saint or to be a Devil

All Conrad's colonists are men who would be kings exposed in all their flawed mortality. The themes and images of "An Outpost of Progress" are characteristic: Europe's seedy failures glorifying themselves as "serving the cause of progress,"¹ the mock crucifixion, the cry for God answered by a steamboat whistle, and the hanging body "putting out a swollen tongue at his Managing Director"²--all resemble Kipling's would-be kings in their blasphemous pretension.

Conrad was fascinated by such men. He began his career as a writer by charting the downfall of "two human wrecks such as one meets in the forsaken corners of the world,"³ and dethroning pretenders would dominate his work even after he had abandoned the colonial setting. Of Almayer's progenitor, he remarked cryptically: "If I had not got to know Almayer pretty well it is almost certain there would never have been a line of mine in print."⁴ Of Willems, he confessed to being "aroused" by the "dubious status" of an alien in the jungle and to heaping him with evil "on a very slight foundation,"⁵ But Conrad was not entirely without motive. The pariah who was shunned for bringing "the Arabs into the river"⁶ was surely the original sinner, and he is the real

model for the white kings and rival sons who violate Conrad's colonial Edens.

The first of this succession of fallen kings was Almayer, the powerless son who dreams of "being made king amongst men by old Lingard's money" so that he can erase the blackness of his passions and the telltale blood of his daughter; but that "fairy palace in Amsterdam," the "earthly paradise of his dreams," (p. 17)⁷ becomes "The House of Heavenly delight" with its opiate dreams, and the pretender's aspirations to immortality rest with his folly of a castle and black grandchild. Then Willems would continue the search for kingship in Eden and the reward of Lingard's treasure until the jungle and a black woman again expose, enslave, and destroy. And twenty years later Conrad would return to Lingard himself, the benevolent father and white god "seeking an arcadian happiness for the little corner of the world he loved to think all his own," (154) to make certain that he too is unmanned by desire.

But it was in Heart of Darkness that Conrad truly grasped his theme and the imperialist effort becomes intensified as all human action, holy or horrible, that attempts to master destiny. Now Lingard, the "King of the Sea," becomes Kurtz, the "august Benevolence"--and Lord Jim, seeking self-conquest as ruler of savages, destroyed by an enemy within--and the "King of Sulaco," turned to stone in a kingdom of silver because his dream of bringing order to his "kingdom within a kingdom" masks his passion to rival his father and

God. The theme would return again and again. Even Axel Heyst is a colonial king ruling a fantasy island free of the baser passions until his pose of purity is exposed as impotence. And Heyst becomes a link to all Conrad's romantic escapists, the Antonys and Reynards whose dream of being holier-than-Thou masks a merely mortal nature that is a good deal less.

From the earliest novels, in which the jungle is a projection of primitive fantasy, to the "magic circle" (6) of Heyst's enchantment, Conrad saw the imperialist illusion as an attempt to escape the limits of reality common to the colonist, the dreamer, and the artist. Colonial kings may be lured to the jungle by "the fascination of the abomination," or even by the opportunity to control such subversions, but all are destroyed by their fantasy. Passive escapists like Almayer submit to a dark id, but aggressive men of action are no less vulnerable to the promethean illusions of the superego; and when Kurtz, the dark god, and Jim, the shining savior, are exposed as facets of the same romantic illusion, the line between the "fascination of the abomination" (69) and "august Benevolence" (123) has become dangerously thin. Stein talks about this, man's dream of transcending his limited mortality: "He wants to be a saint, and he wants to be a devil . . . so fine as he can never be . . . in a dream." (130)

Furthermore, Conrad explicitly identifies all his colonists with the artist, in his escape from reality, in

his daemonic descents, and in his demiurgical power to control an Eden of his own creation. Of course, Conrad had been both a colonist and an artist, aware that "the writing of a book" is like "the conquest of a colony,"⁸ and obsessed by the tempting dangers of both roles. Thus, Lingard, meddling with native politics, is as much a white Prospero manipulating his island without men as Axel Heyst, inheritor of Villiers's pure realm of art,⁹ is a colonial king. Each lives within "the world of his creation" (Rescue, 287)¹⁰ where he can "mould his own fate in accordance with the whispers of his imagination." Kurtz makes the poet's dangerous descent to become a dark magician, and Jim is the white sorcerer of a moonlit island with all the "charm" of "works of art," (172) but both are the gods of a rival creation. What then are we to make of Jim's imaginative triumph when Kurtz's report is called "a beautiful piece of writing," (123) or of man's dream of kingship over savages when Conrad exposes the savage within the colonial king?

This fantasy of colonial kingship would become the essential Conradian theme. Here Robert Penn Warren is fairly characteristic in taking Stein's words on the destructive element as the text for Conrad's concern with the paradox of man's position as a natural creation who attempts to live by his illusions, and the dream as his frustrated attempt to become one of the gods. For Warren, Conrad's advice is "to follow the dream":¹¹ while wisdom lies in the recognition of the limits of the human condition, the illusion itself is

"the mark of human achievement, and is, in the end, his only truth."¹² But Irving Howe seems to come closer to the truth when he speaks of the "radical scepticism"¹³ that "corrodes the underside" of everything Conrad values. Conrad may tell us a good deal about dreams, ideas, action, work, community, and order; but he shows us only savagery, delusion, self-idolatry, and chaos.

In the white man in the jungle, trapped between his pose as ruler and the discovery of his inadequacy, Conrad found an ideally available metaphor for his recurring concern with civilization and barbarism, with all man's attempts to transcend his limited virtue and decaying body. Clearly Conrad was in touch with his feelings when he admits to the satisfaction of undoing Willems. Putting heroes on pedestals only to knock them down remained important enough for him to invest twenty years in The Rescue for no ostensible reason other than to destroy Lingard, and he continued to assault kings on fantasy islands until he had created the factual reality of Costaguana only to expose it too as the megalomaniacal dream of dozens of self-deluded heroes, and then to confess, in Victory, that his colonies had been Axel's fantasy all along.

Since Gustav Morf's work on Conrad's Polish heritage not many readers would contest that much of Conrad's need to expose flawed men arose out of his guilty awareness of his own flaw and his identification with Jim's "jump" out of the past.¹⁴ It hardly matters whether we see Conrad's

motives as Morf's guilt of a political deserter,¹⁵ V. S. Pritchett's guilt of an emigre,¹⁶ or even Jocelyn Baines's defense that Conrad's family encouraged his desertion.¹⁷ Conrad was clearly aware of the distance between what he was and what he had become, and of the price he paid to get there. Indeed, Conrad was able to seize upon the colony as the tabula rasa of dreams because he had discovered deserters like Jim in all the ports of the East at the time he was acting out the most dramatic of such fantasies--the foster child fantasy with which he recreated Josef Korzeniowski, the Polish seaman, as Joseph Conrad, the English writer. Even more emphasis should be placed upon the enormity of this challenge to father and God--no fictional Crusoe was more defiantly assertive or had greater need of expiation.

In part Conrad's colonial kings were to serve as his expiatory victims until he could recreate the moral failure of the colonist in the jungle when he no longer needed white gods or savages to eat them. We remember Conrad leaving Poland "as a man might get into a dream"¹⁸ when Marlow insists he is telling us a "dream" that his stories will justify; and Conrad's recurring association between the colonist and the artist in socially defiant, even parricidal, transcendence goes well beyond the guilty conscience of the Victorian imperialist or the guilty conscience of the fin de siecle artist to become the exposure of this particular colonist-artist as a Lord Jim, "a hollow sham" (209).

Of course the problems multiply when we consider that

few men need to overthrow two fathers for selfhood, and much of Conrad's torment, even the art that resolved it, might well be attributed to his having at least one father too many. Surely Warren's "two Conrads," "the Conrad who praised the simple ideas and sincere emotions and the Conrad of the neurotic illnesses and dark inwardness"¹⁹ must have their source in that curious splitting of "father"--Korzeniowski, the revolutionary patriot and romantic artist, and Uncle Thaddeus, his stable pragmatic antithesis. Naturally there was conflict. Korzeniowski saw himself a storybook hero and martyred messiah; however, Conrad saw his mother killed and himself abandoned by such grandiose heroics,²⁰ so it shouldn't be difficult to understand why Thaddeus might have found ripe ground for his warnings against ego gratifying dreams.²¹ All the same Korzeniowski was powerful and charismatic, respected as an artist and revered as a national savior²²--a far more attractive object of identification than proper, dull Thaddeus, the eternally nagging conscience. Small wonder that Conrad remained obsessed by the heroes who took risks beyond humanity, or even that he should need to tear them down, that he should worship the Lingards and Stanleys and Brookes that his stories expose.

Apparently it is difficult to avoid the irreverence of positing psychological conflicts when dealing with Conrad's art. Frederick Crews has tastefully demonstrated the way Conrad's psychic life elucidates his symbols,²³ but far less psychologically oriented critics touch upon the same issues.

Robert R. Hodges has noted the many "enchanted Heysts" paralyzed by parental dominance,²⁴ although he misses the way the father's legacy of idealization enchants by emasculating his son. And Paul L. Wiley comes close when he observes the recurrence of the Eden motif and all those knightly rescues of icy princesses,²⁵ although he misses the son's swollen pride as the cause for expulsion, or that the hero's rival for the princess is a father. Then Baines, citing Conrad's self deception that he was "preoccupied with the relationship between father and daughter," points out the seven novels in which a father obstructs his daughter's striving for freedom, and comes up with an allegory in which Conrad knew he was abandoning the Polish cause and that the choice would forever obstruct his freedom.²⁶ Nevertheless, those seven novels barely attend to their shadowy unattainable women and the action, as in most Conrad novels, is generated out of the conflict between father and son.

Now, to say that a work of art reflects Oedipal conflict is not, in itself, a substantial critical contribution; still, Conrad's choice of rebellions is at least a step towards understanding his attitude toward those colonial Adams, Crusoes, and Prosperos, and his use of a fantasy Eden as his earliest subject and a continuing theme in his art.

Furthermore, he had to create Joseph Conrad before he could create imaginary islands, and the two, occurring at the same time, would necessarily be related even if Conrad hadn't

gone out of his way to fictionalize himself to suit his art. Thus, we are told that Conrad, like Jim, had abandoned his ship in the East, and that he met the models for his colonial renegades at a time when he too was torn between duty and dreams.²⁷ Clearly, Conrad understood the lotus eaters of Lord Jim in whom "the distinction of being white" (9) masks "a place of decay," (9) and knew what they were looking for in the Eastern "gift of endless dreams." (8) But this is exactly the sort of thing Thaddeus was worried about when he inveighed against the pitfalls of thought and encouraged his nephew to "cultivate cheerful habits,"²⁸ so we can understand Conrad's insistence on the conflict between "contrary stresses" his new role entailed.²⁹

That sense of subversion was still cropping up in Conrad's autobiography in his curious account of working away at Almayer below decks and being interrupted by a seaman eager to know what he was "scribbling." He was, in fact, writing about Nina "watching the sinking sun," "the lure of the tropics," and "the impatience of passionate youth bent on its desire" with the knowledge that the "sun" of his "seagoing years was setting too."³⁰ The need to reconcile these two roles would persist in Conrad's claim that he had carried his notion of service from the "sea" to his "desk"³¹-- still it's hard to miss the suggestion of "The Secret Sharer" in that delightful picture of Conrad, the dutiful seaman, concealing Conrad, the irresponsible scribbler, below decks.

Perhaps that is why Conrad's account of his rebirth as

an artist also creates the myth that Garnett committed him if not to "another life" then "another book."³² In view of Thaddeus's disapproval and his own fear of his new role, it is understandable that Conrad might need an approving father like Marlow to say "Pass on." (142) But biographical accounts actually indicate that Conrad had always emulated, even upstaged, his father--that he always knew he would become a "great writer."³³ Jim's identification with storybook heroes comes out of Conrad's childhood fascination with adventures peopled by heroes he could only have identified with his father, since the self-dramatizing Korzeniowski identified them with himself.³⁴ Naturally, the child's fear of rivaling a giant father would be reinforced by Thaddeus's warnings, and much of Conrad's ambivalence seems to have found expression in the fantasy heroes and powerful magic of his art. Still, Conrad himself knew that such art was also defiance. When he tells us that he escaped into heroic stories while his father lay dying, he reports the nursing nun's warning that he shouldn't be reading "these books."³⁵

In response to the repressive conscience of a Thaddeus and dangerous dreams like his father's, Joseph Conrad would be at once a powerful magician and mover of men, and as proper a bourgeois gentleman as Thaddeus could have wished. When he preaches his "few simple ideas"³⁶ and insists that he has been a "sober worker" all his "two lives,"³⁷ we suspect he protests too much; all the same this new creation was a supremely logical resolution for the son of a rebel

father and a conforming father, and an outcast with an accent who wanted to belong. It is the Korzeniowski in Conrad who seeks the jungle in order to escape, defy, even control; and it is Thaddeus warning his nephew to cultivate "duty" over "grandiose ideals"³⁸ in the vague hope that such kingship is all in the service of an "idea." In any event, Conrad's colonies remain the Edens of dream and the man who had actually recreated, "imperialized," himself was in a unique position to understand both the colonizer and the savage.

"Karain," an early exploration of the colonial theme, is a useful place to consider Conrad's attitude towards black men and imperial heroes. Bruce Johnson, in fact, has discussed Karain as a prototype for Lord Jim, noting that both rulers bury a past sin by governing a native state "clothed in an illusion of unavoidable success," but both rulers are "ornate and disturbing, for one could not imagine what depth of horrible void such an elaborate front could be worthy to hide."³⁹ Johnson also notes the references to art that recur in Lord Jim, but one wishes that he had taken it farther than this. Clearly, kingship is self-conquest because the native state, like the work of art, is a tabula rasa of dreams. That is why this king is "cast in metal,"⁴⁰ and why his kingship is described as "the accomplished acting of his amazing pretences" against the "suspicious immobility of a painted scene."⁴¹ Through the worship of their subjects, "a reverence accorded only to monarchs of the stage,"⁴² such kings almost become what they appear to be--but not quite.

Like Conrad, the mighty Karain is telling his story to exorcise a betrayal in his past, and he seeks protection from the English seamen because Englishmen don't believe in ghosts.

Of course, the Jubilee sixpence that the seamen give Karain as a charm is the sort of talisman Conrad was using when he attempted to exorcise his past in a country that didn't believe in ghosts. His Personal Record ends with her "magical red ensign"--that "symbolic, protecting, warm bit of bunting . . . destined for so many years to be the only roof over my head."⁴³--and his faith in "red lines" on the map, England's mana against ghosts, continued to be transcribed into the imperial metaphor of his art; in "Karain," however, the frame exposes his ambivalence. When the unknown casts its mystery over the known, it is the English seaman who remains haunted by ghosts, as doubtful a king as Karain.

Many of Conrad's key themes are here in kingship as an illusion of self-conquest related to the illusory symbolic actions of art, and storytelling as the symbolic expiation of ineradicable sin. But even more useful are the insights into the way Conrad would use the reality of the colonial relationship to serve his private needs, and the way this reality would be distanced and charged into the symbols of his art.

In his reading, Johnson makes some significant misinterpretations that might explain why the question of the exotic frame for the Malayan stories "has never been satis-

factorily answered."⁴⁴ Thus, he notes that Jim flees to the black and Karain to the white "as though both expect guilt to become manageable at some sort of cultural barrier," yet the absolution proves illusory since "all men are in the same, uncomfortable position when guilt and expiation are concerned," and Karain wears a sarong instead of a business suit, so that the affinity between the white man and the native can be more "effectively rendered."⁴⁵ Of course Conrad will keep exposing sarongs beneath business suits, but his cultural barriers are crucial. Because the native state is unreal to the colonist, it serves as the landscape of his unconscious, and guilt does become manageable when the man who rules the savages of his fantasies imagines that he rules himself.

Furthermore, Conrad perceived very real distinctions between ruler and ruled that could be used to serve his private needs and metaphoric purpose. Johnson, again noting the problems but not their meaning, observes that Conrad's natives can be haunted men or schemers for power, but they are never driven by "conduct Platonic in its white inaccessibility"; Dain cannot lead the attack because he is "one of them" and the natives cannot begin to understand "the peculiar ego failure which marks Jim." "Here," Johnson continues, "Conrad intimates some psychological differences between the illusion generated by East and by West, but he seems never to have resolved the question."⁴⁶

But Conrad had resolved the distinction between "one of

us" and "one of them," and the distinction becomes crucial because so much of Conrad's work deals with romantic dreamers driven by an ego ideal and haunted by the ghosts of its failure, and because he used the colony in fiction as white kings had used it, to act out this dream. The question that will keep arising is whether all such kingship is a lie or transcendence, but the question itself is rooted in reality. Conrad never bypasses the world; he gains symbolic force by intensifying it.

Colonials really do live in illusory kingdoms created by their ego ideals, and the need to create a Platonic image of oneself is a European phenomenon no native would understand. Mannoni even describes this fateful contrast between Western assertion and native dependence as the source of the white man's power over natives,⁴⁷ and Kurtz's report on "the exercise of our will" (123) might be the report of an ethnological investigative team. Jim telling Jewel "nobody is good enough" (194) is Mannoni's prototypical colonist relying on skill and self-confidence so as not to "prove inferior either to his own ideal of himself or to the situation."⁴⁸ And Conrad understood that a Jim who had failed his ideal image might escape to a less real world where he could be king--actually Jim leads that attack because this is his dream. But out of his own need to escape to fantasy islands, Conrad also understood that white kings who worship red ensigns are terrified if unable to rely openly on magic, and when their heroic fantasies are exposed

as illusions, the Jims are revealed as mortal and are sacrificed.

The Nigger of the "Narcissus," written in the same year as "Karain," is equally suggestive in its use of the black man as a scapegoat for the crew and as projective symbolism, the literary equivalent of such sacrificial rituals, for the artist. Since Conrad the dark double has been tacitly accepted as the subversive forces in man's soul, but it is important to emphasize that Conrad discovered his symbol in the peculiar hazards of the colonial fantasy. If contact with darkness doesn't awaken the crew's dangerous longing for passivity, it tempts with the equally destructive opportunity for narcissism under the guise of paternal benevolence, and these are, in reality, the dangers of the colonial relationship. Mannoni is talking about something like Wait's "I belong to the ship"⁴⁹ when he describes the native who begs for favors as a visible sign of dependence and, when rewarded, will continue to return with, "You are now my white man. I shall always come to beg of you."⁵⁰ And Conrad, as well as the Freudian psychoanalyst, understood that such flattery destroys by feeding the white man's fantasy that he can control his savage children and has indeed become a God.

The same sort of thing takes place in An Outcast of the Islands when a black woman becomes a projection of the erotic forces beneath man's ordered will, and here too such projections destroy, precisely as they do in reality. Perhaps

Conrad had observed the curious sexual liberation of the colonies, perhaps he had even felt it--certainly he could only write of erotic love with dark love objects. In any event he perceived the eroticism of the exotic as clearly as modern psychology. Mannoni explains that black women, because they are less "real" and less involved with family taboos, become almost magically arousing; yet it is debilitating to love the creation of fantasy and colonists are often so transformed by the experience that legends arise of love charms that the manly will.⁵¹ It is this "pygmalion love"⁵² that destroys Conrad's Willems, and he too cries out against the "charm" that carries with it "a sense of irreparable loss" (61)⁵³ and struggles "like a man bewitched within the invisible sweep of a magic circle" (124): "All that had been a man within him was gone" (67). Thus Willems is unmanned by indulging in an excess of fantasy Edens, and such retribution is both psychologically accurate and symbolically suitable for the pretensions of his dream.

It is not only love that destroys. Conrad understood that white men go to seed in the jungle because it is always destructive to live in a fantasy world that evades the resistance of reality. His colonists may be a paradigm for the fate of modern man in a subjective world dominated by his power, or a metaphor for the artist as Prospero ruling a rival creation with his power to will dreams, but the symbol arises out of the truly demiurgical nature of the colonial experience and the reality of its retribution.

Describing the colonist's loss of will psychologically, Mannoni explains: "If a man lives in the midst of his own projections without truly admitting the independent will and existence of other people, he loses his own will and independence, while the ego inflates as it becomes hollow."⁵⁴ Conrad, perceiving that Kurtz served no idea, community, or external system of order, writes: "He had kicked himself loose of the earth," (143) and when his ego inflates to annihilate the external world, Kurtz is found to be "hollow at the core." (153)

In all Conrad's colonies such narcissism is given symbolic reality. When the imperial king replaces the idea "to bow down before" with himself as the object of worship, he is exposed as Kurtz, the empty ivory idol, or Jim, the "stone figure" (248) and "hollow sham" (209). Of course the metaphor Conrad found in the colonial experience was a natural one for an age that was alarmed at its power to overthrow father and God; still, Conrad could use it with such resonance because he was aware of the parricidal defiance of his own dreams and art.

The Malayan Trilogy

In the first books of the Malayan trilogy Conrad was too immobilized by "the jostling and confusion" of "contrary stresses"⁵⁵ to articulate his theme, yet he leaves little doubt about its purpose when he announces the death of Kaspar

Almayer to announce his first book and new name: "It seems as if something has died in me."⁵⁶ And when he writes, in the same words, of his uncle's death "It seems as if everything has died in me."⁵⁷

Both Almayer's Folly and An Outcast of the Islands, designed to exorcise "the hallucination of the Eastern Archipelago,"⁵⁸ are largely descriptions of the tropical scenery that "had got a great hold on me"⁵⁹ and the almost vindictive punishment of two white kings inflicted by its hostile foliage. The two volumes lure us through castrating jungle plants into dark holes filled with decay with the kind of lushly adjectival prose that atrophies even as those hapless kings are drained, paralyzed, and destroyed. At this stage Conrad's poisonous jungles and black vampire women are decadent fantasies resembling the French colonial novel out of Loti; but here the Conrad who despised such exoticism⁶⁰ was working out the fatal tendency to lotus eating that the Thaddeus in him associated with puissant reveurs.

Almayer gets the worst of Conrad's need to get at both repressive fathers and unruly sons as both the dependent son of Lingard--"Call me father" (17)--and the betrayed father displaced by a more powerful son. In the first role he is the prototype for all Conrad's outcast sons paralyzed by parental dominance, an impotent Heyst relying on his father's magic to make him king. Later, in An Outcast of the Islands, he is called an "ineffective white god" in an office like "the temple of an exploded superstition" with "no successful

magic in the blank pages of his ledgers," (224) and the imagery is established for the colonist and the rival son as Prospero; but now neither Almayer nor Conrad have the necessary assertiveness to assume the role.

Thus, blackness in Willems becomes an unruly sexuality, while blackness in Almayer is a fatal passivity and drifting to dreams; but, curiously, the destructive fantasy in both cases is related to the father: Almayer sacrifices his whiteness by marrying a native, Lingard's "daughter," in return for his honeymoon castle and Lingard's protection, and Willems, in marrying Hudig's daughter, will do exactly the same. Of course, much of this is still unfocused hostility towards fathers, yet a pattern that will become significant in the later novels is beginning to emerge. Somehow kingship over fantasy Edens is won by renouncing competitive reality, and while this may be a symbolic solution common to colonists and artists, Conrad will develop it even further until, in Victory, the castle is Axel's and fantasy islands are revealed as the father's way of keeping his son in his place. That is why Almayer finds himself isolated and unwanted in that corner of the world "where old Lingard and his own weak will had placed him" (27) and as incapable of holding Nina against the passion promised by a dark rival as the "disarmed" (378) Heyst is powerless to protect Lena from the forces he had repressed.

Almayer's problems are compounded when the struggle between black and white culminates in Nina, and those

rebellious dreams are projected onto Dain and directed against Almayer in his role as restraining father. Again, Conrad is too divided between assertion and self-punishment to focus his theme; but when Almayer identifies with the "body" of his daughter's lover, he is seeing the end of his power as a man and his last hope of success, and this vision of a dark double "falling into a deep precipice" (83) is the first of the many jumps and falls Conrad would identify with his own rebellion against the past.

Finally, Almayer's Folly ends with the submission that would become characteristic of Conrad's colonial novels when the king of opium dreams is humbled before a greater god, Allah: "The only white man of the east coast was dead, and his soul, delivered from the trammels of his earthly folly, stood now before the presence of Infinite Wisdom" (166). Then, in the ultimate coup de grace, Conrad demolishes Almayer's dream of innocence, as well as immortality, with the most terrifying fantasy of miscegenation, the black baby that indisputably exposes the secret darkness of our hearts: "A grandson is born to the old Rajah and there is great rejoicing" (165).

Clearly, Conrad is reveling in Almayer's sordid defeat; the problem is that the plot doesn't tell us why. Yes, Almayer's desire for Nina is incestuous, but even that is not treated as a motive for retribution. Actually Nina is important to Almayer only as a means of asserting his youthful power and restoring his purity--inappropriate perhaps,

and pretentious in its self-love, but curiously free of erotic suggestions, and inadequate to justify that abundance of guilt. Apparently Conrad was unconcerned about clarifying motives, or incapable of doing so. One passive dreamer had to be punished so that one assertive one could triumph, and Conrad could write his book, dedicate it to Thaddeus, and conclude with the triumph of "passionate youth bent on its desire."

While Almayer only hoped--"Old Lingard would not live forever" (17A)--and "falls" into a precipice, Willems becomes more assertive in taking that fatal "step" off "the straight and narrow into a quagmire" (13) to provide the sin to justify the guilt. Significantly, that step is the betrayal of his father-in-law, and the preface to his betrayal of two more fathers--a white god and a blind king. Although Thomas Moser is correct in insisting that the Conrad who was about to marry was terrified of sexuality, a woman does not actually cause Willems's fall. The path to the jungle began with that step in Hudig's office and the dark woman, a woman stolen from a father, is really the externalization of forbidden desires and the appropriate agent of their retribution.

While Almayer's Folly had suggested an association between the "lure of the tropics" and Conrad's own lures and desires, now, at the moment he was asserting himself both as a man and an artist, Conrad's fantasy of the primitive identifies the dangers of sexuality and dreams in decadent jungles that madden, emasculate, and destroy. Thus, the

action of Outcast of the Islands reenacts the prefaces' account of Conrad's own struggle, regression, and rebirth as an artist--with Willems bearing the fate of the straggler.⁶² The horror of loss of control that made Conrad cling "desperately"⁶³ to the sea is realized in Willem's horror of the "bewildered life," (118) and Conrad's longing for relief from "contrary stresses," to let his spirit "float supine over chaos,"⁶⁴ is realized in Willems's "the night is dark and the shore is far--because death is better than strife." (70)

Perhaps that is why Willems's revulsion at sexual satiety--"the depraved sense of pleasure at the aftertaste of slime in the water" (64)--sounds so much like Conrad's account of the book that confirmed his new role: "After writing the last words of that book, in the revulsion of feeling before the accomplished task, I understood that I had done with the sea, and that henceforth I had to be a writer."⁶⁵ Willems meets Alissa in the jungle where he too seeks "refuge from the unceasing reproach of his thoughts" (60) after betraying a father, feels the "brusque stirring" of "new hopes, new fears, new desires," (61) and discovers that the jungle which "held the promise of joy and beauty" offers "nothing but poison and decay." (62)

In general terms Willems's fall is the result of the ferocious conceit with which he creates and dominates Alissa; "Those two, surrounded each by the impenetrable wall of their aspirations" (249) are Conrad's earliest use of the colonial relationship to expose man's isolation in the

solipsistic world of his egotism, and it is fitting that Willems be destroyed by the satiation of fantasy. But, finally, An Outcast of the Islands is really about the egotism of a rival son so tormented by forbidden desires that he brings the forces of evil up a snake-like river to destroy his father's secret source of power and capture his treasure. A Freudian explication of the fairy tale motif is hardly necessary to identify Conrad's obsession with digging up prohibited treasure and rescuing princesses from dragons. The treasure Jim steals from the dragon Cornelius is called "Jewel"; Lena, stolen from another father, is mistaken for a treasure; Nostromo plunders Viola's "treasure"; Gould and Heyst violate abandoned mines--and all are destroyed by aggrieved fathers and gods.⁶⁶

Outcast is full of such parental retaliation from the initial expulsion from Hudig's protection, through the nightmare vision of Omar castrating an unruly son, to the final expulsion from Eden with Lingard as God. And of course, the final victory belongs to Lingard. Though we see him only when he drops down as a deus ex machina to manipulate the action, Lingard is the book's most fascinating character, and the paradigm of Conrad's imperial kings.

Although this first white father, the hero of the action approved by the world, seems to have been conceived as an antithesis to Willems--even here Conrad suspects the reality of Lingard's kingship and the world's praises: "There is nothing for us outside the babble of praise and blame on

familiar lips, and beyond our last acquaintance there lies only a vast chaos." (152) A Lingard is angry with "things he could not understand" (153) and he acts to control that chaos, but in the fantasy world of his colony, action itself is a dream, and Lingard also dreams--"of an arcadian happiness for the little corner of the world he loved to think all his own." (154) After Conrad had focused the theme in later novels, he could return to Lingard in The Rescue and define the area of his imperialism as "the circle of another existence, governed by his impulse, nearer his desire"; (99) but even in Outcast Conrad knew that the native state was an island without men where the white king plays God.

Perhaps some of Conrad's suspicion of the hero of action was a way to justify dreaming, and some more of it directed against another acclaimed hero of action, his father. In any case, Conrad's second novel goes beyond punishing the outcast dreamer to cast doubt upon all imperial action, indeed all human action, by exposing the motives that impel heroic dreams. That is why the scenes of Lingard's anger are separated from his scenes as "Providence" by the confrontation with Babalatchi with its analogy between rulers and natives and fathers and sons. In his dream Lingard is the ruler of Paradise wrecking just retribution on a Willem "ranging over the islands and disturbing the universe by robbery, treachery, and violence" (161); in reality he is a father angered by "disrespect of his power" (156).

Thus Babalatchi exposes the human rivalry behind the imperialist's god-like convictions by reminding Lingard of his once human passion, by goading him on to destroy the man who boasted "that he alone has made you less than a child in Sambir" (177) and then by revealing that "your white man's justice" that "knows not anger" (174) as an assertion of power much like the benevolent father's motive in ruling his son. In effect, that little phallic power play with the gun is the imperialist relationship reduced to essentials. Babalatchi's is "'A good gun . . . Better than this--there.'" With the tips of his fingers he touched gently the butt of a revolver peeping out of the right pocket of Lingard's white jacket. 'Take your hand off that" (168).

Lingard says he seeks justice for Willems for he "liked his very faults," and Babalatchi is talking about white rulers who speak "for your good" while "they load their guns," (170) but they are talking about the same delusion. Many years later, in Nostromo, Conrad would echo Babalatchi's "A black tiger knows when he is not hungry--you do not" (171) in the perception that heroic dreamers must clothe their "passionate desires in the fair robes of an idea,"⁶⁷ (265) and that Gould's "conviction" is another passion to better his father and God.

Finally, Conrad plays out the white king's desire to be more than human in Eden itself. Almayer submitted before Allah, but here Conrad not only forces Willems to submit,

he even casts doubt upon the father as Providence when Willems becomes a "small child" confronting the man "so Tall, so big and so unapproachable." (194) Of course, Willems is Adam being exiled; we see that "bone, sharp and triangular like the head of a snake, dart up and down twice under the skin of his throat," (194) but he is specifically Adam unmanned. The knife crushed by Aissa's father and Babalatchi's gun are echoed in the butt of Lingard's "revolver bulging his jacket on the hip," (194) and Willems concedes with "the blank-desolation of a small child robbed of a toy" (197). Even the motive for such retribution is unmistakable in Willems's abject apologies: "I kept clear of women. It's forbidden--I had no time--and I despised them. Now I hate them!" (201) But to Adam's protest, "I am white," (204) his father tells him that he is not even a man.

Naturally, exile follows judgment with appropriate thunder as Lingard looks down from "an inaccessible height" (205) at the craven pair driven into a "nestful of snakes."⁶⁸ (245) Sexual assertion comes with its built-in punishment as Willems is condemned to Aissa and an excess of Eden when he longs only to escape, until he is mercifully rescued by Johanna who kills him with, "a stiff trigger," (268) in the name of God.

"This wasn't much like an act of justice," (197) Lingard admits, and he wishes Willems would say something "wicked that would justify the violence of the blow" (197). It is

true that Lingard, and Conrad, are still relishing the rebellious dreamer's downfall, and that the book may just be something "wicked" enough to justify the violence of Conrad's blow, and to force submission to "the only one man that had ever cared for me," (206) "you whom I have mortally offended" (207).

Although it couldn't be written until twenty years later, The Rescue clearly follows the pattern of the trilogy. When critics like Moser⁶⁹ and Hay⁷⁰ assume that Conrad falsified a story about "the dangerous egotism of the Western mission" into a romance to satisfy publisher and public, they are missing the relationship between the themes, and the fact that Conrad had been aiming at Lingard's human passions all along. At the end of Outcast even Almayer was questioning "Providence": no one in Europe "had ever heard of him there! (271)--"Father was wrong--wrong" (274). And the kernel of the love story was there in Babalatchi's hint that the sea had once been "stronger than the Rajah of the sea." (172) Writing The Rescue took years of success and defenses, and by then Conrad had long passed such silliness; still, the unmanning of Lingard had to be written--not necessarily well.

Although it chronologically precedes An Outcast of the Islands, The Rescue will take Lingard out of Eden where he had been left in command. Thus, the narrative opens with dogged insistence on "The King of the sea" as Zeus; his ship is the "Lightening," his manhood, a thunderbolt, and he stands "erect" despite "angry seas" (6) crying "magic words that

make all safe" (47). "They call me Rajah Laut, King Tom . . . it is no joke to have such names fastened on one even in fun. And those names have in them something which makes all this affair here no small matter to anybody" (323). It never is a small matter in Conrad when names like Tuan Jim and El Rey de Sulaco, "the face of a joke upon the body of a truth," (Nostromo, 351) both admit and resolve his ambivalence to heroes and dreams.

And Conrad is still hovering between awe and suspicion. While the introduction to Lingard includes a tribute to Brooke, ingenuously free of the psycholic implications of Brooke's kingship, Lingard's meddling dreams are the punishable pride we expect to precede a fall: "I am a white man inside and out; I won't let inoffensive people . . . come to harm if I can help it. And if I can't help, nobody can" (39). Furthermore the dream has become nothing less than that of restoring an exiled Adam and Eve and rebuilding Paradise. Paternal benevolence perhaps--"They were like his children" (330)--still, the very idea is unlawful presumption. Seeing the native village in a storm, Lingard sees the "legendary country of the immortals" (80) withstanding "the wrath and fire of heaven," (282) and determines that "he alone" (106) could undo God's wrath. Even further, Conrad makes it quite clear that Lingard acts, not out of ideals or even friendship, but because he must act to control chaos, that he is not "a white man inside and out": Hassim and Immeda "existed--within his breast!" (329).

Again the colony is a world of the hero's "creation," (287) but here Conrad was returning to Lingard after Axel's dream realm of art in Victory, and imperialism as the symbolic action of art has become far more explicit. Here the hero has actually become an "engraving in a book about bucanears," (126) "a great actor on a drakened stage," (282) or a "statue with a limb of marble," (287) and his heroine is a Desdemona won by a "picturesque story" when names like "Daman, Tengga, Ningrat" take on "a symbolic shape" and impose "themselves upon her senses." (163) Even to Edith Travers Malaya is a "stage" where costumed as a native she plays the "heroine of a ballad" or a "fairy tale," or "an opera with the fatal inanity of most opera librettos" (300-301). This sort of imagery had been developed throughout the earlier colonial novels and here Conrad becomes even pretentiously literary with a pastiche of ill-digested references to Cleopatra, Oedipus, and Helen of Troy.

Within the magic circle governed by his action the white dreamer remains king, but once again Conrad will lure him into the dark forests of passion where he is found to be "defenseless as a child before the shadowy impulses of his own heart" (11). Lingard's power lies in his brig with its phallic thunderbolt,⁷¹ and when he abandons his ship to follow a woman, at the moment he should have acted, he becomes Antony after Actium, "disarmed" (226): "you . . . have taken the hardness out of me" (329)--"I am nothing now" (328).

The femme fatale offers to assume the blame, but Lingard is forced to confront an area beyond his control in a rather ghastly rendering of Oedipus discovering the betrayer of Thebes--"Why! It's myself" (329). Indeed, the woman is not the real source of danger, and the plot becomes even more sinister when one of Conrad's curious fatherly doubles delivers the ultimate coup. Jorgenson, "a man like myself," (157) had once been just such a white king undone by a woman, and his churlish misogyny runs through the narrative as a fatherly warning against passion along with his warning against dreams. The conclusion is equivocal: passion renders the white god mortal, and a father angered by his son's power or passion destroys the brig needed to fulfill his utopian dream. In any case, a far from equivocal explosion of dynamite destroys Lingard's thunderbolt to demonstrate another way "in which proasic fate deals with men who dream quickly and want to handle their dreams in broad daylight."⁷²

Actually mysterious fathers, mentors, and doubles become a problem in all these novels. No function of plot really explains why both Hudig and Lingard provide the black wives who destroy their sons, or why Lingard's paternal rescue leads to the betrayal that justifies Willems's exile. Of course both sons marry for dubious motives and are appropriately undone by fulfillment; Lingard as much as tells Willems, take the forbidden woman and see what you get. Still, Conrad goes farther in suggesting an exploitative relationship that denies the son identity and manhood.

Lingard gives the girl who "called Lingard father" (25) to Almayer to atone for killing her mother, and when Hudig uses Willems to get rid of an illegitimate black daughter ("He had shifted the burden of his youthful vagaries onto the shoulders of his confidential clerk" [37]), we begin to suspect Lingard's story that Mrs. Almayer had been "like" a daughter to him. Almayer may even be justified in blaming that father for his fate and Willems in crying "the evil was not in me" (206); when Lingard, quite gratuitously, tells Willems Hudig's motives, Willems feels that Hudig has "stolen his very self from him," (37) and when Lingard exiles the son he loved "for his very faults," (170) he actually says that he exiles "his shame": "You are not a human being that may be destroyed and forgiven. You are a bitter thought, a something without a body that must be hidden." (208)

Variations on curious paternity seem to proliferate endlessly. We find it in all the father-daughter-hero triangles and mentor relationships: Jim runs to many men "more like a father" (115) until he is adopted by Marlow and Stein; Nostromo has Viola and Mitchell; Davidson has Heyst; Gould has Holroyd; and the harlequin has Kurtz. Often they are secret sharers who act out each other's sins: there are the Captain and Leggatt, Almayer and Dain, Omar and Willems, Jorgenson and Lingard--and Jim has his glorified Jorgenson in Stein.⁷³

Curious paternity isn't surprising in a man who actually lived the foster child fantasy with an almost sym-

holic splitting of "father," still it may not be possible to do more than suggest the sort of things Conrad might be doing with the theme. Garnett's function, however, isn't too difficult to understand. If Thaddeus wouldn't support Conrad's dream, he had to find another father to give his benediction and take some of the blame; but what does this suggest about the surrogate fathers in the novels, or Marlow and Stein when they play Garnett's role in saying "follow the dream"? We tend to sympathize with Stein rather than the minister father who can't understand Jim's dream; but how do we feel when Gould disobeys his father to follow Holroyd--"I have inspired confidence in a man of wealth and position . . . this fact makes everything possible, because without it I would never have thought of disregarding my father's wishes" (80)--or when the harlequin disobeys his archpriest father to follow Kurtz?

The paternity problem becomes still more significant in the fatherly doubles of Lord Jim. We have grounds for suspecting Stein's "sentimental motive," (140) even his famous advice, when Jim is sent to Patusan to reenact his past and redeem his failure. Moreover we have the same confusion about whether Jewel is Stein's daughter, and about a surrogate, Cornelius, who serves Stein's purpose as Almayer and Willems had served Lingard and Hudig. And, finally, the suspicion of a Stein-Cornelius double should be crucial since it is Cornelius's "aggrieved sense" of "legal paternity" (171) that destroys Jim.⁷⁴

Very generally, Conrad's fathers and sons seem to function as splittings like Thaddeus and Koreniowski, or symbolic extensions of each other entwined in both redemptive and exploitative relationships. Perhaps this is related to Conrad's ambivalent feelings towards his own fathers and his need for both rebellion and atonement. In any case, fathers and sons act out each other's sinful dreams, and the sacrificial relationship becomes an integral part of his concept of art. This first becomes apparent in the Marlow novels when Conrad implies an analogy between character and author and father and son; when Jim reenacts Stein's role as "specimen," (129) or double, or son, Conrad makes it clear that he serves the same purpose for Marlow and the author. Finally, it is because Jim acts out the dreams and failures of their past--"the feeling that binds a man to a child" (79)--that the storytellers redeem Jim's crime, and that the book not only redeems Conrad's past, it becomes the ultimate reconciliation between father and son. The reconciliation of Heart of Darkness is much the same, with Marlow, son to the giant Kurtz, redeeming the heroic sinner with his story.

Even in the prefaces and autobiography which draw his fictions into reality, Conrad talks about manipulating his characters with the same godlike paternalism with which Lingard controls his boys. He can't take the real Lena so he gives her to Heyst,⁷⁵ and he becomes apologetic to the characters who act out his sins. Thus, he expresses concern

for Willems, "on whose head I had heaped so much evil simply by imagining him as he appears in the novel";⁷⁶ but he also hints that the real Willems died "like a dog" for his presumption while "nobody can deny that I have recorded for him a less squalid fate."⁷⁷ A Personal Record even stages a touching scene with Almayer's "complaining shade" to justify his maltreatment: "You came to me stripped of all prestige by men's queer smiles," but who kept him from being "lost" and put into his "unhonored name . . . the very anguish of paternity?" "Remember," he continues, "all the toil and all the pain were mine."⁷⁸

Perhaps this is another reason why the created narrator was crucial to Conrad's growth as an artist. Once Conrad had found Marlow to mediate between reality and dreams and to internalize the role of redeemer, it became safer to act out the sin and realize his theme. Those fuzzy early novels lack just this sort of distance; however, in providing the wayward son with a method of using fictional outlets and victims, they too made the Marlow novels possible. If, as Kenneth Burke suggests, the work of art is a rebirth ritual with identity changed in accordance with accepting or rejecting a symbol of authority, then the Malayan novels served to kill off the old Conrad, with the appropriate rebirth imagery of castration, pit, and decay,⁷⁹ to announce his new name and the more assertive artist of Heart of Darkness.

Heart of Darkness

Although the Malayan outcasts were his first subject, Conrad always insisted upon the jungle trip that inspired Heart of Darkness as his artistic birth: "Before that I was a mere animal."⁸⁰ A Personal Record stresses its legendary quality--the hero, in his boyhood, placing his finger on a map saying, "When I grow up I shall go there,"⁸¹ and the novice bearing the Almayer manuscript through the jungle like a "talisman" until it acquired "an ancient yellowish complexion."⁸² Naturally, the trial by blazing sun and hazardous jungle would be followed by a period of feverish illness, the death of the old identity, and the birth of the writer: "It was as if the sin of my childish audacity was to be visited upon my mature head."⁸³ Indeed, that illness, the sort of hypochondria that tormented earth shakers like Darwin and Marx, was never entirely overcome, and Conrad continued to refer to the lasting price of his "regular dose of the East."⁸⁴

After a period of disassociation like Marlow's before his rebirth, Conrad was "implled by some idle and frivolous magician" to complete his first novel. This too was audacious: "Never was Rubicon more blindly forded, without invocation to the gods, without fear of men."⁸⁵ It might also be worth noting that Conrad made many attempts to complete Almayer over a period of six years;⁸⁶ actually, he approached and drew away from his vocation so often that he

can produce an initiation of the artist whenever it seems appropriate. However, considering Conrad's tendency to fictionalize himself, it is significant that he chose to identify the writer with the explorer and Marlow's descent into the jungle with his own descent into "the lonely region of stress and strife."⁸⁷

In Heart of Darkness, where Marlow admits, "the snake had charmed me," (71) the imagery of mapping and exploring appear as both a demiurgical defilement and a heroic effort to conquer darkness; and all Conrad's ambivalence to such power is reflected in the discrepancy between the "red" (73) on the map where England redeems exploitation with "the idea,"⁶⁹ and the story itself which exposes the unholy pretension of imperial illusions. Even further, that map becomes a kind of book in which the artist imposes his order on the "blank spaces," (70) and if "the writing of a book" is like "the conquest of a colony," and the ruler of this rival creation is its god, then Kurtz must be Conrad himself as the "august Benevolence" of an "exotic Immensity" (123).

That sinfully audacious child also offers some support for Crews's audacious contention that Heart of Darkness is a fantasy of Oedipal usurpation with the primal scene concealed in its unverbalizable mystery. Yes, Kurtz resembles Korzeniowski,⁸⁸ and primitives even regard mapping as incest;⁸⁹ but Kurtz is also the Korzeniowski in Conrad, and the story seeks not only a reconciliation with the father, but with Conrad himself. This is the kind of integration

Guerard is observing when he describes Marlow's descent as an archetypal night journey into the unconscious to confront his buried self and accept his savagery.⁹⁰ But the terms, of course, are not incompatible, and both are related to the devastating exposure of the imperial mission that reveals the colonial king as the savage.

Since creation was Conrad's own mode of control, we shouldn't be surprised at his image of the colonial king: "The chief of the inner station" (92) had "stolen more ivory than all the agents together . . . that was not the point. The point was in his being a gifted creature" (119). From the moment we first hear of Kurtz, Conrad insists upon his curious profession, "a universal genius" (95): "And to this day I am unable to say what was Kurtz's profession . . . I had taken him for a painter who wrote for the papers, or else a journalist who could paint." (151) We see his painting of Progress, his dying words are phrases "for a newspaper article," (146) and his report is "a beautiful piece of writing." (123) He is also "a great musician," (151) and "you ought to have heard him recite poetry, his own too"; (140) but "of all his gifts the one that stood out pre-eminently was his ability to talk, his words" (119).

Again and again Conrad insists "but heavens! how that man could talk" (151): "his gorgeous eloquence," (152) his "magnificent eloquence," (149) his "magic current of phrases" (123). And then his voice: "The man presented himself as a voice: (119): "A voice! a voice" (136): "It rang deep to the

very last" (146). This is the source of Kurtz's power: "The voice was gone. What else had been there?" (148) And finally Marlow, "no more than a voice" (95) telling the story compels the reader with Kurtz's "power to charm" (124).

In A Personal Record Conrad says more about the persuasive "force of a word": "The power of sound has always been greater than the power of sense . . . Don't talk to me of Archimedes' lever . . . I have no use for engines. Give me the right word and the right accent and I will move the world."⁹¹ Still, "the power to charm" is dangerous magic. After all there is a lot of that spell-binding poet-hero father in the Kurtz who can lead "any party." (151) Donkin manipulating the crew of the Narcissus with his "filthy loquacity"⁹² is called "a consummate artist,"⁹³ and engines like the Archimedes lever and the seaman's manual, "not a very enthralling book," (108) are Marlow's antidote to Kurtz's "beautiful piece of writing." Indeed, Kurtz's dangerous eloquence recalls that ambivalence to the poet's craft which Coleridge described as "the doubtful doubleness of the imagination": "the bewildering, the illuminating, the most exalted and the most contemptible, the pulsating stream of light, or the deceitful flow from the heart of an impenetrable darkness" (119-120).

Even in an age transfixed by the poete maudit, Kurtz is the decadent's puissant reveur par excellence, and Conrad went out of his way to deny any association with that crowd. "I suppose I have become permanently imperfect in the eyes

of the ineffable company of pure esthetes," he snipes when explaining that he had carried his notion of service "from the sea."⁹⁴ The same hearty gentleman seaman abhors descents into darkness in Dostoyevski⁹⁵ and Freud: "I like to regard reality as a rough and rugged thing over which I can run my hands--nothing more."⁹⁶ Of course, Freud suggested that the very strength of a prohibition is an indication of the intensity of the desire to violate it, and Conrad is suspiciously insistent upon the dangers that tempted him:

To be a great magician one must surrender oneself to occult and irresponsible powers, either outside or within one's breast. We have all heard of simple men selling their souls for love or power to some grotesque devil. The most ordinary intelligence can perceive without reflection that anything of the sort is bound to be a fool's bargain. I don't lay claim to any particular wisdom because of my dislike of such transactions. It may be my sea training acting upon my natural disposition to keep good hold on the one thing really mine, but the fact is that I have a particular horror of losing, even for one moment, that full possession of myself which is the first condition of good service.⁹⁷

With Thaddeus's warnings reinforcing his own fears, Conrad might well protest that he was neither saint nor devil; all the same, he refers to the price he paid for "the devilish and divine privilege of thought,"⁹⁸ and the "magician" who impelled him to write; he confesses that he "wrestled with the Lord" for the creation of Nostromo⁹⁹ and that he had been "satanically ambitious" in Lord Jim.¹⁰⁰ In fact,

no other writer couples his name more frequently with God's: "After all, the creation of a world is not a small undertaking, except perhaps to the divinely gifted . . . This world cannot be made otherwise than in his own image."¹⁰¹

The same divinity smuggles in prefaces that carry his creation into creation to support his power. He not only meddles with a real Willems, Almayer, and Lena, he creates the documented history of Costaguana including Garibaldi and Charles IV, and blows his "breath into the shapes of men and women."¹⁰² Even his description of creation sounds remarkably like "the creation," certainly the creation that opens Nostromo:

My thought goes wandering through vast spaces filled with shadowy forms. All is chaos, but slowly, the apparitions change into living flesh, the shimmering mists take shape, and--who knows?--something may be born out of the clash of nebulous ideas.¹⁰³

For all his wily denials, Conrad is still using the demiurgical terminology of the outcast rebels of the decadence, and if he protested so strongly against it, it is because for Conrad it was more than a self-glorifying pose. In A Personal Record he asks: "Is it such a very mad presumption to believe in the souverign power of one's art?";¹⁰⁴ at least unconsciously, Conrad suspected it was, particularly for an artist who had usurped his father's place and created himself.

Accordingly, with the appearance of his first book, Conrad began to insist upon a need to "justify myself to myself--to redeem a tacit moral pledge,"¹⁰⁵ and his artistic

credo in the preface to The Nigger of the "Narcissus" codifies the method of redemption. Now the artist may make the fearful descent because the work of art will carry its "justification in every line."¹⁰⁶ The artist does not rival, but serves God by awakening that feeling of solidarity "which binds men to each other and all mankind to the visible world."¹⁰⁷ Admittedly, this insistence upon "simple ideas" deceived no one, least of all Conrad, but even in that more honest moment when he denied an ethical purpose to creation, his and God's, Conrad was still obsessed by a need to find a place for the artist in the community of men--"In the conception of a purely spectacular universe . . . the artist of every kind finds a natural place, and amongst them the poet as the seer par excellence."¹⁰⁸

In Heart of Darkness, still stunned by his audacity in penetrating the mystery, Conrad would use this strategy to act out and redeem the staanic nature of his craft. Thus, Kurtz-Marlow offer the artist in both his erotic criminality and his redemptive lies, as the colonist fascinated by abomination and aspiring to control that chaos. In effect, Heart of Darkness redefines the romantic myth of the poet's dangerous pursuit of the image by a Victorian imperialist in the same year when Freud pursued the dangerous images of dreams and Symons hearded the dangerous explorers of the symbol. If Kurtz, the charismatic messiah turned devil, resembles Korzeniowski and everything Thaddeus abhorred, Marlow has a good deal of Thaddeus him-

self, and together they take care of much of Conrad's ambivalence--"Mistah Kurtz--he dead" (148) implies "Mr. Marlow, he alive."

Perhaps that is why this scapegoat self-image is accused of every crime that the poet, throughout history, has laid at his door. The poet is amoral; he can "lead any party." (151) The poet is lascivious, given to unspeakable rites and inordinately successful with women. The poet is always "discoursing," never "doing" (119); in all that "eloquent report" "there were no practical hints to interrupt the magic current of phrases" (123). The poet is egocentric, "avid of lying fame," (146) His "ivory" and His "Intended" (121). And he talks too much: "You don't talk with that man--you listen to him" (127). Furthermore, he is dangerous because his eloquence blinds men to the darkness of his heart. Here "the force of a word to persuade" becomes the demagoguery of the "exercise of our will," (123) and Kurtz's worshipping disciple ironically echoes Conrad's faith in the artist's power to make us "see": "He made me see things" (130)--while he cannot even see Kurtz. And of course, the poet is a liar. "All those burning noble words" (123) are lies--that "beautiful piece of writing" means "Exterminate the brutes" (123).

In short, Kurtz is Rimbaud's visionary artist, "the great sick man, the great criminal, the great accursed, and the supreme Scholar!"¹⁰⁹ Plato's banishment would be justified, and Conrad will exorcise him too.

Within the late-Victorian consciousness of man's flawed power, the myth of the fire-stealing artist, and Conrad's own rebellion, the colonist-artist is the ultimate parricide who demands retribution. "Wrecks of novels" as well as colonial papers with "high flown language" on "Our Colonial Expansion" cause the derelicts of "An Outpost of Progress" to "think better of themselves,"¹¹⁰ and the hanging body sticking out a swollen tongue at the Managing Director suggests the sexual pretension of these kings' defiance and their flaw. Thus, words become jibberish in "the heart of darkness," machinery rots, and a man-of-war with a "limp" ensign fires impotently into an immense continent. (78) Even Conrad's account of those "six-inch" guns--"and nothing happened. Nothing could happen" (78)--sounds like Conrad's account of creation: "One goes through it and there's nothing to show at the end. Nothing! Nothing! Nothing!"¹¹¹ That is why the giant Kurtz crawls "on all fours" (141) "contemptibly childish," (146) and is finally carried, "not much heavier than a child." (144) Almayer had become a "powerless magician" nursed by a native, and Willems was taken off his pedestal and reduced to a "child," but here Conrad systematically develops the pattern of imagery that will dominate the later colonial novels.

Here the rival magician is transformed into a hollow idol turned to ivory by "some devilish initiation," and the imagery of imperialism and art merge as they do in Karain's statues and performance. The ivory of the greedy imperialist's

dream becomes Kurtz himself, "an ivory ball" (121) "an ivory face" (147) "an animated image of death carved out of old ivory" (135). Human heads that look like "ornaments" prove to be "symbolic" (132); Progress is an ominous painting and "a merry dance of death and trade" (79); Kurtz is an "actor" in a "philanthropic pretense," (91) "a sordid farce acted against a sinister back-cloth" (78); and the Company Director "running that show" (83) is a hollow "papier-maché Mephistopheles" (93); the accountant maintaining appearances is a "hairstylist's dummy," (83) and Kurtz's disciple is the harlequin in "a troupe of mimes." (129)

Furthermore, Conrad also exposes the colonist who serves light not darkness and the craftsman who orders the seer's fearful vision. Yes Marlow descends into darkness to be reborn a prophet, but he certainly doesn't have much to say. Trying, like any artist, to tell his story to people who live in drawing rooms, the best Marlow can come up with is that feeble lie that turns the unspeakable horror into one of sentimental fiction's eternal clichés--"the last word he pronounced was--your name." (157) Critics like Mudrick are horrified by "the jumble of melodramatic tricks"¹¹² but others have noted the death imagery that casts doubt on the order of the drawing room, and the tricky half lights Conrad uses when he is pulling some flim-flam. In effect, the very inadequacy of Marlow's attempt at order is exposed by a scene that is purposefully undermined by hollowness.

It is not only the bad artist who tells lies--and

Marlow's little white lies are not far different from Kurtz's big black ones. That report was only an artistic way of expurgating the truth, and those phrases for "a newspaper article" (147) tactfully conceal "the horror." Throughout the story the veneer of civilisation's lies has been stripped away just to expose this "horror," (147) but Heart of Darkness is still rent by the blackness of Conrad's vision and his inability to accept the consequences. In purifying Kurtz for his Intended, the explicit moral of the story deliberately diminishes, even negates, the action of the passage. But of course Heart of Darkness is not just Marlow's story, it is Conrad's--"you fellows see more than I could then. You see me, whom you know . . ." (95)--and in the very discrepancy between what happens and the way it is told, Conrad is saying something about art.

In The Nigger of the "Narcissus," Conrad had spoken about the "strong, effective and respectable bond of a sentimental lie,"¹¹³ and Marlow is talking about this sort of evasion when he admits that there is "a flavour of mortality in lies." (94) Far from shaking the heavens, Marlow's lie doesn't even evoke a shudder. Words too are "the great foes of reality,"¹¹⁴ and creation a "fiery trial of untruthfulness,"¹¹⁵ but Conrad adds, "the sustained invention of a really telling lie demands a talent which I do not possess."¹¹⁶ Ever since Plato, poets have been uncomfortably aware of being liars, and Conrad is no exception to the tendency to smuggle confessions into his

work when he admits that his "few simple ideas" were sentimental lies.

One such technique for confessing ambivalence is the use of shifting levels of reality and self-negating frames. Although the technique arose out of Conrad's perception of the colonial experience as a passage to a different level of reality, he developed the discrepancy between the dream and the return into a division that would encompass reality and art. Then Marlow's role, in frames which stress the expiatory power of telling, grew out of the need for a mediator between the two worlds, a good artist who would atone for the sinful dreamer and return the straggler to the community.

Still, in the very discrepancy between the visions, Conrad is signalling his trickery. Karain, a guilt haunted wanderer like Marlow, tells his story to exorcise the past while the frame exposes the incongruity between the inadequate talismen and the tenacity of demons; in effect, by undermining the order the story creates, the frame exposes the lie of fictional form. Heart of Darkness reverses the procedure for the same purpose; in this case the frame asserts an order so spurious beside the intensity of the story that it can only be rejected.

Self-images of the artist with a guilty conscience are common enough in literature, but the Marlow of Heart of Darkness looks remarkably like Coleridge's guilt haunted mariner exorcising his crime with a story, and the frames

are similar in function. Seated like an idol, yellow with Conrad's "dose of the East," Marlow tells his story with a hypnotic voice to a captive audience to explain how he won "strange powers of speech"--Kurtz's "speech that cannot be silenced" (109). In much this way, Coleridge, the prototypical romantic artist haunted by his God defiant autonomy and social irresponsibility, created a sinner who rebels against order, but ends by renouncing power, submitting to a divinity beyond himself, and preaching "a few simple ideas"; and here too the discrepancy between what the work states and what it does is so ridiculously incommensurate that it seems to be the point of the whole operation. "Kindness to albatrosses" may diminish the mystery, but it is all the world can handle. Again and again Marlow says that there are no words for what he has seen. Only the redeeming lies of art make wedding bowers and the lifting of the breeze possible.

The strategy is natural enough. Kipling's splitting of the artist and his use of the frame performs a similar function in "To be Filed for Reference." Here the bad artist ventures beyond the pale and sells his soul for his book so that the stuffy narrator can expurgate the manuscript in the service of imperial order. Of course, Kipling and Conrad were using the same imperialist values to contain similar demons; but even a contemporary writer like Singer, divided between a Rabbi father and the art he associates with defiance, writes about a lusty magician who renounces his power for submission to God, and Singer's praise of

"holy books" as opposed to his own sinful magic looks much like Conrad's use of the seaman's manual to oppose his own cryptic foreign ciphers.

And finally, Conrad also atones by submission to something beyond himself. Here the outraged god of the Malayan novels is appeased by the "idea" to be sacrificed to, but, by now it becomes apparent that the introduction is as much a lie as the conclusion. Obviously those passages on "the knight-errants" of imperialism, (67) with their baffling muddle of efficiency, abomination that fascinates, and ideas that redeem, can't be clarified because Conrad, with characteristic self-deception, didn't want us to do so. Actually, "efficiency," (69) Conrad's famous work ethic, is simply a Kiplingesque distraction, hardly the same thing as an ideal of service, and "simple ideas" are later distinguished from Jim's dream; but the fine shades that distinguish efficiency, ideas, and aspiring ideals hardly matter since Marlow goes on to introduce his journey as a challenge to invade Eden, with not a word about puttering with engines or ideas.

Apparently Conrad needed his faith in British order and his art as service to that order, while maintaining an outlet for vision. The "idea" is there as a catch clause, and by the writing of Lord Jim, he could no longer even carry this off. The French Lieutenant's unimaginative efficiency is no real challenge to Jim, ideals are self-serving, and the resolution will attempt to justify dreams.

Furthermore, who are the auditors of the frame, described

so affectionately, for whom Marlow is bothering to lie?

"The Director of Companies was our Captain and our host . . .

He resembled a pilot which, to a seaman is trustworthiness

personified" (65). But Conrad's Company Directors are

generally masterful egotists: Kayerts dies sticking his

tongue out at one, and the one who runs the Eldorado

Expedition "inspired uneasiness" (87). Then there is the

accountant compulsively building houses with dominos like the

villainous fool who adds up columns in the story, and a

lawyer like the one who threatens Marlow; even the knight-

errants of the frame are the greedy imperialists of the

story: "Their leader, hardly Sir Francis Drake" looks like

"a butcher in a poor neighborhood" (99).

In fact, this is the way the nightmare jungle exposes

the underside of reality throughout the story. The effect

is somewhat like the reappearance of people we know in

dreams where the bad mother is really a witch and we can hate

her. Thus, the accountant who builds and orders becomes the

monster who keeps his books in "apple pie order" (83) while

a dying man screams, but isn't that what accountants and lawyers

are doing back in London with their illusion that that city

"has been one of the dark places of the earth" (67).

Yet the poet sacrifices himself for these men and they

are the ones who reject him. In part, the Conrad who

admired authors like James¹¹⁷ really wanted to see himself

as the convivial Marlow joining the community with his

stories: the dwarf of the epigraph is ready to sacrifice any-

thing for "something human." Still there is no mistaking the fin de siecle hostility towards such men and the scorn of lies as a sop to the Thaddeuses. Even the efficacy of the frame is momentarily shattered when Marlow blurts out that his auditors can never understand--"We live, as we dream--alone." (95) That is why Marlow concludes with the tribute of a Horatio, left to tell the story because he drew back "a hesitating foot," to the hero who "stepped over the edge" (149). Kurtz is awarded the supreme accolade to the artist--"He had something to say. He said it" (148)--but Conrad would need Lord Jim to win our approval with a less threatening vision of dreams.

Lord Jim

For the imperial symbol in Lord Jim we need only consider the Patusan chapters. Indeed, Conrad claimed to agree with Garnett that the book split into two and that this was a flaw,¹¹⁸ but surely the division was intentional and crucial to his meaning. When Marlow says "Pass on" (142) and Jim crosses the watery threshold to an enchanted island, the levels of reality shift and so do the terms of value. We judge Jim's death--and the whole work conducts us to this judgment--according to one set of values in the everyday world of the Patnas, and a very different one in an imagined world where reality is transformed by dreams. Again the colonial kingdom is both the tabula rasa of fantasy, where the white ruler "leaves his earthly failings behind and

whatever reputation he has for an entirely new set of conditions for his imaginative faculty to work upon," (133) and a work of art with its possibilities and erasures. Conrad carefully underlines the shift: the objective trial of facts gives way to romantic prose, reality is veiled with the imagery of imagination, and we are directed to see events charged with supernal significance. On Patusan Jim is not simply a man: he always "appeared to me symbolic" (162).

But has Jim overcome reality with that last "unflinching glance" (253) or are we looking at another delusion of "exalted egotism" (253)? Marlow, of course, affirms Jim's greatness and he confronts our scepticism--"you fellows had starved your imagination to feed your bodies" (138)--with the challenge of a special stand; Jim is an imaginative triumph. A real Jim might be another colonial pretender evading failure with illusory kingship, but Marlow is suggesting that we judge this Jim in a world where such pretense has power. Now Conrad must become even more explicit about the implications of the colonists' kingdom of dreams:

But do you notice how, three hundred miles beyond the end of telegraph cables and mail-boat lines, the haggard utilitarian lies of our civilisation wither and die, to be replaced by pure exercises of the imagination, that have the futility, often the charm, and sometimes the deep hidden truthfulness, of works of art?

(172)

Marlow is right; something will happen to our judgment when Jim becomes a fictional creation in the meaningful

world of the work of art. But Marlow is also a fiction, and his story is only one part of Conrad's book. Reality is implicit, even on Patusan; the story teller intercedes from an outside world, sceptical voices speak for the reader, and echoes of the Patna return as reminders. Even in England life had been a stage set on which Jim acted out the "dogged self-assertion" (3) of his romantic dreams, and when he saw his failures only as aborted opportunities for glory, we judged him vainglorious and immoral. Remembering this, we are forced to question his motives at the conclusion. In England the French Lieutenant had set the standard for honorable action by never considering honor at all. How does Jim's death measure up to this standard? And can we apply another standard when the limits of reality inevitably impose upon Patusan, shattering the dream of "a clean slate? (113)? Even on Patusan Jim's storybook heroics bring destruction, and the possibility of expiation through a meaningful death is left to the grace of the reader.

The full meaning, and our verdict, lie in this ambiguity-- in our manipulated response to the limits of London and the dream of Patusan, reality and story. And finally what we are being asked to judge is not only the man, and the creation, but the act of creation. That is why Conrad reminds us that Marlow is telling a story and that Jim is a subject for Marlow as the book is his own subject. And then, just before the conclusion, he introduces that letter from Jim to make certain we know why we need Marlow's words, that somehow

Marlow's reshaping of chaotic reality is analogous to Jim's recreation--that in judging Jim's death, we judge Conrad's art.

Since Jim's story is probably the closest Conrad came to rewriting his own we can understand his special stake in our answer, and the Novalis epigraph--with its implication that our faith will redeem Jim's conviction¹¹⁹--suggests the storyteller's method of redemption. If Jim has, in fact, mastered destiny, overcome mortality, and transformed the world with the force of his pretense, then Conrad has justified his own recreation and art. Jim creating order on an island of dreams and the artist conquering the colony of his book are still rebel Crusoes scorning the middle way, scorning fathers who cannot understand, to set up their own territory with more power than fathers dream possible. But defiance demands justification, and if the storyteller can justify the superiority of his creation to God's, even a moral order beyond that of reality, then both deserters are vindicated.

Conrad is still acting out his ambivalence towards dreamers; however, this time the realm of the imagination is not a dark jungle but a "distant heavenly body" (133) so purged of unspeakable rites that it becomes easier to ignore its defiance and apply artistic, not moral, criteria. Terror of the evil genius had forced us into the camp of company directors, but, disarmed by Jim's innocuous charm, we resist being with those who starve imaginations to feed

bodies (138) and are easily enticed into complicity with a hero whose failures and dreams make him "one of us" (27). Obviously Conrad has stacked the cards in gaining our consent; the problem, as always, was in gaining his own. Lord Jim is offering us the other side of dreamers and artists, not the devil but the saint; still, Conrad is asking whether they are very far apart.

Perhaps that is why we see so much of Kurtz, the great sinner, in Jim, the great saint. Certainly Conrad is using the same terms. The fantasy on Patusan is introduced by the same sort of general passage insisting on a historical Patusan, with the same paeon of praise to the knight errants of imperialism--not "agents of trade" but "instruments of a recorded destiny" (139). Even if we don't recall what Heart of Darkness made of these instruments of destiny, the sceptical voice of the "privileged man" (205) breaks in, just before Jim's death, to voice our suspicion that a mythic king is a colonial adventurer. Even the romantic Stein brings light into the Archipelago "for the sake of better morality and--and--well--the greater profit, too" (134). And finally, Brown appears to externalize the underside of the creator of order as the outlaw, another "instrument of destiny" diefying himself as "the Scourge of God" (225).

From the reality of imperialism Conrad then makes the same transition to an island without men. Again Marlow insists that he is telling us a dream and that Jim triumphs because he was "alone of his superior kind," (107) in a land

"where his word was the one truth of every passing day" (166). Kurtz's "My Intended, my ivory" is not far from Jim viewing Patusan with an "owner's eye," (152) and loving it with "idealized selfishness" (108). Kurtz, "avid of lying fame and sham distinction" becomes Jim "craving after more glamor than he could carry" (92).

More important, Patusan also exists "under an enchanter's wand" (201) with Jim taking credit for its moonlight "as if he had a hand in regulating that unique spectacle" (162). There is a rebellious soul in things which must be overcome by powerful charms and incantations," (162) and Jim has Kurtz's "power to charm." Again and again we hear of this "charm" until it becomes "he has worked all the evil. He hath a charm," (252) and "in the assent to his will lies the gist of the whole situation" (239) echoes the sinister threat--"by the simple exercise of our will," of Kurtz's beautiful writing.

And if Jim is a Prospero creating order and revealing the best, Brown will expose the underside of artist magicians as an Iago, playing "havoc" (225) with "the satanic gift of finding out the best and weakest spot in his victims" (235). But even as Prospero, the artist is a dangerous magician who creates a rival world with his "faculty of beholding the shape of his dream," (106) and for all Jim's claim of white magic, it is the same fearful, solipsistic dream. Thus, Kurtz, "a hollow sham," (146) becomes Jim, the "hollow sham," (209) and Kurtz, no "heavier than a child" (144) becomes

Jim, "a little child--a little child" (199). Pride transformed Kurtz into an ivory idol in ironic fulfillment of his dream, and Jim is transformed into a heroic statue, "a stone figure" (248) set up on a "pedestal" (162) with his destiny "graven in imperishable characters upon the face of a rock" (113).

Then how, after the Kurtz-Brown devils have been revealed in Jim, can the book possibly confirm Marlow's verdict? "The language of facts," Marlow warns, can be more "enigmatic than the craftiest arrangement of words," (206) and attempts to justify Jim's heroic stature with Conrad's crafty facts and words often miss the sort of "greatness" (138) Conrad seems to have had in mind. Critics like Van Ghent and Guerard, for example, have tried to confirm Jim's status as a tragic hero like Oedipus by posing a classical struggle between the conscious will and unconscious deed; but Van Ghent's "incongruity" between "the constructive will and the destructive act"¹²⁰ or Guerard's "the intent rendered absurd by the deed"¹²¹ would seem to flounder on Conrad's insistence upon the evils of Jim's constructive will and the impurity of his intent. Of course, Sophocles was concerned with the nobility of man's aspirations and the taint of his hybris, but the classical conception of purity of motive and distrust of action is still a long way from Conrad's obsessive undermining of "exalted egotism." The distinction in plotting should make this apparent. Oedipus needs to know the truth to save Thebes, while Jim

runs from the truth to save his illusions. Oedipus affirms man's godlike aspirations by his victory; Jim exposes his pretensions by defeat.

Certainly Van Ghent is correct when she observes that Conrad "cannot conceive the classical relation between the hero's suffering and communal destiny"; still, something more than her vaguely defined "modern man's spiritual isolation"¹²² distinguishes a hero who dies to purify his people from one who dies to purify himself. Conrad's alienation is really the more private pain of the rebellious exile, and that sacrificing father who sacrificed his family taints Jim with the pride and self-interest that taints all Conrad heroes. That is why the terms of the stories are unmistakably different. Oedipus leaves no mourning wife to make us weigh the human cost of a "shadowy ideal" (253).

"Of all mankind," Marlow tells us, Jim "had no dealings but with himself" (206); but does he, at that last moment, confront himself? Of course, the motive behind that unflinching glance remains a possibility we can cling to, but we have, in fact, been given every reason to believe Jim's notion of honor and purity remains unchanged. He never acknowledges his jump and he saves Brown to protect his illusions.

Still, the real question here is not whether Jim sees the truth, but whether there is truth in his delusion; not whether he has become capable of self-sacrifice, but what is

"exalted" about his egotism (253). The last glance of the "white man" is "proud" (253)--and these words return insistently: "superb egotism" (251), "fierce egotism" (152), even "idealized selfishness" (106). This Jim could never admit he was not king, loves only opportunity veiled "like an Eastern bride," (149) and dies without a thought to Patusan: "There is nothing to fight for . . . nothing is lost." (250) Pretentious? even insufferable? yet Marlow insists he has "confessed to a faith mightier than the laws of order and progress" (206).

Again Van Ghent is fairly characteristic in seeking heroic action. Jim's act of faith, she contends, is "faith" to the community he had betrayed; though the result is another betrayal, by taking the honor of a white man on his head, Jim is being "superbly 'true' to that community,"¹²³ However, when Van Ghent speaks of the compact with the white community made in "the profoundest spirit of the dream,"¹²⁴ she fails to consider the equivocal nature of whiteness and dreams. At the Patna trial Conrad had made it clear that maintaining the colonial brotherhood of whiteness was a defensive illusion concealing guilt: Willems maintained the same "unstained purity of his life, of his race, of his civilisation" (70) as he fell into dark holes filled with decay, and the conclusion makes it clearer that Jim uses his identification with the white man as a rationalization for his complicity with the black one, that he saves Brown to save himself and in doing so violates the faith of the community that had redeemed him.

No, the faith Jim has confessed to from the Patna to Patusan is somewhat different still, it is faith in himself as the hero of a story; he is "faithful," like Karain, "to the illusions of the stage." (149K) When the "white man" stages the death of an immortal hero with all the theatrics of that "proud and unflinching glance," (253) we remember him on the training ship acting out the grandiose notions he had found in books in much the same pose; dressed in "shining white" and "very smart aloft," he dreams of devotion to duty as "unflinching as a hero in a book" and looks down "with the contempt of a man destined to shine in the midst of dangers" (5). But given Stein's ring--and he immediately recognizes it as a credential "like you read about in books" (143)--Jim actually becomes those storybook heroes in a kingdom of "people in a book" (159). He is Adam newly created, a fire stealing Prometheus, a limping Oedipus, a fairytale knight rescuing a princess, even a suffering Christ betrayed by a Nazarene, and the treacherous imagination that lured him from duty, and the "vapourings" that made even Marlow "thoroughly sick of him" (144) back in England have a different meaning when they have become the story.

The conquest of love and honor, Marlow tells us, "are fit material for a heroic tale," (138) and then he tells us that tale of the hero who performs the impossible task of bringing a cannon up an unsurmountable hill to become King of the Mountain. In "the amazing Jim myth" (171) we learn of a god who turns tides and regulates moonlight.

When "romance had singled him out for its own," (172) we hear the story of a "knight and maiden meeting to exchange vows amongst haunted ruins" (189)--"Remember this is a love story I am telling you now (181). Now the Jim who had found "a special meaning in everything that happened to him" (185) is not simply self-dramatizing; he is the drama.

Admittedly, Conrad never lets us forget that such stories are "bally rot" (162), that "legends" formed around Jim's name "as though he had been the stuff of a hero." We know that Jim appears to be a god from the clouds because he is "alone of his kind" and that his "pitiless wedding" (253) with opportunity is hardly a love story. And when his legendary death scene is colored by Conrad's tricky half-lights, we remember the earlier account of colonial drifters dreaming of white triumphs when "death is their only certitude of achievement" (9). But the meaning of Jim's triumph lies in this very distance between human flaws and imaginative triumphs, so Conrad keeps calling our attention to both posturing and performance.

If Jim is to be a tragic hero it is really because he is a performer in a book that has been lifegiving to us. We, not Jim, must grow in wisdom and be transformed by his story. Actually this is the reason all tragic heroes must die: Oedipus purges Athens, not Thebes.

We don't expect the Shakespearean hero to be measured by a growth in wisdom: Othello remains a fool and his dying recognition of folly is scarcely a redemptive vision. Nor

is the Shakespearean hero judged by the social value of his acts; Hamlet leaves Denmark a bloody Patusan strewn with corpses. Claudius is quite right--heroic excess disturbs the universe. And what but the "exalted egotism" of Jim's "I alone am responsible for every life in the land" (240) describes "I was born to set it right"? or the self-consciousness with which the Othellos, Hamlets, or Cleopatras die to redeem an image of themselves? or even their concern with the proper record of their story? Indeed, Shakespearean heroes die with the same self-dramatizing nobility that calls attention to the way their performance in the play redeems their acts, and the way their ideal of themselves redeems the audience.

Jim is staging the death of an immortal hero in a story--perhaps even one of Shakespeare's stories. Lingard played these roles in The Rescue, Jim read Shakespeare, and Korzeniowski translated him and identified his martyrdom with Shakespeare's tragic roles.¹²⁵ Of course it is significant that Conrad's heroes are not Hamlet; still, he is suggesting that the very grandeur of the performance affirms the possibility of transcendence or the power of art to create the illusion of transcendence. This is the point of Marlow's story: "the truth disclosed in a moment of illusion" (196). In the end, only the Marlows and Horatios who transform memory into story give the hero who "steps over the edge" immortality. Confessing himself to Marlow "as if he had the power to bind or loose," (59) Jim is saying "Set ye down this . . . tell my cause aright."

The death scene then is a test, like the trial in the courts, but this time we are testing the power of the imagination and seeking a different kind of truth. Here there is no attempt at the security of fact, the reliability of witnesses, the impersonality of judges--only the artist with "the craftiest of words" manipulating us, the most biased of jurors. But the reality of the early chapters had come no closer to reliable witnesses, jurors, or truth: "They wanted facts . . . as if facts could explain anything!" (18)

And finally no discussion of Lord Jim can come to terms with the discrepancy between the guilt condemned in the courtroom and Jim's greatness without insisting upon the fictional nature of Jim's triumph. By making the split between reality and Patusan, man and creation, Conrad admits both sin and expiation, his own sin and his own mode of expiation. Again he permits the dreamer to triumph and confesses while confessing that it is only an illusion of triumph.

Such dreams may be illusions; still Conrad implies that they call forth effects as though they were real by the artist's ability to win our assent. Just as Jim lives in a dream of kingship made real by the faith of the community, the possibility of his redemption through a meaningful death is based upon our imaginative consent: "In the assent to his will lies the gist of the whole situation." Marlow really gives his support to Jim's re-

creation because he finds him irresistible, and we probably will too, not because we approve, but because we have been charmed.

Actually Conrad is pulling some Prospero-Iago tricks of his own and the "gist of the situation" lies in our "assent to his will." After all, we never see reality to measure against Patusan--only what Conrad wants us to see, and when Marlow hasn't "the heart to set down" (249) Jewel's struggle to win Jim from the strength of his dream," he simply cuts out the scene that would color our judgment. And isn't Marlow an Iago manipulating us as Brown manipulates Jim, "with a sickening suggestion of common guilt," (235) and then a Prospero appealing to our dream of order and meaning? What but Marlow's legerdemain gives a "special meaning" to Jim's pointless destruction and forces us to see Jim the way he sees himself, as "symbolic"? Conrad even explains how it is done. When Jewel tells her mother's story, Marlow has a momentary vision of life's "disorder" before he finds the words with which to tell it: "for words also belong to the sheltering conception of light and order which is our refuge" (190). Then he confesses that we are all "forlorn magicians" (191) and his methods: "I began my exorcism" (192). Again, the artist's illusion, "An enterprise for a dream," (192) is a lie: "There was nothing . . . that could tear Jim from her side" (193); but this time the irony is more bitter than it had been in Heart of Darkness. Twelve more chapters will belie his words, and later, in a drawing room like that of Kurtz's Intended, even Marlow is

speechless: "You felt that nothing you could say would reach the seat of the still and benumbing pain" (212).

Jewel will never forget, but the book can determine what we remember and forget. Of course, Conrad can demonstrate the power of words, but he remains disturbed by their power. How different is Marlow's lie from "the wretched story told by the crew: "It wasn't exactly a lie, but it wasn't the truth" (78); and how different is Jim's performance from Karain masking his "void" with "a dignity seen nowhere else but behind the footlights and in the condensed falseness of some grossly tragic situation" (147)? The gift of the imagination is still double, and by shifting his angles of vision Conrad can manipulate our view of Jim, the significance of his story, even the significance of stories. Sometimes imagination is the "enemy of men" (8) that lured Jim from duty, and sometimes the "deeper truthfulness of works of art"; sometimes Marlow remembers Jim with "overwhelming force," but sometimes he passes from his eyes "like a disembodied spirit . . . ready to surrender himself faithfully to the claim of his own world of shades" (253).

When Marlow is leaving the enchanted island the opposing views are brought into juxtaposition: "all this dropped out of my sight bodily, with its color, its design, and its meaning, like a picture created by fancy on a canvas . . . I had turned away from the picture and was going back to the world where events move, men change, light flickers." Then "the boat fairly flew" as if "a great hand far away

had lifted a heavy curtain" and the air vibrates with the "toil of life, with the energy of an impeccable world" (200-201). The same imagery of freshening reality opposes deceptive moonlight in Coleridge's story of another mariner whose imaginative power was "a breach of faith with the community of mankind," (95) and here too the artist is diminished by a greater hand. But even more interesting is the physical change in Jim. On the first stage of the journey Jim remains high on his pedestal advising a native fisherman; however, as reality approaches and the curtain is lifted, he dwindles in power and size until he has become "no bigger than a child," (204) and "beyond the limits" of Marlow's vision a "colossal Presence" is seen watching "four dwarfs isolated on a strip of glistening sand" (202).

In effect, the symbolic pattern of the earlier novels is repeated as it is when Marlow sees Jim, the king of the mountain, as "a tiny white speck" (204) and when Cornelius and Brown expose a presumptuous child: "He is no more than a little child here--like a little child--a little child" (199). In fact, the words, repeated on four occasions (199, 200, 230, 242) are even more important here. Beyond the area dominated by his fantasy Jim is powerless, and the shifting angles of vision determine not only his moral stature, but his physical size.

Conrad may be talking about dreams and art, but his terminology is that of fathers and children, and his colonial king is another assertive son. When Marlow is

irritated by Jim's "vapourings"--"Why hurl defiance at the universe? This was not the proper frame of mind to approach any undertaking."--he attributes his stuffiness to being "twenty years his [Jim's] senior." Youth, he admits, has to assert itself, and all assertion in this world of doubts is a defiance, is an insolence." Furthermore, this is the scene in which Marlow notes the "invisible halt" in Jim's gait, and the scene in which he reminds Jim of his place with uncharacteristic hostility: "'It is not I or the world who remember,' I shouted, 'It is you'" (144).

It is difficult to determine whether Conrad was aware that the insolence of youth "bent on its desires" lay behind his own need for Jim and art to triumph and his suspicion of that triumph. However, youthful vigor as opposed to waning age is always the key to Jim's victory. Why else the glut of references to Jim's "fresh young voice," (164) "smooth tan face," (209) "boyish eagerness," (141) or "the youngest human being now in existence" (134)? Why mention that he settles the affairs of a man "old enough to be his grandfather," (164) or that he ascends the pedestal "to represent in his persistent youth the power, and perhaps the virtues, of races that never grow old" (162). And of course the young god replaces the waning king, whose wife treats him as her "own son" (156) by bringing that phallic cannon up a hill; and the more sexual son steals a princess from her father. Like Oedipus, Jim limps, and like Adam, he bites "something rotten" (154).

It isn't surprising that Jim should be betrayed by the "aggrieved legal paternity" (171) of one displaced father--Cornelius, destroyed by a second--Brown as the "scourge of God," and killed by a third--Doramin, the displaced king. We aren't far from Willems with an apple in his throat judged by an agrry god.

But this sinner is not only punished, he is redeemed by a man "twenty years his senior," and that "Dear boy . . . Old man" (147) relationship is crucial to the resolution. Thus, Conrad insists upon the necessity of "making a clean breast of it to an older man" and being believed, (78) and upon the "feeling that binds a man to a child," (79) the sympathy of age with "youth on the brink" in whom they see their own "glances full of fire" (78). Thus we are prepared for a reconciliation between father and son with the storyteller as forgiving father with "the power to bind or loose" (59). But naturally submission comes first. After the courts have condemned him, Jim becomes a "dear good boy" following Marlow "as manageable as a little child, with an obedient air" (104) and taking plodding jobs with several fatherly mentors to expiate his "craving for glamor" (92). Only then does Marlow undertake his redemption.

It isn't even necessary to ask how much of this self-important hero is Conrad's own father in one of his sacrificial roles, or how much is Conrad, his rival and recreator. It is enough that he insists upon their union in the same curious relationship he had with Almayer's "shade." When

Marlow tells Jim's story, Jim's voice actually enters Marlow's body "as though his spirit had winged its way back into the lapse of time and were speaking through his lips from the past" (21).

Finally, when Marlow is ready to convince us of Jim's greatness in bearing our sins and our dreams, even his stature changes. Significantly, the transformation takes place just before Jim's death when Marlow reads the letter from Jim's father on Providence and established order. Here, the father with his "certain knowledge of the Unknowable" begins to look suspiciously like Thaddeus; certainly his letter with its "one virtue, one faith, one mode of living and of dying" (4) might be one of Thaddeus's smug, albeit well-intentioned, sermons, and Conrad's irritation must have been something like ours. Now Marlow asks, as he had in Heart of Darkness, what do they know back in England? How can a Crusoe's father understand? And now Jim grows until he is "no longer a mere white speck at the heart of an immense mystery, but of full stature . . . but always mute, dark--under a cloud." (209), and then "a tiny speck that seemed to catch all the light left in a darkened world" (204). Establishing Jim's heroic stature had been Marlow's problem all along. When Jim jumped, he told us, he had "tumbled from a height he could never scale again," (68) and he still can't produce facts to deny it. The solution is a symbolic amnesty like that of truth in illusion--in effect, a fortunate fall.

If such reconciliation is Lord Jim's purpose, then Stein's speech--clearly a "big moment"--is part of the plot. Robert Penn Warren and others have agonized over it, but it is pretty standard Conrad-on-dreams. All that is significant is that it is all wrong. Of course air should be dream and water the destructive element; then the imagery would fit in neatly with Heart of Darkness, and eliminate critical agonies. We expect fearful descents for purification, but Conrad violates our expectations and equates not id, but super-ego, the illusions that protect us from destructive elements, with the destructive element itself. This is exactly what he means to say and in a fashion that deliberately taunts and confuses. Jim's dream is no less demi-urgical pretension and sacrificial risk than Kurtz's descent into darkness. Again, the result is a symbolic resolution, but hardly a formula for action or the gospel according to Conrad.

Besides, what are Stein's credentials for a wisdom figure? He, too is a romantic dreamer who labels butterflies, and that dubious biographical information and tricky half-lights suggests that he may not be the wisest mentor for Jim. And if this was to be the book's wisdom, why couldn't it have come from Marlow? Since resolution, not advice for living, seems to be Conrad's purpose, perhaps their very distinction is part of the answer. In effect, Conrad has gone some way towards reconciling his opposing angels if the foreign adventurer and sober British seaman both give their blessings to Jim's dream.

Actually much of the book depends upon this sort of synthesis between the Garnett-Korzeniowski advice to follow the dream, and Thaddeus's warnings against grandiose ideals. Even Stein's curious use of the words "usque ad finem" (131) serves the same function. Naturally the words baffle because Thaddeus had used them in a letter to Conrad with quite a different intention.¹²⁷ "For we are made partakers in Christ if hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end" might, out of context, describe Jim's vision of himself, but it is hardly our vision of a Jim to whom "one of us" means a creator, not a partaker in creation. Then the problems multiply when the words are used by "the privileged man" as Thaddeus had intended them, to support fighting "in the ranks" (206). From the privileged man or the French Lieutenant the words are suitable; from Stein they are the devil quoting scripture.

But the machinations behind Conrad's use of a warning against dreams becomes clearer when Marlow uses "usque ad finem" to justify his verdict on Jim. The key passage follows Jim's decision to free Brown when Marlow explains that the natives' faith, their "assent to his will," made him the equal of "men who never fall out of the ranks" (239). Even if we don't recall Kurtz's report, we go along with the privileged man in wondering if Jim's kingship is an ideal of service. Then the following paragraph describes Jim's faith in Brown, "but Jim did not know the almost inconceivable egotism of the man," (239) and seven lines

later we come to, "I am responsible for every life in the land."

Since Conrad wrote about Jim's identification with Brown, particularly in this "ruthless faith in himself," (228) he could not, like Marlow, be missing the contradictions. He is simply shifting the terminology to convert Thaddeus's warning to the service of dreams in order to give his straggler a place in the ranks. Thus, Marlow recalls "some words of Stein's . . . to follow the dream-and so-always-usque ad finem . . . He was romantic, but none the less true" (203). He is not false to Jewel; he is "True! True! True!"--true to the dream (213).

In effect, blurring the edges between the warring terms of submission and assertion, and reality and illusion, is both Conrad's method and meaning. That is why the narrative shifts become more pronounced just before Jim's death, when we are reminded that Marlow is telling his story on a veranda as Jim had told his story on another veranda, and letters within letters shake our hold on the line between dream and reality. And finally this chinese box puzzle works two ways. While it establishes a reality beyond Marlow's fiction, it also casts doubt upon that reality to expose the whole work as a fantasy like the solipsism of Jim's dream. As Jim creates his fantasy as God of Patusan, Marlow reminds us that the storyteller is really the god of this operation: "He existed for me, and after all, it is only through me that he exists for you" (137). But beyond

the limits of Marlow's vision a greater Presence--perhaps Joseph Conrad himself--watches Marlow, a specimen like the author who created him, and the reader who judges the creation. Throughout the novel such shifts of perspective remind us of an "insubstantial pageant" beyond this Prospero's performance, and Conrad even directs us to the implications of his self-referent art when Stein's celebration of "Nature--the great artist" (126) echoes Shakespeare's "so, over that art / Which you say adds to nature, is an art / That nature makes."

Accordingly, in a work that questions the power and purity of dreamers, the author himself abrogates the right to omniscience and the spurious order of fictional form. Marlow continues trying to grasp reality and arrive at judgments, but his story remains "incomplete" (205): "And besides, the last word is not said . . . probably never shall be said . . . the heaven and earth must not be shaken." (137) In the end Conrad also submits to a greater artist, and the book closes with us all locked into mortality with Stein--still, it matters that they have labeled butterflies.

Apparently this atonement was Conrad's purpose all along--not Van Ghent's search for the answer to "how to be,"¹²⁸ but a resolution of what Conrad was. Such dreams and conflicts, Crews tells us, not philosophies, entice us into the artist's imagined world.¹²⁹ Even the Conradian convolutions of style and narrative technique that reach their fullest development in the moral ambiguity of Lord Jim are not really

the "extreme ethical scrupulosity, even anxiety, for truth"¹³⁰ that critics like Van Ghent find so admirable. Actually Conrad would be the first to admit that men are rarely driven to pursue abstractions like truth. But Van Ghent's suggestion of "anxiety" comes close, and Zabel's "deviously incremental sincerity"¹³¹ closer still, to locating the psychic tension that propels Conrad's arduous exploration of "the shadow of a line of difference between the right and wrong of this whole affair" (79). Indeed, Lord Jim seems to have been calculated precisely to create the difficulties that preclude moral judgment while challenging us to make such judgments, to act out fantasies and defuse our censure, to strain towards exoneration while Conrad's intention is ineluctably resisted by guilt.¹³²

Nostromo

The same themes--error and expiation, and illusion and truth--recur in Nostromo in the most public manifestations of imperial conquest. This is Conrad's most external work, and a startling departure from his earlier colonial novels. This time, for instance, the colonial kingdom is not a jungle of the unconscious or a moonlight island of dream, but the palpable daylight world of history. And this new world creates critical problems. We were prepared for something like Decoud's interior passage and allegorical fate on a Patusan where there was no omniscient narrator, no exterior validated action, no character who could be said

to exist if the hero was not dreaming them. In fact, all Conrad's colonies are interior landscapes that invite symbolic explanations; only Costaguana is an objectively realized political world that defies them.

With one of the largest, most densely populated, completely detailed canvases in the English novel, Conrad appears to be pitching to the farthest extremes of social realism, and his critics seize upon all this new objectivity. Guerard observes that "reasoning on public affairs" occupies more pages than "solitary introspection";¹³³ Palmer stresses "political ironies" not "spiritual dilemmas";¹³⁴ and Hay describes the characters as "politics in action."¹³⁵ Even Leavis, while praising the "reality of surface," supports the general impression of externality when he says that "the reverberation of Nostromo has something hollow about it."¹³⁶

"A certain emptiness"¹³⁷ is a general charge--Palmer also finds the "pyrotechnics" taking place in a "vacuum"¹³⁸ --still, no one seems to doubt that this is to be a highly organized social world, "not the complexities of the individual psyche," but "the complexities of the external world."¹³⁹ Leavis explains that we see characters from the outside as "figures in the futility of a public drama";¹⁴⁰ Guerard speaks of history escaping "the puny wills of men";¹⁴¹ and Warren, of "the moment when individual passions sublimate themselves in the historical process."¹⁴² Finally, Hay supports the general assumption that this is a political

novel when she defines the political novel as one which laments "the defeat of will power by anonymous social forces" as opposed to a novel of private sensibility like Lord Jim "where individual self-assertion" can triumph over society and fate.¹⁴³

Now this overwhelming impression of the primacy of the external world must have been Conrad's intention; he was hardly missing a detail in his attention to its externals. "There was not a single brick, stone, or grain of sand of its [Nostromo's] soil I had not placed into position with my own hands,"¹⁴⁴ he assures us--and they are all there. In fact, this scrupulous authenticity has driven Conrad's critics to terms like "perils," "dramatic impenetrability,"¹⁴⁶ and "almost impenetrable barriers";¹⁴⁷ but Nostromo, more accurately, is sometimes a bore.

As Conrad's elaboration of facts proliferates in unremitting verisimilitude, it begins to look as if Nostromo was not to be the artistic selectivity of literature, but life itself, complete with eye witnesses, correspondence, gossip, legend, even its own written history. Larger novels have been written--War and Peace gives reality formidable competition--but Nostromo in particular calls attention to its own reality, objectivity, and comprehensiveness. Even Conrad's characteristic shifts of events, chronology, and angles of vision remind us of the complexity of reality, not the artifice of the novel. Moreover, there is the ponderous earnestness with which the narrator attempts to give us all

of it. Droning facts must be reliable, and those hundreds of years, miles, people, and pages appear unmistakably solid.

Even in his preface Conrad is insisting that we believe in the factual reality of Costaguana, and that preface, with its brazen trompe l'oeil is a guide to his scheme. Almost in parody of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century novel's use of the preface as a bridge to reality, Conrad thanks the Goulds politely for their kindness to him during his "sojourn" in Sulaco and explains that he has studied the unpublished work of his "venerated friend" Don Jose Avellanos, History of Fifty Years of Misrule, and can speak as a reliable authority.¹⁴⁸ Now, to offer one's creation as credentials for the validity of a creation is a standard novelistic ploy, but Conrad doesn't really expect us to bite on the old discovered manuscript trick, nor does he imagine that his audience will need justification for reading novels and find history more respectable than poetry. Still, that half mocking tone does suggest that he is playing with our expectations that history is different from poetry, and reality distinguishable from fantasy.

In fact, Conrad is asking us to pretend that this is the real world as opposed to his dream landscapes in the Congo, Malaya, or Patusan, only to undercut the very reality he creates. History is supposed to be reliable while poets make up fancies in their heads, but when the book is over Conrad has exposed history as the sum of such fancies and this bustling little colony, for all its rich texture of

actuality, as another island without men. To the heroic dreamers who populate it, Costaguana is created by their desires, and its history is their fantasies of kingship, idealized by convictions of public good, passed on as communal legend. Actually, individual self-assertion is far from useless before the impersonal forces of society and history; Nostromo is about the way self-assertive dreamers create history, and those anonymous social forces are "the vanity which makes the world go round" (353).

Nostromo is about the men of power who make history. Costaguana is not, like Patusan, the creation of one romantic dreamer; in Costaguana everyone is a hero or a king: Gould, El Rey de Sulaco, (102) rules an "Imperium in Imperio" (271) with his wife as its Queen; but Montero is the Emperor of his imperial monarchy and he offers Gould the chance to become "Conde" or "Marquis" (451). Then Pedrito plays "Duc de Morny" to his brother's "Napoleon," (263) the engineer is the "Napoleon of railways," (353) Bento is "the Citizen Savior of the Country," (152) and Holroyd "the Steel and Silver King." (266) Even Viola, "the champion of oppressed humanity, enemy of kings" (523) is "king on his island," (577) and the bandit Hernandez is "master of the Campo" as Gould is "master of the mine" (401).

Surely there is some irony in all those heroes, and the historical heroes--Napoleon, Garibaldi, Charles IV--and the heroic statuary and commemorative plaques, and the ridiculous barrage of pompous titles--"Capatez de Cargadores"

(139) "Minister to the Courts of England and Spain, etc., etc." (534) "Commandante of the National Guard," (437) "Minister of War," (43) "Finance Minister," (62) "Minister Plenipotentiary," (155) "Perpetual President," (51) "President Dictator," (41) "El Senor Gobernado," (110) "El Senor Administrador," (123) "Great Vicar," (219) "First Lady," (619) "Chief of the State," (132) "First Official," (220) and the innumerable Excellencies and Excellentissimos--an irony that becomes even stronger when the most visible result of Costaguana's revolution is the promotion of its heroes. Now the priest is "The first Cardinal-Archbishop of Sulaco," (568) the bandit is "Chief of the Campo and Minister of the Interior," (268) and the outcast Dr. Monygham is "Inspector-General of State Hospitals . . . Official Advisor on Sanitation to the Municipality, Chief Medical Officer of the San Tome Consolidated Mines" (563).

When Decoud assumes a role in history he becomes "The Journalist of Sulaco," (174) Viola is "The Garibaldino (as Mohammedans are called after their prophet)," (17) and "Our Great Nostromo" (574) isn't a man, he is "our man" as Kurtz had been "that man" (101) and Jim, "one of us" (27). And finally the ironical purpose becomes unmistakable when Conrad entitles his heroes as they entitle themselves--the Hope of honest men," (144) "the friend of our country," (530) "the Incorruptible," (244) "the considerable personage," (84) and even his reader, "the privileged passenger" (544).

In Nostromo we watch heroes live by self-idealization

in little Costaguanas created by their visions of grandeur, and then see history, in the very process of being made, as an attempt to impose an orderly pattern on their illusions. Captain Mitchell, Conrad's parody of a hero-worshipping, epoch-making historian, is boring enough to be trustworthy; yet history as he recounts it is as much an artifice as the lies of the poets. Describing Nostromo's ride, Mitchell cries: "It was history--history, sir! And that fellow of mine, Nostromo, you know, was right in it" (144). That cry of "history," as certainly as Linda's "never" (631) and the legendary ghost, diefies Nostromo; but, paradoxically, dreamers like Nostromo and Gould do make history out of their private fairy tales. That is why the cast of political leaders is completed by gods and fairy tale heroes, and why history and legend merge. The levels of reality, Conrad suggests, aren't all that different.

Imperialist adventurers really do become strange gods when Conrad gives literal reality to "the spiritual value which everyone discovers in his own form of activity" (353). Holroyd, the industrialist for whom God is "an influential partner" (78), needs "a moral intention big enough to satisfy his vanity," (421) so he becomes Christian Destiny, a deus ex machina manipulating Costaguana by the immortality of his millions. He is a disembodied voice from an "inviolable sanctuary," (158) and when he comes through with the money Don Jose says "I shall not have believed in vain" (158). But Gould is also the "savior" of paradise; his words are a

"charm" (402) and his suppliants cry, "forgive us our misery" (402). Then Nostromo's heroic vanity transforms him into the saint or devil who performs the "miracle" (487) of the silver; Montero is "a military idol . . . awaiting the homage of his worshippers" (135); Bento is "the incarnation of that strange god, El Gobierno Supremo" (154); the patriot Viola is a mad messiah; and Don Jose, the grand old man of the revolution, accepts his worshippers like "a stone idol . . . before the smoke of certain burnt offerings" (155). Even Monygham, an image of the artist, is a "sorcerer" (49) or "temptor," (525) and the narrator himself is the omniscient creator of heroes and kings.

In Costaguana, where capitalism is "destiny" and material interests are an object of "faith," (92) trade ships are Juno and Cerberus, a mine is "a fetish," (245) and captains of industry talking of money and railroads "talk about their gods" (220). But government is also "an object of strange worship" (151); "divinities" (17) like Garibaldi are invoked and enshrined; words like "Right" and "Justice" (534) are capitalized and intoned.

But finally Conrad is unwriting history to reveal all this heroic "saving of the country" as "a blood-thirsty game of murder and rapine played with the terrible earnestness of depraved children" (54). Holroyd, the prototype of Costaguana's heroes, may be a crueller vision of self-idealization than Jim seeking transcendence through a dream, but no different in kind; and that dream of propagating a

purser form of Christianity is a worship of himself no less sinister than Kurtz's ivory power. But now Conrad continues: this force is "the same to whom the doctors used the language of horrid and veiled menaces," (84) and the history of Costaguana proves to be the adamic fantasy of another dying animal combating mortal impotence by pretending he is god.

When political action becomes wishfulfillment the lines between reality and fantasy necessarily become muddled. Because imperialist adventurers invest their desires with divinity, Conrad turns them into divinities; and because they cannot believe in their own motives if they did not "first make them part of some fairy tale," (237) he turns them into the creations of that fairy tale. Historical imperialists become ghostly gringos, an "Old Man of the Sea," (63) "a good fairy," (581) a "goose with the golden eggs," (349) a charming prince, a magician, and King Midas; the silver becomes, not an economic force for good or evil, but an enchanting treasure; and Nostromo becomes, not history, but a "moral romance derived from the tradition of a pretty fairy tale" (241).

In effect, Conrad exposes the heroic fantasies that make the world go round by giving those fantasies reality, and then making them look like history. It is not so much, as Hay suggests, that this time "he is giving evil its most concrete and exterior form,"¹⁴⁹ but that this time he is giving illusion its concrete exterior form in the ultimate extension of his paradoxical conjunction of action and

illusion: "In our activity alone do we find the sustaining illusion of an independent existence as against the whole scheme of things of which we form a helpless part" (556). Nowhere does Conrad more conclusively shatter his own dream of an "idea" that redeems; here a kingdom of dreamers lost to abstraction become those abstractions.

On an island of the imagination one dreamer became the statue of a king; in the jungle of the unconscious one satanic worshipper of the idea became a fetish to be worshipped; but this time Conrad turns his whole carefully documented colony into a fantasy kingdom cursed by the peculiar logic of the fairy tale which brings about proud men's comeuppance by giving him exactly what he wanted. As Gould pins his faith in material interests, Sulaco's waterfall turns into a silver snake, its moon becomes "a colossal bar of silver," (616) and the whole garden paradise, the "Treasure house of the World." (547) Gould's name, once an "inexhaustible treasure," (402) and Nostromo's reputation, an "incorruptible treasure," (333) are both turned to silver. "A circumvaluation of precious metal" (245) isolates Gould, and the "shining coils" (56) of Emelia's hair are the same silver fetters that bind Nostromo, and the weight that kills Gould's father, Nostromo, and Decoud.

Ineluctably, the Midas touch carries its own retribution-- "the fatal spell of success" (5). Indeed, the fairy tale motif of the cursed wishes which grant the dreamer his desires while punishing him for having them is a supremely

suitable extension of the kind of retribution Conrad dealt all of his heroic dreamers in all of their fairy tale colonies. Thus, Gould rivals his father and God as the creator of Eden, but he has become "a stony fiend," (449) his lady is a madonna in a niche, and a wall of silver "erected by the silent work of evil spirits" (245) stands between them to prevent the very immortality the silver promised--a stone god and goddess can have no heir. And the same "spectre of unlawful treasure" (605) stands between Nostromo and Giselle, rendering another hero impotent for all his seeming power.

The hardening power of the Midas touch is literal. As the heroes of history are known by their statues, the dreamers of Costaguana join the enshrined Garibaldi and Charles IV as public monuments cast in metal and stone. Gould, repeatedly seen on horseback covered with the dust of his mine, becomes an equestrian statue to replace the "anachronism" of "the other Carlos" (53) in the square. Emelia, first associated with the Madonna and roses, surveys her kingdom "masked" and "powdered white like a plaster cast" (95) until she is identified with a statue of the Madonna glittering with "gilt" rings and crown (78). Nostromo, who "distains any metal less than silver," (249) is appropriately cast as an equestrian statue of shining silver. Holroyd is "Caesar's head on an old Roman coin"; (84) Viola is "the statue of an old man guarding the honor of his house"; (618) Don Jose is "a stone figure"; the ladies of

Costaguana are smothered with powder "till they looked like white plaster casts"; (54) and, as Decoud dies, Antonia appears as a gigantic "allegorical statue looking on with scornful eyes at his weakness." (556) Finally, the conclusion shows us Mitchell, "penetrated by the importance of men, events, and buildings" (531) pointing out the cast of Costaguana's history turned to busts, medallions, and funeral urns in the cathedral, and we recall the moment, beside a funeral urn, when Gould assumed the defiant mission that turned Costaguana to stone.

"Here," he would say, pointing to a niche in the wall of the dusty aisle, "you see the bust of Don Jose Avellanos, 'Patriot and Statesman,' as the inscription says . . . worn out with his life-long struggle for Right and Justice, at the dawn of the New Era . . . The marble medallion in the wall, in the antique style . . . commemorates that unfortunate young gentleman who sailed out with Nostromo on that fatal night, sir."
(534)

Furthermore, Conrad is still associating imperialist action with the illusions of art. When Costaguana's heroes clothe their desires in "the fair robes of an idea," (265) or a "shining robe of silk and jewels," (241) history becomes a masquerade or performance that recalls the papier-mache figures of Kurtz's "sordid farce" (78). A Personal Record even uses this language when Conrad refers to the writing of fiction as truth "clothed in the painted robe of imagined phrases,"¹⁵⁰ and Conrad's use of the terminology of art is at its most insistent in this, his "political" novel. Here, too the colony is a

"stage" (173) and political action is a "burlesque business," (171) "tragic comedy," (194) "tragic farce," (406) "quelle farce," (194) "une farce macabre," (168) "burlesque parody," (174) "ironic fairy tale," (350) "comic fairy-tale," (350) and a "comedy of naive pretences" (54).

Thus Nostromo is described as a "picturesque" hero who appears whenever there is something "striking to the imagination to be done" (250); Pedrito acts out the "absurd visions" (430) he discovers in books, while his brother, costumed in plumes and gold, is the "solemn masquerading" (135) of an Aztec deity; Holroyd manipulates his kingdom with "the imaginative satisfaction other minds would get from "drama" or "art," (421) and Gould doesn't know "whether his talk is the voice of destiny or simply a bit of clap-trap eloquence. (91). When Emelia "purifies events" by the fire of her imaginative purpose," (164) she too is seen costumed as a fairy, "with the charm of art," (581) and finally disguised as a Madonna, "cloaked and monastically hooded over her evening costume" (622). Even Decoud, who finds the role of hero repugnant, chooses a role as lover "to play my part in the farce," (272) and it is Decoud, who watches the action as "a connoisseur in the art of his choice," (221) who exposes Costaguana as a fiction. Finally, our suspicion that Nostromo, in his grand entrances surrounded by colorful cargadores, cutting off his buttons for Morenita, and dying with an aria of betrayal, is deliberately Verdieque, is confirmed:

Imagine an atmosphere of opera-bouffe in which all the comic business of stage stratesmen, brigands, etc., etc., etc., all their farcical stealing, intriguing, and stabbing is done in earnest. It is screamingly funny; the blood flows all the time, and the actors believe themselves to be influencing the fate of the universe.

(168)

Apparently this "twilight country"¹⁵¹ of Nostromo has no more reality than those earlier colonies. That is why Decoud's recognition that this must be life, "since it is so much like a dream" (276) echoes the Calderon epigraph to Outcast of the Islands from "Life is A Dream." Holroyd lives in his "pet dream," (266) and Emelia, in "a merciless nightmare," (583) "a painful dream" (585). Montero acts out his "absurd visions" and Gould calls Montero's political ambition the "grotesque extravagance" of an "oppressive dream," (451) because it isn't his dream. Only Decoud recognizes that life is the "maddest of dreams," (296); "A man haunted by a fixed idea," he warns, is "insane": "every conviction as soon as it became effective, turned into that form of dementia the gods send upon those they wish to destroy" (221).

Indeed, the conclusion exposes the dream as the delusion of madmen. When the story began Giorgio Viola was a patriot who served with Garibaldi, but at the conclusion he is a King of his island "all alone on the earth full of men," (594) and a mad god murdering the son who plunders princesses and treasure; Nostromo, the heroic adventurer, has become a ghostly gringo, and history and legend, action and art

have merged. Decoud's solipsistic island is really no different from the historical world on shore, and when we return from the night on the gulf and the realm beyond the action that conceals illusion, all Costaguana is colored by unreality.

Does this mean that Nostromo is not a political novel? If we use Howe's criterion of "a novel in which political ideas play a dominant role or in which the political milieu is the dominant setting,"¹⁵² of course it is. Hay's criterion, "the defeat of will power by anonymous social forces," makes it more questionable; but Nostromo, by any definition, is not Lord Jim and it would be an error to deny its attention to the historical, economic, political, and social aspects of imperialism. If these have been slighted in this discussion, it is because others have done ample justice to Nostromo as a political novel and have left many questions unanswered. No account of Conrad's theory of history can explain these gods, fairies, and ghostly gringos, or why a Garibaldian patriot "living in the republicanism of his young days as in a cloud" (355) becomes a mad god murdering his son. Howe is correct when he observes that Nostromo's political action takes place in the "rearguard" and that the political ideas, "seldom directly expressed," are generally "banal." And he is invaluable when he adds that this "hardly matters for the ideas of the book are thoroughly absorbed by its personal drama, with problems of morality and problems of politics coming to seem very

much the same."¹⁵³ Then why not focus upon the personal drama? particularly when Conrad's purpose is to expose political ideology as "personal impulses disguised into creeds"?

Conrad is still talking about the dreams of megalomaniacal heroes who are "hollow at the core," and he has moved from the islands and jungles of fantasy to man in society only to reveal that man is no less alone in a fully peopled world. In fact, Conrad has deliberately drawn upon the techniques of a narrative tradition that leads to certain expectations precisely to undermine the foundation of those expectations, the traditional novel's premise that man lives in a real social world. Novels with omniscient narrators, huge casts of vividly realized human beings, exterior action, and multi-layered social structures, are permitted to question or to attack, but not to cut away at, the very reality that fills their pages. The writer who denies the world generally chooses a different mode of operation.

This is not historical reality, but a devastating assault on history and reality. By relegating the dream to its own domain on Patusan, Lord Jim validated the possibility of a real world on shore; but by establishing a fully documented world and exposing it as a dream, Nostromo's nihilism is far more shattering. This is probably why the book is so disturbing and why it is so often taken for a spectacular failure. The hollowness Leavis perceives is there, but perhaps it lies in Conrad's vision of the world

rather than in a failure to realize that vision.

Perhaps that is why Conrad is so insistent upon Nostromo's facade of objective reality. An omniscient narrator conducts us from the reality of the preface through the creation of Costaguana and we continue to watch its history from above. At this distance society looms larger than any individual. There is no dominant figure; anyone could vanish and Costaguana would go on. We can even doubt whether there is a title role, and the very possibility of such a question shakes our hold on the book. Why wasn't the book named after Gould, since his mine dominates the action and Conrad insisted that the silver, not Nostromo, was his hero?¹⁵⁴ In fact, Nostromo is specifically described as "the next great man of Sulaco after Don Carlos Gould" (205). Thus, Hodges complains that the "romantic treatment" accorded Nostromo is "inconsistent with his real moral status,"¹⁵⁵ and he is correct. Clearly, the title could belong to either hero, matched in sin and triumph, but history is as capricious as fiction. Mitchell's is the last voice we hear and Nostromo is the hero of his version. That he doesn't deserve heroic treatment is the reason he gets it: his illusion has conquered.

To the reader all Sulaco may be equally visible, but not to its heroes. All see themselves at center stage, and because the canvas is so large and the narratorial distance so great, this solipsism is exposed in all its absurdity. Jim was the hero of his fantasy but he was also the hero of the book, and by giving him center stage Conrad invites us

to participate in his illusion. However Nostromo offers us the world as an eternal three ringed circus full of stellar performers demanding attention, and much of the irritating tension and hollowness created by the barrage of equally demanding details is, in fact, calculated. We aren't expected to know where to look, much less whom to care about. We are denied both faith in reality and the security of settling down inside someone's reassuring ego.

Jim's role may have been an illusion, but Conrad suggests that it can be a lifegiving illusion if we believe in it, and we are not only permitted to believe, we are asked to make the imaginative effort, even coerced into identification; naturally Jim's "conviction gains infinitely." In fact, Hay distinguishes Jim's novel of private experience from Nostromo, the political novel, precisely because Jim's ability to convince Marlow, who finds him "irresistible," is "a measure of his triumph over society and fate."¹⁵⁶

But the Novalis epigraph to Lord Jim is no less appropriate to this "political" novel. Describing Nostromo, Decoud says, "The heroes of the world," "the men who are feared and admired," are not "patriots" (212): "His work is an exercise of personal powers; his leisure is spent in receiving the marks of extraordinary adulation" (211). In effect, the hero is still the man with enough charisma to impose his self-glorification upon the world and history, no less than art, is susceptible to the illusion. However, this time it is harder to accept. While men like Nostromo

are imposing their heroic self-image upon history, we remain outside the illusion, untouched by its magic, and wise to their convictions. "What is a conviction?" Decoud asks, but a "particular view of our personal advantage either practical or emotional?" (209)

The critics, those who look for a "political" novel like Palmer as well as those who expect an "art" novel like Guerard, agree on one thing--that Conrad is using inappropriate narrative techniques. Those facts disturb the symbolists and the symbols disturb the politicians, but Nostromo has both facts and fairies--perhaps it is a different sort of book.

Here Palmer's objections can be useful in indicating how Conrad's disarming mode of conjoining action and illusion has disarmed the critics who rise to his bait. Thus, Palmer complains that Conrad's symbolic settings and narrative resist his political theme. Sulaco, he contends, is a "Western locale" distinguished sharply from the "Eastern semi mythical settings of the earlier stories," and "Gould's politico-economic ideal is not Stein's 'dream' or the 'light' Conrad's savages seek." A setting in which the facts of the external world mirrored inner problems might have been appropriate in the Marlow stories where Conrad was dealing with "spiritual dilemmas"; but Nostromo's "political ironies" require "a high proportion of realistic detail, and external situations and conflicts," and these characters "are rarely brought into conflict; they are more

likely to be observed in succession by the narrator, like Marlow's interlocutors in Lord Jim."¹⁵⁷

But Conrad's technique is ideally appropriate because Costaguana is another semi-mythical island without men and Gould's politico-economic ideal, for all the talk of contemporary imperialism, is the same as Stein's dream. Conrad uses projective symbolism because this colony is still the projection of its king's dreams, and its characters are rarely brought into conflict because they have no more relationship with each other than Jim had with Dain. To Palmer's charge that Conrad was more successful with this technique in "prepolitical themes,"¹⁵⁸ the answer is that Conrad's thinking was always prepolitical, and the devices that appear to undercut the political ironies are there to serve his psychological and metaphysical ironies.

Conrad is not concerned with arguing a theory of history that supports or opposes political revolution; he is revolting against heroes and kings. Howe explains Conrad's political conservatism by saying: "when the children of revolutionaries revolt, it is against revolution."¹⁵⁹ Quite true--but Conrad was also the son of a revolutionary king revolting against both kings of the revolution and kings. Costaguana's rebels cry words like "liberty" and "justice" "with the flavor of folly and murder," (453) but the demagogue Donkin manipulates the Narcissus with the same "filthy loquacity" and Kurtz leads still another political party with noble, burning lies.¹⁶⁰ Clearly, one shouldn't count on someone

with Conrad's capricious stands on imperialism or hostility to political causes for a theory of history--certainly not the Conrad whose Razumov betrayed the revolution in order to win a place in society, the approval of his father, and recognition of his Family Romance fantasy as the long lost illegitimate son of the prince.

In all his colonial fantasies Conrad had transcribed his fear and envy of the man who could "lead any party," but the demagogues of Nostromo come still closer to the messianic heroes of Polish patriotism, the authority figures of Conrad's past--Viola is even an "Idealist of the old abstract revolutions"¹⁶¹ grown mad in mourning like Korzeniowski himself.¹⁶² Perhaps this is why the men who make Costaguana's history are not only defiant rebels, they are given more terrifying power on a far larger canvas than before, and here the clash between father and son has been multiplied to produce a vision of history itself as a Freudian nightmare.

Nostromo is dominated by two Adams, the "impious adventurers" (5) of an imperialist legend. Both challenge the gods, defy a parental curse, and are avenged by the fatal spell of their success. But even Holroyd "running a man" (90) and Gould opposing the immortality of his millions with youthful vigor suggest that we might find the same story behind all Nostromo's kings. And Conrad not only intensifies the pattern, this time he confronts the element he had been attempting to avoid. This time both kings are

specifically described as sexually magnetic, centaurs on horseback attractive to women. Gould wins Emelia by succeeding where his father had failed, and "everybody knows" (296) Nostromo's success with women, even with his mother. Such machismo, notably lacking in the writer who hid for a week after proposing to his wife,¹⁶³ was doubtless Conrad's image of the father who did, after all, carry off his mother (and Thaddeus himself had been impressed by Korzeniowski's prowess with women).¹⁶⁴

Such machismo had also been notably lacking in Conrad's colonial kings. Of course, Kurtz's unspeakable rites were implied, but they were satanic and unspeakable, and Jim's assertions are rendered acceptable precisely because he is so reassuringly sexless. Almayer simply dreams, Willems can be castrated by a plant, and Lingard, for all his heroics, is impotent. Admittedly, Nostromo is hardly a lusty novel, yet here Conrad is far more specific about the hero's real source of power, and perhaps his own motive in undermining heroes. Of Nostromo, Monygham mutters "gloomily," "He's very attractive" (579).

In Gould, the association between sexual assertion and imperial action that has run through the colonial novels is clearly identified, and his story suggests its source. The father destroyed by his mission, the abandoned child, and the letters of warning against challenging risks--all come out of Conrad's experience of his father's disastrous fanaticism and his uncle's prohibitions. The theme appears

in all those sons combatting parental dominance and would culminate in Axel's story in Victory. But Gould's Costaguana is also Villiers' fantasy kingdom and even here Conrad was crystalizing the dangerous implications of action that became Heyst's Oedipal nightmare.

In Villiers' Axel we find the prototype for the father killed by corrupt officials, the forbidden treasure, and the son who rejects the dangers of action for the kingship of fantasy. Victory would use this decadent "Gospel with all its suggestions when the father preaches inaction to keep the son in his place; but even in the Malayan novels Conrad knew the dangers of plundering a father's treasure, and here Nostromo plunders Viola's island to keep Giselle as a "jewel in a casket" (604) just as Jim and Heyst steal their jewels from a father, and Gould's motive in opening his father's mine is no more economic than Heyst's "apostasy" (63) in opening abandoned mines for the Tropical Belt Mining Company. Action to satisfy "uneasy vanity" that leads to the "moral degredation of the idea," (582)¹⁶⁵ and "the fatal spell of success," (5) are not political theories.

Because Gould, unlike Axel, is a disobedient son, archetypal myths of prohibited treasure inform Conrad's story of greedy imperialist gringos in an emerging Eden. Gould's mine is a forbidden woman, described in terms of chastity and defilement. He will "preserve unstained the fair name of the mine" (272); "It must remain inviolate or perish by an act of his will alone" (271). Clearly, the mine is Emelia's

rival. Even Gould perceives his "subtle conjugal infidelity," (409) Decoud notes his "sentimental unfaithfulness," (271) and Emelia labors "to save him from that cold and overmastering passion" (272).

Furthermore, it is his father's prohibition against opening the mine that makes Gould "fall under its spell" (64) and imposes "the necessity of success" (82). Repeatedly, Conrad stresses the father's weakness and the vigor of the son: the mine enchants the son "with another form of enchantment, more suitable to his youth, into whose magic formula there entered hope, vigor, and self-confidence instead of weary indignation and despair."¹⁶⁶

Thus the background for the Gould enterprise is given in one scene which relates the death of the father, the son's violation of the prohibition, and the winning of the heroine. The conjunction is hardly random staging. In light of his response to Thaddeus's death, Conrad didn't need Freud to tell him that the most important event in a man's life is the death of his father.

That irreparable change a death makes . . .
 This consideration, closely affecting his own
 identity, filled his breast with a mournful
 and angry desire for action . . . Action is
 consolatory. It is the enemy of thought and
 the friend of flattering illusions. Only in
 the conduct of our action can we find the
 sense of mastery over the Fates. For his
 action, the mine was obviously the only
 field. It was imperative sometimes to know
 how to disobey the solemn wishes of the dead.
 He resolved firmly to make his disobedience
 as thorough (by way of atonement) as it well
 could be.

And this, Conrad's most explicit statement of the association between imperialist action and Oedipal assertion, clarifies the distrust of action that runs throughout Conrad's work to culminate in Emelia's otherwise mystifying contention that there is something "inherent in the necessities of successful action which carried with it the moral degradation of the idea" (582).

At the conclusion of the scene Conrad has left us with no illusions about Gould's illusion. Material interests have become an object of "faith" justified in the name of a "better justice to come," (93) but we have just seen an emotional need being idealized into a conviction.

Even further, it is Gould's defiant masculinity that wins his Eve: "a subtle thought of redress and conquest, had filled her with an intense excitement, which she returned to the giver with a more open and exquisite display of tenderness." (72) She too intuitively feels the nature of the conquest between her lover and the "dead man of whom she thought with tenderness (because he was Charley's father) and with some impatience (because he had been weak)" (82). Thus, the silver becomes her "passion" (271) too. The history of the mine is "the history of her married life," (73) and she wonders why discussing the mine with business men "rendered her so impatient and uneasy, whereas she could talk of the mine by the hour with her husband with unwearied interest and satisfaction" (77). This is not a desire for possession, but desire itself: "she had laid her unmercenary hand, with

an eagerness that made them tremble, upon the first silver ingot turned out still warm from the mould; and by her imaginative estimate of its power she endowed that lump of metal with a justaficative conception . . . like the true expression of an emotion or the emergency of a principle" (118).

In effect, Emelia idealizes her desire for a man of power into a principle, but it is power that wins her. Mr. Gould had expressed the conviction that "God looked wrathfully at these countries, or else he would let some ray of hope fall through a rift in the appalling darkness of intrigue, bloodshed, and crime that hung over the Queen of continents" (92). In his speech on the power of material interests, Gould presents his challenge to God to bring light, and such confidence is irresistible. Emelia glances up at him with admiration: "'Charley,' she said, 'You are splendidly disobedient.'" (93)

Then Sulaco becomes a vale of tears while Charley possesses the Queen of Continents and remains splendidly disobedient. By the time Emelia warns that they "have disturbed a good many snakes in that paradise," (232) it is too late. The mine is no longer a means of serving the idea, but Abstract Justice itself, and Gould is an angry god ready to destroy his creation rather than surrender it to Montero: "Let the heavens fall." (447) But the interests of the mine and the will of heaven are not identical, and Gould's rationalizations make his real motives clear: "The Gould concession could not be resumed. His father had not

desired it. The son would never surrender it alive" (447). But of course, the son had defied his father in opening the mine just as he defies God now. Thus, Gould countermands Holroyd's order to "put our trust in God" with

"but then, he is very far away, you know,
and . . . God is very high above."

The engineer's appreciative laugh died away down the stairs, where the Madonna with the Child on her arm seemed to look after his shaking broad back from her shallow niche.

(228)

That is why Gould becomes a stone god and Sulaco, a sterile wasteland of memorial statues, tablets, and urns. Significantly, the Midas touch begins in the proposal scene which opens with the words, "it has killed him." Here Gould appears covered with dust, contemplating a cracked marble urn "ornamented with sculptured masks," and grasping "a thick oaken cudgel in his bare right hand" (67). More significantly, Gould's phallic cudgel, reminiscent of Lingard's revolver and "limb of marble," (287) will reappear in the "upraised marble arm" (53) of the displaced statue of Charles IV, and again in Viola's avenging "arm of stone." (618) Because such ambition demands chastisement, "the mine mastered the energetic spirit of the son as it had mastered the lamentable weakness of the father" (583) and Gould, separated from Emelia by its silver wall, becomes another "little boy" (231) unmanned by power. Inevitable too is the message of atonement and submission which appears in Emelia's

warning against action and her insistence upon the necessity "to work for the glory of the dead and the ones who come after" (582).

In Nostromo, Gould's "splendid disobedience" becomes "unlawful audacity," (593) and the question, again, is whether the emphasis should be placed upon the first or second word. Claire Rosenfield describes Nostromo as a fire stealing culture hero, albeit a hero manqué,¹⁶⁷ and Hodges feels that he gets, but doesn't deserve, "romantic treatment."¹⁶⁸ Of course, it's hard to miss the mandatory properties of heroic myth in the exposed infant with foster parents who performs miracles, even though Nostromo is hardly self-sacrificing and the silver hardly a boon, and the discrepancy naturally creates some confusion about Nostromo's moral status in the story. But Nostromo is not Conrad's hero; he is Conrad's ironic vision of heroes. That hero of history, legend, opera, swashbuckling adventure, and romantic fiction--too many things to all men--is a darker vision of the legendary Jim, the hero as he is "said to be" (333).

Echoes of Jim appear in Nostromo's vanity, "that finest form of egotism which can take on the aspect of every virtue," (333) in the ability "to make himself obeyed," (355) the "charm" that "casts a spell, (21, 578) and the illusion that becomes real when others believe it. But this time Conrad is emphasizing the public image of the hero's dream--and Nostromo, whose "very essence, value, reality, consisted in its reflection from the admiring eyes of men," (586) is

nothing but a public image. For all his dying words of betrayal, Nostromo is never concerned with the people's betrayal by capitalism. Repeatedly we are told that he "distains" the natives, (461) that "the only thing he seems to care for . . . is to be well spoken of" (273) and that "his imagination had seized upon the clear and simple notion of betrayal to account for . . . being done for" (469):

"What did he care about their politics. Nothing at all . . . He had been betrayed" (467). Nostromo is no more "a man of the people" (334) in a political sense than he is a true lover or sacrificial hero. Conrad is only concerned with the way he projects these images--and Nostromo's faith in himself is so overwhelming, and his ability to project that faith is so convincing, that even the reality of his corruption cannot tarnish his legend. Even more than Jim, Nostromo is morally reprehensible and aesthetically triumphant.

That is why Conrad makes the split between the legend and the man. The Nostromo who returns from a realm beyond the control of his ego to a world that offers no applause to confirm his reality has died in the void as surely as Decoud. Without his name the world itself "had no existence" (463) and the new man is a "ghost" (545) walking the earth "in a dream" (487). Moreover, a resolution in which the man, corrupted and ignominiously murdered, is reborn as legend, is particularly suitable for this hero's "flattering dream." (462) Nostromo has usurped Viola's place with Teresa, and he has defied God by refusing to send for a priest because

"the peace of a dying woman is less than the priase of people who have given you a silly name . . . in exchange for your soul and body" (284). For his chance at "A greater miracle than a saint could perform" (487) to add to his legendary fame, Nostromo gets damnation--but he remains "well spoken of."

First Conrad attends to the retribution of father and God. Nostromo has repeatedly been called Viola's "son" (525) and "the woman whom he called mother" (526) is "in love with him"; (354) but, having gone this far, Conrad evades the dangerous implications by splitting the son into Nostromo and his "protege" Ramirez, and compounding the confusion by splitting the daughters as well. Thus, Ramirez can be the nominal subject for Viola's wrath while Nostromo, despite such lines as "My anchor has bitten fairly deep into the ground of this port of Sulaco," (592) is welcomed as suitor and son.

The daughters, the fair and dark ones of fairy tales, are also sufficiently confusing to discourage attention, but all that is crucial is that they are both hedged with taboos. Linda is dangerously associated with her mother; "Linda, with her mother's voice, had taken her mother's place," (591) and Linda is the goddess tending her light "above the passions of the earth." (616) However, Nostromo has promised Teresa to marry Linda, so Giselle, while sexier, is similarly taboo.

Silver, immortal fame, and sexual assertions then merge as Nostromo returns to plunder the treasure under the pretext

of courtship: "He yearned to clasp, embrace, absorb, subjugate in unquestioned possession this treasure" (590). His retribution suits these transgressions; "no mere refusal could stand between him and a woman he desired," but the forbidden mother, appearing as the "spectre of the unlawful treasure," (605) stands between him and Giselle to prevent the consummation of his prowess.

The nature of Nostromo's transgressions also demand that he become "a little child: (487) punished by "the senile vanity" (612) of an old man "uneasy for the integrity of his honor" (611); "A young man yet . . . But I am not so old. No!" (612-613) In this, Conrad's most lurid scene of paternal vengeance, Viola has become all the images of "father" Conrad might have met in myth and dreams--the biblical patriarch, the mad winter king defending the earth goddess against his young rival, the fairy tale dragon protecting the princess, the mighty tree, and Korzeniowski himself, as half-crazed messiah. Even echoes of Lingard's and Doramin's vengeance appear in the "statue of an old man guarding the honor of his house," (618) and in the image of "the Garabaldino--big, erect, (italics mine) with his snow-white hair" who had "monumental repose in his immobility, leaning upon a rifle" (617). And when Viola is shown after the murder, reading his Bible, "rugged, undecayed, like an oak uprooted by a treacherous gust of wind," (630) it would seem that the offended father once again has come out on top.

Then there is also Nostromo the legend, and a discrepancy between damnation and glory that recalls the discrepancy between the reality of Jim's destruction and his fictional triumphs. However the fiction here is far more suspicious. In these concluding scenes imperialism, illusion, performance and madness have merged. As Fidenza, Nostromo is a false actor, his public life is pretence, his romance a cover story, and his death, his most melodramatic performance. How seriously should we take this sort of claptrap?

Ha! Old Giorgio--the guardian of thine honor!
 Fancy the fête, coming upon me so light of
 foot, so steady of aim. I myself could have
 done no better. But the price of a charge of
 powder might have been saved. The honor was
 safe . . . Senora, she would have followed to
 the end of the world, Nostromo the thief.
 (623)

or "I cannot see her . . . No Matter . . . one kiss is
 enough," or, "I die betrayed" (623).

Only the greatness of Nostromo's vanity had kept him pure, but the same vanity prevents him from seeing his degradation. "Careless and cool" (618) he can lie to Giselle after he is shot--"It seemed as though I could not live through the night without seeing thee once more--my star, my little flower" (618)--and his dying words are a lie about betrayal. Furthermore, the scene sets Nostromo's illusions beside the madman's delusions--Viola repeating "the child had to be protected," (617) secure in the illusion that he is destiny. Still, the magnitude of Nostromo's ego fills the world to make his delusion legend.

Through his charisma, Nostromo has become the hero of legend and history and Conrad's novel. Linda adores him, Emelia redeems him, Mitchell reverently records his heroism, and even the sceptic Monygham concedes defeat before such triumphs. In fact, it looks as if a canny critic like Warren is being similarly charmed when he sees Linda's "Never" as Nostromo's "victory over the vast indifference of things"¹⁶⁹--and Wiley, when he calls love "the single value transcending the egotism of a materialistic world"¹⁷⁰--and Palmer, when he feels that Nostromo is getting "affirmative treatment."¹⁷¹

But surely the scene is a ghastly farce performed with the same false staginess and sentimental cliches that exposed Marlow's lies. Linda will wait--she is just mad enough--and the ghost will return throughout eternity, not to Linda, or even Giselle, but to the silver. Conrad isn't celebrating the power of love; even the genuine love of Antonia and Decoud doesn't redeem. He is talking about the power of illusion, and he calls it a sinister power. That conclusion actually reads: "It was another of Nostromo's successes, the greatest, the most enviable, the most sinister of all" (631).

Neither is Nostromo redeemed when he calls for Emelia to absolve him. Emelia is not the Madonna; she plays the part of the Madonna, and her robes conceal an "evening costume" (622). Her charm is "the charm of art," (581) and Conrad stresses "the powerlessness of her magic" (581).

Knowing the truth, we are not expected to share the valuation of history and legend.

Still, Emelia conceals Nostromo's corruption, and there is a good deal of confusion about why. Critics taking her at her word assume that she is repudiating material interests; however, that is not what is happening in the scene. Actually Conrad places the emphasis, not upon imperialism, but upon Monyham's curious response: "He did not believe Mrs. Gould. But her word was law. He accepted her denial like an inexplicable fatality affirming the victory of Nostromo's genius over his own. Even before that woman whom he loved with secret devotion, he had been defeated by the magnificent capetez de cargadores, the man who had lived his own life on the assumption of unbroken fidelity, rectitude, and courage!" (625)

And Monygham's defeat is crucial to the novel. While the hero is a political savior who conquers women, Conrad's image of himself is still the man who walks with a limp, the betrayer of Thebes. All the dangers Conrad associated with the artist's role are heaped on this scapegoat "fit for dirty work" (508). Monygham is a witch doctor, and "familiar of the house," (528) "old, ugly, learned--and a little 'loco'"; (49) but most of all he is "outside the pale," (347) unloved and unloveable. Naturally Monygham has none of the hero's machismo; he can be left alone with the heroine because he has been emasculated by "the instant in which his manhood had failed" (484). Still, there is a

good deal of sentimental self-portraiture in Conrad's emphasis on Monygham's selfless heroism and "his capacity for passion (though lacking "the polished callousness of men of the world" [581]), and finally, Conrad would have us believe that lies, legends, and madness conspire to distort the truth; the man who possesses the mystical genius of the hero triumphs, while the truly noble Monygham remains incapable of arousing love and veneration even in those who should be most grateful.

Of course, the bitterest pill is that Emelia, no less than those silly girls, preserves Nostromo's image--clothing her motives "in the fair robes of an idea" just as she had glorified Gould and continues to defend him: "He was perfect--perfect . . . it was a colossal and lasting success; and love was only a short moment of forgetfulness." (582) Perhaps this is why Emelia, for all her goodness, is treated rather badly at the conclusion.

In women like this--Jewel, Linda, and Kurtz's Intended--Conrad continued to write out his mother's fate as the human waste in the hero's trail; but Emelia comes closest to her story, as his account of Gould, the madman "haunted by a fixed idea," is his strongest verbalization of his resentment against the man whose dreams brought "the heaven down pitilessly upon a loved head" (422). In part, Emelia is compassionate memory; even the image of the benevolent madonna venerated by the subjects in her drawing room resembles Conrad's tender description of his mother, another

exiled queen: "a loving, wide browed protecting presence whose eyes had a sort of commanding sweetness; and I also remember the great gathering of the relatives from near and far, and the grey heads of the family friends paying her the homage of respect and love."¹⁷² Yet there is unmistakable hostility in those images of a gilt statue, a disguised madonna, and a frozen fairy presiding over the altar of "a glittering tea-set" (124) and in her abysmal loneliness and powerless magic.

Then has Emelia saved the world from the silver or is she simply another woman falling under the spell of the hero? Torn between his reverence for the mother of memory and his resentment of the woman who abandoned him to follow his father, Conrad creates a number of lonely deluded ladies with "an instinct for devotion" (82) who ask for what they get. Observing Nostromo's power to charm, Morynham remarks: "Women are so very unaccountable" (354).

Though heroes are dangerous and women unaccountable, the noble portrait of Morynham isn't entirely accurate either, and evaluating his choral voice is crucial to Conrad's meaning. Throughout Nostromo, our only objective view of Sulaco's fanatic kings has come from two sceptical voices. Only Morynham and Decoud are neither heroes or hero worshippers, but like the author, dethroners of kings. Decoud confesses his function early in the novel when he tells Antonio that the heroes of the world are not patriots and promises to expose their illusions: "This is the quintessence

of my journalism" (211)--it is also the quintessence of the novel. And Decoud does, in fact, serve as the author's representative in Sulaco. Decoud is the artist as frenchified dillitante, fatally isolated from the world by aesthetic distance. It is Decoud who derives "an artistic pleasure from watching the picturesque extreme of wrongheadedness into which an honest, almost sacred conviction may drive a man," (221) and it is Decoud who exposes Costaguana as a performance. Monygham's purpose in distaining the hero's glory is similar, but his more personal need to prove Nostromo as corruptible as himself comes even closer to Conrad's image of himself as the betrayer of Thebes.

But finally, these dangerous doubters are set up to be sacrificed to a book full of dangerous doubts. Thus, the sceptic who threatens the world by exposing its solipsism dies within the void of his own terrifying doubts, discovering too late that men like Gould "live on illusions which somehow or other help them to get a firm hold on substance" (265). In effect, Decoud has elevated scepticism itself into an ideal, and this "barren indifference posing as intellectual superiority," (168) proves as presumptuous as heroic dreams--and far more dangerous. The warning itself is impressive, yet readers may be justified in being disturbed by a mythical island and allegorical fate that fail the standards of reasonable reality on shore. Anyone this sceptical would scarcely have acted at all, and Decoud alone has formed a tie to something beyond himself. Never-

theless, he had to be sacrificed, and Conrad doesn't take redemptive love seriously enough to let it stand in his way. Besides, we know by now that Gould's story and Nostromo's were no less moral fables.

Nor will Monygham, despite that noble portrait, emerge unscathed. His "fidelity" is hardly "unbroken," his exposure of Nostromo hardly disinterested, and he engages in action, not selflessly, but to redeem his past. Although Monygham speaks of putting "no spiritual values" into his "desires," Conrad makes it clear that he has "an ideal conception of his disgrace" (418). Apparently, the outsider who rejects the glories of action in his search for the truth is no less susceptible to "the dream" and Monygham may be Conrad's confession of his own motives as omniscient creator and dethroner of kings. For isn't Monygham, in his self-contemptuous readiness to accept abuse, the artist himself reveling in Monygham's rejection, idealizing his disgrace, and glorifying his sacrificial role? And isn't it knowledge of guilt that impels both Monygham and the author to be dethroners of kings and to idealize their fallibility with the conviction that men were not meant to rule Thebes?

At the conclusion, the dull rambling of the local historian, objective action, documented history, personal reminiscence and legend have merged; but despite that illusion of accuracy, the multiple viewpoint is as nihilistically self-negating as the documents are deceptions. The reality of history remains as tenuous as Jim's dream,

and only Conrad's novel--the lies of a poet--encompasses the truth.

And if history is a fantasy, then poets aren't the only liars--perhaps they are simply more interesting--and perhaps this explains why our last view of Sulaco is given by Mitchell, the pompous historian, with the reader as his "privileged captive,"

. . . stunned and as it were annihilated
mentally by a sudden surfeit of sights,
sounds, names, facts, and complicated
information imperfectly apprehended, would
listen like a tired child to a fairy tale;
would hear a voice, familiar and surprising
in its pompousness, tell him, as if from
another world, how there was "in this very
harbor . . .

(544)

Actually, after four hundred and fifty-five pages, it is quite a relief to find Conrad confessing, not only that history is a fairy tale, but that at times he has been deliberately boring us--another captive audience to a garrulous mariner--with the "wearisome impressiveness" and "pompous manner" (360) of his own story that began "in this very harbor." In fact, Morf supports the irreverent suggestion that much of Costaguana may be Conrad's little joke when he notes the suffix "guana," and it's hard to accept his hesitant explanation that "it may be mere coincidence that guana is the Polish genitive of guano"¹⁷³ since Conrad was taken by the same joke in Lord Jim.

However, Mitchell's fairy tale goes beyond exposing

history as an illusion to expose the book itself as another way an omniscient creator imposes his conviction on the world to compete with the order of history. What, after all, does Nostromo tell us about historical destiny? Warren and Guerard have debated about whether the book ends with a cloud in the distance or with sun behind that cloud, and they are both correct;¹⁷⁴ still, the discussion is faintly comic, like asking if the year ends with summer or winter. At the conclusion, conditions in Sulaco have improved, but revolution is still being brewed by emerging kings and king makers. Now the bandit is "Minister of War" and we have another "victory gained in the conquest of peace," (127) with the possibility of Abstract Justice always just up ahead. More regimes will come and go and the historian will create his meaning just as the artist does when he closes the curtain. Henry V ends with a marriage and victory, but its history would look quite different if the play had covered one more year. And finally, Mitchell's ending, the epoch making order and perfectibility of the historian, is another illusion of order and control, not far different from the order of art.

But here the last word--and the first--is the artist's. Indeed, Conrad never lets us forget "In the beginning was the word" and that is why he is so assertive about his omniscience. The imagery of the creation opens Nostromo, A Personal Record makes much of "blowing breath into the shapes of men and women,"¹⁷⁵ and, for the first time Conrad

even rejected settings he knew for a country that never existed so he could do this one himself. The introduction is making a point of this victory over reality when Conrad describes being depressed because "it seemed somehow that there was nothing more in the world to write about"¹⁷⁶ until he remembered a man who had stolen a lighter of silver. "Yet," he continues with Jamesian scorn, "I did not see anything at first in the mere story."¹⁷⁷ The point is well made. Conrad does create real people who can take him to lunch, and historical figures, and if, as Howe suggests, he even predicted the future of Cuba, it was no mean power.¹⁷⁸

Ultimately, this is Conrad's point. Perhaps the need to triumph over one of those charismatic heroes acclaimed by history drove Conrad to expose the role as a fantasy of power and to assert his own in another sort of kingship. In any event, he makes certain that the documents of the historian and the mystical genius of the hero both give way before the imaginative genius of art. Decoud's "true record" is "a light by which the action may be seen when personality is gone": (255) Emelia's watercolor preserves Sulaco's innocence; and a bust, "Parrochetti's work," (534) is all that remains of Don Jose. Remember, when A Personal Record quoted Novalis, Conrad was talking about his own art: "And what is a novel if not a conviction of our fellow-men's existence strong enough to take upon itself a form of imagined life clearer than reality and whose accumulated verisimilitude of selected episodes puts to shame the pride of documented history."¹⁷⁹

Victory

It is hardly surprising then that the themes of imperialism and creation should culminate in a pure realm of art where the poet is king, or that Conrad should name his last colonist Axel and admit that his colonial island of "shadows" (4) has been Prospero's kingdom of dream. Critics like Frederick Karl have discovered Victory's "Tempest" island with a Wang-Ariel, Pedro-Caliban, and powerless Prospero;¹⁸⁰ many more have discovered suggestions of Oedipal rivalry, homosexuality, and castration. There is no need to elaborate on any of these subjects here--simply to note their connection. All Conrad's colonies have been islands without men peopled by the helpers and enemies of the unconscious, and all his colonists have been artist-magicians and rival sons, escaping the threats of reality for the kingship of fantasy only to be overcome by the forces they try to deny.

Of course, Heyst, "manager in the tropics," (5) of the Tripical Belt Coal Company speaks of the "stride forward" (5) of the imperial mission, but Conrad makes it clear that this colonist stays within his "magic circle" (6) because he is "Number One of this locality" (175) and omnipotent. That is why tricks of perspective like those of Lord Jim make his cigar the size of the volcano, and why Lena says: "If you were to stop thinking of me I shouldn't be in the world at all." (177) And Heyst's father also uses political terminology when he speaks of "Action--the barbed hook,

baited with the illusion of progress," (163) but Victory has nothing whatever to do with political action. Heyst cannot return to the world because he is "enchanted" (6) by "more spells than your commonplace magicians ever dreamed of," (6) enchanted by a father who warns: "Look on--make no sound." (165)

Fantasy kingship is opposed to competitive action in both of the fictions that inform Conrad's plot. Tampering with forbidden power had ended in Prospero's exile and he too became a colonial king because he was "alone of his kind." But Villiers's myth of the artist may come even closer to home. It's easy to understand why the decadents, and the decadent in Conrad, might have been charmed by the story of Axel, the visionary poet who wins occult knowledge of the symbol by renouncing the world. Symons had preached the gospel: "Life, to him [Villiers] was the dream, and the spiritual world the reality,"¹⁸¹ and Conrad was impressed by Symons and had reason to share Jim's belief that imaginative triumphs were life's "secret truth, its hidden reality," (13) But Villiers' gospel was also the defiance of rejected and inadequate men who sought the pure realm of art because they were afraid of reality. Thus, Axel turns from the corrupt world to study occult books in a fantasy kingdom, and when action and a father's treasure are associated with the forbidden mother in a girl who offers her love, Axel, with true fin de siecle delicacy, rejects the treasure and consummation for the ultimate perfection of dreams and death.

Evidently such a super dreamer could be put to use for Conrad's vision of himself as son, artist, and exiled prince. Gould had assumed one aspect of the Axel-Conrad story with the father victimized by the world and the "disembodied" warning voice "out of a greusome Arabian Night's tale" (63). But in Victory the father's "ghostly voice" (207) becomes terrifying. That is why this son withdraws to study his father's books and to rely on his father's magic as dutifully as Axel and Almayer, and that is why he remains king of his island only as long as he obeys that injunction against reality: "I am done with facts" (27). But this time the symbolist credo and the voice that enchants are unmistakably exposed as the father's eternal warning to the son to keep his place, and for all Conrad's talk of love and faith in life, action is Oedipal rebellion, and the price of participation is impotence.

Indeed, all Heyst's attempts to act in the world are described as demiurgical presumptions, and we are back in Eden with another "original Adam" (163). With Morrison, Heyst had played Prospero, "saving a man for fun," (188) and then Providence, "incarnate proof of the efficacy of prayer" (188). No wonder such assertions involve opening an abandoned mine, an "apostasy" followed by "shame and remorse"; (63) no wonder the chastened Heyst withdraws to "drift" as a "defense against life": (89) ". . . I allowed myself to be tempted into action. It seemed innocent enough, but all action is bound to be harmful. It is

devilish." Still, "the germ of corruption had entered his soul" (188).

Then the germ becomes Lena and Eden gets its Eve: "funny notion of defying the fates--to take a woman in tow" (55). Heyst is wary of any intrusion on his "undefiled peace" and Conrad is ambivalent: "You don't take a woman into a desert jungle without being made sorry for it!" (49) Actually, this ambivalence creates much of the novel's confusion. Here Conrad's own suspicion of women colors his description of Lena's sexual "charm" (379) as well as her seduction of Ricardo, and the instructions for the warning message are so ridiculously confusing that it is impossible to tell whether she deliberately deceives. Still, the father is the direct cause of Heyst's doom. Again a princess has been stolen from a dragon father and he sends the forces that actually destroy.

Thus Schomberg and the spirit of Heyst's father join the trip of "apparitions" (308) to demonstrate "how helpless a man is against shades." (327) Now Conrad leaves little doubt about why the hero is helpless, the motive for his purity, and the nature of his fatal "incompleteness" (201). When his revolver is stolen, Heyst cries: "I cannot protect you! I haven't the power." (324) And later: "I have been a disarmed man all my life." (378) Nor does Conrad leave much doubt about the rumored homosexuality of Heyst's relationship with Morrison when he externalizes it in Jones, Heyst's woman-hating double, nor about their source. When

Heyst makes love to Lena, his father's portrait watches the "abominable calumny" (206) and Lena wonders whether the evil invaders are retribution for their sin.

Crews is correct in describing an Oedipal nightmare. Heyst does become more passive as he moves into the world and Lena becomes large and terrifying¹⁸² until the tempting mother and punishing father merge in an androgynous figure with a knife between its legs that raises its arms in a symbol of victory. Indeed, it is this Lena that turns Heyst into a passive child; this is the "great exultation of love and self-sacrifice which is woman's sublime faculty" (297) that impels her to take over: "Had she known of some means to put him to sleep for days she would have used incantations and philtres without misgivings. He seemed to her too good for such contacts, and not sufficiently equipped." (297) Apparently this mother-father is a more powerful magician all too well equipped. That would explain why, this time, it is Lena's masculine figure that is described as "statuesque" with "the charm of art," (237) and why the upraised arm of the avenging father is Lena's gesture of victory.

Finally, the sentimental death scene, though colored by Conrad's stagiest illusions, seems to be one he almost believes, along with that quotable message: "Woe to the man whose heart has not learned while young to hope, to love-- and to put its trust in life." (382) But while Lena sees Heyst reaching out for that climactic embrace, we know he

cannot bring himself to touch her. In fact, Crews is probably correct about the real source of the shot that kills her and Conrad's unconscious reasons for keeping it, and so much of the novel, confusing.¹⁸³ Only Lena's death breaks Heyst's father's spell. Obviously it is Heyst's sin, not Lena's death, that demands his self-immolation.

But even more curious than the story is Conrad's use of the preface as a frame that draws his fiction into reality to admit the relationship between his action and art. Here he begins by admitting, with suspect humility, that it is presumptuous of him to throw "a bit of imagined drama into the welter of reality"¹⁸⁴ on the eve of a great war, or to use the word "victory" for a "mere novel";¹⁸⁵ yet, this "detachment" which permits a musician to play as the Last Judgment is sounding is man's way of reconciling his "infinite littleness" with the "gods." Then "detachment" recalls the real Heyst, a man who "had lost the trick of asserting himself." Such thinking, Conrad observes, is "the great enemy of perfection . . . the most pernicious of habits," and he goes on to tell us of the pernicious reflection that produced Victory.¹⁸⁶

Apparently, Conrad discovered the real Lena and witnessed the cruel pinch in a moment of "idleness for which I have a natural talent";¹⁸⁷ however, it was this "perfect idleness that had invested the girl with a peculiar charm, and I did not want to destroy it by any superfluous exertion."¹⁸⁸ Heyst may well claim, "He who deliberates is lost," (359)

but Conrad doesn't act--he deliberates, and gives Lena to his fictional Heyst knowing "that she would be heroically equal to every demand."¹⁸⁹ Actually, Conrad's irritating coyness¹⁹⁰ at such moments tempts to the equally coy reflection that he was mistaken, and that his rationalization--"in view of her triumphant end what more could I have done for her rehabilitation and her happiness?"¹⁹¹--indicates a degree of self-deception remarkable even for Conrad. But even if Lena's "end" is more dubious than Conrad could admit, it is important that he is suggesting that the immortality of his art is the greatest possible triumph.

And finally, the preface not only negates the "message" of the novel, in reenacts the rescue motif that runs through Conrad's fiction to explain his own withdrawal from assertion and asserts the onnipotence of art. The old question, did he give up the girl to write the book or write the book because he couldn't get the girl? needn't be answered. It is enough that Conrad suggests a relationship between the terrors that prohibit Heyst's action and his own art. In light of Heyst's father and fate, it is easier to understand why Conrad might turn to the symbolic action and kingship of fantasy, and why he appears torn between a sense of failure and triumph.

Still, Conrad's fantasy is not a neurotic drive for power or infantile escape, nor is the artist really a "case" like the colonist--though the metaphor is telling. The colonist escapes difficult reality for an unreal world he

can dominate, but having a fantasy is not the same as writing a book. Conrad doesn't take the easy way, but the hard way; the world he creates is not less real, but more real.

Notes and References

Chapter II

1. "An Outpost of Progress," "Typhoon" and Other Tales (New York, 1962), p. 193.
2. Ibid., p. 205.
3. Letter to Marguerite Poradowska, August 18 [?] 1894, Letters from Joseph Conrad to Marguerite Poradowska (1880-1920), trans. and ed. John A. Gee and Paul J. Sturm (New Haven, 1940), p. 77.
4. A Personal Record (New York 1912), pp. 142-43.
5. "Author's Note," An Outcast of the Islands (New York, 1964), p. viii.
6. Ibid., p. ix.
7. Almayer's Folly, "Almayer's Folly," and Other Stories (New York, 1965). Throughout my text page references to this edition are given in parentheses.
8. "A Glance at Two Books," p. 2. The metaphor is used again in "Geography and Some Explorers" when Conrad calls explorers men who "like the masters of a great art worked each according to his temperament to complete the picture of the world." Last Essays (New York, 1926), p. 15.
9. Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's Axel, the symbolist king of an imagined world, provided a model for Conrad in Nostromo and Victory.
10. The Rescue M.S. quoted in Thomas Moser, Joseph Conrad: Achievement and Decline (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), p. 124. Moser uses the title The Rescuer to distinguish the manuscript from the book.
11. Introduction to Nostromo (New York, 1951), p. xxi.
12. Ibid., p. xxiii.
13. Irving Howe, Politics and the Novel, p. 81.
14. The Polish Heritage of Joseph Conrad (New York, 1965), p. 161.
15. Ibid., pp. 153-166.
16. "The Exile," New Statesman (London), August 14, 1957, 229.

17. Joseph Conrad: A Critical Biography (New York, 1960), pp. 30-32.

18. Quoted in Morton Dauwen Zabel, "Introduction," The Portable Conrad (New York, 1965), p. 1.

19. Warren, p. xix.

20. Jean-Aubry, I, 5-27.

21. The self-idealizing heroism which led to Korzeniowski's exile and his wife's death is the subject of many of Thaddeus Bobrowski's letters warning his nephew against the "Korzeniowski strain": "Your grandfather and uncle were always entertaining projects which had no validity except in their imaginations . . . your father was an idealistic dreamer." (July 30, 1891 in Jean-Aubry, I, 146). The Bobrowski strain, on the other hand, provides the source for Conrad's "few simple ideas": "If individuals and nations would set duty before themselves as an aim, instead of grandiose ideals, the world would be a happier place . . . I have taken the motto "usque ad finem" as my guide, the love of duty which circumstances define." (November 9, 1891, Jean-Aubry, I, 148).

22. In the account of Korzeniowski's funeral in "Poland Revisited," Conrad reports that half the population turned out to honor his father. Notes on Life and Letters (London, 1921), pp. 226-227.

23. "Conrad's Uneasiness--And Ours," Out of My System: Psychoanalysis, Ideology, and Critical Method (New York, 1975), pp. 41-63.

24. The Dual Heritage of Joseph Conrad (The Hague, 1967), pp. 15-60.

25. Conrad's Measure of Man (New York, 1966), pp. 132-198.

26. "Introduction," "Almayer's Folly" and Other Stories, p. 316.

27. In The Mirror of the Sea, Conrad described his own accident on board the Highland Forest as a mysterious accident like Jim's, followed by the same "inexplicable periods of powerlessness." (London, 1946, p. 54). Again, in The Shadow-Line, Conrad describes the spiritual lassitude of a young seaman who overcomes the temptation to "go soft," and the preface calls the story "a personal experience." (New York, 1959, p. 35). Conrad would continue to blur the line between fiction and autobiography, even, in the preface to An Arrow of Gold, hinting that the duel and the love affair were his own. Baines's biography of Conrad demonstrates that the truth was considerably less romantic (pp. 51-58).

28. Letter to Conrad, November 9, 1891, Jean-Aubry, I,
148.
29. "Author's Note," An Outcast of the Islands, p. vii.
30. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 19.
31. Ibid., p. 10.
32. "Author's Note," An Outcast of the Islands, p. viii.
33. Baines, Joseph Conrad, p. 22.
34. Eloise Hay perceives that Korzeniowski played his sacrificial role in the grand poet-hero tradition (pp. 36-38) and Gustav Morf notes that Korzeniowski identified his martyrdom with Shakespeare's tragic heroes (pp. 35-36).
35. Conrad, "Poland Revisited," p. 225.
36. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 14. "Those who read me know my conviction that the world, the temporal world, rests on a few very simple ideas . . . It rests notably, amongst others, on the idea of Fidelity."
37. Ibid., p. 180.
38. Letter to Conrad, November 9, 1891, Jean-Aubry, I,
148.
39. "Conrad's 'Karain' and Lord Jim," "Lord Jim": An Authoritative Text, Background, Sources, Essays in Criticism, p. 463. The quotations from Conrad appear in "Karain: A Memory," "Typhoon" and Other Tales, pp. 148, 147.
40. Conrad, "Karain," p. 161.
41. Ibid., p. 148.
42. Ibid., p. 147.
43. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 21.
44. Johnson, p. 465.
45. Ibid., pp. 464-65.
46. Ibid., pp. 465-66.
47. Mannoni, pp. 61-88.
48. Ibid., p. 49.

49. The Nigger of the "Narcissus" (New York, 1951), p. 18.
50. Mannoni, p. 47.
51. Ibid., p. 113.
52. Ibid., p. 111.
53. An Outcast of the Islands (New York, 1964). Throughout my text page references to this edition are given in parentheses.
54. Mannoni, p. 114.
55. "Author's Note," An Outcast of the Islands, p. vii.
56. Letter to Marguerite Poradowska, February 18, 1894, Letters to Marguerite Poradowska, pp. 65-66.
57. Letter to Marguerite Poradowska, April 24, 1894, Ibid., p. 63.
58. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 21.
59. "Author's Note," An Outcast of the Islands, p. viii.
60. In the Author's Notes to both Almayer's Folly (p. vii-viii) and An Outcast of the Islands (p. viii) Conrad vehemently denies being an "exotic" writer.
61. Moser, "Afterword," An Outcast of the Islands, p. 280.
62. "Author's Note," An Outcast of the Islands, p. ix. It is particularly significant that a Pole who never lost his accent should identify the prototype for Willems as a "man who had forgotten how to speak" and then punish the character he identified with his own rebellion by seeing to it that he loses the ability to speak. Works like "Amy Foster" also use a language barrier to explore alienation, and Conrad's use of language becomes even more complex in Heart of Darkness when the words of the pretentious white rulers become jibberish in the jungle.
63. "Author's Note," An Outcast of the Islands, p. vii.
64. Ibid.
65. Author's note entitled "To My Readers in America," The Nigger of the "Narcissus", p. xxxiii.
66. The colonists of Heart of Darkness "tear treasure out of the bowels of the earth" (p. 99) and Marlow attempts

to rescue Kurtz "as though he were an enchanted princess sleeping in a fabulous castle." (p. 114).

67. Nostromo: A Tale of the Seaboard (New York, 1951). Throughout my text page references to this edition are given in parentheses.

68. The Amiel epigraph to the 1895 edition (London) of Almayer's Folly also stresses the theme of an exile from Eden: "Qui de nous n'a eu sa terre promise, son jour d'extase, et sa fin en exil."

69. Moser, Joseph Conrad, pp. 60, 150.

70. Hay, p. 105.

71. The confusion between the ship and the colony in The Rescue reveals the essential similarity between Conrad's two great themes. Not only is Lingard's colony "the circle of another existence, governed by his impulse, nearer his desire," (p. 99) his brig is also a kingdom where "his will was its will, his thought was its impulse, his breath was the breath of its existence." (p. 11). In fact, the same terms are used in Lord Jim when we are told that in Patusan Jim's word was "the one truth of every passing day." (p. 166). Although Zabel oversimplifies the problem when he discusses the similarity between Conrad's native world and the sea (the native world is not simply an "exotic jungle"; it is specifically a colony), he is correct in perceiving that both are described in terms of a mysterious night passage that poses a threat to fidelity, and that both offered Conrad an escape from reality for the man and a way beyond realism for the writer. ("Introduction," "The Shadow-Line" and Two Other Tales, pp. 8-13).

72. The Rescue M.S. Quoted in Moser, Joseph Conrad, p. 153.

73. In "A Smile of Fortune," Conrad's most curious potpourri of Oedipal themes, "a sort of shady, intimate understanding" (56) is established between the pure young captain and an impure older man. Again the father attempts to use a young man to get rid of an illegitimate daughter and/or uses his daughter to destroy a young man. (An Arrow of Gold has the same fairy tale father who uses the princess to lure young men on to losing their heads.) Even the Eden motif is repeated with potatoes as love apples and another son, failing to rescue the princess, discovers that he is less than a man. More curiously, "A Smile of Fortune" is set on the "Tempest" island of Victory where the rescue is enacted by another hero unmanned by his father. And, even more curiously, the black child motif is displaced onto the Captain's brother who conceals an illegitimate mulatto son,

and here there is open talk of "parricide" (p. 39). "A Smile of Fortune," Twixt Land and Sea (New York, 1912).

74. To complicate matters further, Cornelius often appears as Jim's brother and rival for the father's (Stein's) favors in a relationship like that of Almayer and Willems. For this sort of brother rivalry we might look to the steady Bobrowski's bitter remarks about attractive, irresponsible brother-in-law who was, in part, responsible for the death of his sister. Conrad was raised on them.

75. "Author's Note," Victory, xvii.

76. "Author's Note," An Outcast of the Islands, viii.

77. Ibid., x.

78. Conrad, A Personal Record, pp. 144-45.

79. Burke, Attitudes Toward History (New York, 1936), II, 215.

80. Jean-Aubry, I, 141.

81. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 41.

82. Ibid., p. 35.

83. Ibid., p. 33.

84. Conrad shared Marlow's "regular dose of the East" (Heart of Darkness, p. 70). His correspondence is filled with reports on his health and critics like Frederick Crews have stressed this hypochondria ("Conrad's Uneasiness--And Ours," p. 46).

85. Conrad, A Personal Record, pp. 114-115.

86. Baines, Joseph Conrad, pp. 100-01.

87. Conrad, "Preface," The Nigger of the "Narcissus", p. xxxviii.

88. Crews, "Conrad's Uneasiness--And Ours," pp. 55-60.

89. Philip Mason, "Foreword," Prospero and Caliban by Otto Mannoni, pp. 10-11 (note).

90. Albert J. Guerard, Conrad the Novelist (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), pp. 37-44.

91. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 1.

92. Conrad, The Nigger of the "Narcissus", p. 101.
93. Ibid., p. 100.
94. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 10.
95. In a letter to Edward Garnett (May 12, 1927) Conrad contends that Dostoyevski "is too Russian for me. It sounds like some fierce mouthings from prehistoric ages." (Jean-Aubry, II, 140).
96. H. R. Lenormand, "Note Sur Un Séjour En Corse," La Nouvelle Revue Française, December 1, 1924, 666. Quoted in Bernard Meyer, Joseph Conrad: A Psychoanalytic Biography (Princeton, 1967), p. 10.
97. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 10.
98. Quoted in Zabel, p. 12.
99. Letter to Edward Garnett (November 12, 1900), Jean-Aubry, I, 299.
100. Letter to Edward Garnett, November 12, 1900, Jean-Aubry, I, 299.
101. Conrad, "Books," Notes on Life and Letters, p. 7.
102. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 162.
103. Letter to Marguerite Poradowska (March 29 or April 5, 1894), Letters of Joseph Conrad to Marguerite Poradowska, p. 64.
104. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 18.
105. Conrad, "Poland Revisited," p. 202.
106. Conrad, "Preface," Nigger of the "Narcissus", p. xxix.
107. Ibid., p. xxx.
108. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 178.
109. Letter from Arthur Rimbaud to Paul Demeny (May 15, 1871), Rimbaud: Complete Works, Selected Letters, Translation, Introduction and Notes by Wallace Fowlie (Chicago, 1967), p. 307.
110. Conrad, "An Outpost of Progress," p. 189.
111. Letter to E. L. Sandison (October 12, 1899), Jean-Aubry, I, 283.

112. "Marlow and Conrad," "Heart of Darkness" and the Critics, ed. Bruce Harkness (California, 1960), p. 135.

113. Conrad, Nigger of the "Narcissus", p. 155.

114. Conrad, Under Western Eyes (New York, 1963), p. 1.

115. Letter to E. L. Sandison (October 12, 1899), Jean-Aubry, I, 283.

116. Quoted in Zabel, p. 11.

117. In a Letter to Galsworthy (February 11, 1899) Conrad described James admiringly as "civilized": "He does not deal in primitive emotions." (Jean-Aubry, I, 271).

118. Letter to Edward Garnett (November 12, 1900), Jean-Aubry, I, 298.

119. "It is certain my conviction gains infinitely, the moment another soul will believe in it."

120. Dorothy Van Ghent, The English Novel: Form and Function (New York, 1961), p. 231.

121. Guerard, p. 145.

122. Van Ghent, p. 232.

123. Ibid., p. 235.

124. Ibid., p. 231.

125. Morf observes that Korzeniowski identified his melancholy philosophy with Shakespeare's (pp. 35-36), and notes that in "Gaspar Ruiz" Conrad describes his father's conviction that "man fires, but God carries the bullet" is "piously atrocious": "It would indeed be an inconsistent occupation for the Guardian of the poor, and the helpless, to carry the bullet, for instance, into the heart of a father." In considering the heroic performances of heroes like Nostromo and Jim we should also consider Korzeniowski's taste for self-dramatizing heroics. A letter written by Korzeniowski after his wife's death reveals the sort of thing Conrad grew up with: "I know I have not suffered and never could suffer like our Saviour, but then I am only a human being . . . For the momento mori we have the grave of our dear one, and every letter which reaches us is the equivalent of a day of fasting, a hair shirt or a discipline . . . I see what Dante did not describe, for his soul, appalled tho it was, was too Christian to harbour inhuman visions. Such is our life." (January 18, 1866, Jean-Aubry, I, 16.).

126. After writing this I discovered Frederick Crews's remarks on the confessional bond between author and reader. The literary process, Crews contends, is not simply the release of author and reader, but a "transitory complicity" in which "the two seek acquittal from fantasy charges." Swift "implicates us in his aggression" and Stendhal "admits to hypocrisy, while forcing our agreement that this is the way of the world." Moreover, "an author often places the reader in the role of parent and begs his absolution.": "by mixing oblique confession with a reassertion of commitment to decency and reality and beauty, and by involving the reader in everything he discloses, the author claims the right to be accepted as he is." This is the sort of relationship Conrad appears to be internalizing in Marlow and Jim. The reader, identifying with Marlow, is forced not only to share Jim's fantasy, but to embrace Conrad's attitude toward his guilty desires. Responsibility is diffused and Conrad exonerated. ("Anaesthetic Criticism," Out of My System, p. 85).

127. See note 21.

128. Van Ghent, p. 229.

129. Crews, "Conrad's Uneasiness--And Ours," p. 46.

130. Van Ghent, p. 227.

131. Zabel, p. 11.

132. Whatever Conrad's use of the imperial metaphor contributed to modern novelistic technique grew out of his need to deal with his conflicts in novels. The world as a hallucinatory projection of the hero's dreams, the action that strips away that illusion, the dissolution of form and language in the jungle, the arduous exploration of the ambiguity of reality, and the narrator who mediates between reality and the dangerous isolation of the dream--all grew out of Conrad's need to tell the story of the outcast in the jungle, but Conrad's outcast in the jungle is Conrad.

133. Guerard, p. 178.

134. John A. Palmer, Joseph Conrad: A Study in Literary Growth (Ithaca, 1968), p. 162.

135. Hay, p. 175.

136. F. R. Leavis, The Great Tradition: A Study of the English Novel (New York, 1954), p. 243.

137. Ibid.

138. Palmer, p. 164.

139. Leavis, p. 238.
140. Ibid., p. 243.
141. Guerard, p. 178.
142. Warren, p. ix.
143. Hay, p. 177.
144. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 162.
145. Joseph Warren Beach, The Twentieth Century Novel: Studies in Technique (New York, 1960), p. 365.
146. Zabel, p. 42.
147. Guerard, p. 210.
148. "Author's Note," Nostromo, p. 4.
149. Hay, p. 178.
150. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 35.
151. "Author's Note," Nostromo, p. 4.
152. Irving Howe, Politics and the Novel, p. 17.
153. Ibid.
154. Letter to Ernst Bendz (March 7, 1923), Jean-Aubry, II, 296.
155. Hodges, p. 161.
156. Hay, p. 177. In an attempt to make all Conrad's novels "political" Eliose Hay contends that even in works like The Nigger of the "Narcissus" and The Secret Sharer "nearly all his principal characters fall into situations where their personal action or thought is challenged by public forces with which they are incompatible . . . and they end, like Lord Jim and Razumov, by giving up the struggle for their private causes and standing for judgment before the common conscience of their readers." (p. 177). This is curious, not only because there is some question whether Jim's death ends or affirms his private cause, and because the bond between Jim and the reader is as much a means of gaining absolution for self-assertion as it is a means of submission to society, but because Hay herself later distinguishes novels of "private sensibility" from "political novels" like Lord Jim because Jim asserts himself over society and fate. (177) Apparently it is not easy to define a "political" novel.

157. Palmer, pp. 159-162.

158. Ibid., p. 160.

159. Irving Howe, p. 178.

160. In A Personal Record Conrad caustically quotes Marcus Aurelius's "Let all thy words have the accent of heroic truth," adding that it was all very fine for an Emperor to give "grandiose advice," but "most working truths of the earth are humble not heroic." (p. 3). Apparently Conrad's "few simple ideas" were his answer to the grandiose words of his father, the poet-hero.

161. "Author's Note," Nostromo, p. 6.

162. In a letter to Edward Garnett (January 20, 1900) Conrad describes his father as a man of "great sensibilities"; of "exalted and dreamy temperament" and "gloomy religiousness" degenerating after the death of his wife into "mysticism touched with despair." (Jean-Aubry, I, 292.)

163. Moser, "Afterword," An Outcast of the Islands, p. 280.

164. "His unusual appearance, his originality, and his gifts attracted the women--everybody knows how much women are interested in anything out of the ordinary." (Bobrowski's memoirs, quoted in Morf, p. 25.)

165. The conjunction between action and illusion was not a paradox to the rebellious son of an idealistic hero. Certainly Decoud and Gould's paradoxical descriptions of action are echoed throughout Conrad's work. In The Secret Agent Conrad describes the anarchist Professor as seeking "the peace of soothed vanity" (p. 77); in "Autocracy and War" Conrad writes: "Action, in which is to be found the illusion of a mastered destiny can alone satisfy our uneasy vanity and lay to rest the haunting fear of the future." (Notes on Life and Letters, p. 145.)

166. Even the rivalry between Gould and the father-god Holroyd is a conflict between youth and age: "The audacity of youth reckons on what it fancies an unlimited time," but to be a millionaire "is like being eternally young." (p. 352). It is difficult to understand why Guerard should feel that Nostromo's psychology is "classical rather than Freudian" ("reason and folly play a larger part than unconscious or half-conscious compulsion" [p. 177]), or why Baines should feel that "there is a total absence of any significant relationship between father and son in Conrad's work." (Joseph Conrad, p. 154.).

167. Paradise of Snakes: An Archetypal Analysis of Conrad's Political Novels (Chicago, 1967), pp. 59-60.

168. Hodges, p. 161.
169. Warren, p. xxxv.
170. Wiley, p. 99.
171. Palmer, p. 161.
172. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 48.
173. Morf, p. 144.
174. Warren, pp. xxxi-xxxii; Guerard, p. 198.
175. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 160.
176. "Author's Note," Nostromo, p. 1.
177. Ibid., p. 3.
178. Irving Howe, Politics and the Novel, p. 105.
179. Conrad, A Personal Record, p. 35.
180. Frederick R. Karl feels that the resemblance to The Tempest is "not fortuitous"; however, Karl does not understand why Conrad's Prospero is powerless. A Reader's Guide to Joseph Conrad (New York, 1969), p. 253.
181. Arthur Symons, The Symbolist Movement in Literature (New York, 1958), p. 21. Symons is my source for information about Axel because Symons and Conrad were personal friends. Conrad wrote to Symons in 1907 thanking him for a favorable review and they met in 1911. Symons, Notes on Joseph Conrad With Some Unpublished Letters (New York, 1971), pp. 13-15. Conrad may have read Symons's articles on French symbolists like Villiers and Rimbaud when they appeared between 1895 and 1898 (Richard Ellman, "Introduction" The Symbolist Movement in Literature, pp. xii-xiii); and his book on symbolism when it appeared in 1899. He was certainly familiar with Symons's work by the time he wrote Nostromo and Victory.
182. Crews, "Conrad's Uneasiness--And Ours," pp. 51-53.
183. Ibid., p. 52.
184. "Author's Note," Victory, p. ix.
185. "Author's Note to the First Edition," Victory, p. vii.
186. "Author's Note," Victory, pp. ix-xi.
187. Ibid., p. xv.

188. Ibid., p. xvii.

189. Ibid.

190. A letter to Edward Garnett (September 17, 1895) reveals Conrad at his most irritatingly coy. After announcing the murder of Willems (i.e. the completion of An Outcast of the Islands) Conrad describes Almayer's carping about the funeral arrangements: "he made me perfectly wretched with his grumbling about the expenses connected with the sad event and by his unfeeling remarks on the deceased's little failings." (Jean-Aubry, I, 179).

191. "Author's Note," Victory, p. xvii.

III. Rudyard Kipling: The Child as King

Here the problem is coming to terms with a beautiful book like Kim in the face of Boris Ford's accusation that Kipling lacks "warm-blooded feeling,"¹ or Edmund Wilson's contention that "the whole work of Kipling's life is to be shot through with hatred,"² or Robert Buchanan's reference to "all that is most retrograde and savage in the restless and uninstructed Hooliganism of the time."³ It's difficult to argue. Pages of equally blistering attacks might follow, and pages more, to confirm the harshest accusations of bigotry, in Kipling's own voice--"Your new caught, sullen peoples, / Half devil and half child."⁴

More recently, however, scholarship has been trying to justify a less damning appraisal. Now Alan Sandison describes Kipling's imperialism as a "metaphor" for an existential situation,⁵ not a political creed, and Bonamy Dobree sees Kipling cherishing Empire as "the most superb instrument to cause man to outface the universe, assert himself against vacancy."⁶ Clearly, Kipling tormented by angst would be more acceptable than Kipling the arrogant Jingo, so now there is a possibility that even God will forgive him for writing so well; but unfortunately, Kipling's fear of chaos won't quite cover everything, and the best

intentioned apologists are often forced into some pretty awkward equivocations when actually confronting the text. Elliot Gilbert, writing a book called The Good Kipling, even comes up with a good Kipling whose patronizing snobbery is really "no more than a kind of (grossly, of course) exaggerated impatience with those who have not fully achieved themselves . . . And if he spoke of lesser breeds, he clearly had in mind the sort of breeding which, in his mind, men and women--as well as works of art--can achieve by implementing the Law they discover in and for themselves."⁷

Of course Kipling was concerned with self-realization, but Benita Parry is quick to point out that the self-realization that shaped his vision is the singularly one sided self-realization of British whiteness;⁸ of course, Kipling was controlling chaos, but he controlled it with unpleasant ferocity. And it is this characteristic ferocity that becomes a problem when we examine the remarkable Kim. How then did that surly prophet of the sahib's code suddenly come to write a wonderful fantasy of interracial love in which a symbolically half-caste child literally crosses beyond the pale to become an agent of redemption?

At this point it is tempting to dissolve into lyricism about such a lovely book and to forget that its very sweetness is a fascinating critical problem. Even Kipling felt a need to explain that his "Daemon" wrote Kim, not himself,⁹ and scholarship tends to handle his disquieting conversion by veering to unreasonable extremes. Thus, critics like

Rao, Thompkins, and Carrington read a work free of conflict, evil, or latent tragedy¹⁰--while Wilson, Parry, and Raskin, seemingly more tough minded, refuse to be taken in by the pretty evasions used to conceal the "stealth and cynicism of the Great Game."¹¹

Edmund Wilson is characteristic of the righteous sceptics offended by Kim's commitment to imperial service: "Now what the reader tends to expect is that Kim will come eventually to realize that he is delivering into bondage to the British invaders those whom he has always considered his own people, and that a struggle between allegiances will result." Kipling has established a contrast between East and West, but "the parallel lines never meet; the alternating attractions felt by Kim never give rise to a genuine struggle. And the climax itself is double; the adventures of the lama and Kim simply arrive at different consummations, without any final victory or synthesis ever being allowed to take place."¹² If Wilson sees a political sell-out, Benita Parry is equally upset by a "travesty" of the Indian religion in which Kim has been a votary. At the conclusion Kim gets to become a spy by his own worldly skill, and wins Paradise through the Lama's intercession. This, "the final irony," is a mockery of the Lama's innocence and his love for Kim.¹³

Surely some sort of righteous indignation can be expected when dealing with such emotionally loaded issues; still, a work worthy of attention is worthy of responsive

attention, and here the critics' own political and moral values have been carried into the work to distort its unique terms and values. Wilson's, in fact, is not only an error of insensitivity, it is also a distortion of the plot. No attentive reader expects a "struggle of allegiances" because the problem hasn't been set up that way.

Kim is never asked to choose a political creed; he doesn't think about the matter at all. Imperialism as a way of life is never questioned; it is the moral system, to be accepted as a given, that governs his particular world. Indeed, the term "Great Game," consistently misunderstood as political imperialism, can be clarified by an address to college students in which Kipling referred to "the first rush of the great game of Life."¹⁴ The Great Game refers to life itself, and the action of the novel is to teach Kim the rules of that game--to teach him how to grow up.

Kim is really an old-fashioned Bildungsroman that conducts a boy through the rebellions of youth to manhood, where he recognizes and is recognized by society; and manhood, in this case, is identified with being a Sahib, a white man capable and worthy of responsible rule. The problem then becomes more complex when Kipling identifies the rebellions of youth with the black world of India--the mysticism of the Lama and the subversive secrets of the bazaar--until finally a love that crosses caste, and a passage from blackness to whiteness, not only resolves the ambivalence of growing up, it reconciles the opposing worlds.

In effect, the "imperialism" of Kim has been abstracted to its fundamental symbolic action as a ritual to control disorder, and the political and social relationships between ruler and ruled are being used to resolve problems of power and self control. Kim has no political motives; he, and Kipling, have emotional needs. They need to contain the barbarians outside the border in order to contain the disorder in themselves. Thus, a black-white child crossing Anglo-Indian barriers acts out forbidden dreams of exploring the world beyond social rules, but rebellion is transmuted into acceptance and purified when it is turned to an adult vocation in the service of order and social reconciliation. In these terms Kim of the Rishti, the half-caste spy and Little Friend of All the World and Friend of the Stars, is not a sell-out, but a synthesis that admits and resolves conflict.

Neither is there any question about choosing an identity. Kim never decides to become a Sahib; he discovers that he is one. He always bears his destiny in his whiteness, and in the amulet his father prophesied "would yet make little Kimbell a man." (4)¹⁵ Those magic papers--a birth certificate, and that mysterious document, the "ne varietur" (4) --explicitly insist that destiny cannot be altered.¹⁶ Indeed, the book continues to reaffirm Kim's identity. Even his secret passwords proclaim: "The pedigree of the white stallion is fully established." (26)

Nor does Kim "renounce" the ways of the East. There

has never been any question of a spiritual vocation for Kim because he is the son of a Sahib, but reconciliation is precisely the strategy here. Road and River are never in conflict; they are alternate ways in a world where all roads lead "to the feet of the One" (223) and the road is "a broad, smiling river of life" (74). Kim, playing his game, is a child embarking upon life as a Sahib, while the Lama, on his quest, is an old priest preparing to be free of it. Once Kim renounces the freedom of youth, he must assume his rightful place as an actor, not a seeker. Kim tries to evade responsibility, preferring the games of black street urchins and trips with the Lama, but when the time comes his knowledge of the secrets of the bazaar and the wisdom of the other world will merge to make sahibdom more acceptable.

Thus Kim passes through a series of identity crises framed literally as rebirths, and he asks, again and again, "Who is Kim?" (223, 141) but the quest is never a search for faith or self-knowledge. He simply wants to know who he is so he won't be "alone--one person--in the middle of it all." (269) Kim is involved with the world; he isn't interested in knowing very much about himself. In Kipling, the important thing is always finding one's proper vocation and gaining the skills required to handle it. That is what the book is about.

Action and contemplation are found equally worthy in a work which transmutes interracial conflict to effect

union on the level of symbolic mergers. In the particular vocabulary of a book where roads are rivers, a spy is a link, not an agent of a repressive political force, and Kim's mission can become a priesthood of another sort. Black and White, River and Road, Quest and Game--all the opposing forces in Kim's India--are caught up in the curious friendship between a boy and a lama. In their wonderful passage across India and Kim's own passage to manhood, the opposing worlds assume each other's qualities until even sahibdom has been redefined. In lieu of Wilson's parallel lines, the Yin-Yang symbol more accurately describes this regenerative interaction of conflict.

Now, to accept Kim's vocation and the Lama's as equally worthy the reader must, to some extent, suspend the values of social reality as he perceives them and respond to the special politics of this fictional India. We must be prepared to follow as Kipling identifies growing up with political intrigue, and even further when political intrigue becomes identified with a quest for sanctity. Clearly this is quite a handful. Even when we have responded to the special magic of the book there is always the danger of drawing back at the conclusion and asking what Kim is actually going to be doing with his life. However, the wonder of the book is precisely this--that it does force us to accept situations that are essentially repugnant, that it is a beautiful book which skirts an ugly subject, and that it worked for Kipling because he believed almost

devoutly in all those ugly assumptions. Kipling could believe that being a white ruler was a particularly fine thing because barbaric forces always threaten our borders and the task of a white man is to contain them. The trick, of course, is getting us to accept this conclusion, and the subtlety and complexity with which the strategy is handled must, at least, command our admiration.

If no critical account has made an effort to figure out exactly how it is done, it is because no single account will acknowledge all the problems. Those readers who realize that they have been forced to accept Kim's concession to imperial service may be feeling rather guilty about it. Suspecting that they have been taken in by the artist's sleight of hand, they tend to react by writing angry articles about how the "Lama" has been betrayed,¹⁷ or by pretending that there are no real issues at stake, so it doesn't hurt to enjoy the book.

But the point is that Kim does admit the potentially tragic divisions of interracial conflict, and it attains its transcendent resolution by using, not evading, the terms of imperialism. And Kim is neither a devious tract for a cynical political morality nor a loving travelogue of India with wispy dialogues between a boy and a lama. While Kim succeeds in transforming conflict, it does so by the artist's craft, not by consolatory evasions. Kim gains its peculiar force from the threat of conflict, potential but unrealized. The barbarians usually remain beyond the

borders and the pages of the book, but their blow to the Lama is real, and without this implicit threat Kim would be as vacuuous as some of the critical accounts. The love between Kim and the Lama is remarkable because it implies the possibility of hate; Huck and Jim couldn't have had an idyll on the raft if there hadn't been evil on the shore.

Imperialism, it is true, is seen through a child's eyes as a game; nevertheless, Kipling specifically uses a colonial setting and a relationship that deliberately blasphemes all the values of that world--his values and his readers'. After a lifetime career as haranguing preacher of white supremacy, Kipling wrote a book that violates all its most sacred taboos.

Of course, Kim is not really a half-caste. That would be another story, and Kim of the Rishti is a symbolic strategy, not a recommendation for miscegenation. Nevertheless, those excursions into blackness do come perilously close to the violations of the Sahib's code which threaten the myth of white kingship by admitting that blackness might lie inside white men too. Even the fate of Kim's father who takes up with a native woman and falls into opium addiction and degradation suggests, behind the purity of Kim's fantasy game, the very real danger in crossing the line. Kim, "burned black as any native," (3) mothered by an Indian who passes for a blood relation is, in fact, the child of two white parents. We have some difficulty remembering this, however, because Kim is, in every real sense, a half-caste.

Kipling's other remarks on the subject suggest what a very subversive game he was playing here: "A man should, whatever happens, keep to his own caste, race and breed. Let the White go to the White and the Black to the Black."¹⁸ Introducing the story of a man who might be Kim's father, Kipling writes: "When a man begins to sink in India, and is not sent Home by his friends as soon as may be, he falls very low from a respectable point of view. By the time that he changes his creed, as did McIntosh, he is past redemption."¹⁹ And "Beyond the Pale" is called "the story of a man who wilfully stepped beyond the safe limits of decent everyday society, and paid for it heavily.

"He knew too much in the first instance; and he saw too much in the second. He took too deep an interest in native life; but he will never do so again."²⁰ It is doubtful if Kipling would recommend Kim's education for a real Sahib; Anglo-Indian children, like Kipling himself, were sent home to England precisely to avoid such contamination, and there is no evidence that Kipling disapproved of the theory.

Moreover, innumerable Kipling stories cast out the violators of the Sahib's code who expose the secret blackness of Whites. A wound in the "groin"²¹ is the price of crossing sexual barriers in "Beyond the Pale," and even in the compassionate story, "Without Benefit of Clergy," the interracial love which violates the rules of society and the laws of heaven must be obliterated until not a trace of the unholy liason remains.

In fact, half-castes, in Kipling, are seldom permitted to survive, and when one appears he is a comic butt or a symbol of degradation. Of these "Borderline folk," Kipling writes:

The Black and the White mix very quaintly in their ways. Sometimes the White shows in spurts of fierce, childish pride--which is Pride of Race run crooked--and sometimes the Black in still fiercer abasement and humility, half heathenish customs and strange unaccountable impulses to crime.²²

Of course it is never very difficult to find evidence of racism in Kipling, but it is important to insist that far from evading these issues in Kim, Kipling uses and challenges these very assumptions. In stories like "The Head of the District" Babus are stupid, and their attempts to be anglicized are a subject for ridicule. In Kim, the Babu is not only an intelligent wily hero, but in the subversive darky act he puts on to trick the Russians, he openly uses, and thus mocks, the Anglo-Indian view of the babu as a harmless fool that Kipling himself uses quite seriously elsewhere. But then the strategy, like everything else in this deceptively simple book, becomes even more devious. The white man is not only tricked by his preconception of the native as a fool, but by his assumption that the native is persecuted. As a drunken clown the Babu becomes "thickly treasonous," babbling "tales of oppression and wrong till the tears ran down his cheeks for the miseries of his land." (284) Actually it proves to be a disarming

ploy: when the Russian barbarians infiltrate the border and evil and conflict threaten to enter the book, Kipling introduces the evasion of a dancing clown, much as Twain does in Huckleberry Finn, to parody the serious issues. This, in fact, is the only direct reference in the entire work to the reality of imperialism or the possibility of native dissatisfaction--and we are forced to reject it, along with the Babu's cowardice and humility, as part of the trick. Thus, the arguments have been admitted and harmlessly dispelled.

All that can be said conclusively is that racial attitudes in Kim are far more complex than criticism will admit. Love may cross caste and class, but even here there are traces of Kipling's customary projection of anti-social attractions onto a dark scapegoat, and racial assumptions we would rationally challenge--if we were given a chance. Kim is both black and white, and blackness is accepted as a part of whiteness, but ultimately it is associated with values that must be suppressed. Kim's natural competence is a property of his whiteness; not only does he dominate the native children, but he is obeyed by his native superiors and his paternalistic treatment of the other-worldly Lama is justified. The Babu is an educated ethnologist who still believes in the "Powers of Darkness," (216) Mahbub Ali is suspiciously familiar with the ways of bad women, and Kipling doesn't risk making the Lama truly black. Actually, the Lama is not even Indian, he is safely sexless, and Kipling offers an alternate enemy, "the Russians," to

keep us from examining the issues too closely. Even so, this makes it all more startling that Kipling has been able to use Kim's excursions beyond the pale and the Lama's mystical vision for his fullest and exploration of the tempting dangers he associated with darkness.

For Kipling, crossing the pale had always been an insupportable risk: "A stone's throw out on either hand / From that well ordered road we tread / And all the world is wild and strange."²³ Mystery, when it is permitted in Kipling, creeps in only under cover of horror stories, but in the Anglo-Indian horror stories even the supernatural is explained. When the Sahib's reason is pitted against the inscrutability of India the conclusion is invariably that of the explained mystery which puts the world back in order with the Sahib in control. An imperialist hero tortures a native into exorcising a curse in "The Mark of the Beast" and a pompous Sahib exposes the mystery of the East as a trick done with a telegraph in "In the House of Suddhoo."

But it is precisely because Kipling felt the attraction, as well as the terrors, of the worlds above and beneath society that he used the bi-cultural world of Anglo-India to externalize his duality and chose to defend himself against their tempting dangers by action, reason, and things--the bulwark against chaos dominated by a white king. Furthermore, such kingship in Kipling is predicated on knowing only "as much of India as is good for any man."²⁴ The other world challenges the Sahib's pretensions in the

horror stories much as the world beyond the pale exposes his dark sexuality in the love stories; but in Kim the voice Kipling had to suppress to survive explores the borderline world even at the risk of rendering the imperial posture absurd.

Many of the answers to why such risks were possible can be found in the genre and special tone of the book, and this aspect criticism in general has neglected. Kim is, above all, a children's book, rather than a book about a child, and this determines the values, the tone, and the level of seriousness. A particular sort of innocence informs its vision which makes the moral earnestness of the critics, if not irrelevant, at least absurd. Children are hardly pure and their games channel very real aggression, but it is pointless to scold children for wanting to be King of the Castle. In Kim the political conflicts of grown-ups are reduced to plots and pranks; that doesn't mean we should ignore them, but that we should adjust to their level of intensity. Kim is in the game for the fun of it and rebellious natives are no more important than the boogiemens Russians; they are all there because the game requires a tabooed "it" so the child can be a hero and have secret clubs and codes. Although the game answers all the unattractive human needs expressed seriously in imperialism, it is not quite the same thing as selling the Lama's people into bondage. Furthermore, Kim is innocent. He never truly understands, or at least never talks about, the ultimate reasons for his

espionage, any more than he understands his role in sexual intrigues; he runs errands for adults. This is not only a source of freedom for Kim, but an enormous technical advantage for Kipling.

Kim can be a "Friend to All the World" because this is a world where such things are possible--magic and rebirths and supernatural helpers prepare Kim for his mission, and the whole business can be resolved because it isn't to be taken entirely seriously.-- Love that crosses class and caste is a child-like wish fulfillment, more hoped for than believed, but this level of pretense made it safe for Kipling to explore the tempting dangers of the area beyond action. In Kim, the realm beyond is associated with the Lama and his mythic river, rituals are the harmless mumbo jumbo Kipling loved, and demons are reduced to the mock boogiemen of Lurgan's tricks with mirrors--just enough to scare a child.

The needs that dictate the values of the work are also those of a child. Children's fiction in general is organized around the desire to escape authority and the opposing need to compromise for safety and love, and Kim, in particular, is part of a specific tradition of children's fiction that had begun to blossom at the end of the Victorian era. After the Romantics had invented the innocent child and a rigid Victorian middle class brought him to power, the conflict between the dream of innocence and the naughty need to escape social restrictions produced dozens of these fantasy journeys. Not fairy tale heroes, but ordinary

children, travel into magic lands with wonderful foster parents. The Little Lamé Prince, The Water Babies, At the Back of the North Wind, Alice in Wonderland, even Peter Pan--all manage to get their digs in at society and a mitigating two-world vision at the end. That these children journeyed beyond society at a time when their parents were using the imperialist escape might be another issue; however, Kim at least, retells that fantasy journey in the specific terms of a nineteenth-century child of Empire.

For this reason Kim's compromise ending must be read as a particular sort of fantasy common to children's fiction,²⁵ not a political betrayal. The ordained Sahib-spy satisfies the form and emotional demands of the genre because the rebellions of growing up must be channeled into the socially acceptable, and the compromise is no more a betrayal than it is in the other books Kipling wrote for children. Mogli also enjoys the forbidden freedom of the jungle with wonderful fantasy parents, but he too must return to his people and his natural position of power: "The Master of the Jungle must return to Man."²⁶ Not only do we have the joy of license, but purification too. Mowgli will be a better forest ranger because he can use his knowledge of beasts to control them, just as Kim will be a better ruler. The ending is sad, but hardly cynical; it simply admits that we have to grow up: "'It is hard to cast the skin,' said Kaa."²⁷ Similarly, the insufferable rich kid of Captains Courageous is reborn on a fishing boat with a new father

who initiates him into the skill and wisdom of manhood. For a time the work seems to revel in freedom from society and position, but again the hero returns to his real father and proper role as the fishing fleet's owner--albeit a better boss for his knowledge of the other half of the world. Stalky and Co., though odious, operates in much the same fashion, turning the aggression of schoolboys to the service of the Empire.

Although the formula cannot account for a transcendence untouched in other works, Kim responds to the same needs using the terminology of Empire. An imperialist child might chose to rebel by sneaking into bazaars, speaking Hindustani, and finding a better parent in an Indian--and his fantasy might also end with having it both ways as a Sahib-spy with a mission.

But just as much as the escape and return, the incredible power of the child seems to mark a work as children's fiction. Of course, it's his fantasy that allows him to be King of the Castle; he makes up the rules and he gets all the good lines. Furthermore, his very borderline state is the source of his power. In growing up the child does have access to both worlds. He can cross over into the magic realm where parents cannot come; he understands the language of the animals, so he finds the magic sword and slays the dragon, and the fantasy always ends with the love and gratitude of grown-ups--"Without you we could never have . . ." None of this really happens at home where growing up is painful,

the child is powerless, and the rules of adulthood are inexplicable.

Kim is the King of the Castle in the game he is playing on the opening page, and the whole book adapts this heroic fantasy to the relationships of imperial rule. Kim's India is really that childhood dream world peopled by creatures of the imagination who do our bidding, and this determines its use of the social context. When Kim sits astride the gun, he rules not only because the gun is the "conqueror's loot" (3), he rules because it is his fantasy. Thus the book dwells on how useful a child can be in getting behind enemy lines, and it lovingly reports every word uttered in his praise: "The only boy I could not make see things" (207): "You are the first that ever saved himself" (186); "Kim stole out as away, as unremarkable a figure as ever carried his own and a few score thousand other folk's fate slung around his own neck." (44)

The critic's objections to Kim's power and the author's patronizing attitude towards the Indian characters miss the point. It is true that Indians, though clever, kind, or sublimely wise, are drawn to a less than human scale; however, this is part of the strategy. In Kim the universe is created just the right size for a white child in India. It is the world Kipling remembered from his childhood where the amah is beloved, but still slightly smaller than the white master. After all, the colonial child really was a king in India. "Tod's Amendment" stresses his amazing

power as a "buffer" between master and servants and an "idol" to both: "So Tod had honor in the land from Boileaugunge to Chota Simla, and ruled justly according to his lights."²⁸

The nature of Kim's world and his fate seems to have been determined by Kipling's own childlike need for approval and an orderly world he could control. This is why Kipling's imperialism was always a kind of children's game with good guys and bad guys, secret societies, rituals, passwords, codes, and taboos; and this may be the real source of his appeal for an age whose need to control savages in strange places were the needs of a frightened child trying to come to terms with the inexplicable. In any event, it is because imperialism filled Kipling's needs as the game of kingship fills the child's that he was able to capture the natural simplicity of the child's eye view, without even bending.

All of Kim is the most childish game of "pretend"--and all the mumbo jumbo of the spy racket, the deliberate silliness of the secret rites, and Kim's boyish pleasure in skill and praise, never diminish, but rather enhance the genuine seriousness of the book. Precious few adults have ever been able to write children's books that do not condescend, but reach the child's world by working from symbolic equivalents in the adult unconscious, and it shouldn't be paradoxical that these--books like Huckleberry Finn and Kim--are precisely the children's books that are read by adults.

Finally, the most critical aspect of children's fiction

is that it takes place in a world without sex. It is really because Kim is set in the presexual Eden of our fantasies of childhood that it can evade the menacing problems of Black-White relations. This is the time Kipling describes in his autobiography when "below the age of caste," he could hold his servant's hand in a Hindu temple of "friendly gods."²⁹

A world without women is also the prerequisite for the interracial idylls Leslie Fiedler finds in the American novel,³⁰ and the promise of friendship in all colonial fiction crashes on the inevitable sexual threat--without Adela, Aziz and Fielding could have been friends. Kipling too is explicit: "But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth, / When two strong men stand face to face,"³¹ Women present too many problems.

This, of course, is why Kim must refuse to make love to the native woman--not, as Wilson suggests, because he is a racist snob.³² Adult sexuality would throw all the values of this world off kilter and introduce another kind of problem. Still, Kim's meeting with the Woman of Shamlegh is certainly a disquieting foray into the dangers that lie beyond the book, with the attraction of darkness, and the possibility of a fate like that of Kim's father. Significantly, the scene occurs at the moment Kim first asserts his manhood by kicking an enemy in the "groin" (293) and by firing a gun, and it toys dangerously with sexual innuendo. Thus, Kim writes the message that the woman will

carry in "gross Shikast--the script that bad little boys use when they write dirt on the walls," (305) and he admits to being a Sahib and a sexual male by kissing her in unasiatic fashion. In approaching the subject that has been carefully avoided, the episode points to a time when Kim will have to be white, when there can be no more trips with the Lama, and when his rebellious desires will no longer be innocent; but, like the matter of Kim's profession as an adult, this issue culminates beyond the pages of the book. For the time being, Kim steadfastly rejects temptation, calls the woman "sister," (306) describes himself as a "priest," (305) deliberately misunderstands her seductions, and uses the walnut to send a spy message. Then he complains: "How can a man follow the Way or the Great Game when he is eternally pestered by women?" (307)

The rejection of women is also necessary to fulfill Kim's quest: "priests" must remain pure because celibacy is a prerequisite for the hero's union with the father in all mythic quests. Thus, the Woman of Shamlegh appears as the eternal temptress who must be rejected, and we are told that "Huneefa and her likes destroyed kings" (213): "Most true it is in the Great Game, for it is by means of woman that all plans come to ruin and we lie out in the dawning with our throats cut." (213) Woman as forbidden mother, witch and temptress is later opposed by the Sahiba, the good earth mother, but she also reminds us that there are two kinds of women--"those who take the strength out of

a man and those who put it back. Once I was that one, and now I am this." (329) Even the test sentence stresses this danger: "It was cooked by a woman, and perhaps it is bad for your caste" (220).

Of course, Kipling's private feelings about women may also play a part. Since The Kipling woman--"a rag and a bone and a hank of hair"³³--is generally a vampire who threatened male unity, distracts men from their mission, and doesn't belong in the barracks, Kim's confusing objection that he isn't being treated like a man when distracted from his mission may really be Kipling's own boyish confusion. Men are supposed to play the Great Game: only sissies play with girls.

But Kim is not only a children's book that operates outside the threats of adult reality, it is also a world of myth and fairy tale where resolutions are achieved by magic, and a work of art which performs its own sort of magic with patterns and symbols and words. Far from being "nakedly picaresque and plotless"³⁴ as Kipling disarmingly suggests, Kim is really very carefully structured to bring its hero through divergence to sahibdom. Thus the action of the novel is essentially a series of initiation rites whereby Kim passes from the Game to the Quest in a resolution between them. Indeed, the rebirth of the ordained spy is explicitly presented as a mythic initiation of the hero, and we might even check off the key stages of Joseph Campbell's monomyth and find the withdrawal, trials,

meeting with the magna mater and return to infantile bliss, a woman that must be rejected, and finally, an apotheosis and the hero's return empowered to teach the message of the two worlds.³⁵

Kipling was probably recreating the heroic initiation consciously as well as by working from heroic fantasies in his unconscious. Not only was he a Mason³⁶ who had these terms close at hand, but he was deliberately glorifying Kim's mission by analogy with the story of the Buddha. When the Lama and the Keeper of the Images study the stages of the Buddha's quest at the beginning of the book, they are establishing the model for Kim's. The Lama repeatedly compares himself and his Chela to the Lord and Ananda, and then Kim undergoes the tests and assumes the qualities associated with the Buddha. The Buddha also wandered as a beggar and struggled against the forces of evil, desire, and power. His triumph was also signaled by the appearance of a woman bearing food, and he was finally united with the earth goddess, as Kim is, in the dust. Even the justification for Kim's return to action is the Buddha's renunciation of asceticism and bliss for participation in the world.³⁷

Actually Benita Parry is needlessly disturbed by the distortions necessary for this resolution. Buddhism, she admits, accepts the way of action as well as of contemplation, but it insists that such action be disinterested, and Kim's fate is hardly what was intended.³⁸ No, a spy certainly isn't a good Buddhist, but Kipling wasn't writing the book

on Indian religion that Parry is reading. Buddhism, like imperialism, is transformed to suit the terms of the book, and much is made of the disinterested, even religious, nature of Kim's final commitment. When Kim is assigned the role of "teacher" (340) at the conclusion, the fact that he is a teacher of imperialism doesn't negate the obvious analogy to the Buddha.

If this terminology begins to sound rather heavy for a children's book, the more domestic terms of the fairy tale might be more appropriate. Certainly Kim resembles the humble child of fairy tales who wins his fortune in the great world, and his quest as a spy fits Auden's account of the quest of the fairy tale hero.³⁹ Kim also searches for a magical object that has fallen into the possession of evil forces; through the restoration of the secret papers he can conquer the dragon Russians, and the attainment of this goal is the prerequisite for manhood. In his task Kim is assisted by magic helpers: a wise old Lama, a sorcerer named Lurgan who gives him charms to slay the dragon, an old witch who offers "the protection of the road," (214) even a shape-changing beast called the Babu. And just as in myths and fairy tales, the guides who appear to aid Kim are the fathers and mothers of dreams; Mahbub Ali, called "father" (212); the Lama, both "father and mother" (201); and Creighton, whose interest, salacious rumor suggests "was directly paternal." (212) Furthermore, Kim passes the fairy tale hero's traditional test by his readi-

ness to accept help rather than assert his own power, and his willingness to risk failure to help a stranger who later helps him in return. And finally, Kim too is revealed to be of noble birth, reunited with his father, and ordained.

Both myths and fairy tales, Campbell suggests, are concerned with power--either the cosmic striving of the Promethean hero or the powerless child's striving to master adult secrets--but, in both cases, initiation is won through submission.⁴⁰ Kim is also about power--about imperial power and imperial heresy. Thus, Kim's initiation becomes a way of acting out the heroic fantasies of the colonist and the child, while gaining absolution. In effect, ~~Kim~~ moves from the arrogant childlike dream of being King of the Castle, of finding his father's identity and being "made great," (49) to becoming a real hero whose power to redeem the world is won by servitude, discipline, and self-abnegation. He is prepared for his role by lessons in humility, and his triumph, when achieved, is to be reduced to a link on a chain, a number, and thankless responsibility. At the conclusion, Kim's imperialism partakes of the Lama's Buddhism as well as the great Western faiths, and such a resolution almost makes his fate acceptable. But this is far from cynical trickery. There is no reason to doubt the religious nature of Kipling's ideal of Empire or his prayer for humility: "If, drunk with sight of power, we loose / Wild tongues that have not thee in awe . . .

For frantic boast and foolish word-- / Thy mercy on Thy
People, Lord!"⁴¹

Furthermore, the rebirth archetype is a means of working through the emotional crises that accompany change; before Kim can adjust to the rules of grown-up society he has to act out his rebellion, and before he can be a real white king he must accept the black man within him. In these terms, "going native" ritualistically violates the Sahib's code in order to transcend it, and social reconciliation is both a means and a result of coming to terms with the "other."

Even in the opening paragraph Kim is playing king: "In defiance of municipal orders, astride the gun . . . that fire-breathing dragon" (3) Kim assumes his proper position as ruler of the native children; but across from the gun lies the Wonder House, and these are the opposing ways of East and West, Quest and Game, River and Road, that the action will resolve. The epigraph underlines the dichotomy by promising, not simply social resolution through interracial understanding, but even participation in the Mystery to "ye who treat the Narrow Way": "For whoso will, from Pride released, / Contemning neither creed nor piest, / May hear the soul of all the east" (33).

Kim, a dark-skinned English man-child "bearing two faces--and two garbs," (42) combines both worlds and this is the source of his magic. During his "years of indiscretion," (5) however, he chooses the rebellion of darkness,

speaks the vernacular, and keeps Hindu clothes "in a secret place" so that he can become a "low caste street boy" for business or frolic" (6). Missionaries can't see the beauty of this life "wild as that of the Arabian Nights," (5) but Kim lives everyone's dream of evading rules and whiteness. He has access to the wonders of the walled city of Lahore and the illicit secrets of the bazaar; he eats out of "the same dish" as holy men and executes "commissions" for "sleek and shiny young men of fashion: "It was intrigue, of course--he knew that much, as he had known all evil since he could speak--but what he loved was the game for its own sake" (5).

When the Lama arrives he too becomes part of the game. The quest for a Red Bull on a Green Field is, at first, a joke--ridiculously incommensurate with the Lama's sacred mission: "Boylike, if an acquaintance had a scheme, Kim was quite ready with one of his own; and boylike, he had really thought for as much as twenty minutes at a time of his father's prophecy." (21) We aren't expected to take it seriously either. A miraculous birth during an earthquake and confused recollections of his father's opium dreams give rise to the prophecy that "Nine Hundred First-class devils: (4) will claim Kim and "he shall be made great" (49). His "fetish," (136) that red bull, is a misunderstanding of the regimental flag; his "great piece of magic" (4) are legal papers; and his motives are equally dubious. The Lama seeks freedom from the Wheel of Things, from power,

desire, and self; Kim seeks power to control the wheels that run the world. Kim is childishly proud: "Perhaps they will make me a King," (21) but the Lama answers: "I will teach thee other and better desires upon the road" (22). And this is what will happen. When Kim renounces desire, his quest will take on the sanctity of the Lama's; when Kim becomes a Sahib, sahibdom is no longer seen as kingship, but as service.

Meanwhile, the opening chapters introduce the two ways. The Wonder House, under the aegis of Gods and artists, is one kind of temple. When Kim and the Lama pass through its turnstile they cross the threshold into a world where magical resolutions become possible. But the railroad, that mechanized monster of English know-how, becomes another mode of passage, a road that moves. With his marvelous recreation of Indian life on the train, Kipling immediately establishes the tangible world as a temple, and opens the way to seeing the path of action as equally sacramental. The Lama, his eyes on the infinite, never sees these marvels, but we see them along with Kim who is "entirely happy to be out chewing pan and seeing new people in the great good-tempered world," (42) until finally even the Lama comes to understand that "work of the devils" (33) as a "Te-rain that joins friends" (237).

But now the world and the infinite are opposed as the Game and the Quest, and the relationship between them is deliberately incongruous. If the Lama is the wise old man of

Fairy tales, then Mahbub Ali must be its wily trickster; while the Lama, "not--I think of this world," (43) is Kim's guide to the realm beyond India, Mahbub Ali, very much of the world, is Kim's guide to the seamier underside. Now the Game is as much a travesty of the Quest as Kim is a travesty of a hero. Like the Lama, to whom Kim is an appointed chela, Mahbub Ali sees Kim as "sent from heaven," (28) but in this case, he wins his appointed role for his less than holy ability to "lie like an oriental" (29) and because the Lama's innocent pilgrimage can be used as a cover. Certainly, the relationship looks a little dubious, but we are not expected to question it or even, at the moment, to take it seriously. After the alternatives are introduced, each will be developed separately until they can be resolved. The first, significantly, is that of Sahib.

The lines to the "Prodigal Son" preface these chapters and establish our consent when Kim is claimed by his father's regiment: "Here I come to my own again-- / Fed, forgiven, and known again" (94). Even the Lama agrees with the white Chaplain's "Once a Sahib is always a Sahib" (107): "He must go back to his own people" (110). Naturally, the path to adult responsibility is not taken without a struggle; however, Kim's resistance now does not suggest a denial of his identity nor a spiritual vocation. He simply wants to be with the Lama because he is worried about him and because he wants to get away from "the very school and discipline he had spent two-thirds of his young life in avoiding" (120).

Like many heroes, Kim tries to reject the burden of the call: "I wish I did not come here to find the Red Bull and all that sort of thing. I do not want it" (110). But his denial here is quite different than his denial at the conclusion.

The burden of adult responsibility is further stressed in the epigraph to the chapters on the school for Sahibs where Diego Valdes, "crowned by fleet and people," looks back to boyhood's "wild careening riot" before the "bondage of great deeds."⁴² Thus, St. Xavier's looks down on boys who "go native altogether" because "One must never forget that one is a Sahib, and that some day, when examinations are passed, one will command natives" (149-150). The book never questions this, nor does Kim: "Kim made a note of this, for he began to understand where examinations led" (150). But this fate is still a burden, neither a mission nor much fun.

This first of Kim's transformations is quite literally a passage across a threshold where "The Gates of Learning shut with a clang," (147) and a rebirth: "A priest clothed me and gave me a new name" (123). Mahbub Ali says: "They will send him to a school and put heavy boots on his feet and waddle him in these clothes. Then he will forget all he knows" (131).

This solitary passage was very different from that joyful down-journey in the third-class with the lama. 'Sahibs get little pleasure of travel,' he reflected . . . It

is my kismet. No man can escape his kismet.
 But I am to pray to Bibi Miriam and I am a
 Sahib'--he looked at his boots ruefully.
 'No, I am Kim. This is the great world, and
 I am only Kim. Who is Kim?' He considered
 his own identity, a thing he had never done
 before, till his head swam.

(141)

Because Kim's special way will be to shift from white to black ways the chapters on his training for this Game are prefaced by Kipling's poem on the creative nature of ambivalence: "Something I owe to the soil that grew-- / More to the life that fed-- / But most to Allah Who gave me two / Separate sides to my head" (157). As a chain man Kim is taught to use the self suppressed at St. Xavier's; on holidays he is allowed to "go native." That is why he seizes upon the spy game: "that is good if it allows me to return to the road again. This clothing grows no easier to wear" (143).

Even so, Kim does develop a sense of mission out of his admiration for Creighton, the tricky spy whose life suggests a way illicit games can be turned into legitimate service. Then the Game becomes training for life. Kim learns how to use shape-changing as a way to pass safely behind enemy lines, and how to use his knowledge of blacks to control them. But Kim is not simply learning a spy's sneaky wiles. Crossing behind enemy lines is a means of access to the other world, a way of absorbing his own creative blackness: "Certain things are not known to those who eat with forks. It is better to eat with both hands for a while" (154).

Even further, a role on the chain--a "lead rope" (143) like Melville's monkey line, actually demands a violation of the sahib's code. At the imperialist school "they say that no Sahib must tell a black man that he has made a fault," (162) but Kim must learn, like Huck Finn, to apologize to a black and admit he is not king. And when the lines begin to shift and cross, it is because he has learned the password--"there is no caste where men go to look for Tarkeen" (220).⁴³

Now Kim is ready to be tested. Again there is a mysterious transformation in a "Place of miracles . . . for there went in at twilight a Mohammedan horse-boy, and there came out an hour later a Eurasian lad" (176). Lurgan, the sorcerer, presides over Kim's initiation in a suitable awesome site replete with fearsome gods to warn off the unworthy; "Tibetan devil-dance masks, hanging above the fiend-embroidered draperies of those ghastly functions--horned masks, scowling masks, and masks of idiotic terror." (180) The whole scene is a marvelous pot-pourri of Masonic rites and fraternity hazing, all the more scary for being a child's notion of a secret initiation. And, of course, Kim comes through triumphant. He beats the native boy at the jewel game to win the favor of the "father," his superior reason demolishes the forces of darkness by proving the devil is a recording, and he resists hypnosis by incanting the multiplication table. Now he can be indoctrinated into the skills of his profession. He is taught

to observe, memorize, map, and control both himself and the world, and this too is all the more effective for being a child's notion of skills as a ritual to gain adult power: "Here was a new craft that a man could tuck away in his head; and by the look of the large wide world unfolding itself before him, it seemed that the more a man knew the better for him" (196).

Then Kim is richly praised, renamed R-17, and appointed: "From time to time, God causes men to be born--and thou art one of them--who have a lust to go abroad at the risk of their lives and discover news" (193). Even the language, with its association between a spy and a spreader of the gospel, has become pretty elevated, and Kim still dreams of greatness--of following "Kings and ministers" as he had followed "vakils and lawyer's touts" (144). But greatness does not imply superiority to natives; on the lead rope of the human community in the Game, there are no such distinctions. Neither does greatness involve personal glory. Kim, only a number, can't even boast of his adventures back at school, adventures that "would paralyse St. Xavier's--even the biggest boys who shaved" (195).

Now the time is "ripe" for Kim's return to the Lama who has waited for the "one chela appointed to bring the event to a happy issue" (199). The transformation for this role is far more intense as Kim is the "passage-hawk" of the epigraph: "Give him the firmament God made him for / And what shall take the air of him?" (202) Huneefa is a real

witch and her magic is no trickery: "Tonight we change thy color" (214). There are devils, rites, incantations, and "Drugged Ecstasy" (215). Kim really loses his senses and awakens "About third cockcrow . . . after a sleep of thousands of years" (217) with a new name, "The Son of the Charm" (219) "The keys of the Secret Things," "The full protection of the Road," (214) and the tools of his trade. His kit, like the shaman's magic bag, is the badge of his profession and the mark of his curious identity: revolver, medicines, money and paint box, mingle with the ghost dagger, rosary, and an amulet bearing the "names of local saints and such things" (219). He can deliver the Koran "with the cadence of a mullah" and pass an examination on "rods and chains and links and angles" (204). He is sent out prepared for anything, under the protection of several pantheons of Gods: "Kings could be no richer" (221).

With Kim's return to the Lama the opposing ways--R-17's test as a man and the Lama's pilgrimage--come together. For this the Game must become still more serious. Again Kim asks: "Who is Kim?" (223) but now his quest for his identity is seen as a mystic experience: "A very few white people, but many Asiatics, can throw themselves into a mazes as it were by repeating their own names over and over." A passing holy man recognizes this as one of the "Gates to the Way," and Kim says that he too is a "Seeker" (223).

Then Kim has returned with "great wisdom," (199) though

not quite as the Lama imagines. Christlike, he heals the Jat's child and transforms E-23 to save his life, but Kim's pathiis still not the same as the Lama's. His magic is trickery and Western medicine, and his holiness is a particularly earthy sort:

The pallor of hunger suited Kim very well as he stood, tall and slim, in his sad-coloured, sweeping robes, one hand on his rosary and the other in the attitude of benediction, faithfully copied from the lama. An English observer might have said that he looked rather like the young saint of a stained-glass window, whereas he was but a growing lad faint with emptiness.

(234)

Kim is still a Sahib. "I was then a Scholar in the Gates of learning, and attired as a Sahib. Do not forget, Holy One . . . I am still a Sahib--by thy favour." And the Lama doesn't object: "True. And a Sahib in most high esteem" (228).

Although their ways remain logically opposed, sahibdom merges with the Lama's priesthood and Kim will reach his goal and salvation too, because he has rejected the hybris of white power, and the ultimate in such humility is his role as black chela begging for a man he now has the right to command. Praised for his miraculous cure, Kim answers:

"I was made wise by thee, Holy One," said Kim, forgetting the little play just ended; forgetting St. Xavier's; forgetting his white blood; forgetting even the Great Game as he stooped, Mohammedan fashion, to touch his master's feet in the dust of the Jain temple.

(227-228)

"Who goes to the Hills goes to his mother" (275) sets the scene for the final passage, and the language itself takes on the quality of dreams as the action moves inward to "a world within a world" (280) on the "black breasts of Eua," (278) To Kim, the movement through the Lama's country is a movement away from white reality: "Each long perfect day rose behind Kim for a barrier to cut him off from his race and mother-tongue. He slipped back to thinking and dreaming in the vernacular, and mechanically followed the Lama's ceremonial observances" (255). But it would be an error to assume that Kim has pretensions to a spiritual vocation or that the terms are being set up for conflict. Kim's passage away from the world is the necessary drift to darkness preparatory to his renewal as a Sahib. Kim never even questions embracing an Eastern philosophy; he absorbs it.

Even in these chapters Kipling never lets go of reality. Kim is still hard at work at his mission, agents scurry through the maternal mountains, and the crisis is flanked by scenes with the marvelous Sahiba. Holiness is always balanced by reality and tempered by it. The Sahiba, indifferent to salvation, only wants the Lama to get her many grandchildren, and the Lama, conceding to the demands of reality, gives her a charm just to shut her up. Actually, the Lama feels the impact of reality as much as Kim is drawn to the spirit--the Lama loves Kim, mountains, babies, and saffron stews--yet no one speaks of the Lama's "conversion." And Kim's anguished repentance at failing his duty balances

the Lama's remorse at feeling human passion; it should be taken with the same seriousness.

All these issues come to a crisis in the mountains when evil threatens for the first time. It comes directly in those Russians who infiltrate the border, and more obliquely, in suggestions of native uprisings and the seductions of a dark woman; but here both ways are tested. For the Lama, pride in physical prowess and joy in the tangible world are "bondage to the delight of life," (312) and the evil of passion is the other side of such delight. But the passion that wounds the Lama proves Kim's manhood. A Sahib defines himself by noble action; defending the Lama awakens "every unknown Irish devil in the boy's blood," (289) and "thinking hard in English," (290) he fires a gun and this, in turn, culminates in kissing the native woman.

Ultimately, the Game and the Quest are synthesized, not in the mountains, but back in the world--not through logic or even magic, but through love. Here Kim is prepared to renounce his identity, and his mission to care for the Lama, and the Lama dreams of coming back for his chela and missing the moment his soul could reach the Great Soul. By embracing all that is most antithetical to their goals, the Lama wins freedom from the wheel and Kim feels the "wheels of his being lock up anew on the world without" (337).

In giving his strength to the Lama, Kim is no longer a spy disguised as a chela; he has become a chela, and the opposing ways merge in his role; "Never was such a chela.

I doubt at times whether Ananda more faithfully nursed Our Lord. And Thou art a Sahib?" (323) But now Kim, absorbing the Lama's spirit and his words, answers: "Thou hast said there is neither black nor white . . . I am not a Sahib. I am thy Chela, and my head is heavy on my shoulders" (323).

Even this denial is not a renunciation of his identity as a Sahib or his vocation as a spy; Kim is just placing the Lama first. When he repents his past, it is not the mission he repents, but his thoughtlessness to the Lama: "I was a child . . . Oh why was I not a man!" (324). In part Kim also longs to evade the burden of adult responsibility; if someone else would deliver the secret papers "the Great Game could play itself for aught he cared" (324). Like many heroes Kim would rather stay with the lotus eaters and sleep, but he is brought back to the control of a Sahib by his shame at the way the mission is completed by a native who has said: "I am a fearful man, and I do not like responsibility" (335).

Still it is always the packet of papers that makes Kim ache; bearing the Lama is never a burden. And when Kim is ready to give up his mission to care for the Lama, his renunciation is far from disenchantment with the Game. He is ready to renounce all that he has dreamt about out of love. Kim, denying that he is a Sahib, is Huck Finn "risking" his soul to save Jim; it is by denying that he is a Sahib that Kim truly proves himself one.

In the end Kim's return to the wheel is not a "betrayal"

but a fitting conclusion supported by his regenerative rebirth in "the hopeful dust that holds the seeds of all life" (338). After another mysterious ceremony and magical "hundred years" (342) sleep, Kim is reborn, mothered by an earth goddess, the Sahiba, and fathered by the Lama--a child of both ways.

Of course there is still the sticky matter of his vocation. How, exactly, does the book end? The final epigraph insists that Kim has become something better than a king: "I'd not give room for an Emperor-- / I'd hold my road for a King / To the Triple Crown I'd not bow down-- / But this is a different thing!" In fact Kim has become "the Lord of us all--the dreamer whose dream came true" (319). It's all very nice, but not very explicit, and the fact that the lines come from Kipling's poem to Cecil Rhodes⁴⁴ doesn't allay our suspicions. The Lama has paid for Kim to gain wisdom like the curator at Lahore, however, Kim is not, as he pretends, an ethnologist who studies, but a spy who manipulates. He can admire the Lama's art, but he is only an artist because he has been taught to draw enemy encampments. The solution is ambiguous. The Lama says Kim can become a "teacher" or a "scribe"; (340) it doesn't matter since he has attained ~~paradise~~ ^{paradise} while Mahbub Ali says, since he is so sure of paradise, then he can "enter government service" (341). Neither understands what the other is talking about, which makes agreement possible; neither does the reader, for the same reason.

No, Kim's fate is hardly what the Lama had in mind but, even loving the Lama, are we expected to share his view of the world? When Kim is brought back to his task, it is because of his admiration for the Babu's courage and trickery: "He ~~tricked~~ tricked them. He lied to them . . . I never would have gone down to them after the pistol-shots . . . I must get into the world again" (336). Then these values crop up again in the final dialogue between the Lama and Mahbub Ali, contending for Kim's soul. The Lama, who has "never lied" and never found "need" (341) is opposed by Mahbub Ali: "Oh Allah, hear him! What need in this Thy world!" (342) and we know that the Lama can only survive without trickery or violence because he doesn't live in this world. Certainly there are moments in the book when the Lama's way threatens to invalidate the Games of the West; yet Kipling still feels uncomfortable in the presence of such ultimates and his response, even here, is to maintain faith in community, action, and things, and to reduce the challenging mystery. Thus, the conclusion returns us to reality as the Lama's "transfiguration" (334) is seen through the eyes of Kim, who asks--though tenderly and with great grace--"Wast thou very wet?" (345) This tone of ironical debunking is necessary to a reading of the conclusion; for even as spies are being elevated to sainthood, saints are being given feet of clay, and the mode of resolution is a double vision that uses the values of each way to gently mock each other, reveal each other, and provide a saving balance.

At the conclusion Black and White have been resolved and Kim attains power and sanctity too, but all this has come about with such convincing grace that we hardly know how to question it. Much of the feat seems to be dependant upon something Burke calls a process of "purification by imagery"⁴⁵ that normally accompanies a shifting of convictions or rebirth. In effect, Kim can be reborn from rascal to redeemer when the problem has been rephrased in terms which make solution possible--when the magic of the East has been transferred to the imperial mission. The method is ingenious blasphemy: the early references to Kim as an appointed chela are frankly tongue in cheek. We know he gains his marvelous prevision by eavesdropping so we smile at the Lama's assumption that he has been "sent." Kim's magic is hokum, but the Lama is innocent--he also mistakes a courtesan for a nun. Then the joke is carried one step farther when Mahbub Ali also sees Kim as "sent," but for very different reasons. Similarly, Kim's heroic quest begins as a joke. All that nonsense about prophecies and Red Bulls is deliberately silly to disarm us, and we smile indulgently as Kim's passage across India is slowly transformed into a rite of passage and the Great Trunk Road of English power becomes the Road-Tao of Buddhism, leading to the mountains where Kim is reborn a prophet. But by then the level of seriousness has shifted, and the terminology has to be taken more seriously. In effect, we have been seduced. A dirty street urchin running illicit errands becomes a "chela,"

a "novice," (229) a "disciple," (91) a "seeker," (223) a "priest," (305) a "teacher" of the gospel, and finally, "I have accomplished the years appointed for a Sahib" (229).

By now all that questionable imagery suggests reconciliation. Spies really are links between black and white, and heaven and earth are resolved when a pilgrimage is used for a cover, a rosary is used for surveying, and a holy box conceals secret papers. Critics like Parry who find such things cynical, are also needlessly worried about the Lama's being "duped" into paying for Kim's education as a spy.⁴⁶ In paying for Kim, the Lama becomes his father and the book moves towards reconciliation. We should be able to accept this with at least as much tolerance as the Padre's acceptance of "taking a heathen's money to give a child a Christian education" (135).

All the critical accounts that divide the book into a beautiful quest and some hi-jinks to be dismissed as fun for children miss the wonderful way those hi-jinks become sacred, and the meaning of their transformation. But, like everything else in this uncanny book, the transcendence is offered half in faith and half in jest. Kim of the Rishti, the ordained spy, operates not by logic but with the magic of a pun or a metaphysical conceit, by linking opposition symbolically, while admitting it in incongruity.

All the book's magic is flim-flam: initiations are fraternity hazings, Kim's "incarnations" are disguises, his holy aura is hunger, and his charms are medicines. But they

work just the same--the way symbols do, and art. The temple is not a temple but a museum, yet it functions like a temple, and by playacting the part of a chala, Kim truly becomes one. And finally it all works because Kipling's magic isn't flim-flam. The conclusion is artistically right, psychologically sound, and almost morally acceptable because it truly arises out of the growing love which enables Kim and the Lama to assume each other's virtue, the innocence of the Lama which transfigures the world, the genuine purification of Kim's motives, and the sanctity of the real world. As the book progresses and we are drawn into the love between the boy and the Lama, we shouldn't doubt that Kim was "sent" nor that he has attained Paradise.

Finally, it is the miracle of Kipling's prose that forces us to celebrate Kim's emergence into reality. Like Kim, who can't even concentrate on studying the Lama's Wheel for "by the road trundled the very Wheel itself . . . all warmly alive," (253) we too become committed by Kipling's recreation of the wonder of the tangible world. Kim sees all this. He is a spy by trade and, like any good detective, he must mark how minute details reveal the man and the world. Even the importance of "things" in Kim's India suggests the sanctity of the tangible. Conrad may also turn to "things" as a protection against despair; rivets hold things together in the jungle much as Kim bears his surveying tools to chart the unknown. But in Conrad the weight finally rests on the imagery of civilization lying rotting and useless.

All colonial novels are dominated by the same images of roads, wheels, maps, and tools, but Kipling is the only major author to whom these things do not usually suggest demiurgical illusions. In fact Auden suggests that Kipling is unique in his conviction that civilization is a "citadel of light" with the danger coming from barbarians outside, rather than sensing that the danger lies within civilization itself.⁴⁷ In Kim, civilized man can combat disorder through his own action and will; still, there are moments when the Lama's Eastern way--the renunciation of action and will for magic and prayer--threatens Kim's Cartesian defenses, and when Kipling comes close to hesitation in the face of mystery, this is reflected in the imagery. Kim must give up his compass to be initiated, and in the mountains his surveying becomes faintly repellent. One has one relationship with India in loving her and finding a father in her Lama and a mother in her mountains, and quite another in surveying her. In fact, Philip Mason reports that nineteenth-century Indians were incensed by mapping on the grounds that it amounted to incest: the land is a mother and the ruler is her son--a ruler should not uncover his mother's nakedness.⁴⁸ But in the end Kipling legitimizes the mechanical metaphor when Kim's recovery from a destructive abnegation of will is seen in terms of a locking wheel.

In Kim the drift away from action and things is something that must be passed through and overcome. Only at these moments when Kim is drawn away from the world to consider

himself do we ever hear an interior monologue. Kim is rarely alone; Kipling seldom effaces his narrator; and the whole book is a dialogue with the world. The reason becomes apparent when Kim does engage in the dangerous solipscism of thought. Here the graceful rhythms falter to support Kim's terror at not knowing who he is, at being "alone" in "the middle of it all." (269) To Kipling, such trancelike meditations on identity are isolating egotism, a threat to community and cause.

But the very best of Kim comes out of the dialogue with the world when East and West are drawn together in the love between the boy and the Lama, and in the grace with which they express that love. Nothing can be said about the conflict between earthly and spiritual demands that quite approaches the Lama's parting from Kim:

Do not weep; for look you, all Desire is
 illusion and a new binding upon the wheel.
 Go up to the Gates of Learning, Let me see
 thee go . . . Dost thou love me? Then go,
 or my heart cracks . . . I will come again.
 Surely I will come again.

(147)

or creates the reconciliation implicit in the interplay of their voices, both playful and poignant:

"These, he said slowly, "are indeed my
 Hills. Thus should a man abide, perched
 above the world, separated from delights,
 considering vast matters."

"Yes, if he has a chela to prepare
 hot tea for him, and to fold a blanket
 for his head, and to chase out calving
 cows."

(301)

Nothing in Kipling quite approaches the style of Kim. While the prose seems to be related to all Kipling's experiments with dialect, here it reflects a very different attitude towards the world. Dixon Scott, describing Kipling's use of dialect as part of his "imperatively map-making," writes: "For dialect, in spite of ~~the~~ air of ragged lawlessness, is wholly impersonal, typical, fixed, the code of a caste, not the voice of an individual."⁴⁹ Certainly, the schematization of dialect looks like part and parcel of Kipling's imperial reluctance to explore; however, in Kim, precisely the opposite is happening. Rather than assume proper English as a norm and attempt to reproduce the way the vernacular might sound to English ears, Kipling uses the vernacular as the norm of this world and treats it like a magic tongue. The Hindustani spoken by Kim and the Lama is probably no known Indian dialect so much as the secret language Kipling spoke as a child. In his autobiography Kipling remembers himself as an Anglo-Indian child who spoke English only to his parents, "haltingly translated out of the vernacular that one thought and dreamed in."⁵⁰ Even on returning to Bombay as an adult, vernacular sentences Kipling could no longer understand arose out of his unconscious upon renewed contact with "the sights and smells of India."⁵¹ In Kim the language itself reveals this identification with "the only real home I had yet known."⁵²

Kim is also an Anglo-Indian child who speaks the

vernacular "by preference," and his mother tongue in a clipped uncertain sing-song." (3) With the English Chaplain he sounds like this: "There is a river in this country which he wishes to find so verree much. It was put out by an Arrow which--Kim tapped his foot impatiently as he translated in his own mind from the vernacular to his clumsy English." But when he talks to the Lama he reaches, "If I eat thy bread . . . how shall I ever forget thee?" (147) As the Lama observes, "The talk of white men is wholly lacking in dignity" (99).

The language is remarkable and almost unique. In fact, the only comparable prose that comes to mind is Roth's recreation, in Call it Sleep, of the rhythms and nuances of Yiddish. Here too we understand that the characters are speaking English when they are crude and clumsy, but the prose becomes lyrical when they speak the language of their soul. In both works the shifts set the real world apart from the one where one is always an alien.

Kipling was well aware of all the implications of these shifts, and uses the same technique ironically in the darky act the Babu uses to trick the Russians. Here the Babu's English, flowery and awkward, is a mockery of the pretensions of the educative native, and part of his absurd, unmanly pose. In the vernacular, the real Babu emerges as direct, competent, and dignified: "Then why talk like an ape in a tree," Kim admonishes, "Talk Hindi" (264).

Although Kipling's secret sympathy emerges in his sym-

pathy for the vernacular, he consciously draws a clear distinction between the function of the two languages, and insists that Kim return to English. Throughout the book, English is the language of reason and, as such, it is used as a ritualistic protection against the mystery of the East. The Babu, combatting his fear of the Powers of Darkness, talks English "to reassure himself," (216) and Kim resists hypnosis by changing the multiplication table in English. Each time he is drawn away from the world of action Kim returns to "thinking and dreaming in the vernacular," (255) but when he is forced, through violence, into his role of Sahib, he thinks in English and spontaneously produces a "By Jove!" (290).

Language itself is an action as well as a revelation of attitude. Not only is Kipling's English tribute to Hindustani an implied resolution between East and West, but the harmonious resolution is developed throughout the book in the continuing duet between the Lama and Kim. As the bond between them deepens, their language merges, and ultimately it is through the intermingling of their voices that we feel the conflict resolved. Even further, sahibdom is transfigured, and Kim assumes the Lama's stature when he actually assumes his voice. He is using "one of the Lama's pet words" when he describes his mission with: "I too am a Seeker," (223) and we can accept Kim as a priest and reality as a fitting subject of his worship when he speaks like this: "A fair land--a most beautiful land is this of

Hind--and the land of the Five Rivers is fairer than all,' Kim half chanted" (175).⁵³

But how Kipling could write such a book remains a problem. Edmund Wilson notes that nine children's books followed Kipling's disastrous stay in Vermont, but he is wrong in assuming that this was a reversion to a time when one isn't "responsible for the way that the world is run."⁵⁴ Out of Kipling's powerless anger came an even greater need to rerun the world symbolically, and this is most easily accomplished in a world where the child is king and life is a game. While Kipling's simplistic moral and political values are more acceptable in children's books, they aren't any different in the stories he wrote for grown-up children who need power. The oddity is that a work like Stalky and Co., appeared in 1899, and Kim in 1901. Both were conceived during the American visit, but they are very different responses to the problem of running the world. Here Wilson is correct in perceiving that Stalky and Co. converts the most odious aggression of schoolboys into the most odious values of Empire.⁵⁵ Certainly this is supported by a class-mate's reverent description of Stalky viewing a dead soldier: "Member the beastly look on Stalky's face though. His nostrils all blown out, same as he used to look bullying a fag? That was a lovely evening."⁵⁶ But then Kipling wrote Kim.

Although the author's problems may lie beyond the proper range of criticism, the background for Kim becomes an import-

ant way to examine the way the political scene can be transformed in a work of art. Kipling had always relied on imperial values to handle his demons, and he was still using them in children's fiction like The Jungle Books and Stalky and Co. But the same moral and political sphere forms the background of Kim--why should the terms be used so differently?

Between 1892 and 1896 Kipling lived in America, and it was there that he conceived the boy named "Kim of the Rishti."⁵⁷ Otherwise they were terrible years: at no time in a generally marginal existence was Kipling more of an alien or more justifiably disliked. Then, in 1899, his attempt to return to America was prevented by a lawsuit, and the years that followed saw him homeless through a devastating series of disasters--the death of his uncle, his sister's madness, a serious illness, and finally, the death of his daughter.⁵⁸ Kim is the product of this curious midpoint in Kipling's career, and his return to his parents in England, ostensibly seeking protection. The writings of the period stress the same theme; a blinded rejected hero returns to his "mother's house" in Rewards and Fairies,⁵⁹ a wandering Jew returns to "his father's house" in Puck of Pook's Hill,⁶⁰ and the epigraph to "They" sees the children who have died sent home by the Virgin because they are homesick in heaven.

If we accept Wilson's assumption that Kipling's anger, his politics, and his art have their source in the childhood rejection described in "Baa Baa, Black Sheep,"⁶¹ then such

a return might well have established the conditions for a work of reconciliation. It does seem likely that a child who had been exiled from parental protection in an edenic India to be tormented in a cruel English foster home might become a frightened man who submitted to authority and bullied the weak. In any event, both the exile and the torment would be reproduced in the American visit, and with it the momentary relief of return. "Journeys end in lover's meetings,"⁶² prefaces Punch's return, but the story goes beyond reunion to close with the assertion that love can never wholly erase the knowledge of "Hate, Suspicion, and Despair."⁵⁸ Apparently reconciliation didn't last the second time either. Perhaps that homecoming can be described as a "return to the womb" preparatory to renewal; certainly it was the preface to Kipling's return, with fresh arrogance and anger, to fan the hatreds of a now dying Empire.

Furthermore, it seems likely that an adult at such a crossroads might find the ideal self-image in a child seeking identity, and that this might explain why an author retreating from competitive reality would return to childhood to write books that conduct young men from irresponsibility to service. Admittedly, Stalky and Kim are far different visions of Empire, but both frame, in symbolic terms, Kipling's deepest conflicts and the way they will be resolved. That is, Kim is one way by which Kipling could combat alienation and be reborn a prophet of Empire. The idea was obviously on his mind; even in Puck of Pook's Hill, a

despised outcast returns home to become the savior of England--unfortunately Kipling returned a more truculent prophet.

But meanwhile, the naughty powerless rejected foster child of "Baa Baa, Black Sheep" was recreated as a happy "Friend of all the World" who fulfills a heroic quest and wins power and approval. Kim's perfect childhood, precisely the one Kipling was denied, replaces the restrictions that torment Punch; loving parents replace the forbidding ones; and reconciliation seems to have made it all possible. In 1899 Kipling did return in memory to a happy childhood in India and to his "father's house"⁶³ where

in a gloomy windy autumn Kim came back to me with insistence, and I took it to be smoked over with my father. Under our united tobaccos it grew like the djinn released from the brass bottle . . . Between us, we knew every step, sight and smell on his casual road, as well as all the persons he met.⁶⁴

Thus Kim is also a tribute to Kipling's father: "There was a good deal of beauty in it, and not a little wisdom; the best of both sorts being owed to my Father."⁶⁵

Kim is not a bastard, free of parental ties and identity like the picaresque hero, nor does he reject his heritage with the violence of Huck Finn; and the acceptance that marks the work, as well as the structure of a plot that moves towards the discovery of Kim's identity with his father, seems to have grown out of this union between Kipling and

his father. While the perfect love of parent and child is enacted in a step child fantasy, Kipling has incorporated his own father in a variety of ways. The elder Kipling, in reality curator of the museum at Lahore, actually appears in the book as the Keeper of Images, the patron of artists and mystics who presides over the action. His friendship with the Lama, "a friendship of priest and priest," (16) extends the connection further: "For we be craftsmen together, thou and I." (15) Then Kipling goes beyond showing how much his dark and light fathers have in common, he symbolically merges their identity. The Lama thinks he must have been a Sahib in a former life and The Keeper of Images, a Lama. And finally, the roles are shifted even further with the exchange of gifts whereby the Lama, wearing the curator's glasses, goes off to seek his river through the curator's "eyes," guided by his "son" Kim.

Through his father Kipling found a way to return to the pre-Fall paradise of childhood, the only possible world for the resolutions of Kim. Something of Myself, Kipling's autobiography, is the place to look at the source of his conflicts and fantasies and to suggest the way they have been transmuted in art. Here the seventy year old imperialist lovingly remembers himself as an almost Indian child holding his servant's hand in Eden. Once Kipling had known a world where the "two sides of his head" had not come into conflict, and it is easy to understand why he would return

to childhood and temples and the love of ruler and ruled when he needed resolution.

Then came the expulsion, the terrible English years of "Baa Baa, Black Sheep," described as his initiation into suffering and art. Pretending, Kipling tells us, is the only defense of the powerless child, and he describes playing "the Robinson Crusoe Game," with all its rules and taboos, by taking refuge behind a "magic ring"⁶⁷ in the dark basement. The same magic ring, and the right way to do things as a ritualistic mode of control, would continue to shape Kipling's politics and art; but nothing in Kipling reproduces the magic of Crusoe's island more compellingly than Kim, where a child's game of pretend is performed with a child's desperate earnestness of intention.

Escape to a fantasy world that could be manipulated became Kipling's earliest means of acting out the other side of his head, but in Aunt Rosa's rigid foster home, imagination was a naughty deviation. Perhaps Kipling even believed it. Self-protection, he explains, taught him to lie--"the foundation of literary effort."⁶⁸ Of course, much of this may simply be the familiar half-mocking self-accusation of artists: Stephen Daedalus is called a liar, Mann sees his artists as con men, and Plato would agree; still, Kipling seems to have taken the accusation more seriously than most. "Baa Baa, Black Sheep" elaborates on the notion of art as a subversive lie, and here Punch's imaginative gift is specifically associated with his

naughtiness and his dark skin. When Punch welds the creation story onto Indian fairy tales it is called "a grievous sin,"⁶⁹ an artist is "a child of the devil,"⁷⁰ and reading becomes an "escape to a land beyond the reach of Aunt Rosa and her God."⁷¹ Finally, reading destroys Punch's sight as it did Kipling's, and works like The Light that Failed would continue to associate blindness with the impiety of seeing too much.

Much has been made of this scorn, or fear, of his vocation, and it is true that Kipling's public voice allied itself with the bourgeois jingos who distrusted art. He is often caught in nonsense extolling men who do "real work" over "men who write about what they think about what other people have done or ought to do"⁷²--but he also wrote a book like Kim. Stalky explains part of his motive in showing us that poets with glasses have a rough time in military school, but this too is a "young poet" tradition: Stephen Daedalus, in his glasses, enviously watches boys playing football, Babel's Jewish dreamer with glasses admires Cossacks, and in all of them the artist's self-humiliation is not only exaggerated, but a secret source of pride. All that can be said with any certainty is that Kipling feared punishable powers and the sort of introspection that leads to despair, and much of this he shared with the period. The Bull in "Children of the Zodiac" pulling a plough to keep from thinking of the Scorpion Death is Marlow attending to "the incidents of the surface." (103)⁷³

Perhaps more terrifying demons or a stronger attraction demanded a "veil twixt us and thee, dread Lord . . . Lest we should hear too clear, too clear / And unto madness see!";⁷⁴ Kipling's sister's experiments with the occult had ended in madness,⁷⁵ and the Daemon who wrote Kim is the other side of the demons invoked by her automatic writing. In any case, Kipling shunned impious powers and the terrifying void while continuing to find ways to work out the opposing attractions.

Even that public role as imperialist prophet and regimental bard was a way to keep a foot in both camps--to write stories while allying himself with the doers, like Yeats's balladeer who becomes a part of heroic action by singing of it, or Babel's dreamer celebrating the bloody masculinity of Cossacks. In fact, all Kipling's stories are this sort of attempt to legitimize the function of his art. First, a narrator representing the values of John Bull effaces himself to heap laurels on colonials and soldiers, but above him is the artist himself, and it is often difficult to determine how much irony the artist is directing at his often insufferable persona. Even the self-reflecting technique of prefacing his stories with his poems is a way of placing the story in "reality" as opposed to "art," while resolving the spheres of action and creation.

In general, the fiction and the autobiography both reveal Kipling divided between white England and black India, reality and imagination, and suggest why he might need to suppress the rebellious voice and how he might use

Anglo-India to do it. Here it is important to remember that Kipling really was swarthy enough to support rumors about his parentage,⁷⁶ that his first mother was an amah, and his first language Hindustani. Clearly there was a good deal of identification with Indians and a time when Kipling could accept this. During his early years as a journalist he used an Indian pen name,⁷⁷ his nocturnal wanderings through the low life of Lahore were those of a Dante,⁷⁸ and Wilson himself admits that he was a sympathetic guide to black India.⁷⁹

During these early years Kipling even saw himself as a guide to the inferno: "Having no position to consider, and my trade enforcing it, I could move at will in the fourth dimension."⁸⁰ "What do they know of England who only England know?"⁸¹ implies a recognition that such an inferno lies within the English, and that Kipling saw himself as exposing it. Why he should later suppress this other side of his head is less important--Wilson attributes it to "abnormal docility"⁸²--however, he did, and he continued to identify the naughtiness Aunt Rosa condemned with blackness. Perhaps Punch, "the black sheep" and "little devil"⁸³ is the source for all Kipling's natives, "half devil and half child," and his ambivalence towards them is his ambivalence towards his own half-devil self. Punch doesn't want to be naughty and he wants to be addressed as "Sahib"--so does Kipling.

"To be Filed for Reference" comes close to Kipling's

own story by externalizing the two voices and associating art with the blackness beyond the pale. Here the artist is split into Kipling's usual persona, a responsible narrator called "Sahib," and McIntosh Jellaludin, a bohemian artist who lives with a native woman, eats opium, and does "past redemption."⁸⁴ The narrator describes the degradation of "a former Oxford man"⁸⁵ with smug satisfaction, brings him tobacco for which he is pitifully grateful, and in return, is given the masterpiece which McIntosh had paid for with "seven years damnation."⁸⁶ McIntosh is the dangerous artist, a "faquir" with God defying power: "I am as the Gods, knowing good and evil but untouched by either."⁸⁷ The narrator is a parasite and a spy who uses McIntosh for his access to native life, and pockets his manuscript to be filed for reference. More curiously, the book turns out to be Kipling's own unpublished novel, Mother Maturin. The narrator plans to expurgate it, and he is telling us the story "as a safeguard to prove that McIntosh Jellaludin and not I wrote the Book of Mother Maturin."⁸⁸

It sounds as if McIntosh was another daemon, one that was exorcised. Mother Maturin was, in fact, permanently filed away, but Carrington quotes an account of it as "The story of an old Irish woman who kept an opium den in Lahore but sent her daughter to be educated in England . . . hence a story of how Government secrets came to be known in the Bazaar and vice versa."⁸⁹ Obviously a story about "the unutterable horrors"⁹⁰ of Eurasian life would be too dangerous

for Kipling to handle. Kipling, like his narrator, wanted to know only "as much of India as was good for any man," while McIntosh pays for more knowledge with his soul. Here, "going native" is blasphemous, and here the hero's curious name is a perverse bastardization; still, the conclusion remains strangely ambiguous. Even Strictland, the spokesman for the imperial norm, declares McIntosh "an extreme liar or a most wonderful person" ("but he thought the former"),⁹¹ while the narrator is an offensive spy who risks nothing and saves himself. It is difficult to determine the degree of self-accusatory irony since the narrator's views on miscegenation are recognizably Kipling's own, and writer-as-spy was the role Kipling played in his wanderings through the night-town of Lahore. In effect, he too found a way to get behind enemy lines and back again by renouncing dangerous power and submitting to a cause. But Kipling also wrote Mother Maturin, and the story itself is both a confession and a propitiatory rite to absolve himself through a scapegoat self-image.

Mother Maturin didn't please Kipling's father either, and his disapproval is one explanation for its suppression.⁹² Instead, the idea was detoxified and transformed into Kim,⁹³ with only the fate of Kim's father as a reminder of the potential lowmess of low life. Kim's world beyond the pale is the world of Kipling's childhood innocence, the "fourth dimension" he lived in as a journalist, and the world of Masonic temples where he had safe access to all castes and

to mystery.⁹⁴ Here spirit doesn't threaten and blackness is regenerative. Here Kim is Kipling as a Black-White child, not devil but daemon, and Kipling the journalist-spy, an ideal image of himself as message bearer and friend of all the world.

Indeed, at the conclusion Kim has become an image of the artist-as-spy, like Babel who called himself "God's spy," the sneaky Defoe, and a venerable tradition of journalist spies. All Kim's training as a spy is really training in the craft of the artists observing, reporting, mapping, but--especially--lying. When Lurgan teaches Kim to paint his face and to assume another "incarnation," Kim's gift surpasses that of the Hindu child whose mind "could not temper itself to enter another's soul; but a demon in Kim woke up and sang with joy as he put on the changing dresses, changed speech and gesture therewith." (191)

Ultimately, Kim's power is that of the artist who transforms the world with his fantasy, and all his disguises and pranks are almost parodistic visions of the wily way the artist operates; Kim can become a cheela by pretending, and he can resurrect E-23 by repainting him. Such images of the artist as a shape-changing trickster are not uncommon in fiction. Melville's confidence man, Mann's Felix Krull, Gide's Lafcadio, and Ellison's Rinehart are all ironic self-images of the artist in his amazing freedom to recreate himself and to act out unacted desires, and Kim learned the trick from the Babu's darky act and from Creighton,

"the father of fools": "Here was a man after his own heart-- a tortuous and indirect person playing a hidden game. Well, if he could be a fool, so could Kim" (140). Thus, "incarnations," (110) lies, disguises, and art, all suggest ways the weak and the outcast can evade the rules and extend their limits, how they can get behind enemy lines and back again.

And Kipling's real miracle in Kim is just this ability to recreate himself, not only as a wonderful child, but as an Indian Lama, Largely through the creation of a dreamer with glasses whose wisdom transcends the world of action, Kipling can externalize the voice he had to suppress to survive and produce a harmonious vision. Here Kipling truly permits himself to explore the other world without an ax to grind or a position to maintain--the ultimate act of humility necessary for creation. And in embracing all that was most antithetical to his own goals as a white king, he justifies his vision of the artist as prophet. It is the very best of the two sides of Kipling's head. Out of his quarrel with the world, he made rhetoric; out of his quarrel with himself, he made the poetry of Kim.

Notes and References

Chapter III

1. "A Case for Kipling?" Kipling and the Critics, ed. Elliot L. Gilbert (New York, 1965), p. 20.
2. Wilson, The Wound and the Bow, p. 90.
3. "The Voice of the Hoolligan," Kipling and the Critics, p. 68.
4. "The White Man's Burden," Kipling's Verse, p. 321.
5. Sandison, p. 195.
6. "Rudyard Kipling," Kipling: The Critical Heritage, ed. Roger Lancelyn Green (New York, 1971), p. 347.
7. The Good Kipling: Studies in the Short Story (Athens, Ohio, 1971), pp. 48-49.
8. Parry, p. 207.
9. In Something of Myself Kipling places a great emphasis on the unconscious compulsion involved in the creation of Kim: "When your daemon is in charge do not try to think consciously. Drift, wait and obey." (p. 402) Apparently Kipling did: "Kim took care of himself. The only trouble was to keep him within bounds . . . At last I reported Kim finished. 'Did IT stop, or you?' the father asked. And when I told him it was IT, he said: 'Then it oughtn't be too bad.'" (II, 374).
10. Kanatur Bhaskara Rao, Rudyard Kipling's India (Oklahoma, 1967); C. E. Carrington, The Life of Rudyard Kipling (New York, 1955); Thomas Rice Henn, Kipling (New York, 1968).
11. Parry, p. 255.
12. Wilson, The Wound and the Bow, p. 100-101.
13. Parry, p. 255.
14. Kipling, "Values in Life," A Book of Words, p. 131.
15. Kim (New York, 1928). Throughout my text page references to this edition are given in parentheses.
16. Blackstone's law dictionary defines "ne varietur" ("it must not be altered") as "a phrase sometimes written by

a notary upon a bill or note, for the purpose of establishing its identity, which, however, does not affect its negotiability."

17. Wilson, The Wound and the Bow, p. 102. Parry feels that the Lama has been "duped" (p. 252).

18. "Beyond the Pale," Kipling: A Selection of His Stories and Poems, II, 35.

19. Kipling, "To Be Filed For Reference," Plain Tales From the Hills, p. 327.

20. Kipling, "Beyond the Pale," II, 35.

21. Ibid., p. 39.

22. Kipling, "His Chance in Life," Plain Tales From the Hills, p. 77.

23. Kipling, Epigraph to "In the House of Suddhoo," Plain Tales From the Hills, p. 144.

24. "The Mark of the Beast," Kipling: A Selection of His Stories and Poems, II, 241.

25. ~~There is a simple formula for identifying a children's~~ book. Of course, adult fiction also has its fantasies of heroic or daemonic passage and a reconciliation between these longings and the reality of the world; in children's fiction, however, the pattern of rebellion and return is simpler, less disguised, more clearly defined.

26. Kipling, The Second Jungle Book (New York, 1895), p. 230.

27. Ibid., p. 234.

28. Kipling, "Tod's Amendment," Plain Tales From the Hills, pp. 197-198.

29. Kipling, "Something of Myself," II, 317.

30. "Come Back to the Raft Ag'in Huck Honey," An End to Innocence (Boston, 1955), pp. 142-52.

31. Kipling, "The Ballad of East and West," Verse, p. 233.

32. Wilson, The Wound and the Bow, p. 102.

33. Kipling, "The Vampire," Verse, p. 220.

34. Kipling, "Something of Myself," II, 409.

35. The Hero With a Thousand Faces (New York, 1956)
pp. 36-37.

36. Kipling, "Something of Myself," II, 338.

37. Campbell, pp. 31-34.

38. Parry, pp. 248-51.

39. W. H. Auden, "Kafka's Quest," The Kafka Problem, ed. Angel Flores (New York, 1946), pp. 47-8.

40. Campbell, pp. 37-8, 136.

41. Kipling, "Recessional," p. 327.

42. Kipling, "The Song of Diego Valdes," Verse, p. 152.

43. a vegetable curry.

44. Carrington, p. 211.

45. Burke, Attitudes Toward History, II, 133. To the accusation that imperialism remains real and imperialism remains ugly, there can be no answer. Nothing Kipling could do would convince us of the moral rightness of Kim's fate, but that is not the point of this argument. I am only concerned with indicating the way Kipling uses the techniques of the artist to create a symbolic resolution between his opposing worlds. Sahibdom wasn't service; however Kipling believed that it was, and his skill makes the illusion imaginatively believable, if only momentarily, for many of us.

46. Parry, p. 252. Parry's insensitivity to tone or her earnest concern for "the ethical propositions of Buddhism" (243) also leads her to misunderstand the Lama. "At the onset his simplicity seems often to be mere silliness, his search for a mythical river hardly the pursuit of a wise and learned man seeped in metaphysical speculation." (pp. 246-47).

47. "The Poet of the Encirclement," Literary Opinion in America: Essays Illustrating the Status, Methods, and Problems of Criticism in the United States in the Twentieth Century, ed. Morton Dawwen Zabel (New York, 1962), I, 260.

48. "Foreword," Prospero and Caliban by Otto Mannoni, pp. 10-11 (note).

49. "On Rudyard Kipling," Kipling: The Critical Heritage, p. 315.

50. Kipling, Something of Myself, II, 318.

51. Ibid., II, 332.

52. Ibid., II, 359.

53. If this is closer to King James Biblical than Indian, Kipling's audience wouldn't know or care. Kipling was given to using Biblical language with varying degrees of seriousness, from Pearl S. Buck pretentiousness to genuine elevation. In "The Bridge-Builders," it is nonsense: "Cub thou wast, assistant thou art. Personal assistant, and at Simla, thou shalt be if any credit comes to me out of this business" (The Days Work, New York, 1898, p. 6). In The Man Who Would be King, it conveys a half-ironical deification: "Go and Dig the land, and be fruitful and multiply." (II, 128) But in Kim the "elevated" language reaches genuine transcendence.

54. Wilson, The Wound and the Bow, p. 128.

55. Ibid., pp. 99-110

56. Kipling, Stalky and Co. (New York, 1899), p. 290.

57. Kipling, Something of Myself, II, 373.

58. Carrington, pp. 220-230.

59. Kipling, Rewards and Fairies (New York, 1910), p. 155.

60. Kipling, Puck of Pook's Hill, Kipling: A Selection of His Stories and Poems, I, 524.

61. Wilson, The Wound and the Bow, p. 98.

62. "Baa Baa, Black Sheep," Thirty-eight Short Stories: An Introductory Anthology, ed. Michael Timko and Clinton F. Oliver (New York, 1968), p. 228. The epigraph to "Baa Baa, Black Sheep," underlines the theme of a homecoming: "When I was in my father's house, I was in a better place." (p. 214).

63. Something of Myself stresses Kipling's "joyous homecoming" and his delight in his parents (II, 332-33).

64. Ibid., II, 238.

65. Ibid., II, 375.

66. Ibid., II, 317.

67. Ibid., II, 320.

68. Ibid., II, 319.
69. Kipling, "Baa Baa, Black Sheep," p. 221.
70. Ibid., p. 234.
71. Ibid., p. 223.
72. Kipling, "An English School," (An account of the United Services College written for an American paper, Youth's Companion). Quoted in Janet Adam Smith, "A Boy of Letters," The Age of Kipling, ed. John Gross (New York, 1972), p. 13.
73. In "A Recantation" Kipling reveals the fear of the artist's role that we see in Conrad, and the same need to redeem his craft by dedicating it to the service of "the idea": "Yet they who use the Word--Assigned / To hearten and make whole / Not less than Gods have served mankind / Though vultures rend their souls." (Verse, p. 367).
74. Kipling, Epigraph to "The Disturber of the Traffic," Many Inventions (New York, 1941), p. 1.
75. J. I. M. Stewart, Rudyard Kipling (New York, 1966), p. 133. Apparently Kipling is referring to his sister when he writes: "I have seen too much evil and sorrow and wreck of good minds on the road to Endor to take one step along that perilous track." (Something of Myself, II, 404).
76. George Orwell, "Rudyard Kipling," Dickens, Dali, and Others: Studies in Popular Culture (New York, 1946), p. 146.
77. Kipling, Something of Myself, II, 339.
78. Carrington, pp. 61-3.
79. Wilson, The Wound and the Bow, pp. 94-6.
80. Kipling, Something of Myself, II, 339.
81. Kipling, "The English Flag," Verse, p. 221.
82. Wilson, The Wound and the Bow, p. 98.
83. Kipling, "Baa Baa, Black Sheep." p. 237.
84. Kipling, "To Be Filed For Reference," p. 327.
85. Ibid., p. 329.
86. Ibid., p. 335.

87. Ibid., p. 331.

88. Ibid., p. 336.

89. Carrington, p. 279.

90. Kipling described Mother Maturin in a letter to a friend: "It is not one bit nice or proper but it carries a grim sort of moral with it and tries to deal with the unutterable horrors of lower class Eurasian and native life as they exist outside of reports and reports . . . Mother says it's nasty but powerful and I know it to be in large measure true." Quoted in Parry, p. 212.

91. Kipling, "To Be Filed For Reference," p. 335-36.

92. Parry quotes a friend of the family as saying that John Lockwood Kipling "was not satisfied with it." (p. 212).

93. Carrington, p. 66.

94. Describing the Freemason temple Kipling writes: "Here I met Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, members of the Araya and Brahmo Samaj, and a Jew Tyler, who was priest and butcher to his little community in the city. So yet another world opened to me which I needed." (Something of Myself, II, 338).

IV. "Passage to more than India"

A Passage to India is probably the most important and most widely read of E. M. Forster's novels; nonetheless, it remains the most mystifying. Varying interpretations have discovered Forster accepting or rejecting its Hinduism, celebrating the triumph of India over England or vice versa, expressing hope for universal friendship, or the very impossibility of such union. Furthermore, Forster stopped publishing his fiction after A Passage to India appeared in 1924, so we may even be justified in drawing some connection between the mystery of his silence and the ambiguity of his last public novel. If, as his silence suggests, A Passage to India failed as a personal resolution for Forster, then the novel's ambiguity might well be the author's ambivalence.

And each of Forster's novels had dealt with ambivalence--with the failure of the undeveloped heart and the search for a more abundant life by resolving "the prose and the passion,"¹ First the "only connect" motto of Howards End had been tested out in England, and then in Italy, until it had reached its logical culmination in the fracturing dichotomies of colonial India; but here the connection of "colliding" rafts is finally negated by an image of "swerving" horses as the earth itself cries out against the

possibility of union. And each of Forster's novels had ended with the birth of a child or the sense of a cycle beginning anew; but this time the action goes beyond rain and rebirth, the child appears as part of a fantasy denied in the epilogue, and the future is directed towards negation.

In his discussion of the colonial novel, Marshall McLuhan has observed that "the 'two world view,' such as that offered by British India, is especially useful to the artist who cannot localize or understand his dissatisfactions nor overcome the dualism of his experience."² Certainly Forster's efforts to reconcile East and West, as well as his geographical travels eastward, are this sort of continuing passage from the finite to the infinite in search of a vaguely defined "something more" and a dream of resolution offered in the multiple possibilities of colonial India. That is why it should be useful to examine the way this particular passage is being used to fulfill Forster's private needs and artistic purpose, and to try to determine why the challenges raised by a cave in India might have proved insoluble.

Admittedly, at first glance the novel appears to be neither formidable nor disturbing; but the attractively available story and disarming charm that made it a popular success as a political travelogue make it that much more frustrating when the mists descend somewhat later. Thus, Forster's friend Dickinson confidently asserted that A Passage to India was "about the incompatibility of Indians

and English," but added, less confidently, "with all sorts of behind suggestions," and the uneasy query: "What did happen in the caves?"³ And even the astute Lionel Trilling once called it "the most comfortable, and even the most conventional of Forster's novels";⁴ however, he too was principally concerned with Forster's "liberalism" and went on to admit: "It is not easy to know what to make of the dominant Hinduism of the third section of the novel."⁵

But of course, that "dominant Hinduism" cannot be dismissed, nor can we dismiss the social world of the novel to please those who would see Forster as a mystic, and we have to find special ways to deal with the discrepancy between these opposing visions as inherent to the function of this colonial passage. We have to deal with a social comedy that becomes a rebirth ritual, and a political novel about fratricidal Anglo-Indian relations which never even questions England's presence in India, which only once timidly suggests that it isn't rule that causes problems but rule without love, and which refers to the end of British control only as a wild prophecy of a mythical future when men can be friends.

Small wonder that a sociological critic like Kettle is disturbed by Forster's failure to confront concrete problems with positive values, by his acquiescing to mistiness, mysticism, and despair.⁶ Of course, the clear cut political issues blur when a mystery in a cave awakens psychological horrors which prevent interracial friendship even when exor-

cised by an act of atonement. These terms can't possibly satisfy the reasonable liberal, particularly when a reasonable liberal like Fielding wonders: "Kindness, kindness, . . . but was that really all that this queer nation needed? Did it not also demand an occasional intoxicification of the blood?" (117)⁷ Naturally problems arise when the political subject matter invites us to look for an indictment of social injustice and a solution more immediately practicable than human sacrifice.

Actually the outraged Indians and Anglo-Indians are probably justified when they see themselves slighted and their India, as well as the ugly political realities, dismissed. Forster's India is no more India than Yoknapatawpha is the South, but India itself is not Forster's major concern. The Moslem Aziz may not be representative of India nor Godbole of Hinduism, the lower classes never appear, and the public facts of Indian life are inconsequential. Even social tension, though it serves as the background to the action and part of the very texture of the plot, is not the focus of the narrative. The colonial world has been used chiefly because it magnifies the gulf of misunderstanding present in all human situations, and because inter-racial conflict externalizes man's conflict with himself. The action is phrased in the opening dialogue when an Indian asks "whether or not it is possible to be friends with an Englishman," (10) but immediately the angle of vision shifts until all human separateness and division is seen through the Anglo-Indian

conflict, and the unifying vision the action seeks is a reconciliation between these opposing worlds.

The title, taken from Whitman, suggests an approach by emphasizing the pivotal word "passage." Like all Forster's parables of restraint and freedom, it suggests that some people live in closed rooms and must reach out to the view beyond; but this time the view becomes a fantasy world beyond society, and the eastward journey of two imperial tourists functions symbolically as a rite of passage whereby man passes from the tangible to the inconceivable--"Passage to more than India."⁸ In an equally important sense, "passage," the movement from one place to another, is a search for union, and friendship between two nations becomes another way for Forster to reaffirm the wholeness of truth--"Lo, sou!l, seest thou not God's purpose from the first? / The earth to be spann'd, connected by network, / The races, neighbors to marry, and be given in marriage."⁹

The specific problems raised by A Passage to India suggest that it first be considered in terms of its rituals of passage and rebirth, and here Forster not only links the real and the visionary in the tourist's mysterious passage, even his vision of social conflict is informed by the public counterpart of private initiatory experience. That is, the narrative as a whole is organized around the cyclic structure of fertility ritual, with the central characters undergoing the purifying initiation necessary to fulfill their sacrificial role in the larger social drama. Here

the agon, or struggle, of ritual is embodied in the argument of the dramatic action; out of social conflict and the opposing ways of East and West comes renewal in a new vision that will resolve discord.

In effect, A Passage to India is a strategy for dealing with a situation of conflict, and Forster has chosen several ways to manipulate the conflicts of reality with symbolic solutions. Because he has chosen the imaginative form of religious ritual for his vision of social and psychological dissention, the action of the novel can move freely between politics and religion, social satire and passion play, accepting and unifying the real and the unreal. This is a world that makes it possible for an ordinary English lady to become a Hindu goddess and for English and Indian to bypass social chasms with mystic visions, effecting connections possible only to magic and art. And because the orientation of the novel is both sociological and mystical, the attitude itself admits and embraces opposition.

Moreover, Forster has chosen to manipulate reality in terms of a dramatic pattern which says without words that union and new life are born of struggle and sacrifice. Thus, Gertrude White perceives that a Hegelian dialectic, structurally and philosophically, connects the novel's fission between action and being;¹⁰ but perhaps this is because the Indian ritual Forster drew upon underlies Hegel's dialectic. The work of the Cambridge anthropologists suggests that ritual is prior to all men's philosophies,

and all thought may be seen as following its dramatic pattern, where conflict and tearing apart give rise to a new idea or epiphany.

Even when not consciously imposed upon contemporary experience, such patterns are an integral part of our culture and a natural vocabulary which the artist draws upon with a greater or lesser degree of awareness. But Forster had been a student at Cambridge when The Golden Bough was opening the primitive to Western experience, and he also had Indian ritual at hand to support Whitman's injunction to "Eclaircise the myths Asiatic--the primitive fables . . . eluding the hold of the known, mounting to heaven."¹¹ He even had Eliot's recently published Waste Land, which might have contributed the desolate passage and trial in "a decayed hole among the mountains,"¹² the Hindu union on a rudderless boat, and the message of the thunder. Perhaps Forster's unidentified stranger suggests Eliot's "third who walks always beside you,"¹³ as the vile naked baby recalls Eliot's "bats with baby faces,"¹⁴ and Mrs. Moore, the "withered priestess" (208) playing with mysterious cards looks like Tiresias. However, we need not look for such direct influences; there are certainly enough prototypes, even unconscious prototypes, Forster could have used for his mystical union beyond the divisions of the self which would restore the wasteland. But even more useful to Forster the novelist would be Eliot's suggestion that "the mythical method is a way of controlling, of ordering, of

giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy that is contemporary history."¹⁵

Such a concept would seem to be a natural solution to Forster's own need for escape from the restrictions of British society, for a link with the visionary, and for an expansion of the novel comparable to the end of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony when "we hear something that has never actually been played."¹⁶ But this makes it all the more curious that conflict in A Passage to India is not finally life-giving. At the conclusion of "Temple," the form of the novel has been archetypal, completing the full ritual movement from purpose through passion, to a new perception--until we move beyond the vision at Mau to an afterword which seemingly denies, both philosophically and structurally, the action of the narrative. And even as the action strains towards the apocalyptic movement of synthesis and renewal to be undercut by ambivalence and doubt, the whimsical hesitations of the style consistently withhold the expansion demanded of the visionary. Perhaps this is why Forster's critics can question whether he has completed an artistic passage between realistic social comedy and symbolic mystery, and whether he has, in fact, reconciled the opposing worlds. And when we must come to terms not only with the pattern, but with its violation, we are back at the mystery of what happens in the cave to frustrate the expectations aroused by the structure of the action.

Because the problem in A Passage to India is chiefly

this discrepancy between what the author says he is doing and what he actually does, the best way to reach a kind of meaning would be to examine the structure of the narrative, the action that precedes speculation, the passage itself.

In developing Whitman's identification between geographical and mystical passage, Forster is essentially recreating the ageless European experience of the uncharted space of the East as a fantasy kingdom of dreams, death, and renewal. In the archetypal myth of the quest which, in fact, informs European accounts of the Great Explorations, the central action is this sort of journey to an otherworld, with its function that of reconciling the dark realm of the unconscious and the demands of social reality. Forster's fantasy is similar in pattern and purpose. His questors must also confront destructive forces beyond society, and risk the dissolution of the self, to win a vision that will reconcile the opposing worlds.

Actually, A Passage to India is the prototypical colonial novel, with the cathartic adventure of the hybristic hero retold for the twentieth-century reader. Its questers, as vessels of collective consciousness, are the same proud rulers who rule the thousand colonies of the colonial novel where they always confront an area that challenges their pretensions to reason, order, and control. Commenting upon one of the most recent of such novels, a Time magazine reviewer writes: "When an American novelist wants to demonstrate the naivete of Americans, he packs his

characters off the Europe. This is known as the Henry James gambit. When a British novelist wants to demonstrate the naivete of Englishmen, he ships his characters out to India. This is known as the E. M. Forster ploy."¹⁷ Admittedly, Forster's protagonists are clearly distinguished from the arrogant naivete of his Anglo-Indian community, as they are from the unseeing protagonists of the popular colonial novel; yet it is precisely because they are sensitive and humane that the destruction of their Western values becomes significant. Like author and reader, they are no less guilty of imperial illusions.

Thus Forster's questers confidently seek the "real India" (24) and the "real India" appears to both of them at a crucial point of transition and conflict: an old woman faces death and a young one approaches love and marriage. Adela's experience, more easily interpreted psychologically, is a passage within herself to confront the real Adela, while Mrs. Moore must confront the unfathomable chaos within the universe itself; yet both journeys ultimately test the Western dream of a rational universe.

Adela places her faith in reason to combat the mystery in India and in herself: "I thought that if I was just and asked questions I would come through every difficulty," (259) but a question causes the difficulty. Nothing in India is reasonable; the mere asking of a question causes things "to disappear or to merge into something else," (86) and the conscious mind has no control, even over itself. Adela

Quested--quest, question, and addled--the name itself suggests the relationship, in Adela's quest, between reason and madness. Mrs. Moore, on the other hand, places her faith in faith. Hers is a quest for "more" when oneness with the universe seems an easy, desirable goal: "God has put us on earth to love our neighbors and to show it, and He is onmipresent, even in India, to see how we are succeeding." (51) But in India that Christian god becomes less and less efficacious: "Outside the arch there seemed always an arch, beyond the remotest echo, a silence" (52). Mrs. Moore, no less than Adela, is shattered by the loss of a reasonable universe, and she withdraws from the tangible world to a cave "where no young people will come asking questions and expecting answers" (200). For Fielding the answer is simply good will and friendship: "The world, he believed is a globe of men who are trying to reach one another and can best do so by the help of good will plus culture and intelligence" (62). Fielding is neither destroyed nor even tested by the cave, but he is left with a "poor crop of secrets," (117) an inability to achieve "intimacy," and a clarity that "prevented him from experiencing something else" (118). Thus, all human efforts to connect man's separateness fail. Even Aziz's abundance of love cannot prevent the "tangles" of human misunderstanding when "nothing clicked tight" (278).

Forster's India is a vision of the unfathomable abyss at the center of the universe and the secret abysses of the

unconscious that defy all man's attempts at civilization, order, and human relations. India's gods resist Christianity's reasonable categories of good and evil, and then "neglect to come." Trees turn into snakes, birds refuse to be labelled, and the "song of an unknown bird" (79) casts a blight over friendship. A maddening echo mocks human attempts at communication as Chandrapore's primeval ooze stubbornly defies imperial attempts to impose order with roads "named after victorious generals" (16). In India the "sky," not man, "settles everything" (9).

Thus the action moves from an initial purpose which seeks union through reason, faith, good will, and love, to the resulting passion when human action is opposed by the mystery of India. Barriers will not dissolve before rationalism in the tangible world--"In space things touch, in time things part" (193)--and union, when it comes, will take place on another level. Fielding, painfully aware that "he ought to have been working at something else the whole time," (191) suggests the basis for the final perception of "Temple" when he tells Azia to become a religious poet: "There is something in religion that may not be true, but has not yet been sung . . . Something that the Hindus have perhaps found" (227). This is the song Forster attempts to sing in his book when he makes a passage beyond the restrictions of the self and the divisions of the rational to an area where reconciliation is possible.

The principal role in Passage to India's ritual drama

is played by an almost ordinary Englishwoman who will restore the world through suffering and sacrifice. Mrs. Moore is one of Forster's recurring earth mothers or sibyls, but this time Forster places far greater demands on the role. Mrs. Moore is not a disembodied presence like Mrs. Elliot or Mrs. Wilcox, but a living character, playing a major role in the novel. This creates some of the technical problems. Naturally critics would be bewildered by the discrepancy between the size of Mrs. Moore's character and the demands of her role, of the symbolic mists that replace convincing character, and, more tellingly, of her irritating inexplicable inhumanity; but the problems are inherent in the meaning. Indeed, in this case it is crucial that Mrs. Moore's role supersede her humanity, that an ordinary lady be reborn a goddess, and that such a transformation take place beyond the limits and categories of reason. When we complain that Mrs. Moore is not believable and that we don't understand, we, no less than Adela, are limited by our need to order and label.

In the end, rebirth not reason, symbolic mergers not logical compromise, unite the two worlds. When Mrs. Moore rejects the distinctions of the West and removes her shoes in a Mosque, this definitive action becomes the "golden bough" that grants her entry into the "real India"; through it she wins the friendship of Aziz and opens the passage to the caves and the mystery. It is then that Aziz says "you are an oriental," (23) and one of the connections the

narrative seeks will be worked out in the curious rebirth, "the indianizations of Mrs. Moore," (257) by which a slightly mad English lady is "travestied into Esmiess Esmoor, a Hindu goddess" (225). No, the transformation isn't quite believable, and the suggestion of "travesty" suggests that it wasn't intended to be; but rebirth, in this case, functions as a resolution that yokes opposition symbolically, while admitting that the resolution is incongruous. The same curious pattern of rebirth and renaming crops up with understandable frequency in colonial novels since the colonial scene is chosen precisely because it offers dichotomies and an opportunity to resolve them. Of course, the pattern is used with varying degrees of irony: Conrad's Tuan Jim, Rajah Laut, and Rey de Sulaco are both holy and unholy imposters; Kipling's Kim of the Rishti is a wistful dream, his McIntosh Jellaludin is a bastardization, and Timlay Doola "is Tim Doolan gone very wrong indeed."¹⁸ But to some degree all of these symbolic mergers operate with the magic of the pun or the discordia concors of a metaphysical conceit by transforming ambivalence into paradox.

In effect, Forster also stands between two spheres that must be resolved and Mrs. Moore's change of identity and rebirth with the double vision of the prophet is one way to embrace the complexity. The famous observation of the wasp, in testing the truth of "Then you are an oriental," is the first part of his plan. Here Mrs. Moore's instinctive acceptance of the wasp--"Pretty dear" (35)-- immediately

follows her son's evaluation of Azia from the viewpoint of of the imperial ruler. Even as Mrs. Moore admits that Ronny's accusation sounds "very sensible," she is thinking, "how false as a summary of the man" (34). Similarly, there are two ways of seeing the wasp which, like all things, bears good and evil, and Mrs. Moore chooses to see it as a "pretty dear." Later the wasp reappears in the English missionary's musing on invitations to a club party, an analogue to the Christian heaven where exclusion is necessary to make inclusion meaningful. Distinction is a necessary part of the Western intellectual process and the wasp, pretty but dangerous, must be excluded from its heaven. And finally the wasp reappears in the union at Mau, this time in the consciousness of the Hindu mystic and again associated with Mrs. Moore. For the Hindu distinctions do not exist and God is equally present in man, the wasp, and perhaps even the stone.

Then seeing the wasp as a "pretty dear," Mrs. Moore has begun to move beyond the tangible world with its imperial divisions between ruler and ruled, towards the Hindu dissolution of categories that will embrace disparity. When she can tell that a ghost caused the accident on the Marabar Road--"None of the English knew this . . . it was a racial secret communicable more by blood than speech" (99)--her uncanny perception is part of the same movement away from the world of action and intellect towards participation in Eastern mystery. But such passage also entails

the harsh renunciation of mortality. Thus, Mrs. Moore becomes increasingly impatient with human relations and earthly responsibility until Godbole's unfathomable song in which the God does not appear shatters her last hold on a reasonable world with its promise of infinite order. "It so happened that Mrs. Moore and Miss Quested had felt nothing acutely for a fortnight. Ever since Professor Godbole had sung his queer little song, they had lived more or less inside cocoons" (133).

The visit to the Marabar, the climax of this movement to the abyss, takes place in the same curious state of womb-like suspension, with the train trip described as a literal passage beyond action. "Nothing" (132) happens, Mrs. Moore feels "nothing," (133) the scenery is negative, and the train crosses "nullahs" (135): "The train, half asleep, going nowhere in particular and with no passenger of importance . . . lost on a low embankment between dull fields" (136). If the caves have a message, it too is negation. They cannot be described because "nothing attaches to them" and if mankind "grew curious and excavated, nothing, nothing would be added to the sum of good or evil" (125). Finally, on the return from the caves, even the train has become a "coffin": "In the twilight, all resembled corpses, and the train itself seemed dead" (161).

This is the experience Jung describes as a state of compulsion without hope or aim as if one were in the womb or grave, and the traditional image sequence of the rebirth

archetype indicates just such a pattern of internal movement towards disintegration and death, balanced by an external movement towards renewal. Thus, the traveler's geographical passage is a movement from England to Italy to India, and thence inland to the caves which are described as a succession of steps moving inward to the ultimate unapproachable internality of a cave within a boulder eternally reflecting its own darkness.

And the cave itself is both womb and grave. Life and death penetrates the image itself, as death is both an end and a source. The mounds in the hills are "graves or breasts" of the fertility goddess Parvati; (140) the cave is a "black hole," (146) smelly and suffocating, "stuffed" with snake-like echoes that breed; (148) a baby appears as "a vile naked thing"; (147) and the entry and return are described in the imagery of sexuality and birth: "They were sucked in like water down a drain . . . and then the hole belched and humanity returned" (146-47).

This, of course, is the perilous chapel the hero must pass before he can restore the land, and the thing that tests this hero is an echo "entirely devoid of distinction": "Hope, politeness, the blowing of a nose, the squeak of a boot, all produce 'boum.'" (147) But that is the mystery.

She had come to that state in which the horror of of the universe and its smallness are both visible at the same time--the twilight of the double vision in which so many elderly people are involved. If this world is not to out taste, well, at all events there is

Heaven, Hell, Annihilation . . . But in the twilight of the double vision, a spiritual muddledom is set up for which no high-sounding words can be found; we can neither act nor refrain from action, we can neither ignore nor respect Infinity.

(208)

Before such ultimates all human relations and values are absurd and all distinctions, love and lust and good and evil, are meaningless labels: "Pathos, piety, courage--they exist but are identical and so is filth" (149). Now Mrs. Moore can only withdraw to death, abandoning the responsibilities that link her to the world of action, and denying the life-giving roles of wife and mother. Even the Christian vision of holy motherhood is reversed from the accepting "yes" of the annunciation to renunciation: "Oh, why is everything still my duty? When shall I be free of your fuss? Was he in the cave and were you in the cave and on and on . . . and Unto us a son is born, unto us a child is given . . ." (205).

By the values of the world, Mrs. Moore's conversion is a form of self-annihilation, but it is by renouncing selfhood and action and with it "poor little talkative Christianity" (150) and the premises of imperial rule that she moves beyond separation to create union as Esmiess Esmoor. To the Anglo-Indian community, and sometimes the mystified reader, Mrs. Moore is a senile old lady; but she is also a shaman playing with mysterious cards and speaking with the divine madness of the prophet, or a "withered

priestess," like Eliot's androgynous Tiresias, who rejects "centuries of carnal embracement" (135) and now predicts the rising of the waters.

But how much are we to believe? Actually, supernatural journeys like this one take place in many Forster stories: the diver of "The Story of the Siren" makes a descent to see the siren at the bottom of the sea and he too returns, "Unhappy, unhappy, because he knew everything . . . and all he cared to do was sleep."¹⁹ Of course, A Passage to India expands the theme of passage with the concept of Nirvana, and criticism has elaborated endlessly on this Hinduism as if Forster were its prophet--a view at considerable variance with his avowed distaste. But all we need to know is how Hinduism functions in this particular novel, where the archetypal descent--and, significantly, Freud called this death wish the "Nirvana principle"--is given in the terms of its Indian setting. Yes, we can always use explications like McConkey's account of the emptiness of the cave as the absolute Brahman, the ultimate reality beyond time and space with which the individual soul will merge, making the tangible world an illusion.²⁰ And it is helpful to know that "Bhakti" is the dissolution of the self when Aziz writes "the song of the future" which transcends creed (268) and Godbole calls that "Bhakti" (293) that "Bhakti" is the dissolution of the self. But all that is crucial is that Forster is using the mythical journey to resolve conflict symbolically and that Mrs. Moore's Hindu vision is one way

to bypass discord. Forster explains, in Aspects of A Novel, that a writer's "prophecy" may "imply any of the great faiths that have haunted humanity," but a prophetic writer need not "say anything about the universe; he proposes to sing."

Moreover, the rebirth pattern characteristically resolves conflict in two ways simultaneously--through the acts of the individual hero, and through his death and surrender to the community. Mrs. Moore's conversion is not only a private resolution that links the opposing ways of East and West, her sacrificial death also extends her influence to encompass the larger ritual action that organizes the novel and effects a connection in social terms.

If we are inclined to emphasize the initiation of Mrs. Moore, we must remember that A Passage to India is a social novel too--indeed, this is its goal--and because Forster is always opposing the alienation of private experience with hope for human society, the focus of the narrative is actually placed upon the social relationships of the group. Letters, invitations, and dialogue that questions and calls strain across chasms with the urge to communicate; the individual is rarely alone. First, the story opens at a social gathering of Indians, then it moves to a "Bridge Party," a tea party, a picnic, a crowded courtroom, a victory celebration, a Moslem festival, and finally, the mystical union at Mau takes place at the most sacred festival--in effect, the most important party. But social and

spiritual experience are not opposed. In its public aspect primitive rituals like the festival at Mau are also concerned with the union of the social group or with fertility as a communal benefit, and Forster is using the vocabulary of such a ritual with the renewing friendship of English and Indian as his desired end.

"Mosque" opens the ritual and the seasonal cycle of the Indian year. The time is the cool spring when the situation has not yet become one of conflict; yet it has its agon in variations on the division between ruler and ruled and the challenges of friendship. Here the dominant image is the harmonious mosque, and Mrs. Moore, Adela, Fielding and Aziz seek union through faith, reason, good will and love in the tangible world. It is a time of invitations and meetings, tentative friendships are formed, and an engagement; but carriages fail to be sent, conversations go awry, and "Mosque" ends with disharmony. When a vision of the "real India" appears in Godbole's song, Adela becomes increasingly disturbed about marriage, Mrs. Moore withdraws from man and God, and the guests leave Fielding's tea "cross or wretched": "It was as if irritation proceeded from the very soil . . . Here was Aziz all shoddy and odious, Mrs. Moore and Miss Quested both silly, and he himself and Heaslop both decorous on the surface, but detestable really and detesting each other" (78-9). Even the mysterious sickness that follows the party suggests that "intimacy" (164) between the races is somehow dangerous and

that union cannot be won in these terms. Still, "Mosque" ends with plans for a picnic that challenges "the spirit of the Indian earth, which tries to keep men in compartments" (127).

In "Caves" human efforts and values are tested by the echo, on trial by the fire of the Indian sun, and tried in the English court. The season is burning summer, the time of the god's suffering, death, and tearing apart. Relations are severed between parents and children, and lovers and friends. Christian order is destroyed for Mrs. Moore as the order of the reasonable mind is destroyed for Adela, and finally, the agon of psychological, social, and metaphysical conflict culminates in Adela's suffering, Aziz's martyrdom, and Mrs. Moore's death.

To support the theme of passion and Sparagmos, the Moslem festival Mohurram provides a background for the conclusion of "Caves," with Aziz, the dark scapegoat for racial hostility, identified with Hussein, the martyr who dies yearly so his followers may win salvation in his name. But, Mrs. Moore appears to die for Aziz. The death, not seen but reported as in ritual and tragedy, takes place at sea and, like the vegetation god's, her body is "committed to the deep":

she was further in the tropics than ever
achieved on shore, when the sun touched
her for the last time and her body was
lowered into yet another India--the Indian
Ocean.

Myths grow up around her, and cults with sacred places:

A legend sprang up that an Englishman had killed his mother for trying to save an Indian's life--there was just enough truth in this to cause annoyance to the authorities. Sometimes it was a cow that was killed--or a crocodile with the tusks of a boar had crawled out of the Ganges.

(256)

It is a death depicted in primitive, even tragic terms, as the result of conflict and the atoning sacrifice, something more than the "One touch of true regret" (51) which might save the Empire; it is the "occasional intoxication of the blood." Just as the primitive and Christian communities are joined and renewed by sharing the body and blood of the sacrificed god, Mrs. Moore influences and is merged with the major characters to bring union and rain.

Finally, the court becomes a scene of magical transformation comparable to the peripetia of ritual when the action shifts from the death of the old to joy in the discovery of the reliving god. As Esmoor, Mrs. Moore exorcises Adela's echo and saves Aziz; her death and his victory are simultaneous. Thus, the English violation of India finds symbolic atonement in the death of an Englishwoman to save an Indian accused of raping an Englishwoman. Mrs. Moore is not only a sacrificial god and redeeming mother for Aziz, she also embodies a social relationship, and union is further effected when social barriers have been crossed.

The sahib's code maintains that you must "toe the line" (171), "You can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds," (188) but such a violation produces the social reversal: "A new spirit seemed abroad, a rearrangement" (214). "Victory on this side, defeat on that--complete for one moment was the antithesis" (231). Now the court is dominated by an Indian god and the English "had fallen into their ownppit." (235)

And still another source of reversal comes with the exposure of Adela's guilt, the pit in her unconscious. When Adela recants, it is because admiration for the "beautiful naked god" (231) awakens her attraction to the "handsome little Oriental," (152) and with the failure of her conscious mind comes doubt about the Christian god and the premises of imperial rule: "Her particular brand of opinions, and the suburban Jehovah who sanctified them--by what right did they assume so much importance in the world and assume the title of civilization?" (218) Finally, that suburban Jehovah recalls "poor little talkative Christianity," (150) Mrs. Moore is invoked, and Aziz is saved.

Even as a social comedy this is the moment of ironic reversal, and Forster is always reminding us that the traditional Anglo-Indian story has varying levels of seriousness. Even while Mrs. Moore is confronting those ultimates which render the imperial posture absurd, the Anglo-Indian community is performing a social comedy that exposes the absurdity. Forster has commented upon novels written on "an elephant's back high above the actualities of the

bazaar" by Anglo-Indian ladies obsessed by "the disasters of intermarriage";²² at moments, A Passage to India almost parodies such novels. A Passage to India also has its white rulers protecting themselves from primal ooze with a temple-like club, assertive technology, libations in scotch, the ubiquitous anthem, and a club play where Sahibs disguised as Sahibs ritually reenact life in England. A Sahib's code maintains the line between order and disorder, and the mythically pure "English girl fresh from England," (165) a violated virgin crucified with cactus thorns, is despoiled by the bestial Indian of colonial fantasies.

When played against the outraged smugness of the Anglo-Indian community, Adela's exposure is a grim joke, but a joke that supports and enriches the serious theme. Mr. Mc Bryde can assert that it's a "scientific" fact that "the darker races are physically attracted by the fairer," (219) but Aziz finds Adela repugnant, and the pure English maiden is somewhat less than pure. Then, with Adela's purity, science topples, the myth of the reasonable English mind, and the white gods themselves. The Turttons had been considered "little gods"; (28) Ronny's sentiments are "those of a god" because "India likes gods," or, Mrs. Moore adds, "Englishmen posing as gods"; (50) before the arrest the sanctimonious Collector was "revealed as a god in a shrine"; (162) the approach of the City Magistrate is heralded with, "he comes, he comes, he comes. I cringe. I tremble"; (246) but when he commands a servant named Krishna to come, (97) in mockery of the English relation-

ship with their gods as well as their servants, the servant, like the gods of India, "neglects to come." In India, it is the Marabar who are the gods, men are "dwarfs shaking hands," and the deflation of the English and the comic catharsis support the reversal of the ritual.

Now "Caves" can conclude with a triumphal procession celebrating the expulsion of evil and the new society. Adela and Fielding, "half gods, half guys" (233) honored with garlands, are driven through an Edenic garden in a scene that recalls the traditional marriage festival of comedy as well as the sacred marriage of the earth goddess and year god, its ritual predecessor. In fact, the festival of comedy signals just this sort of release and social integration and the festival of ritual signals the same triumph of life over the wasteland. Furthermore, Forster will echo this paradisaical scene in Aziz and Fielding's last ride, and again in the sacred marriage between Fielding and Mrs. Moore's daughter. Their marriage of vision and reason, like the marriage of the rite, seeks to promote fertility by reproducing it: "In the language of theology their union had been blessed." (318) But now Adela appears in the procession as the human surrogate for the god; she is even addressed as "Mrs. Moore," (233) and her role is completed after she has joined Fielding and Stella.

In effect, an attempt has been made to cross racial barriers, but the resolution is complete only for "one moment," (231) and "Caves" concludes with the "tangles" (274)

of reality. Adela and Fielding abandon their "own people" to join the Indian victory but even then are accused of "sticking together," and Aziz's misunderstanding of Fielding's relationship with Adela ends in "tragic coolness": "They had conquered but were not to be crowned" (271). The triumph that crowns the conquest will occur through the Hindu song of "Temple."

The final section of the narrative is almost entirely devoted to the festival at Mau celebrating the birth of Shri Krishna, Lord of the universe and symbol of the reproductive forces of nature. In the Indian year it is the time of fall rains; in the ritual, it is the epiphany.

This is our monsoon, the best weather . . .
Now is the time when all things are happy . . .
the tanks are all full so they dance, and this
is India.

(312)

In echo of the earlier mosque scene, Aziz and Mrs. Moore's son meet at the shrines of "the Head" and "the Body," (296) and the action fluctuates between enmity and friendship as the festival makes its impact upon the fissures of reality. Aziz still has not forgiven the English and Ralph is attacked by angry bees that recall the wasp, but further suggest Adela's thorns and the hostile nature that divides at the conclusion. Thus, the meeting opens with vengeance until, "drowning his last words, all the guns of the state went off . . . the prisoner had been released and was kissing the feet of the singers" (310). The

salvation of the ritual encompasses ordinary life and
 "forgetting that they were not friends," Aziz tells Ralph;
 "Then you are an oriental":

Those words--he had said them to Mrs. Moore
 in the mosque at the beginning of the cycle,
 from which, after so much suffering, he had
 got free. Never be friends with the English!
 Mosque, caves, mosque, caves. And here he
 was starting again.

(311)

Still, reality intrudes. Aziz knows "the two nations cannot be friends" and Ronny answers, "not yet" with a "swerve of voice and body" (311) that foreshadows the final swerve of the horses. Yet, in homage to Mrs. Moore, Aziz takes her son to the festival where they are guided on a "ruderless dinghy," (313) by the "strange temporary life of the August flood-water," (312-13) to a vision of the Rajah, like Krishna, reborn. Thus, the restoration through love is realized in a literal rebirth when Aziz, like the doctor of folklore, ritually heals the dead god in order to heal the land. In fact, it is Aziz's duty as "chief medicine man to the court" (292) to create the illusion that the Rajah is still alive, and it is Aziz as medicine man who heals Ralph's stings with that seemingly magical ointment.

The festival itself is the apocalyptic moment of union and triumph. Although called a "frustration of reason and form," its "muddle" (285) is the all-embracing chaos of Hinduism that opposes the sterility of Western distinctions. It's noise dispels the echo as its rain washes away the

burning of the sun: "The braying banging crooning melted into a single mass which trailed round the palace before joining the thunder. Rain fell at intervals throughout the night" (284). And in that chaos the disparate merge and the major themes and images are resolved:

Infinite Love took upon itself the form of
SHRI KRISHNA and saved the world. All
sorrow was annihilated, not only for Indians,
but for foreigners, birds, caves, railways,
and the stars.

(287-88)

A collision and watery baptism unites English and Indian, the "emblems of passage," (314) the village of Gogul, and the hostile letters: "Artillery was fired, drums beaten, the elephants trumpeted, and drowning all an immense peal of thunder," (315) symbol of the spiritual power of Buddhahood which shatters the illusory reality of the world.

Finally, Mrs. Moore reappears in that triumph, merged with Hinduism through her association with the wasp and her identification with Krishna's favorite wife. She continues in memory, in her children, and ultimately, in the baby to come. Union and fertility are the result of her watery sacrifice:

Thus was he thrown year after year . . .
little images of Ganpati, baskets of ten-day
corn, tiny tazias after Mohurram--scapegoats,
husks, emblems of passage; a passage not
easy, not now, not here, not to be apprehended
except when it is unattainable: the
god to be thrown was an image of that.

(314-15)

At the conclusion of "Temple" the form of the novel

has followed the archetypal sequence of ritual which says without words that there is life out of death and union in duality. Within the great unity of Hinduism friendship is affirmed and the action seems to be concluding with all the results of a successful ritual and the resolution of Forster's need to "connect." But now we are forced to deal with the afterword and its key image of separation.

A metaphor for dealing with what appears to be an anti-climax can be found in Forster's famous account of panic and emptiness in Beethoven's Fifth Symphony:

Beethoven chose to make all right in the end. He built the ramparts up. He blew with his mouth for the second time, and again the goblins were scattered. He brought back the gusts of splendour, the heroism, the youth, the magnificence of life and death, and, amid vast roarings of a superhuman joy, he led his Fifth Symphony to its conclusion. But the goblins were there. They could return. He had said so bravely, and that is why one can trust Beethoven when he says other things.²³

Like all serious works of art A Passage to India is a symbolic action, a ritual much like the rituals out of which are grew. It need not seek an answer any more than a rain dance must bring rain; the very act of organization is its protest against meaninglessness. But outside the work of art dominated by the artist's intelligence lie panic and emptiness, and Forster seems to be indicating this sort of division as part of the narrative itself. Within the major action a passage is effected that concludes

with "vast roarings of superhuman joy," but the goblins return. And similar shifts in focus throughout the novel serve to remind us of the same distinction between the discords of reality and the symbolic solutions of ritual, the moments like the Krishna rite when "a compromise had been made between destiny and desire" (307).

Passage and reality are first distinguished when the party returns from the picnic in their coffin-like train: "And as it ended, as they sat up in the gloom and prepared to enter ordinary life, suddenly the long drawn strangeness of the morning snapped" (161). Again, when Adela's "vision is over" and she returns "to the insipidity of the world" (250): "--complete for one moment was the antithesis. Then life returned to its complexities . . . and before long no one remained on the scene of the fantasy but the beautiful naked god" (231). The moment of unity is then followed by tangled reality and "The visit of the lieutenant-Governor formed the next stage in the decomposition of the Marabar" (258). Later the same tangles between Aziz and Ralph are transformed at a "half-way moment" when "the God had extended his temple." (310) and the Krishna rite in "the strange temporary life" of the August flood (313) concludes when a god, like the god of the courtroom, closes "the gate of salvation"; (315) "The image went back too, and on the following day underwent a private death of its own, when some curtains of magenta and green were lowered in front of the dynastic shrine" (316). Finally,

the last chapter begins: "The floods had abated and the Rajah was officially dead" (316). Now Aziz and Fielding ride together in Eden for the last time until the scenery "fell like a gravestone on any human hope," and the book closes with: "The divisions of daily life were returning, the shrine had almost shut." (321)

In effect, union in the novel occurs by passage into a magical world created by our dreams where life overcomes death and resolutions are possible; but the book ends with a return and the very negation has meaning. The epilogue is important because it is an anti-climax, not an afterthought; in denying the results of the ritual it marks the distinction between the real world and the world of fantasy, and, by analogy, of art. In fact, Northrop Frye is describing a strategy much like this one when he observes that Shakespeare follows his moments of union in the green world with some sort of admission that the discords of court still lie outside the play and with a bridge to the reality beyond his control.²⁴ Again it is important to insist that Forster is not offering Hinduism, or indeed, any philosophy, as a solution to human dilemmas; he is acting out a passage beyond human dilemmas. And it is also important to insist that conflict is resolved in the novel by a fantasy passage that specifically denies the possibility of a resolution in the daylight of reality when the ritual is only a remembered dream.

The outcome is a dilemma. In "What I Believe," Forster

maintains a commitment to human relations as opposed to belief. "Tolerance," "good temper," and "sympathy" should be all that is needed, "but," he continues, "in a world rent with religious and racial persecution, perhaps we also need the 'stiffening of faith.'"²⁵ Although Forster has acted out this faith, he ultimately rejects it; although he speaks of embracing the inner life, he actually recoils against it. While it becomes increasingly obvious that there can be no union in the real world, Forster cannot help distrusting a solution that resolves opposition through the loss of form and will. Unlike Whitman, he is unwilling to sail wildly into the mystery, "to risk the ship, ourselves and all";²⁶ like Fielding, he retreats to the Mediterranean, "the human norm," (282) with a tentative, "Not yet." (322).

Clearly Forster makes a poor prophet for Hinduism. While the ecstatic Gokul Ashtami festival is presented in the novel as the moment of triumph, with ambivalence removed in the epilogue, Forster's account of the same ceremony in The Hill of Devi reveals his ambivalence openly. Admittedly, once removed to art the festival is no longer the same experience; still, the contrast between Forster's personal and fictional response can help explain the sense of negation in the novel. In reality, Hinduism appears to have been more than intellectually unsympathetic to him; it was threatening enough to drive Forster to a unique display of nastiness and, what is more, bad taste. Of the idol of Krishna, described throughout as the "chief dolly,"²⁷ he

writes: "I saw the thing at last--face like an ill-tempered pea: curious little imp for so much to center round."²⁸ Or: "I suppose that if your drunkenness comes from God it becomes more enjoyable."²⁹

In the novel, union at Gokul comes of mess, excess, and abandon, as opposed to the sterile restraints and divisive forms of the West; in reality, Forster found chaos unpleasant: "The altar is a mess of little objects. There is no dignity, no taste, nor form, and though I am dressed as a Hindu I shall never become one."³⁰ The inner life is equally disturbing. Speaking of a Hindu friend, Forster comments: "I have never seen religious ecstasy before . . . but he manages not to be absurd."³¹ While Aziz's sensuality and emotionalism is the novel's antidote to Fielding's arid intellectuality, "the munificence of oriental emotions"³² made Forster vaguely uncomfortable. At his friend's advice to follow his heart and then his mind will see everything clear, Forster balks! "The message as phrased is too facile, doors open into silliness at once."³³

Words like this, "absurd" and "silliness," keep cropping up in A Passage to India, particularly in the key mystery-muddle axis where the threats of vision are tempered by ironical debunking. In fact, Forster's style generally appears to have been shaped just for this sort of restraint, and the persona he has chosen to guide us to the mystery is a donnish gentleman who breaks in to warn us, in the most Victorian of tones, "Visions are supposed to entail profundity,

but--wait till you get one, dear Reader!" (208) And it is because he refuses to abandon himself to the impersonality necessary for the highest level of his intention that Forster implicitly rejects the role of prophet which, in fact, he had described as the ultimate role of the novelist.

In Aspects of the Novel Forster had revealed his admiration for prophetic writers who face the mystery and run the risk of greatness. George Eliot is a preacher who never alters her focus when she speaks of God, but remains on the level of "tables and chairs," While in Dostoyevsky, infinity attends the characters.³⁴ Then he adds:

The prophetic aspect demands two qualities: humility and the suspension of a sense of humor . . . Like the schoolchildren in the Bible, one cannot help laughing at a prophet--his bald head is so absurd--but one can discount the laughter and realize that it has no critical value and is merely food for bears.³⁵

But Forster does laugh at the prophet; his writing on Hinduism is just this. Godbole, bald and laughable, is the novel's prophet, and Forster makes his mystic detachment comically inappropriate, and a vision that resolves discord by admitting none, absurd. "God is Love," (285) "There is no God but God," (276) and Adela's vision of time and space are called "puns" not "truths," (276) and mystery becomes the silly useless word "muddle" (69) that brings us back to the level of tables and chairs. In fact, Forster's earth god and goddess are really a barren intellectual and a

homely spinster, and Mrs. Moore is a surly old lady travestied into a goddess by a comic misunderstanding of her name.

Even in an interview, Forster went out of his way to deflate the ecstatic culmination at Gokul: "It was architecturally necessary. I needed a lump, or a Hindu temple if you like-- a mountain sticking up. It is well placed and it gathers up some strings."³⁶ Of course it is more than this, but why the necessity to diminish the crucial section of the novel? and why with such inappropriate coyness? Gerald Gould makes a revealing comment on Forster's talent when he remarks: "The fairies showered gifts on Mr. Forster: sympathy, wit, knowledge, charm; but an impudent fairy came at the end and made him whimsical."³⁷

Apparently this sort of nervously defensive laughter is Forster's way of handling emotion, but one wonders if a prophet can properly offer us all that transcendent vision while mocking it. Rex Warner clarifies Forster's hesitations when he distinguishes him from D. H. Lawrence in their search for a more abundant life. While the prophet Lawrence plunges in religious fervour, Forster

seems to lead us up the garden path, revealing at the end, some ecstatic scene between the wrong people in the wrong place. Then, after insisting that the scene should be admired, he takes us away. It is magnificent, he seems to say, but on the whole one had better not . . . then, with a final twist of the knife, he adds, "All the same, it would be magnificent if one could."³⁸

Of course this is exactly what is happening at the end

of A Passage to India, and the recoil would continue even beyond that "Not yet" through the years when all he would publish were genial little essays or a tribute to his maiden aunt, the unvisionary member of the family. E. K. Brown once suggested that Forster abandoned fiction because he had always been a novelist of ideas;³⁹ Lionel Trilling calls A Passage to India "the least personal" of Forster's novels;⁴⁰ and critics like Gertrude White and ~~Fredericke~~ Crews, with much the same assumptions, treat A Passage to India as a philosophical problem.⁴¹ Perhaps it is to Forster's credit that his critics have been convinced by his skill at disciplining emotion, but in Forster we are dealing less with an absence of emotion than with a fear of emotion. Forster himself is the Englishman he describes in "Notes on English Character" as not unfeeling but "afraid to feel,"⁴² and this conflict makes up the central theme of his art. In fact, that characteristic role of ironically equivocating gentleman suggests something more complex than objectivity, just as Hinduism's "intellectual" assault on the values of the Bloomsbury humanist is insufficient to account for the terrifying consequences of the cave and the recoil that denies the possibility of human contact.

Beneath the social novel's ordered action and public commitment to personal relations, nothing but disaster results "when a man mixes himself up with natives," (186) and the same mysterious separateness rends every human relationship in A Passage to India. There are no happy

families, Mothers abandon their children, birth is ludicrous, a naked baby is vile, and Christ's mother rejects her role. Men and women fare no better. Aziz and Mrs. Moore have lost their loves and the living couples never achieve intimacy. Repeatedly, Mrs. Moore asks: "Why all this marriage, marriage? . . . the human race would have been a single person centuries ago if marriage was of any use" (201): "Too much fuss has been made over marriage; centuries of carnal embracement, yet man is no closer to understanding man" (134). And Fielding agrees: "Marriage is too absurd in any case" (119). Even the sunrise over the Marabar picnic sets the scene for the mystery as an aborted marriage: "Why, when the chamber was prepared did not the bridegroom enter with trumpets and shawms, as humanity expects?" (137). No wonder Adela finds, not love, but violation in the caves, and Mrs. Moore's vision makes no distinction: "The unspeakable attempt presented itself to her as love; in a cave, in a church--Boum, it amounts to the same" (208); "And all this rubbish about love, love in a church, love in a cave, as if there is the least difference." (201).

Certainly there is no difference in the repugnant sexual imagery of the cave, the smelly "black hole" (146) of Pandora's box with its snake-like echoes loosed as the cursed knowledge of "the undying worm itself" (208). Aziz had warned, even in the harmonious opening scene, that snakes come down from the hills; a snake appears on the way to the picnic, and the cave itself is stuffed with snakes

that breed: "a snake composed of small snakes which writhe independently": (148) and the same snake appears in the garden of the victory procession, and again in Eden where Aziz and Fielding ride together for the last time. Actually, it isn't necessary to belabor the phallic nature of snakes to suggest that the "undying worm" loosed as Adela's hallucination, "a mass of madness" that "had to be shoved back into its pit," (163) is related to the separateness that dominates the novel.

Even further, intimacy of any kind is emotionally repugnant and physically dangerous. For all the novel's statements of friendship and its straining towards connection, the imagery unmistakably reveals Forster's reaction against contact: English and Indian become ill after Fielding's tea; Mrs. Moore is "crushed" (224) by a crowd in the cave, and fantasy violation and hostility are the result of Anglo-Indian parties and picnics. Even the pervasive sense of tactile revulsion supports this recoil from contact; Adela's fancied attack is realized in terms of painfully phallic cactus thorns; Ronny is stung by bees, and then by Aziz, "whose hands are unkind"; (309) Mrs. Moore is revolted by the touch of a baby who settles "on her mouth like a pad," (147) and her rejection of "carnal embracement" is felt "with such force that it seemed itself a relationship, itself a person who was trying to take hold of her hand." (135).

Human contact continues to repel both women and this repulsion is related to their rejection of the roles of wife

and mother; Adela "felt that just as others repelled her, so did she repel Mrs. Moore." (198) Adela, in fact, cannot bear to touch herself: "the touch of her hands on her face started prickly heat." (211) Even at Mau, Godbole is contaminated by the touch of a non-Hindu and the Moslems believe "All illness proceeds from Hindus." (105) Greeting a Hindu friend in a "half-embrace," Aziz is reminded of "cow-dung" while the Hindu is thinking that Moslems are "very violent" (267). Adela and Ronny touch hands in the car in the only moment of deliberate sexual contact, but their touch is a "spurious unity," (88). Fielding, trying to catch the train to the picnic, "missed his friend's hand" (131) and the god of the courtroom is an "untouchable." (217).

Finally, contact is both the cause and the result of the watery baptism: "The boats had collided with each other" (315). And again when English and Indian, joined with their oars "like a mythical monster," (315) collide with the dark god bearing the village of Gokul; "the shock was minute, but Stella, nearest to it, shrank into her husband's arms, then reached forward, then flung herself against Aziz, and her motions capsized them" (315). But "shrank into" is hardly the most affirmative way to describe renewing contact, and this too is negated by the ultimate recoil against physical embrace.

--he rode against him furiously--"and then,"
he concluded, half kissing him, "you and I

shall be friends."

"Why can't we be friends now?" said the other, holding him affectionately . . .

But the horses didn't want it--they swerved apart.

(322)

Because the Adela plot explicitly relates emotional threats and the mystery of the East, this may be a fruitful place to look at Forster's associations and hesitations. Here the purpose of the passage is quite clear: Adela descends into her unconscious to confront the mystery of her buried self, and rebirth becomes a kind of psychoanalysis which should resolve consciousness and unconsciousness as Mrs. Moore's passage had resolved reality and vision. The parallel is accurate and effective. Religions like Mrs. Moore's Hinduism have spiritualized the mythic Night Journey, but its essential function has always been just this, to conduct the initiate through periods of conflict and adjustment. That is why researchers like Campbell find primitive rituals in the dreams of psychoanalyzed patients as they approach their "conversion."⁴³

Adela seeks the "real India" when she is approaching love and marriage, so her India becomes a fantasy of the sexuality she has suppressed. But sexuality is only one aspect of a barrenness and an incapacity for any kind of release that is ultimately related to the failures of Western reason. Thus we are prepared for a sexual response to the Hindu mystery when marriage and the Marabar are established as related themes and Adela's need to order the mystery of

India is related to her need to control her own inexplicable feelings. Even Adela understands that her "bothers are mixed up with India": (98) on seeing the caves for the first time, "in front, like a shutter, fell a vision of her married life" (47). It is Godbole's "song of an unknown bird" (79) that shatters her engagement, and the theme returns in the green bird--"They would have liked to identify it, it would somehow have solaced their hearts" (85)--and again in the shifting sexual topography of the journey and the kites in the cave. And when the engagement is momentarily reestablished, it is because Ronny and Adela are forced to join in loveless unity and "an abundance of common sense" (151) in defense against the mysterious accident on the Marabar road: "Unlike the green bird or the hairy animal, she was labelled now" (94). But inevitably, the black hole of the cave awakens the fears and desires associated with marriage and even a question cannot prevent Adela from being assaulted by her own unreasonable fantasies.

In the cave, Adela's "violation," is played against Mrs. Moore's vision of the abyss, but this time the Hindu's veil of Maya has become the super ego of order creating consciousness. When it is lifted and restraining categories are dissolved, love and lust become one, and the mystery is revealed as a rape both desired and feared. Because Adela must make distinctions, her field glasses are smashed in the mysterious attack, and she meets the mystery in terms of a hallucination that is, in fact, the truth.

More crassly, Adela is the familiar Anglo-Indian lady obsessed by miscegenation and Aziz is the customary scape-goat.⁴⁴ Even her question--and Adela didn't "innocently" (227) ask "what marriage was like" as she claims; she asked Aziz the number of his wives--reveals the common Anglo-Indian assumption of the native's insatiable lust. Clearly, Adela's question was not so innocently concerned with the "handsome little oriental" (152) and the real nature of marriage. After the trial she comes to realize that her experience was the sort of thing "that makes some women think they've had an offer of marriage when none was made" (240) and Aziz composes his tastelessly accurate letter: "Dear Dr. Aziz. I wish you had come into the cave; I am an awful old hag, and it is my last chance" (253).

Because sexuality is never openly mentioned and the episode is tempered by what Rose Macauley calls Forster's "gingerly aloofness"⁴⁵ when dealing with sex, Adela's failure is open to euphemistic interpretation as the failure of "reason" as opposed to "love." But surely all those furtive hints of a secret sin suggest something more, and Forster's reticence only makes sex guilty and malevolent. In fact, Adela herself is "afraid of reticence, in case something that she herself did not perceive took shape beneath it" (212). She feels "unworthy of Ronny," (194) "not fit for personal relationships," (197) guilty of some unnamed sin and "longing to ask pardon" (194).

Then Adela has descended into the pit and the pattern

demands a reintegration of warring selves and a life-giving return. Of course, we can't expect miracles--Adela has limitations--but Forster doesn't seem to know what they are. He actually tells us that "a miracle" had occurred; (243) when the vision was over, "she remembered what she had learned. She was no longer examining life, but being examined by it; she had become a real person" (243). But is this what happens? Adela does accept her blackness in a moment of insight; the guilty echo, like the Rajah's cursed dagger, is properly exorcised, and this is generally accepted as the triumph of instinctive love over the categorical view of natives as rapists. But Adela, at least consciously, has never accepted such a view: "the last person in Chandrapore wrongfully to accuse an Indian" (179). Nor is such a fantasy characteristic of the way of reason. And, more important, she not only remains incapable of love, she even says that it is the experience in the cave that keeps her from ever wanting it. Instead of being resolved, the desires of the unconscious become "a mass of madness" that has to be "shoved back into the pit," intimacy remains dangerous, and Adela, far from a "real person," is incompletely realized because Forster cannot begin to deal with the nature of her problem.

Admittedly, Forster's imaginative Hinduism might philosophically justify the equation of love and lust as it had justified Mrs. Moore as a rejecting mother; still, it is difficult to be convinced that mystical vision really

justifies the disproportionately negative sexual imagery or the revulsion against contact throughout the novel--particularly when Hinduism itself is so sensual. However, considering the nature of the imagery in the cave, it is not difficult to understand why Adela might reject intimacy, or why the area beyond order and restraint might threaten Forster, or why the snake reappears at the conclusion.

Throughout the narrative Forster has been half-offering something vaguely called "love" and an equally misty "vision" as the antidote to barrenness and alienation. Earlier novels had tested love and vision on relatively safe terrains, and A Passage to India appeared between two volumes of supernatural stories in which the starved senses and suburban Jehovahs of the middle class British are exposed to the dark gods of a mythic order of experience. Heroes are offered paradise on the other side of the hedge, a chance to hear the siren, see Pan, or die like Oedipus at Colonnus, and an English Daphne is even turned into a tree precisely so that she will have an opportunity to be ravished. Actually, the stories themselves are timidly conventional paganism, peopled by chiffon-clad woodsprites and a well-behaved Pan--hardly the dark gods Forster admired in Melville and Lawrence;⁴⁶ still, the obsessively reiterated theme is significant. Again and again, the spontaneous and primitive opposes the inhibited and respectable, and separation from society with its divine madness is salvation from the emotional starvation of the normal and ordinary. It is the inspired

and sensitive who see Pan, and those who would cure such visionaries are mocked as destroyers of "the morality of the heart." However, even here we sense a resistance. As in all the art and folklore of enchantment, the very abundance of forbidden pleasure prevents return to the everyday world.

A Passage to India tests such hazardous longings to their limits, and it would be Forster's last public statement of the theme. Again the middle class British are sent into an alien country, but this time they get more than they bargained for. Apparently Forster did too, and his sense of India as a personal threat would seem to account for much of the mysterious danger in the cave that keeps men separate. Naturally Forster would be the one to spot Conrad's "dread of intimacy," to suspect that his elusive "horror" and confused philosophy, were a "smoke screen of reticence," and to suggest that "our difficulties with Mr. Conrad may proceed in part from difficulties of his own"; Forster had created just this sort of "central obscurity"⁴⁷ about the nature of a void which he too had filled with his own unverbalizable horrors.

Of course, now we know why Forster never wrote another novel and why he refused to publish his later fiction:

I shall never write another novel after it
[A Passage to India]--My patience with
ordinary people has given out.⁴⁸ ~~For Havogrsah fernanrhong in vain trying to~~
~~write a play, I will analyse the causes of . . .~~
my sterility . . . weariness of the only
subject that I both can and may treat--the
love of men for women and vice versa.⁴⁹

Now we know that the book that came out of Forster's first trip to India was not A Passage to India, but Maurice,⁵⁰ where the otherworld and "something primitive"⁵¹ and "certain abysses in his being"⁵² are identified with homosexuality. And now we should have a better idea of what an India beyond social restraints might have suggested. Though it may be questionable whether it is sporting, or even challenging, to go back over an author's work from this vantage point, it is not only pointless, but impossible to disregard the association between Forster's own "mystery" and the "other-world" of A Passage to India.

Although their whimsy prevented us from taking them seriously, the supernatural stories had been working towards this association all along, with stories like "Albergo Empedocle" and "Dr. Woolacott" as a link between the sort of stories Forster published and those he suppressed. "Albergo Empedocle" retells the conventional "The Story of a Panic" with its suggestions of homosexuality in the frame. Here the hero escapes a destructive woman and bourgeois reality in the divine madness of the other world, and the narrator, though he has lost "the man I most love in the world,"⁵³ feels he should be happy--"for the greater has replaced the less."⁵⁴ In "Dr. Woolacott" the other world summons the hero to madness and death in the shape of the garden boy who reappears throughout Forster's work. Again the natural opposes the repressed and love is a divine madness unseeing society would cure. But here forbidden

love is also a disease that separates the sufferer from life--"I mustn't be intimate with people"⁵⁵--and death is the other world where connection is possible.

Clearly, Forster had difficulty accepting the more abundant life even in his unpublished, unpublishable stories, and it is difficult to know whether to be more disturbed by the torment the homosexual stories reveal, or by the dreadful banality of the works themselves: if Maurice cloyes with its sentimental wish-fulfillment, stories like "The Classical Annex" or "The Obelisque" shock with the prurient silliness of a sophomoric dirty joke. Still, their recurrent themes and images are suggestive. When our inquiry is directed, not to Forster, but to his interest in black men or the lower classes, but to the way the work of art tries to deal with the author's area of conflict, many of the problems in A Passage to India might be clarified.

Such inquiry might account for areas in which the plot fails to carry the burden of the explicit meaning, or when it carries quite different meanings. If the conclusion frustrates the expectations that have been aroused and the justification for the failure of personal relations has not been realized in the narrative, then perhaps private conflict is creating the confusion. Such inquiry might also account for the particular nature of this colonial India, for the imaginative form of its Hinduism and its political liberalism, even for the real reason why its ruler and ruled can't be friends. And finally, it might answer Kettle's question

about Forster's "failure to dramatise quite convincingly the positive values which he has to set against the destroyers of the morality of the heart."⁵⁶ Perhaps we are bewildered because there are things Forster is unwilling or unable to say.

Certainly the specific nature of Forster's India could only be determined by the demands of his fantasy. We've seen fantasies like Forster's India before, and Fiedler at least, has dwelt endlessly on the American novel's wilderness beyond society and the impossible dream of interracial male friendship. Quarrels with Fiedler's heavy-handed assumptions that this friendship is necessarily homosexual or that it is indigenous to the "immature"⁵⁷ American novel should be reserved for the moment; but, in general, anything goes on in the greenworld, the frontier, and the colony that can't go on at home, and once the English novel comes into contact with dark men and wilderness, it too has male idylls in an Eden beyond civilization and its women. The colonial novel not only has Fielding and Aziz, but Kim and his Lama, Rhubeck and Mr. Johnson, Flory and his servant, Baines and his Blacks, Scobie and Ali--and all these works have at least one scene in which dark and light men join in a pastoral paradise that is explicitly contrasted with the sexual threats and limitations of reality. Even so, many of Fiedler's insights can be useful here because Forster is also making a passage to a "territory unconquered and uninhabited by palefaces, the bearers of 'civilization,'

the cadres of imperialist reason,"⁵⁸ and his longing for interracial male friendship signifies a similar desire to "extend consciousness" and "recover the lost libido."⁵⁹

In A Passage to India, as in dreams and in Fiedler's American novels, the erotic object does tend to be a race we have suppressed and denied upon whom we displace feelings we suppress and deny, and Fiedler is also correct in perceiving that such an idyllic friendship, by crossing super-ego restraints, actually conceals a dangerous "trifling with taboos."⁶⁰ Aziz, emotional, instinctual, and indeed, sexually vigorous, is a characteristic fantasy of the primitive and when Fielding seeks his friendship across social barriers, it is out of affection and admiration for a fully developed heart, and a longing for something beyond his own "poor crop of secrets" (117). Still, guilt remains: Aziz, like Fiedler's Indians, bears the blows of the Anglo-Indian community for being the repository of their forbidden desires,⁶¹ and Fielding himself recoils in embarrassment from the very sensuality he longs for.

In the colonial novel too, interracial friendship becomes a way of accepting darkness, as well as an atonement for the psychological and material exploitation of dark victims, until it too comes to stand for "a healing of social conflicts" (366). Moreover, this kind of reconciliation, with its "enriching interplay of sociological, psychological, and metaphysical significance" (366)--which Fiedler calls "peculiarly American"⁶²--is particularly

crucial in Forster. While Fiedler is correct in observing that the master-slave relationship in the English novel has traditionally opposed the inferior Sancho Panzas with the ego ideals of their masters, democratic guilts and personal rebellions, very much like those of the land of "futile slaves,"⁶³ play an equally important role in contemporary colonial fiction. Not only do we find the same social values opposing oppression, but the same Black-White alter-ego relationships. And when the English king accepts his black unfitness to rule, we find the same guilt for psychological exploitation manifested in the same vision of political equality. Adela renounces her imperial position when she sees Aziz as the victim of her sexuality, and Fielding, "a disruptive influence" outside the "herd," (62) can cross class barriers because Forster was a renegade. Certainly, Fiedler's assumptions about the master-slave relationship would be particularly valid for a Bloomsbury liberal whose own homosexual liaisons crossed class lines,⁶⁴ who could equate sexual rebellion with class rebellion, and then use it as a political idea in an ostensibly sociological novel. This is the sort of thing Kenneth Burke means when he suggests that Gide's homosexuality made him a political liberal by training his sense of divergence.⁶⁵

The relationship between emotional needs and social values becomes particularly striking in Maurice, where primitive sexuality is identified with the lower classes and love with a garden boy becomes a Lawrencian fantasy of

forbidden release. Not only is class rebellion associated with sexual rebellion, an even greater taboo is placed upon violating the barriers of class. Maurice is, above all, a snob who won't play polo with clerks; but when he accepts his sexuality, he too steps down from his position as a white ruler with a vision of sexual freedom and social equality.

The elusive way in which dreamers and artists safely displace their problems shouldn't be surprising. Stanley Edgar Hyman has noted the way Baldwin writes of a boy's conversion to homosexuality in terms of his conversion to religion, and of a man's acceptance of his blackness in terms of his acceptance of his homosexuality.⁶⁶ Furthermore, this sort of displacement is particularly available to interracial relationships: because the outsider is less real, he becomes a receptive vessel for projection, and because he is less involved with family taboos, he becomes even more erotic. Thus, Ralph Ellison has pointed out that white southerners like Faulkner tend to identify any form of personal rebellion with the Negro,⁶⁷ and Forster can use Anglo-Indian racial taboos to act out his feelings about sexual taboos.

In the forbidden love affair between the Sahib and Indian of "The Other Boat," much of this identification becomes apparent. Here heterosexuality is identified with whiteness, the hero must "Keep with his own people or he would perish,"⁶⁸ and when he murders his lover and drowns

himself his fellow Sahibs close ranks to conceal the double departure from the Sahib's code and their own secret departures from normality and whiteness. The story's ambiguous loose ends are equally suggestive. While death is offered as an escape from a destructive mother⁶⁹ and bourgeois society (with hints of a father who escaped both with a black mistress), Forster actually reveals the guilt and terror of non-conformity. Seduction by black magic (the standard colonial explanation for the eroticism of the exotic) is used to justify the love, and the hero's downfall as well as his brother's death "by sunstroke"⁷⁰ are seen as retaliation against their mother for having violated a tabooed circle of male domain. But even beyond Forster's ambivalence, the themes and images that recur in A Passage to India are revealing--the Sahib's code as a sexual barrier with the power of a tabooed circle, the tempting native who dominates "after the ship has entered the Mediterranean,"⁷¹ homosexual love as a "Snake" that "must be driven back into its hole,"⁷² and of course, the contrast between the innocent childhood friendship on "The Other Boat" and a real world where sexuality threatens: "A trivial collision between children had alerted them towards each other as men"⁷³ (*italics mine*).

This splitting between reality and dream, crucial to A Passage to India, becomes clearer in Maurice where, free of the restraints that had limited his imagination, Forster could write personally, even self-indulgently, about "some-

thing more." Apparently Forster had begun A Passage to India and was having difficulty with it when a meeting⁷⁴ with Edward Carpenter, Forster's "saviour" in a "shrine,"⁷⁵ produced Maurice instead. Carpenter, a "Whitmannian poet" and apostle of a pure classless "Love of Comrades,"⁷⁶ also longed for "the generous recognition of an emotion and for the reintegration of something primitive into the common stock"⁷⁷ and, "in keeping with Carpenter's yogified mysticism," the moment Forster was touched, "gently, just above the buttocks" was the moment when Maurice was, quite literally, "conceived."⁷⁸ In much this way Maurice also accepts his "exasperation with normalcy" when Forster "drops" an "ingredient that puzzles him, wakes him up, torments him and finally saves him (250-251)."⁷⁹

But the pastoral idyll of Maurice is frankly sentimental wish-fulfillment, and a terminal note stresses the theme. This is the "last moment of the greenwood" before regimentation and civilization "encroach on the wildness of our island" leaving "no forest or fell to escape to today, no cave in which to curl up, no deserted valley for those who wish neither to reform nor corrupt society but to be left alone"⁸⁰ --in effect, the innocent Eden of American novels, Fielder's "garden in the process of being destroyed."⁸¹

Because it is the private dream of the dedication--"to a Happier Year"--"a happy ending was imperative"; I was determined that in fiction anyway, two men should fall in love and remain in it for the ever and ever that fiction

allows."⁸² But even Maurice concludes with a "not yet," added in 1960 when social attitudes to homosexuality forced Forster to write a post-terminal note admitting that his fantasy still lay in the far distant future. In fiction, he adds, "Maurice and Alec may still roam the greenwood"; in reality, Alec would be "in the dock"--"Maurice may get off without a sentence."⁸³

Clearly, the year when such idylls would be possible or such books publishable wasn't a reality for Forster while writing A Passage to India and if, as Burke suggests, books are rituals that conduct artists through conflict with the world,⁸⁴ then its ending might be signalling Forster's own way of handling rebellion. Indeed, the "Not yet" that ends the Eden of his last publishable novel is the classic idyll's ending with its return to reality and a dream of the next escape.

Out of such conflicts and needs, not philosophies and political opinions, works of art are "conceived." The "Not yet" of the epilogue carries with it all the fears and desires Forster used to explore the barriers that prevent human fulfillment; that is why A Passage to India is a work of art. Of course the "happy ending" of Maurice wasn't possible for a work that would relentlessly work through the terms of its problem, and surely the thing that most saddens one in the unpublishable fiction is Forster's, apparently conscious, abrogation of the task of the writer for the satisfactions of the dream.⁸⁵

Still Maurice and A Passage to India both use the primitive to act out unconscious fantasies; and images of the primitive vary as we vary in our view of our instinctual selves. Thus, A Passage to India confronts what Maurice evades, the ambiguity of desire, yet the function of their primitive otherworlds is essentially the same. A Passage to India's bodiless union in Hindu mysticism offers a symbolic alternative to the reality where dark men and an area beyond restraint threaten, much as Maurice offers the noble savage and greenworld as its innocent dream.

Beneath the ordered ritual of A Passage to India, love really is lust both desired and feared, and Major Callender proves correct; "mixing with natives" always ends with some indignity" (186, italics mine). The eye flies in Aziz's disordered room suggest the other side of excess and connection is the intimacy stories like "Dr. Woolacott" associate with death. Kettle wonders why Forster did not renounce more of "his imperialist attitudes";⁸⁶ the answer is clear--black and white men cannot be friends because they cannot touch. Yet the dangers that hedge human contact can, in part, be purged by the novel's own brand of "yogified mysticism." It is when those phallic thorns are being removed that Adela finds herself repeating the mystic wisdom of Forster's East: "In space things touch, in time things part."

Even the particular quality of this imaginative Hinduism is curious. Forster couldn't help noticing--and he does in

his essay on Indian religion--that the unique properties of Hinduism, so fascinating to colonial prurience, are its lusty gods and casual acceptance of sexuality;⁸⁷ yet the cautiously expurgated Hinduism of A Passage to India comes closer to Whitman's and Carpenter's bodiless brotherhoods than it does to anything recognizably Indian. Certainly, its function in the novel is to provide a special kind of "Bhakti" where categories are safely dissolved between genders as well as between faiths, classes, and colors.

The same homoerotic mysticism appears in "The Life to Come"--one of the stories Forster, wisely, suppressed. Here, a missionary, hoping to convert a native from "the land's antique power of evil,"⁸⁸ but, in fact, seduced by it, invites him to "Come to Christ," the "God whose name is Love"⁸⁹--and is taken quite seriously. The story proceeds much in this vein, playing with conversion and seduction, and punning shamelessly on "come." Naturally, the native had misunderstood the nature of Christian love, and the missionary, modestly insisting that he is not Christ, guiltily withdraws. When the native continues to pursue this delightful new sacrament, he is finally put off by promises of union in "the life to come" and, curiously, the words "not yet."⁹⁰

Although Forster is quite serious about the native's passion as sacramental and the missionary's virtue as hypocrisy, it's hard to see the story as more than a homosexual version of "Rain." However, considering that Forster

described it as "more from the heart than anything else I have been able to turn out"⁹¹ and that it was written while he was at work on A Passage to India, certain themes and word associations ought to be taken seriously.

Christ as a "friend" is familiar from Whitman, where the passage of the soul to "primal thought" waiting for "the comrade perfect"⁹² is resolved by a union between vision and reality in which the perfect comrade becomes Christ. More curiously, before his awakening Maurice had tried to persuade himself that the dream voice saying "That is your friend"⁹³ referred to Christ, but when his "friend" does call their union becomes a physical act. And this, in turn, recalls the beckoning homosexual figure of death in "Dr. Woolacott" and the life to come where intimacy is possible.

Structured systems would only violate this tenuous network of suggestions, and their connection with A Passage to India is, at the most, suggestive associations. But when Maurice renounces Christianity for Clive's Carpenteresque communion with "his friend had called him,"⁹⁴ and later gives up platonic communion for his "friend," we understand a little more about the harsh fate of "poor little talkative Christianity." When lovers refrain, "come, come" in Maurice reappears as a call to a god who does not come, and when Aziz, with "the semi-mystic, semi-sensuous overturn, so characteristic of his spiritual life," thinks of "the Friend" ("A Persian expression for God" [277]), then of his wife, and then "found himself riding in the jungle with his

dear Cyril" (320),⁹⁵ the nature of Forster's mystical vision and interracial union becomes somewhat clearer--and the nature of male friendship as well. This use of the imperial metaphor had even been waiting for Forster in the mystical sublimation of Whitman's "Passage to India" where geographical passage becomes a passage to liberated desire, and a sexual relationship with a "Comrade" becomes the all-embracing brotherhood of mankind.

In effect, A Passage to India offers a visionary world that safely opposes the sterile restraints of Christian society, and an ideal of platonic male friendship that opposes the "carnal embracements" of the Ronnys and Adelas. Adela, in fact, is the snake in Forster's Eden. Adela and sexuality create the tangles between Fielding and Aziz that interrupt their "intercourse" (294) and the jealous rivalry that actually prevents them from being friends. Why Fielding's conflict of loyalties should be the focus of dissension is a puzzle scarcely justified by the demands of the plot, and the feeling that Forster is really talking about something else becomes particularly intense when an incongruous emphasis is placed upon Aziz's and Fielding's attempts to be together in the victory procession, with Adela as an obstruction.

Perhaps the female threatens the innocent childhood fantasy of the colony, or perhaps she arouses the antagonism of repressed locker room (barracks) homosexuality. In any case, women in the colonial novel often play just this role. Throughout Kipling at least, we hear Callender's "it's our

women who make things more difficult out here" (214) and Fielding's, "I knew these women would make trouble" (158). And clearly, a good deal of Forster's joke about attractive Aziz at the expense of repulsive Adela, and his sterile rejecting women, are really this sort of gratuitous anti-feminism.

But of course Fielding and Aziz should celebrate together; the festival commemorates the triumph of their Anglo-Indian friendship. Why then should they be separated in Eden by the snake-like procession? And why should the scene be echoed at the conclusion with another snake and separation? We need not make too much of the imagery of riding (though, naturally, one asks why they must be on horseback), or the sexuality of the final embrace and recoil, to relate both scenes to Whitman's marriage of the races and Carpenter's mystical marriage of friends, and to understand the incongruity of homely Adela as Fielding's goddess, and that the real question that underlies the question of human relationships in Forster is the question of male relationships.⁹⁶

Finally, many of the novel's problems become clearer when we begin to understand how the dangers of contact have been safely displaced onto Adela. Obviously, it would be too threatening even to test Fielding in the cave, but Adela, suitably neuter and consistently identified with Fielding, does confront the abyss of the unconscious and what she discovers causes her to withdraw. In fact, it is

even tempting to risk the critical hazards of using Stanley Hyman's "Albertine strategy" where homosexual love appears in the guise of heterosexual love after Proust's transformation of Albert into Albertine.⁹⁷ At least when applied gently as a metaphor, this suggestion makes it easier to understand that the general dislocation between cause and effect is the disproportion of dreams where intense emotions are displaced onto situations that cannot logically justify them. Adela's experience in the cave produces all that unworthiness and fear of what lies behind reticence because it is a crime created to justify the author's sense of guilt. And it can also help us understand ambiguous loose ends like Forster's uncertainty about whether Mrs. Moore or a naked Indian produces the moment of reversal, and account for artistic blemishes like Fielding's inexplicable marriage.

Surely the weakest portion of the narrative is Forster's curious insistence upon Fielding's renewal of potency in his incompatible middle-age marriage. Not for one moment are we convinced of the unseen, perfunctorily described, marriage of a character so clearly the descendent of all Forster's ascetic heroes. Fielding, remember, cannot be "intimate" with Aziz or "with anyone." (118). First Forster insists upon his "poor crop of secrets" (117) and his desire "to leave a thought behind," not "a child" (119) --then he suddenly produces a child and we can only suspect deliberate fakery. Clearly, Fielding's union with the emotional should be with Aziz as it has been all along.

Finally, it is not difficult to understand the pattern that strains towards fulfillment only to be followed by "Not now, not here" (314), "Not there," "Not yet," (322) or even the restraint of emotion that lies behind what Trilling calls Forster's "irritating refusal to be great." It is because Forster deliberately withholds release and expansion that his cleverly manipulated social comedy is too often insufficiently charged to bear the weight of his symbolism, and his critics become disturbingly aware of the dislocation between the levels of reality and vision. In this sense, Forster has failed to make a passage.

But that characteristic Forsterian double vision with its ironical equivocations and refusal to accept absolutes is his Mediterranean norm, a strategic response to the dangers of being carried away by excess. And that irony, the sort Burke describes as "a sense of fundamental kinship with the enemy,"⁹⁹ further suggests that Forster's self-deprecating rejection of prophecy may have ultimately been determined by a sense of unfitness for the role.

Nor is it difficult to understand Forster's silence or why no serious work of art could have followed A Passage to India. As the novel itself was moving through increasingly psychological perspectives to a denial of external reality and social forms, Forster rejected the social novel's subject matter while clinging to the values of the world. Caught between Victorian restraints and contemporary non-conformity, the order of the ruler and the rebellions of

the ruled, Forster remained as creatively divorced from the forms and values of the Victorian novel as he was endangered by the nihilistic experiments of modernism. That old fashioned Forsterian novel with its chronological sequence of exterior events, its crises and catastrophes, and its controlling omniscient narrator, like his essays asserting faith in civilization and culture, reflect an order that had become impossible for Forster, and it wasn't time for rebellion--not yet.

Torn between a longing for the abundance of the East and the middle class values of England, Forster transcribed his too human contradictions into a compassionate world vision that forces us to accept the complication of prose and passion and the ambiguity, if not the wholeness, of truth. Thus, the necessity for living in the real world with an awareness of the transcendent--which is, apparently, the best we can do.

Notes and References

Chapter IV

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26. Whitman, p. 328.
27. The Hill of Devi (New York, 1953), p. 164.
28. Ibid., p. 167.
29. Ibid., p. 160.
30. Ibid., p. 161.
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32. "Notes on English Character," Abinger Harvest (New York, 1964), p. 6.
33. Forster, The Hill of Devi, p. 193.
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36. P. N. Furband and F. J. H. Haskill, "An Interview with E. M. Forster," Paris Review I (Spring, 1953), p. 33.
37. The English Novel of Today (London, 1924), p. 184.
38. E. M. Forster (New York, 1950), p. 15.
39. "The Revival of E. M. Forster," Forms of Modern Fiction, ed. William Van O'Connor (Minneapolis, 1948), p. 174.
40. Trilling, p. 146.
41. Gertrude White agrees with E. K. Brown that A Passage to India is "the subtlest effort in our time to

write the novel of ideas in English." (p. 637). See also Jeffrey Meyers, p. 57.

42. Forster, "Notes on English Character," p. 5.

43. Campbell, p. 10.

44. The colonial's vengeance--the facial disfigurement of a handsome young native--is described by Major Callender in terms of castration: "'that used to be one of these buck niggers . . . now he's all spetic; damn him, blast his soul--er--I believe he was unspeakably immoral--er--' he subsided, nudged in the ribs but added, 'I wish I had the cutting up of my late assistant too; nothing's too bad for these people'." (p. 216).

45. The Writing of E. M. Forster (London, 1970). p. 275.

46. Forster, Aspects of the Novel, pp. 161-91.

47. Forster, "Joseph Conrad: A Note," Abinger Harvest, p. 137.

48. Letter to Siegfried Sassoon, August 1, 1923. Quoted in Oliver Stallybrass "Foreword," "The Life to Come" and Other Stories (New York, 1972), p. xiv.

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50. In the Paris Review interview Forster explains that he began A Passage to India after his first trip to India in 1912, but was unable to complete it until he returned from his second trip in 1921. (p. 33). Maurice was published in 1914. Frank Kermode points out that Forster began A Passage to India in 1912, got stuck, and put the book aside. Meanwhile a meeting with Edward Carpenter resulted in Maurice. "A Queer Business," Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 228, No. 5 (November, 1971), p. 140.

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53. Forster, "Albergo Empedocle." "Albergo Empedocle" and Other Writings, p. 10.

54. Ibid., p. 35.

55. Forster, "Dr. Woolacott," "The Life to Come" and Other Stories, p. 84.

56. Kettle, II, p. 163.

57. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, pp. 12-13.

58. The Return of the Vanishing American (New York, 1968), p. 185.

59. Ibid., p. 178.

60. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, p. 389.

61. Ibid., p. 389.

62. Ibid., p. 366.

63. Ibid., p. 367.

64. Noel Annan, "A Love Story," New York Review of Books (October 21, 1971), p. 15. In a personal memorandum Forster confessed his desire "to love a strong young man of the lower classes." Quoted in Stallybrass, p. xiv.

65. Counterstatement (Chicago, 1953), pp. 104-05 (note).

66. "Blacks, Whites, and Greys," Standards (New York, 1966), p. 24.

67. "Twentieth-century Fiction," Shadow and Act (New York, 1964), p. 42.

68. Forster, "The Other Boat," "The Life to Come" and Other Stories, p. 195.

69. "The Life to Come" is particularly virulent in its vision of women--"the vengeful onswishing of skirts" (p. 190)--and explicit about the source of Forster's hostility. The native covers his nakedness because "jealous of what she sees the hag comes with her simitar." (pp. 191-92).

70. Ibid., p. 185.

71. Ibid., p. 177.

72. Ibid., p. 190.

73. Ibid., p. 181-82.

74. Kermode, "A Queer Business," p. 40.

75. Forster, "Terminal Note," Maurice, p. 249.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid., p. 255.

78. Ibid., p. 249.

79. Ibid., pp. 250-51.

80. Ibid., p. 254.

81. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, p. 351. In "The Life to Come" Forster echoes the last scene of A Passage to India and the greenwood motif of Maurice when the native and missionary ride together for the last time in a forest about to be destroyed to make way for civilization.

82. Forster, "Terminal Note," Maurice, p. 205.

83. Ibid., p. 255.

84. Burke, Attitudes Toward History, II, 215.

85. Forster confessed that the homosexual stories were written "not to express myself but to excite myself." Quoted in Stallybrass, p. xv.

86. Kettle, II, 159.

87. Forster, "The Gods of India," "Albergo Empedocle" and Other Writings, p. 222.

88. Forster, "The Life to Come," p. 88.

89. Ibid., p. 67.

90. Ibid., p. 72.

91. Letter to Forest Reid, September 8, 1927. Quoted in Stallybrass, p. xvi.

92. Whitman, pp. 326-27.

93. Forster, Maurice, pp. 22, 183.

94. Ibid., p. 66.

95. The same curious association appears earlier in the novel when Aziz reads the Ghalib poem which voices "our isolation and our need for the Friend who never comes" and "is left thinking about women." (p. 106). Although it has been displaced onto a heterosexual love object, here too the association is sexual.

96. At many points in the novel Forster seems to be consciously or unconsciously talking about something else. Why, for example, does the chapter following the victory

procession begin with the suggestive lines: "Aziz, are you awake? . . . No, so let us have a talk; let us dream plans for the future"? (p. 250) Why, when Forster attempts to justify the failure of personal relations, does he say that socially Fielding and Aziz had no "meeting-place": "He [Fielding] had thrown in his lot with Anglo-India by marrying a countrywoman, and he was acquiring some of its limitations, and already felt surprise at his own past heroism."? (p. 319). Since we don't believe that Fielding would become an Anglo-Indian and Forster has shown us nothing to convince us (surely marriage to Mrs. Moore's spiritual daughter wouldn't corrupt him), we can only suspect that Fielding's unheroic concession to social rules is that of marriage. Apparently Forster is disappointed in Fielding for marrying (disappointed in himself for making Fielding marry); he is simply having difficulty telling us why. And what is the meaning of that mysterious Persian poem Aziz is thinking about during his last ride with Fielding? (p. 320). First Aziz recalls the poem about "the thornbushes where pilgrims die before they have seen the Friend," then he thinks of his wife, and finally "the whole semi-mystic, semi-sensuous overturn, so characteristic of his spiritual life" ends when he finds himself riding with "his dear Cyril." (p. 320). The original, quoted by June Perry Levine in Creation and Criticism: A Passage to India (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1971) even refers to "thousands slain of desire" who "had not achieved union with the Friend" (p. 54). The poem is particularly suggestive when related to the Savite temple described on the following page "which invited to lust, but under the semblance of eternity, its obscenities bearing no relation to those of our flesh and blood" (p. 321). These last crucial pages shaped by the semi-mystic, semi-sensuous overturn of Forster's mind and further confused by an ambiguous blend of hostility and eroticism ("He rode against him furiously . . . half kissing him" [p. 322]) bear much closer examination. Since these loose ends have no obvious relation to the social theme they have generally been ignored, but it is surprising that more readers haven't been disturbed by them.

97. "Some Trends in the Novel," The Promised End: Essays and Reviews 1942-1962 (Cleveland, 1963), pp. 344-45.

98. All of Forster's novels end with the birth of a child or the sense of a cycle beginning anew--except Maurice where the sterility of homosexual relations is a major issue in the novel. Here, however, Forster answers the objection to childlessness with "for love to end where it begins is far more beautiful" (p. 97).

99. Burke, Attitudes Toward History, II, 212.

V. Would-be Kings

Throughout the colonial novel the same themes and images are repeated; the would-be king, the island-without-men, and the mythical passage to freedom or power, absolved in the end by submission. They take shape in the major colonial novels of Conrad, Kipling, and Forster, and in a multitude of variants which this chapter can only begin to suggest; but we respond to them with an interest more profound than our interest in cultural conflicts or political imperialism because imperialism is one manifestation of a compelling dream common to all.

Variations on the fantasy colony are probably limitless. This chapter only hopes to indicate how English writers as diverse as George Orwell, Joyce Cary, Graham Greene, H. G. Wells, and D. H. Lawrence drew what they could use from an archetypal myth and common historical experience, and the ways in which the imperial metaphor has been used to realize their private needs and artistic vision. George Orwell is a political propagandist, Graham Greene a Catholic novelist, and H. G. Wells the inventor of science fiction; yet each saw the colonial experience as uniquely suited to his particular concerns. Differences of experience, social milieu, intellectual opinions, emotional needs, and aesthetic aims result in a wide range of critical problems; therefore, at

the risk of shifting critical modes, these works will be considered in terms of the specific artistic problems they raise, precisely to indicate the imperial metaphor's wide-ranging potential.

George Orwell, the opponent of man's political inhumanity to man, would no doubt have denied that his colony was an island-without-men--which makes him an interesting place to begin. To be sure, Orwell saw the writer's role as the furthering of political ideas,¹ and Burmese Days is as close as we come to a "political" novel; yet the protagonist of Burmese Days is a would-be king, as is its author, George Orwell.

"I was conscious of an immense weight of guilt I had got to expiate,"² Orwell wrote of his imperial service. Expiate it he did, in his refusal to accept positions of authority, in self-imposed poverty and self-abasement, and in the sacrifice of his imperialist identity as Eric Blair and recreation as George Orwell, the writer.³ As Orwell, Blair's life continued to be shaped by expiation, by his identification with the ruled, and the use of his art in the service of rebellion. How much of this is the liberal's dedication to democracy and how much a personal sense of unworthiness and taste for self-abasement cannot be answered. No matter, the ideal of service is unquestionable.

Burmese Days, the book that exorcised "those" days, as Blair is interesting--not as a book, but as a specimen in which to examine the relationship between private needs,

political causes, and novels. To this end its very banality is useful. No rich ambiguities get in our way and its "message" is hammered home with every cliché of the colonial novel.

Flory, Orwell's scapegoat self-image, is a genuinely unattractive protagonist--we can scarcely blame Orwell for killing him off. He attempts to be a Sahib--to play polo, shoot animals, quell native riots, marry the girl, and conciliate the club, and fails--but not, like Orwell, because he questions imperial values; Flory unconsciously undermines his position, even courts destruction, out of a sense of personal unworthiness. With more self-knowledge than most of the colonial novel's protagonists--who are genuinely surprised by their limitations--Flory knows that he is the outcast with a scar, and he wants to be in the club because "a club member is sacrosanct."⁴ Still, however hard he tries, the disfiguring birthmark reminds him that nothing he does will be right, and that no Sahib's mask can cover it. Indeed, it lights up quite remarkably whenever Orwell wants to make a point, and the point is obscurely connected with sexual sin. It is shaped like the phallic horns of the charging bull and it prevents him from marrying. Even when he is willing to give up his manhood, to marry Elizabeth and never touch her, she sees him as a beast: "It was, finally, the birthmark that had damned him."⁵

The scar is the mark of Cain, a reminder of the original sin, a "lick of the tarbrush."⁶ It lights up again when

Flory's black mistress is revealed, and this, the ultimate violation of the Sahib's code, severs his last link with the community and the possibility of winning the English maiden as a lifeline to respectability. Finally, suicide, the colonial sin of "deserting the post," unmistakably exposes him as not quite "pukka."

Orwell's own scar may not be crucial; however, he attributes his sense of deviation to having been a charity boy, an artist, and a bedwetter, at an English public school.⁷ These stigmata in themselves would be sufficient, but sexual conflicts obviously play some part in Orwell's artistic thought when his protagonist is doomed by an impossible choice between the degrading sexuality of a native mistress and the rapacious sadism of an English virgin. Actually, sexual revulsion may be misleading, since Orwell's revulsion extends to the male characters, described in animal imagery, as well. Colonials are insufferable, natives are unpleasant, and most repellent of all are a pair of sickly in-bred half-castes--even in a humane writer like Orwell, half-castes serve to expose how dirty we all are inside. Animals don't fare any better. Flory is identified with a slinking pariah dog and his own dog Flo, who exposes him by publicly recognizing his black mistress. Betrayed by a spaniel, death is the only out. What the tale was intended to mean is uncertain, but imagery cannot lie. The writer who served humanity so well doesn't seem to have liked it very much.

Nor, one suspects, did he like himself. Once Orwell had tried to join the imperial ranks and his self-disgust was so great that he abandoned the role with horror.

"Shooting an Elephant" recounts one such episode. When Flory tells Elizabeth about shooting an elephant he becomes a hero in her eyes; in the version he tells in his own voice he is a "hollow posing dummy" struggling to avoid "looking the fool."⁸ Wry self-deprecation is the essay's way of handling what Orwell admits was "the pleasure of power." Thus, he begins by stating that the imperialist Blair had been hated by many people in Burma--"the only time in my life that I have been important enough for this to happen to me."⁹ However, Orwell's argumentative point is not the Sahib as villain, but the Sahib as fool; far from being in control, the white man is "an absurd puppet pushed to and fro by the will of those yellow faces behind."¹⁰ And finally, the insistent references to a comic bungler, set against the majestic death of the elephant, must surely atone for the imperialist ruler who was hated in the opening paragraph.

The same renunciation of power is extended by Orwell to "the struggle to efface one's personality" as a writer. "Why I Write" lists "the four great motives for writing"--"sheer egotism," "aesthetic enthusiasm," "historical impulse," and "political purpose,"¹¹--omitting all the real reasons so that all motives beyond service to a cause appear self-indulgent. Here we kill off another Orwell, the early

esthete. Although one might expect Orwell to approve Flory's taste for art and reject communal values, in this case he sides with the community--hence his sympathy for Kipling, a curious bedfellow.¹² Orwell's tendency to divide art into pamphlets with "a political purpose" and "ornate or merely descriptive books"¹³ is not very far from Kipling's notion that a scholar "may get more pleasure out of his life than an army officer, but only little children believe that a man's life is given to him to decorate with pretty little things":¹⁴ it's merely that we have less difficulty calling Kipling a philistine.

In fact, Orwell shares not only Kipling's tendency to see artists as sissies, but Kipling's need to escape isolation by seeing his art as social responsibility. Even the source may be the same. Both men wrote of their sense of anomalousness at British public schools and were left with the same desperate need to belong.¹⁵ Here, of course, they part company. Kipling chose the role of Sahib that conveyed invulnerability; Orwell rejected the mask he feared his face would grow to fit.

Actually many of these writers were aware that the Sahib's mask was a trap, and the ambiguous master-puppet relationship Orwell codifies in his famous account of shooting an elephant is implicit throughout colonial fiction. All Conrad's colonists are "hollow posing dummies"; Forster's exposes the same hollow gods; T. E. Lawrence himself was a "Yahoo" sold to a "brute-master";¹⁶ and the

white mistress of Lessing's The Grass is Singing is violated by a black servant who is acting out her own sexual fantasies. Sometimes the reversal is a variant of the atoning exposure of the pretentious ruler, sometimes it is the sinister uprising of unconscious forces; and sometimes it occurs when the author secretly values the values of the ruler less highly than those of the ruled; but, in every case, reversals like the victim-victimizer relationship of "Benito Cereno," or the master-puppet relationship of "Mario and the Magician," consistently reveal an uncertainty about who really rules.

This variant of the deposing of the would-be king becomes particularly complex in Mr. Johnson¹⁷ when Joyce Cary manipulates the ambiguity of Johnson as a victim of imperialism or Rhubeck as the creation of Johnson's imagination. Here Johnson imagines a heroic death scene with Rhubeck playing executioner to his tragic hero; Rhubeck sees himself bypassing imperial law to grant Johnson his dignity; Arnold Kettle has doubts. Rhubeck, he contends, "is kidding himself into a day-dream version of the nightmare": He shoots Johnson as he would shoot a dog to whom he feels a special responsibility," and the horror, while conveyed, is blunted by "underlying paternalism."¹⁸ These doubts, in turn, lead Kettle to condemn Cary for "ignoring the rising tide of African national consciousness,"¹⁹ and for the "fairy tale" quality of the treatment.²⁰ Although Kettle is missing Cary's particular use of the colonial

relationship, "fairy tale" is a telling epithet for the treatment. The book is a clever tour de force with perhaps too many patly manipulated ambiguities, but the game itself is fun.

It is understandable that a sociological critic might be lured into believing that Cary's theme is the fatal "imposition of an alien code of manners and morals upon a native culture,"²¹ and then to inappropriate questions about nationalism. The opening does have "objectivity of anthropology";²² in fact, the portrayal of white paternalism and native dependence, and the detribalized native, pathetic in leather shoes and British values, is generally impressive anthropology.²³ All Cary's African novels reveal his experience as a colonial administrator, his interest in ideas, and his remarkable facility for reproducing surface. What they aren't is cohesively organized imaginative structures. In Mr. Johnson, however, he hit upon a workable device and the result is a different sort of book.

In Mr. Johnson Cary abandons the objectivity of the anthropologist to manipulate the tools of the artist. The preface describing Johnson as "a poet who creates for himself a glorious destiny,"²⁴ the songs that show life being turned into art, and the self-conscious mode of narration--all are calculated to keep us aware of the distinction between reality and imagination, because the book is not so much about natives as artists, and not so much about Rhubeck's effect upon Johnson as Johnson's power over

Rhubeck, or, at least the question, "who really rules?" The daydream at the conclusion is not Rhubeck's illusion that he is a benevolent father, or even Johnson's faith in the white god who kills him; it is Rhubeck's illusion that he, the master, is the one in control. The last line actually reads: "But Rhubeck, growing more free in the inspiration which seems already his own idea, answers obstinately, 'I couldn't let anyone else do it, could I?'"²⁵

Cary's curious narrative method is important. In the preface that calls Johnson a poet, Cary explains that he uses the present tense because Johnson lives, not judging, from moment to moment. Cary doesn't want the reader to judge either; he wants the insecurity a traveler feels in "unmapped territory" when he feels he has lost, not only his way, but his identity.²⁶ This too is not so much an attempt to reproduce the primitive mentality as a way of reproducing the process of creation. That is, we see Johnson making himself up as he goes along, writing songs as he lives, turning reality into "a glorious destiny." Kettle is correct in observing the primitive relationship between work and art in Johnson's songs.²⁷ Johnson's art is even primitive magic. But the purpose isn't anthropological. The Horse's Mouth uses Blake's poetry and Gully Jimson's paintings to suggest the same relationship between art and reality.

Furthermore we have more than one voice to shape our response. A first person narration would be one sort of

story; however Mr. Johnson is told by an omniscient narrator, using Johnson's mode of vision. This, the narrator as double agent, is what shatters our hold on the story.

In the reading we are carried "unreflecting on the stream of events";²⁸ after we have finished, imperial mapmaking reason sets in, and Cary deliberately prevents us from reconciling reality and story. But what is the purpose of his game?

Rhubeck and Johnson--together they become complete--build a remarkable road that "defies the very laws of being."²⁹ It is a truly creative act, requiring both imagination and know-how; but here there is no question of who rules. Rhubeck is the civil servant and Johnson the creative force who acts out the things Rhubeck scarcely dares to dream. Furthermore, beneath Johnson's ebullient charm his alter-ego relationship with Rhubeck is hardly innocent. Their road not only brings civilization to the jungle; it is a "raw cut"³⁰ that looses a wave of crime from the interior. The other side of the primitive creative force is its capacity for dark violence; Johnson is Rhubeck's Ariel, and his Caliban. Blore, the District Officer, sees it and hates Johnson on sight; "All exuberance alarms him, as if he feels in it, from Nature itself, some threat to established things."³¹ Rhubeck's wife, however, sees Mr. Wog, "a scene in Africa," "a perfect quaint."³² And Rhubeck himself, discomposed by his sudden recognition that Johnson "is the man with the ideas," reaches for an explanation and comes up with, "He keeps us all merry and bright."³³

Both views are justified. On the one hand Johnson is a comic black thinking he can assume the white man's magic by wearing his clothes, yessing old Pax Britannica, and thanking his white god for killing him. On the other, he is the artist as a shapechanging trickster, and his darky act is a performance. All the characters in Ellison's Invisible Man "overcome 'em with yesses, undermine 'em with grins, agree 'em to death and destruction,"³⁴ and Melville's Babo is playing the same tortuous game. Stanley Hyman contends that the minstrel darky act is used by Blacks to trap the white man in his racial preconceptions, and exploited by Whites to de-fuse the danger of black uprising;³⁵ here Cary is using Johnson, "the tricky one" (164)³⁶ to mask his own secret subversion. Dumb darkies, African trickster heroes, and innocent rabbits who outwit the fox are the strategies of those who can only survive by dissembling, and it is not unusual for artists, in a similarly dubious relationship to society, to identify their shapechanging manipulations with this wily role. Certainly Cary's own artist Gully Jimson is a descendant of tricky artist criminals like Felix Krull who manipulate society outside its laws. And when, at the end of the book, Rhubeck also "carries out orders to make a fool of them,"³⁷ it is clear that Johnson has taught him the game.

Cultural conflict in itself--Kettle's imposition of an alien code"--has nothing to do with Johnson's downfall.³⁸ Johnson likes to dress up and to be called "Mister," but role-

playing, like manipulating colonial funds to provide liquid inspiration and making an artistic "S," are all part of his creativity--charming, but ultimately amoral. After all, when reality gets in Johnson's way while he is in the process of turning his life "into a glorious destiny," it culminates in murder. Johnson sympathizes as Old Gollup talks about what it costs Britain "to tidy up things" for "you nigs," and yesses him--"I too sad for you"³⁹--but he yesses him "to death and destruction." And if Johnson is acting out Rhubeck's desire to build a road, even to permitting him to bypass imperial rules to do so, what does this say about Rhubeck's part in the murder of Pax Britannica?

This is where imperialism is implicated in Johnson's downfall. When the road is completed, when Rhubeck is finished with Johnson and guilty about his precipitousness, then he rejects Johnson to reject the things he fears in himself, and the rejection drives Johnson to robbery and murder. But if Johnson is playing the familiar role of dark victim, Rhubeck's role as "de Lamb of Gawd"⁴⁰ in Johnson's fantasy is no less a crazy fiction. We are judging that fiction.

Johnson's art transfigures the world and himself; it inspires a road and, for a brief moment, makes Rhubeck more than he is. Yet the play throughout the book has been upon the comic discrepancy between reality and Johnson's version of it. When he says Bamu is the best wife and she loves Johnson, we know he is wrong. None of Johnson's judgments

square with the truth. So when he says Rhubeck is his friend and will help him, we are forced to look for irony at the conclusion.. But what irony exactly? Kettle's irony, that Johnson is an innocent Billy Budd destroyed by a system he cannot understand? The system gets more of a going over from Johnson than the reverse. Or at the vision of a heroic sacrifice at the hands of his "frien'?"⁴¹ But he does die in the role and Rhubeck plays his part in Johnson's creation as he has all along. He does take an unlawful risk and in doing so becomes more than a civil servant. Johnson's crazy vision does transform death like a dog into martyrdom, and Rhubeck and Johnson join to transcend imperial law. Rhubeck's "special responsibility" is not the paternalism of the white man's burden. It acknowledges Johnson as a part of himself.

The outcome of the book is a draw, but if we wanted to document Cary's intention we might go outside the book and suspect where Cary's sympathy lies. We would learn that he saw himself divided between special responsibility and something he describes as "Baudelarian,"⁴² that he worked in the Nigerian civil service to win the girl and prove that he wasn't Gully Jimson,⁴³ and that a pattern of captive and free men, and continuing experiments with multiple points of view were ways of working out the conflict between authority and freedom. Although nothing in this hearty writer's work quite justifies the Baudelerian self-image, it is enough that Cary saw himself as Rhubeck-Johnson,

with Johnson as the creative disorder that must be controlled.

None of Cary's free men has anything to do with morality or fact, and none can be defeated because none live in the world. However, Cary himself clings to the moral norm of the world. The narrator's judgments draw us away from the dangers of the romantic imagination, the discrepancy between reality and vision is comic, and the possibility of a Melville anti-ending is reduced to a mechanical twist. Kettle praises Cary for rejecting the "cult" of introverted sensibility,⁴³ without realizing that the rejection goes hand in hand with what Kettle properly calls the "false confidence" of the fairy tale treatment.⁴⁴ Yes, the narrative tricks, stylistic cuteness, and cuddly hero are inadequate to "the profoundist treatment of the subject,"⁴⁵ but that is precisely because Cary is rejecting the consequences of his tentatively Baudelerian vision.

Perhaps Kettle is correct in insisting that Cary ignores African nationalism; in truth Cary was less interested in cultural conflicts than he was in his own; however, when Mr. Johnson succeeds it is because Cary has not used the traditional conflict between ruler and ruled to preach African liberation, but to explore the apocalyptic or daemonic possibilities of his own liberation.

"Benito Cereno's" seering exploration of the same alter-ego relationship reveals the rich possibilities of the theme, and suggests the way in which Cary has failed. When Melville mutinously inverts the roles of imperial ruler and

black servant, questions of divine authority and universal order hang on the same question of who is in command. Even when we understand the mysterious motto, "Follow your leader,"⁴⁶ and have played Melville's game, we still don't know whether we have witnessed a healthy rebellion of down-trodden slaves or the subversive upheaval of anarchic forces. We do, however, know what Melville thinks our "shadow"⁴⁷ looks like. To Captain Delano, the innocent American who tries to make sense out of reality, that primitive self-image is benevolent. Natives are harmless children and leaders are Great White Fathers; to doubt any of this is to doubt Providence itself--"an incredible inference."⁴⁸ Of course, none of it is true; Babu is a satanic Johnson, his darky act is a treacherous deceit, and the implications are unthinkable. Multiple perspectives shake our faith in documented fact, the order of the world, the order of art, and our capacity for judgment. This is no game.

In The Heart of the Matter too, the relationship between the would-be king and the black man is given metaphysical implications--this time by a Catholic novelist, Graham Greene. As one might imagine, the imperial metaphor is used quite differently; however the doubts of the Catholic, like the doubts of the imperialist, the artist, and the secret satanist, are reflected in another ambiguous literary game.

Graham Greene may not be concerned with the political or social aspects of imperialism, yet his colony is the

epitome of the Greene landscape--a place so degraded that there "was no question" of "heaven on earth" and "you could love human beings nearly as God loved them, knowing the worst."⁴⁹ What better setting for a parable about the distinction between heaven and earth, and what better hero than a colonial policeman to explore Greene's recurring concern with the conflict between human aspiration and religious vision?

Greene had traveled to Africa and may have met the sort of men whose dreams of sacrifice or glory drove them to the colonies. Conrad also influenced his writing; perhaps he found them there. In any event, there is a lot of Jim's egoistic responsibility in Scobie's, "I am the Deputy Commissioner of Police . . . I am the responsible man";⁵⁰ and some of Heyst, playing Providence, cultivating "the form of contempt which is called pity" in Scobie's love of the unattractive; and even some of Kurtz's aspiration as the path to corruption. Scobie is not a devil; if anything he is a saint, but Greene is also asking whether devils and saints are very far apart.

"Scobie The Just"⁵¹ descends into adultery, corruption, and, possibly, mortal sin, not through fleshly weakness or lust for power, but through an excess of goodness that amounts to spiritual pride. Thus, his every act--from arranging his wife's affair and forgiving her for it, to pardonong the Portugese Captain and cherishing his mistress with paternal benevolence--is the charity of a good man;

but each act only harms the ones he tries to protect and leads him deeper into sin. In his very effort to remain incorruptible in the midst of corruption and to assume responsibility for mankind, Scobie is abrogating the power and mercy of God. And finally, in the very discrepancy between human motives and their unpredictable outcome, we learn that God is the real governor of this colony: "There are more policemen in this town than meets the eye."⁵²

With Ali's death the colonial dream of bearing the white man's burden is given its fullest metaphysical implications. The act, Kettle complains, is "outrageous,"⁵³ but the outrage is intentional. Here Scobie lets his servant, the only person he truly loves, be killed because he cannot trust him. Still, "Never trust a black"⁵⁴ is not racism. Scobie cannot trust anyone, even God, to be responsible for him, and their images merge when Scobie sees Ali's body:

as something very small and dark and a long way away--like the broken piece of the rosary: he looked for a couple of black beads and the image of God coiled at the end of it. O God, he thought, I've killed you: you've served me all these years and I've killed you at the end of them . . . You were faithful to me, and I wouldn't trust you.⁵⁵

In the end Scobie can be saved by loving God enough to submit to his grace, but he cannot do even this without abandoning his responsibility, and the conflict culminates in suicide. Scobie sees the death of Christ--another Deputy Commissioner--as a suicide, and his own death as emulation

of Christ's sacrifice. The reader sees also the impiety, and Father Rank warns against judgment: "don't imagine you--or I--know a thing about God's mercy . . . the Church knows all the rules. But it doesn't know what goes on in a single human heart."⁵⁶

Greene himself doesn't know what goes on in Scobie's heart, whether he loves God and is saved. His wife says, "He certainly loved no one else";⁵⁷ he says, "Dear God, I love . . ."⁵⁸ And we are left with the syntactical ambiguity of his confession to his mistress: "I love you . . . more than God I think."⁵⁹ More than he loves God or more than God loves her? Either way there seems to be little possibility for grace.

Surely Greene must assume that a non-Catholic would be reluctant to condemn Scobie, and the Catholic, aware of Scobie's emulation of Christ, would be equally unwilling to judge. Greene's theology can't be verified by the Church, and Greene himself chooses to keep us uncertain. In fact, Kettle is particularly annoyed by Greene's use of an omniscient point of view while keeping facts, as well as motives, in the dark. Motives, he admits, may be inexplicable, but human action is crucial in making judgments.⁶⁰ Greene, however, doesn't want our judgments; he wants us aware of human limits. In reality facts are tangible, but it's hard to know where to look or what to make of them. We know so much more about the world of fiction than the one in which we live that Greene must resort to tricks to shake our security.

Critics like Booth, Auerbach, and Kettle speak of obscurity of point of view as an abrogation of moral responsibility;⁶¹ however Greene can hardly be excused of the sort of nihilism that has resulted in the dissolution of the authoritative narrator. Greene accepts the possibility of moral absolutes; his premise is that we cannot know them.

If the reader, like Scobie, is to be denied the gratification he derives from making god-like judgments, then the author must also abdicate his omniscient stance. Richardson knew Clarissa was going to heaven because he decided that she belonged there; Greene gives his power, and ours, back to God. In Brighton Rock it was the harsh judgment of the secular humanist that would condemn Pinkie, and Greene is suggesting that Pinkie, Scobie, indeed all of us, would get a far better deal from "the appalling strangeness of the mercy of God."⁶² But ultimately, Kettle may be right in insisting that the method works against the natural aims of narrative art. In life we make do by living, but we want to know what books are about. The lady or the tiger choice of heaven or hell may be theologically consistent, but "God only knows" is an irritating way to end a novel.

With Greene we have come some distance from political imperialism, and this is the point--a point Jeffrey Meyers apparently misses. Yes, in Greene political causes are "extrinsic," setting is "metaphor," and religious issues replace "the usual subject matter";⁶³ but these are precisely

the reasons why The Heart of the Matter does not represent "the decline of the colonial novel" during "a period when the colonial experience has lost its traditional significance";⁶⁴ it represents the richly varied possibilities of its traditional significance.

The futurist fantasies of H. G. Wells take us even farther from Meyer's "cultural conflicts and race relations."⁶⁵ Yet H. G. Wells conceived his vision of modern man, even a new genre, out of the would-be king. And why not? Just as Orwell, concerned with political power, wrote a political novel and Cary, ambivalent about art, produced a literary game, H. G. Wells, hesitant about nineteenth-century faith in science and progress, used analogies to British imperialism and spawned science fiction. Now ants have an empire too: "The British had emerged from barbarism to a stage that made them feel lords and future masters of the earth. But what was to prevent the ants from emerging also?"⁶⁶ And to imagine that man is watched by a greater intelligence should be a sobering thought as "with infinite complacency men went about their affairs serene in their assurance of their empire over matter. It is possible that the infusoria under the microscope do the same."⁶⁷

The development is logical; space may well be the ultimate colony and new frontier. Looking at the stars, a Wells hero of the future also questions the possibility of "red lines":

In England . . . the wild things live by sufferance, grow on lease, everywhere the roads, the fences, and absolute security run. In an atlas too, the land is man's, and all colored to show his claim to it. . . . He had taken it for granted that a day would come when everywhere about the earth, plough and culture, light and tramway, and good roads and ordered security would prevail. But now he doubted.⁶⁸

But "The Island of Dr. Moreau" is Wells's most terrifying vision of the irrational forces that erupt when man seizes power beyond his lawful place in nature, and it is hardly surprising that its Faustian archetype of the scientist should be a colonial king, or that Wells should draw upon themes and images common to colonial novels. Here another imaginary voyage is a journey to a heart of darkness where an impious Adam impelled by dreams of a rival creation is worshipped as a God: "All the week, night and day I moulded him" and then "rested."⁶⁹ Here too, the beast men the ruler creates are made in their "maker's image,"⁷⁰ and subdued by reciting a Kiplingesque Law. Here too, mortal weakness--drink and suggestions of cannibalism--exposes man's fatal link with the savage, and Moreau becomes a satanic vision of Prospero destroyed by the Calibans he taught to say "Master."

Finally, D. H. Lawrence's "The Man Who Loved Islands" has nothing whatever to do with political imperialism, yet it uses exactly the same characters, figures, and symbols. Lawrence's fairy tale idealist is another fairy tale idealist dressed in "creamy white,"⁷¹ dreaming of "pure perfection."⁷²

That is why he buys "little worlds"⁷³ he can "fill" with his personality--"not necessarily to be alone on it, but to make it a world of his own."⁷⁴ On the first island "the Master" attempts to recreate Crusoe's self-sufficient island, "to regain paradise,"⁷⁵ and to be "Our Saviour Himself"⁷⁶--but he is opposed by reality. A connection remains, "a resentful spirit" like a snake,⁷⁷ with worlds "of undying time."⁷⁸ Slaves rebel, mysterious accidents threaten his omnipotence, and he withdraws, like Prospero, to study. On the second, still smaller island, "a refuge" not a "world,"⁷⁹ the Master moves deeper into the grey wasteland of abstraction--"I am turned into a dream,"⁸⁰ and when a woman demands the attachment of love, he withdraws, even farther. On the last island, a rocky crag, the Master has become a celibate saint, dissolved in the solipcistic void of himself, to die in the white snow of his sterility. We really haven't come very far from hollow gods like Jim and Heyst, or even real imperialists like T. E. Lawrence.

Notes and References

Chapter V

1. Orwell, "Why I Write," pp. 378-384.
2. The Road to Wigan Pier (New York, 1968), p. 180.
3. Peter Stansky and William Abraham, The Unknown Orwell (New York, 1972), pp. 213-291.
4. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 42.
5. Ibid., p. 236.
6. Ibid., p. 31.
7. Such, Such Were the Joys (New York, 1953), p. 16.
8. "Shooting an Elephant," Literary Reflections, ed. William R. Elkins, Jack L. Kendall, John R. Willingham (New York, 1971), p. 20.
9. Ibid., p. 17.
10. Ibid., p. 20.
11. Orwell, "Why I Write," p. 380.
12. Orwell, "Rudyard Kipling," Dickens, Dali, and Others, Culture, pp. 140-160.
13. Orwell, "Why I Write," p. 381.
14. Kipling, "An English School." Quoted in Janet Adam Smith, "A Boy of Letters," p. 13.
15. In Such, Such Were the Joys Orwell describes the undeserved punishment for bedwetting as the scar that left him with his self-image as a guilty victim: "I was in a world where it was not possible for me to be good." (p. 16). Kipling gives the same account of his childhood in "Baa Baa, Black Sheep," and "Something of Myself." (pp. 318-327).
16. Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph (New York, 1935), p. 31.
17. Mr. Johnson, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1st ed.
18. Kettle, II, 183.

19. Ibid., II, 184.

20. Ibid., II, 178.

21. Ibid., II, 179.

22. Ibid.

23. The Rhubeck-Johnson relationship supports all Mannoni's observations on white paternalism and native dependence. Johnson wants Rhubeck to be his father and God, and rebels, like Caliban, only when rejected. Native uprisings, Mannoni contends, are often caused by a lessening of restraints which is taken for rejection (pp. 61-88)--not that one shouldn't see to it that restraints are removed and uprisings occur.

24. Cary, "Author's Note," Mr. Johnson, p. 257.

25. Cary, Mr. Johnson, p. 255.

26. Cary, "Author's Note," Mr. Johnson, p. 261.

27. Kettle, II, 183.

28. Cary, "Author's Note," Mr. Johnson, p. 261.

29. Cary, Mr. Johnson, p. 25.

30. Ibid., p. 184.

31. Ibid., p. 16.

32. Ibid., p. 97.

33. Ibid., p. 164.

34. Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man (New York, 1952), p. 13.

35. Stanley Edgar Hyman, "Negro Literature and Folk Tradition," The Promised End, pp. 297-301.

36. Cary, Mr. Johnson, p. 164.

37. Cary, Mr. Johnson, p. 234.

38. All Cary's African novels use the relationship between native and ruler to realize Cary's vision of a universe in which men, locked in their private fantasies, inevitably clash with the society around them. The question of whether Johnson is a fool in believing in the white god who destroys him or triumphant in creating his version of reality also crops up in the other African novels. In Aissa Saved the

result of imposing an alien culture upon Africans is two noble sacrifices. Ali takes the civilized ideal of honor seriously enough to die for it, and Aissa takes the Christian myth literally enough to sacrifice herself with a joy that transcends the agony of the body. The natives' holy innocence doesn't bring rain or salvation, but both Africans are not so much doomed by misunderstanding as redeemed by the qualities which make them superior to the colonists and missionaries to whom these values have become meaningless.

39. Cary, Mr. Johnson, p. 142.

40. Ibid., p. 17.

41. Ibid., p. 253.

42. M. M. Mahood, Joyce Cary's Africa (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), p. 3.

43. R. W. Noble, Joyce Cary (New York, 1973), p. 4.

44. Kettle, II, p. 177-78.

45. Ibid., II, p. 184.

46. Herman Melville, "Benito Cereno," Short Novels of the Masters, ed. and with an Introduction by Charles Neider (New York, 1948), p. 55.

47. Ibid., p. 123.

48. Ibid., p. 75.

49. New York, 1968, p. 32.

50. Ibid., p. 248.

51. Ibid., p. 11.

52. Ibid., p. 71.

53. Kettle, II, 175.

54. Greene, The Heart of the Matter, p. 264.

55. Ibid., p. 277. Greene's second-rate rewriting of The Heart of the Matter in A Burnt-Out Case has a parallel figure in the native leper, Deo Gratias, whose physical mutilation externalizes the hero's spiritual mutilation. Here the world is not simply a colony, but a leper colony; and the white man, arrogant in his denial of God, is restored to the community by literally embracing his mutilated self--"leper-licking." Even the suggestion of a hollow god is

implied in the epigraph from Dante's burnt-out case: "I did not die, yet nothing of life remained." (New York, 1961).

56. Greene, The Heart of the Matter, p. 306.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid., p. 299.
59. Ibid., p. 196.
60. Kettle, II, 176.
61. Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961), pp. 377-398; Auerbach, pp. 550-552.
62. New York, 1948, p. 357.
63. Meyers, pp. 98-99.
64. Ibid., p. 98.
65. Ibid., p. viii.
66. The Empire of the Ants (London, 1896), p. 8.
67. The War of the Worlds (London, 1898), p. 1.
68. Wells, The Empire of the Ants, p. 32.
69. "The Island of Dr. Moreau," Seven Science Fiction Novels of H. G. Wells (New York, 1934), p. 134.
70. Ibid., p. 153.
71. "The Man Who Loved Islands," The Tales of D. H. Lawrence (London, 1948), p. 921.
72. Ibid., p. 920.
73. Ibid., p. 921.
74. Ibid., p. 917.
75. Ibid., p. 920.
76. Ibid., p. 922.
77. Ibid., p. 918.
78. Ibid., p. 919.
79. Ibid., p. 928.
80. Ibid., p. 929.

VI. The Colony and the Frontier: The Ethos and The Fiction

If D. H. Lawrence's island king is the imperial metaphor stripped to its matrix, T. E. Lawrence is the fantasy given flesh. In T. E. Lawrence's living legend the fantasy is most irresistibly appealing, not only because Lawrence lived the role of the world-be king, but because he wrote down his myth "For the few men who honestly tried to be greater than mankind"¹--for us all. To be sure, Seven Pillars of Wisdom is not a novel; yet it belongs at that tenuous point where autobiography becomes fiction, and, as such, is a unique place to sum up the common elements of the imperial metaphor in fantasy, history, and art. Nothing explains colonial fiction or the ethos of colonialism better than the extraordinary resemblance between fictional kings like Conrad's, and Lawrence the imperial hero. And nothing more effectively demonstrates that the colonies were often fantasy landscapes in which real people resemble fictional characters and mythic heroes because they were creating themselves in the same fantasy roles.

Critics like Robert Graves are probably correct when they suggest that Lawrence destroyed his notes, even lost his original manuscript,² because he wanted to draw upon memory, not upon history. Certainly Seven Pillars should be

approached as an imaginative organization, like a poem. "I had one craving," Lawrence wrote,

for the power of expression in some imaginative form--but had been too diffuse ever to acquire a technique. At last accident, with perverted humor, in casting me as a man of action had given me a place in the Arab Revolt, a theme ready and epic to a direct eye and hand, thus offering me an outlet in literature, the technique-less art. (549)³

Literature is hardly a techniqueless art, but Seven Pillars is literature of a special sort. Hundreds of pages of historical facts and military strategy sit oddly with startling confessions and mystifying hints; poetic imagery and wonderful words accompany murky mannered writing. It compels, chiefly because it is Lawrence. In fact, when we read we tend to confuse what we know about Lawrence with the words Lawrence wrote, and to talk, not of the book, but of the man.

But Lawrence himself was aware that the "role" he was "cast" in was his real form of imaginative expression, that he first lived the myth and then he wrote it down. That was the source of his magic--and also his tragedy. That is why T. E. Lawrence is a storybook hero like Jim, and why Lawrence's account of his tragedy ("those who dream by night . . . wake in the day to find that all was vanity; but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men for they may act out their dream with open eyes, and make it possible")⁴ repeats Conrad's judgment of a fictional king exposed by

mortality: "He demonstrated one way in which prosaic fate deals with men who dream quickly and want to handle their dreams in broad daylight."⁵

Surely Lawrence was not consciously modelling himself on Lord Jim when he became the hero in shining white who settled native disputes, performed impossible tasks, and brought a cannon up a hill to become king of the mountain.⁶ But he was aware of manipulating reality to conform to his heroic ideal and that ascendancy over natives was a conquest over his own sinful weakness. History presented him with a fortress to besiege, like Jim's, but he perceived the fortress's significance as symbol when he used the same words to describe his sexual violation: "The citadel of my integrity had been irrevocably lost." (447).

The role of king over natives permitted such contact with the forbidden, and Lawrence, like any colonial writer, makes use of the appealing darkness of the alien world to justify his own explorations. That is perhaps why he offers that curious apology for sodomy--"the heat" and "no thick clothes to hide our nature" (30)--as the introduction to his book and the justification for "the evil of my tale." (29).

The apology baffles, not only because it is an unlikely introduction to memoirs of the Arab revolt, but because the evidence indicates that Lawrence didn't indulge in such sodomy⁷--certainly there is precious little of this sort of "evil" in his tale. Still, the apology proves a curiously suitable introduction to these particular war memoirs. It

is there to provide, at least for himself, the sense of sin that motivated Lawrence's action, and provided the background for the war and the real evil of his tale.

Apparently Lawrence knew as well as Conrad that action is an illusion of self-conquest that serves our "uneasy varity";⁸ certainly his exposure of the masochistic source of heroic action is much the same. Jim risking death to master his fate--"to preserve my position, I must stand the risk" (153)--is Lawrence's, "thirsting to punish appetites they could not wholly prevent" (30) and striving to atone "through a lifetime of misery" (509). Even Conrad could give no better account of the way "self-sacrifice" uplifted the redeemer (551):

The self-immolated victim took for his own the rare gift of sacrifice; and no pride and few pleasures in the world were so joyful, so rich as this choosing voluntarily another's evil to perfect the self. There was a hidden selfishness in it, as in all perfections.

(550)

An Uncrowned King of Arabia is as ambiguous as a Tuan Jim in the perverse splendor of his aspiration. Anthony Nutting is perceptive when he finds an implied analogy to the story of the Messiah in Seven Pillars of Wisdom, and when he confirms it with Lawrence's approval of the Kennington illustrations portraying him as a divinity above the clouds presiding over the Arab revolt.⁹ Lawrence writing "his will across the sky in stars" (28) does look like Jim

pointing out the moon "as if he had a hand in regulating that amazing spectacle." Even Lawrence's dream of restoring Eden to a chosen people looks more like Lingard's dream "of an Arcadian happiness for a little corner of the world he loved to think all his own" than anything resembling political actuality. But Lawrence was equally aware that such kingship was a dream.

Perhaps that is why the imagery of disguise and costume is crucial in unmasking Lawrence's heroic performance. Commentators later wondered what the "get-up" was for, and no one, least of all Lawrence, was convinced by his explanation that the theatrical costume was a way of merging with the crowd (particularly in England). In Seven Pillars he elaborates on "pure silk of the whitest, (at least outside) with a gold and crimson Meccan headrope, and gold dagger," adding, "By so dressing I staked a claim" (547)--a claim Lawrence himself was unable to believe in, as the association between his "soiled body" and the "daily posturings in alien dress" makes clear (502). Thus, words like "costume," (547) "actor," "part," (548) "theatre," (30) and "performance," (548, 562) recur as they do in Conrad until they too reveal "a godless fraud" (548): "I must take up my mantle of fraud in the East . . . It might be fraud or it might be farce: no one should say that I could not play it." (503)

Once again, rebirth on a fantasy island is a fictional recreation with "the futility, often the charm, and the deep truthfulness of works of art." "Such false investiture,

Lawrence writes, "was a triumph, and a mood of enlargement; we had avoided our sultry selves . . . snatched a momentary change of mind" (550). The purpose of the book is much the same. John Mack calls it Lawrence's way of inviting the public to create with him "a mythological Lawrence, larger than life, a self that would be immune to, or beyond, private pain or conflict, and one that would replace the self he felt he had debased."¹⁰ The citadel image, repeated again and again, confirms that impression; once when the dedication describes "our work" as "the inviolate house," (5) again when

. . . my impotence of vision showed me my
shape best in painted pictures, and the
oblique overheard remarks of others best
taught me my created impression. The
eagerness to overhear and oversee myself
was my assault upon my own inviolate
citadel.

(563)

Clearly, the Novalis epigraph to Lord Jim would be suitable for a hero whose "craving for good repute" (562) serves the same purpose as Jim's need to be "trusted." Lawrence, aware of his "unperceived sham," hopes,

But did not the being believed by many
make for a distorted Righteousness? The
mounting together of the devoted hopes
of years from near-sighted multitudes,
might endow even an unwilling idol with
Godhead, and strengthen It whenever men
prayed silently to Him.

(549)

The (perhaps unconscious) syntactical confusion of Lawrence's and "Him," must be significant; still, Lawrence was aware

of being a hollow idol, his godhead confirmed only by the effectiveness of his performance. Conrad accorded Karain "the reverence accorded monarchs of the stage" in "the accomplished acting of his amazing pretence," and Lawrence explains: "only too good an actor could so impress his favourable opinion." (562).

But finally, Lawrence could pin his hopes on concrete achievements that might confirm his mythic role. In part his failure, revealed in the account of his sexual violation, lay in complicity with the forces of darkness--like Jim's Brown, the Bey says: "You must understand that I know." (443) In part, it was that fatal confusion of reality and dream. Arabia was not an island without men.

At the peak of his achievement Lawrence had written:

It came to me queerly how, four years ago,
I had meant to be a general and knighted,
when thirty. Such temporal dignities . . .
were now within my grasp--only that my
sense of the falsity of the Arab position
had cured me of crude ambition; while it
left me my craving for good repute among
men.

This craving made me profoundly suspect
my truth to myself . . . and I began to
wonder if all established reputations were
founded, like mine, on fraud.

(562)

With the failure of the Arab cause, when reality could no longer confirm his omnipotence, Lawrence was confronted, not only with his limited power, but with the act of betrayal. He had, in fact, made "others die in sincerity for my graven image." (550)

Conrad could have answered that question about men of repute. In Lord Jim imaginative triumphs are set against a secret sin, and when Jim betrays the community that had redeemed him, the betrayal exposes his flawed mortality and dubious motives for kingship. The last act of Lawrence's story was much the same. The would-be king was exposed as mortal and sacrificed--a judgment Lawrence took upon himself, in mortifying the heroic will, and sacrificing his identity as The Uncrowned King of Arabia: "I was standing court martial on myself, inevitably, because to me the inner springs of action were bare with the knowledge of exploited chance" (565).

Conrad also understood the loneliness of "having dropped one form and not taken on the other" (32); and the dangers, that it was "they" who "possessed" Jim. Indeed, when Lawrence describes his "transient satisfaction" (550)--"A man who gives himself to be a possession of aliens leads a Yahoo's life, having bartered his soul to a brute-master" (31)--we are reminded that "selling your soul to a brute" (206) was the privileged man's account of Jim's "illusory satisfaction" (206).

In Conrad it is also easier to understand the kind of fierce egotism that created and destroyed Lawrence's kingship. Mack speaks of Lawrence's "self-centered," even "grandiose" sense of responsibility, noting that he was neither as responsible for the defeat, or the victory, as he had imagined.¹¹ But the reality was unimportant.

Lawrence saw himself alone in his dream, echoing the "exalted egotism" of Jim's "I am responsible for every life in the land" (239).¹²

And finally, Conrad understood the equal terrors of power and maimed will that we hear in Lawrence's anguished cry: "I was tired to death of free will" (502). In Heart of Darkness the imperial hero's ego inflates to annihilate the external world and his is found "hollow at the core." At the end Lawrence saw his messianic role as the same "hollow pretence" (31): "My will had gone and I feared to be alone, lest the winds of circumstance, or power, or lust, blow my empty soul away" (502).

Lord Jim was conceived around the time when Lawrence was born--neatly eliminating any possibility of Lawrence's influence on Conrad, but not the possibility of Conrad's influence on Lawrence. Lawrence had read Conrad, and the novels must have struck a responsive chord: fourteen volumes in Lawrence's library testify to that,¹³ and possibly to the source of specific images and themes.¹⁴ Still, nothing short of keeping a volume of Conrad handy to plan the day's scenario would justify calling all of the similarities conscious. A more likely explanation for the curious resemblance between *The King of Arabia* and *A Lingard* or *Jim* is that Lawrence and Conrad were acting out the same fantasy role in the same parts of the world. The myth preceded the many men who have played that amazing part, and men like Lawrence and Conrad, with similar backgrounds and conflicts,

would have reason to turn to these archetypes of image and theme. Furthermore, Conrad had met men like Lawrence in the colonies, and used them because he had much the same needs, just as Lawrence may have drawn upon Conrad's novels because, at least unconsciously, he recognized his central myth and dream.

Here John Mack's biography of Lawrence may be useful in suggesting a common source for such heroic dreams. In examining T. E. Lawrence as a living legend, Mack stresses the "Family Romance" fantasy common to children and stories of mythological heroes.¹⁶ In it the dreamer overcomes powerlessness and Oedipal resentment by imagining himself the lost child of a nobleman raised by unworthy parents, who undertakes a heroic quest in which he performs valorous deeds, overcomes the usurpers, and resumes his exalted role. Most children outgrow it; Lawrence adapted his life to it, in part, Mack suggests, because his life reproduced the fantasy. He was, in fact, the son of an aristocrat who had renounced his position for Lawrence's mother, and family reticence made the secret of Lawrence's origins as mysterious to the child as that of a mythological hero. Furthermore, Lawrence's devoutly Puritan mother attempted to redeem her own guilt by encouraging the dream of spectacular achievements.¹⁶ To this curious background, add Lawrence's Oedipal conflicts,¹⁷ his sense of "inherited remorse for the flesh-indulgence of our gross birth," (509) some remorse he acquired on his own, and a fascination with romances of

brave knights and bodiless ladies¹⁸--the sacrificial role of a fictional hero seems almost inevitable.

We all share something of the fantasy; colonials in particular. Only individual analysis would yield the true story, yet there is reason to suspect that Lawrence's characteristics, particularly the unresolved childhood fantasy of power, would also make up the profile of many colonial rulers. After all, the men who sought kingship over the less real world of the colonies were often illegitimate sons denied legal position, disinherited sons, and men who hadn't found fulfillment at home. The Puritan ideal of discipline and sacrifice shaped their aspirations, and jungle and barracks have traditionally appealed to men who were uneasy with women. In this sense, Kim's imperialist fantasy may well be the prototypical colonial story, and when we consider the way its Family Romance of heroic deeds and approving parents erases the "Hate, Suspicion and Despair" of the foster child of "Baa Baa, Black Sheep," we are better able to understand Kim's resemblance to T. E. Lawrence.

Naturally, not all colonial kingships can be traced to a foster child fantasy; still, a significant number of colonists and colonial writers shared the same curious background and would have reason to turn to the same heroic fantasy role. Kipling, Brooke, and Orwell were all Anglo-Indian children, raised as young kings, then cruelly separated from their parents and positions of power to be

bullied in English schools. All complained of their miserable childhoods and organized their lives in response to authority.¹⁹ Brooke and Kipling sought kingship, while Orwell, perhaps because the undeserved punishment at school branded him as a "guilty victim,"²⁰ expiated his desire for power with a self-abasement and rebirth like that of T. E. Lawrence. Rider Haggard's boy's fantasies of heroic adventure would also seem to have their source in Haggard's position as the family scapegoat supplanted by his brothers and overpowered by the dominant father who destroyed Haggard's romance with the woman he loved--in short, the same needs that drove him to the colonies to redeem his self-image.²¹ And Richard Burton, deprived of maternal affection and social approval, had reason to cherish the family legend of his descent, by a morganatic liaison, from Louis Quatorze. Although Fawn M. Brodie, his biographer, does not relate the legend to "The White Negro's" trick of wandering beyond the pale in native disguises like Kim, she certainly spots the nature of Burton's fantasy when she says: "There is hardly anyone who dies not early in life imagine himself to be the child of a king, cast by mischance into the laps of the pedestrian parents who are rearing him."²²

But Conrad in particular shared much of Lawrence's background and needs. In Conrad's confused paternity--born of the noble Korzeniowski, raised by the bourgeois Thaddeus--the Family Romance, once again, almost came true. Certainly Conrad is obsessed with the theme: foster children and

Oedipal striving dominate his works; Razumov, the illegitimate son of a nobleman, betrays the revolution in order to win recognition as the true prince; and Jim is not the real son of that minister father--indeed, proving his heroic identity and winning Marlow's approval is the purpose of the book.

Mack suggests that confused paternity might explain the sense of wavering identity which permitted Lawrence to move easily among aliens while seeing himself as a fraud.²⁸ It might also explain the two Conrads, the choice of the colonial world to act out that conflict, his fictional recreations and his need to expose the colonial king's fraud. Even the same faith in discipline and sacrifice--Thaddeus's legacy--went into the making of Conrad, colored with a similar taste for knightly adventures, and, of course, an uneasiness with women that made the male world of the colonies equally congenial.

Out of very human needs, Lawrence and Conrad shaped their myths of the hero, the man who fulfills our most exalted aspirations. Lawrence fascinates because he lived the dream to perfection--Conrad, because in the reading we fulfill the same needs, the stuff of the artist, like "the stuff of the hero" is "the faculty of beholding the shape of his dream." (Lord Jim, p. 106.)

Even more important for us is the vision, in would-be kings like Lord Jim and T. E. Lawrence, of a uniquely modern sort of hero--Herbert Read's "the man with a load on

his mind." Noting that epic heroes are "self-possessed, self reliant, arrogant, and unintelligent," and that Lawrence with his guilt and remorse, his dissembling and questioning, was a far cry from the traditional image, Read could only conclude that Lawrence's story was not "epic": "It is no disparagement to say that out of such stuff no hero is made."²⁴ Irving Howe agrees that the ideal of "manly heroism" who was to have redeemed our "unheroic age" turned out to be "an intellectual harassed by ambition and guilt";²⁵ yet the "load on his mind" is what makes Lawrence a contemporary hero. "The hero as he appears in the tangle of modern life is a man struggling with a vision he can neither realize nor abandon,"²⁶ in his "courage and vulnerability in bearing the burden of consciousness"²⁷ Lawrence becomes "a prince of our disorder."²⁸ Perhaps so. Lord Jim also aspired to a dream, even as Conrad was questioning not only Jim and himself, but the very ideal of heroism. Still, it is no disparagement to say that would-be kings seem to be the best we can do.

As one might imagine, the new image of man and the universe that accompanied British imperialism left its mark on the ethos and the techniques, as well as the themes and images of the novel. In the physical and moral position of the would-be king of the jungle, the extensive explorations, public machinery, and familiar props of the social novel became as invalid as the values they represent and the colonial novel, of necessity, discovers new forms

of expression. If the classic novel's hero had been an almost insignificant cog in a vast social machinery that existed without him, the colonist, "alone of his kind," creates the only known reality. That is why the colonial king becomes a symbol of modern man isolated in the subjective world of his own creation, and why he is one of the first uniquely modern heroes. To be sure, imperialism was only one of the forces transforming the English novel; however, modern man, psychologically and philosophically, is a white king in a jungle, and many of the techniques we think of as "modern" arose quite naturally out of the attempt to tell his story.

If Conrad could begin experimenting with stream of consciousness as early as Almayer, it is because the white man in the jungle has no one to talk to. And to show Jim on an island that is clearly the projection of fantasy is one step away from the novel as the creation of the hero's mind, linked to the possibility of verifiable reality only by Marlow and Conrad's terror of nihilism. Then, because the colony is the dream that the action will strip away, the closed world Van Ghent discovers in Conrad²⁹ is inevitable. In the traditional novel bound by ~~the~~ social contract, events had prepared and motivated external action and time was a logical progression marking such changes. But nothing can happen to change Jim on an island of his own creation; events serve to reveal Jim to himself, and time to focus upon the moment of revelation. And as the

Conrad novel is pushed from the exterior event to the imagery of unconsciousness and dream, it becomes more intensely "symbolic," and because there is no social apparatus to obscure it, we become more intensely aware of its symbolism. Finally, if reality is unknowable and human action unpredictable, the form and language of the novel must be as spurious as the colonist's attempt to order the jungle, and the author himself abdicates as supreme ruler in a world that denies the authority of God.

Of course this attitude towards reality and narrative technique marks a development towards precisely those attitudes Auerbach notes, with some disapproval, in the contemporary novel; indeed, Auerbach charges the shrinking globe, as well as the psychologies and philosophies of modernism, with contributing to the movement away from civilization, reality, and practical will, towards nihilism and despair.³⁰ But even if that were true, neither in form nor spirit does the colonial novel approach this impasse. Of the giants, only Conrad can be called an experimental writer, and contemporary exponents like Godden and Maugham tend to be the most conventional stylists and thinkers. In part this may be because innovators in any period are rare, because these novels were written during a period of transition, and because the colonial novel's unique double vision attracts, even now, writers divided between accepting and rejecting the world.

Since the writer likes to see himself as a homo duplex

and to stress the creative power of conflict, this double-ness may not be significant; still, the colonial writers we have been discussing are characteristically divided men who expose the values of culture while clinging to its forms. Moreover, the alien world not only permitted a rich development of fantasies, it encouraged them to a dangerous extent. The recoil, accordingly, was intense. Conrad needed both dream and return, and his shifting levels of reality, self-negating frames, and mediating narrators are techniques for having it both ways; Kipling and Forster act out "the other sides of their heads," but "toe the line" with conventional techniques; and Cary and Greene test daemonic and apocalyptic possibilities, but their technical experiments are finally a game.

Still, the alien world permitted a far more violent expression of contradiction than did the classic English novel, and ended forever the self-image of ordered community and insular island that had determined England's "great tradition." Admittedly, novels have always expressed contradiction; even the classic novel's great theme is rebellion and return. But the social clutter obscures the mythic passage, and the emphasis is placed on conformity. Eliot's Dorothea or Hardy's Eustachia Vye may press the limits, but there are no saints or devils, no Kurtz or Jim, no pure frontier like Gatsby's, or wilderness like Hester's "where the wildness of her nature might assimilate itself with creatures alien to the law." Wuthering Heights, of course,

had all of these, but that is why Leavis calls it a "sport"³¹ and Chase claims it for the American tradition.

When a hero errs in the classic novel, he errs against society; he doesn't sin against God--choosing God, in fact, is Dorothea's error. And the classic hero's vices are as moderate as his virtues. In the provincial community a hero need not be very large to shake, if not the heavens, the walls of the drawing room--Emma's insult at a picnic causes a great deal of commotion. But with the shift to the infected world, the protagonist becomes larger--indeed, the protagonist becomes male--explorations become deeper, contradictions more violent, aspirations loftier, and sins more thrillingly base. Actually, English novels begin to look a lot like their American antithesis.

Curiously, when Richard Chase compares the "solid moral inclusiveness and massive equability" of Leavis's "great tradition" with the "freer, more daring, more brilliant" American tradition,³² he borrows D. H. Lawrence's imperial metaphor to make the distinction:

The American novel has usually seemed content to explore, rather than to appropriate and civilize, the remarkable and in some ways unexampled territories of life in the New World and to reflect its anomalies and dilemmas. It has not wanted to build an imperium but merely to discover a new place and a new state of mind. Explorers see more deeply, darkly, privately and disinterestedly than imperialists, who must perforce be circumspect and prudential.³³

Distinctions there are, but not so dramatic as Chase's

assumption that English novels "move through contradiction to forms of harmony, reconciliation, and transformation," while the American imagination is stirred by "the aesthetic possibilities of radical forms of alienation, contradiction, and disorder."³⁴ The secret motives of the explorer and the imperialist are much the same; they appear in both English and American novels; and Chase gets much of his uniquely American tradition by eliminating the conformists, just as Leavis had established an English tradition by eliminating the mavericks.³⁵ In any case, whatever distinction there had been breaks down forever with the new novel heralded by Conrad. At precisely the point--1880 or 1890--at which Chase dates the American rejection of English influence for a European tradition "in accord" with American purposes,³⁶ England herself was turning to the pluralistic world. She turned, not only to Russia and France, but to jungles, and she inherited all these models through Conrad.

With the acquisition of a territory like Hawthorne's "neutral territory somewhere between the real world and fairyland, where the Actual and the Imaginary may meet and each imbue itself with the nature of the other," the English novel acquired not only the landscape, but the ethos Chase considers distinctively American. The colonial novel is also characterized by Chase's "flights of imagination," "mythic forms," "concern with the underside of consciousness," "central obscurity," "radical scepticism," "poetry of disorder," and "passion for extremes."³⁷ Naturally, Conrad,

Kipling, and Forster struggle for resolution, but this is no less true of Chase's rebellious Americans, Melville, Cooper, James and Twain. All art is born of conflict, seeking resolution. The difference between an Austen and a Melville is the degree to which social forms can handle the struggle and the degree to which a culture permits an expression of defiance. The new thought in England at the end of the nineteenth century encouraged defiance--the colonies were a good place to act it out.

In fact, the classic American novel and the colonial novel take place in the same world-without-men, and the anti-traditional qualities we associate with the characteristic American fantasy appear in English fiction with the appearance of colonies. Leslie Fiedler might almost be describing colonial novels when he writes:

To write then, about the American novel is to write about the fate of European genres in a world of alien experience. It is not only a world where courtship and marriage have suffered a profound change, but also one in the process of losing the traditional distinctions of class; a world which had left behind it the terror of Europe not for the innocence it dreamed of, but for the new and special guilts associated with the rape of nature and the exploitation of dark-skinned people; a world doomed to play out the imaginary childhood of Europe.³⁸

Still, it isn't quite the same. Colony and frontier are both facts of history and communal fantasy; however, differences in political and social tradition result in somewhat different conceptions of unpeopled space, original savages, and novels.

The American hero, tradition has it, is an innocent Adam creating the world anew on an Edenic frontier, and the theme of his novel is the fall of innocence when confronted with the reality of the world.³⁹ It was quite a contrast to the traditional English novel, where society was the Garden, rebellion was expulsion, and unruly Adams were educated in conformity with the world. But, tradition also has it, the American rebelling against old world authority would naturally create a hero morally superior to society, glorify his struggle for self-realization, and find tragic potential in his magnificent failure to transcend a limited world. The imperialist is in a still different, more difficult, position. The imperialist, not so newly born, invades Eden expecting to find, not original innocence, but original sin; he justifies his dominion as an act of control; and the specifically imperial version of the basic myth is the revelation of savagery in the presumptuous Adam's fall.

In reality, however, the American was hardly that innocent; the contrast hardly that neat. After all, the westward passage, informed by the same myths of forbidden power and freedom, was also a passage to India. Richard Slotkin observes that the Puritans, "attracted and appalled" by the Faustian spirit of the Renaissance, were also excapists impelled by the dream of emulating God in creating an ideal Biblical commonwealth. Indeed, "The most striking quality of life in the New World was the relative absence of social restraints on human behavior, the relative ease with

which a strong man could, by mastering the law of the wilderness--jungle, impose his personal dream of self-aggrandizement on reality." The imperialist's analogies to an errand in the wilderness also justify Puritan impiety, but what they too "desired above all was a tabula rasa on which they could inscribe their dream."⁴⁰

For all that talk of prelapsarian innocence, Puritan assumptions about the nature of man were the cultural baggage of the American voyager. The American, D. H. Lawrence observes, escaped to be masterless and became a master; he dreamed of stateless fraternity in Eden while erecting a state.⁴¹ Explorers spoke of noble savages and imperialists of barbarians, but both set up governments to control the beasts they knew to be there. Roy Harvey Pearce notes that the American was sustained by an ideal of ordering chaos as he tamed, then slaughtered "barbarians,"⁴² and Leslie Fiedler calls the frontier "a margin where the theory of original goodness and the fact of original sin come face to face."⁴³

A counter tradition of the natural evil of the id has always exposed American doubts. Hester's wilderness is far from pure; "Benito Cereno" mocks the American illusion of innocent nature, and "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" identifies the parricidal rebellion of boys and colonies when the Devil, disguised as an Indian, leads the hero to overthrow authority. Slotkin, perceptively, even uses the Tempest image when he notes that the magic of the New World "had both an Ariel and a Caliban face":

On the one hand, it led to the execution of good designs; on the other, it stimulated a monstrous ambition against authority, an obscene Faustian lust to satisfy nature by violating all bonds of obedience, religion, and morality. But even the Ariel face of the New World was somewhat treacherous, tempting the good-willed dreamer into simple, natural willfulness, a delight in the exercise of forbidden benign powers. While Caliban might ruin and destroy the body, too long intimacy with Ariel might woo man too far in spirit from the commonday world of human responsibility, the European world.⁴⁴

The American would scarcely dream of kingship or even benevolent paternalism; he had escaped one king and father. Instead he dreams of the friendship of equals. Still, critics like Leslie Fiedler may be making too much of the distinction. Fiedler is correct when he notes that the traditional English novel opposes the lowly comic slave with the ego ideals of his master, and when he contrasts this relationship with the crossing of class and caste in the "democratic" American novel;⁴⁵ however, the relationship is more complex than Fiedler suggests. Crusoe and Friday remain master and servant out of Defoe's attitude towards primitive forces as well as his attitude towards servants. That is why Crusoe is tame. Nor is the American "union of equals," strictly speaking, true. "Who is the better man?" Fiedler asks, "Isaac McCaslin or Sam Fathers, Huck or Nigger Jim, Ishmael or Queequeg?"⁴⁶ Each in his way, but there is no doubt whom the authors would choose. Even Jim and Chingachgood recognize their master's superiority (the Lama never goes this far for Kim), and Natty Bumppo never

stops insisting that there is "no cross" in his blood. Along with the romantic rebellion that created America, black men are also glorified; but the American novel reveals a need to maintain order against the psychological terror of the wilderness, just as the master-slave relationship in the colonial novel exposes a flight from culture beneath the imperial dream.

Actually, none of Fiedler's distinctions apply purely to American as opposed to colonial novels. With imperialism English literature not only gained black helpers and enemies, it even gained the interracial male friendships Fiedler calls characteristically American. Friendships like those of Kim and the Lama, Rhubeck and Johnson, Scobie and Ali, and Aziz and Fielding are no different from those of Queequeg and Ishmael or Huck and Jim. Conrad even describes the relationship between Jim and Dain as "one of those strange, profound, rare friendships between brown and white, in which the very difference between races seems to draw two human beings together by some mystic element of sympathy" (160).

In the colonial novel too, the interracial friendship reconciles social, psychological, and metaphysical conflict.⁴⁷ Indeed, in acknowledging the hierarchical order of master and slave, and then reversing the roles, the colonial novel may go even farther in its "trifling with taboos."⁴⁸

Furthermore, the colonial novel's idyllic friendship set in another "Eden beyond civilization and its women" is

no more, or less, "homoerotic" than the male romances Fiedler finds characteristic of the "sexless," "juvenile" American novel.⁴⁹ Scobie escapes sexual demands and Catholic guilts in the pure love of his servant, and there is even a scene "with a small green snake" in Eden.⁵¹ Carried across the water to a "between world," all Scobie's worries vanish. With Ali putting "an arm round his shoulder, holding a mug of hot tea"; it was like "the old days" before he married Louise, "all he needed of love or friendship."⁵¹ The same theme reappears in A Burnt-Out Case when Querry escapes his lustful past to find peace in the arms of a native leper. When Querry embraces the leper who externalizes his mutilated self, the act signals the redemptive return of love, perhaps even sainthood, but a colonial wife, missing the point, asks: "He's not, is he . . .?"⁵² "The Basement Room," Greene's story of sexual awakening, makes the relationship clear. Here the pure love of a boy and his butler is opposed to the butler's destructive relationship with his wife and mistress--woman as witch and temptress. Just before adult sexuality literally kills, the servant speaks of his days as a colonist before he married and lost Eden:

I loved some of those damned Niggers. I couldn't help loving them. There'd be laughing, holding hands; they liked to touch each other . . . two of them would go around all day without losing hold, grown men; but it wasn't love; it didn't mean anything we could understand.⁵³

Rhubeck and Johnson, closer to each other than they are to the nest building wives who would rob men of their creativity, also swim together, but a woman's presence violates the harmony. When Rhubeck covers his wife's exposed body, the reason becomes clear. "Would you do it at Brighton or Bornemouth?" she asks.⁵⁴ In the colonial novel too, women bring the threats of a reality in which dark forces are somewhat less than pure. Fiedler should recognize that Kim also rejects a native woman so that "the dream of friendship won't become a nightmare of miscegenation,"⁵⁵ and that Fielding and Aziz could ride in Eden were it not for Adela.

Even so, this is not quite the same thing as Fiedler's tendency to point to every pair of males short of the Lone Ranger and Tonto and call them fairies.⁵⁶ Although Fiedler perceives that dark companions are rejected selves, and that interracial friendship is a mode of resolution, he limits the conflict to a flight from sexuality. This doesn't always get us very far, certainly not with Crusoe and Friday. Though Crusoe, we note, prays for a slave, not a woman, the sexual terminology is limited and inappropriate. If dark helpers and enemies are the dangers and temptations we find in ourselves, then the resolution is one we make with our own private demons. Cary's creative unconscious is a Baudelerian artist, but a Celia required a colonial administrator, and Rhubeck-Johnson is Cary's way beyond conflict; the Lama permits

Kipling to explore the spiritual realm beyond the road; Deo Gratias is Querry's spiritual mutilation; and Ali is Christ, Scobie's fatal aspiration.

Furthermore, the relationship is not so much homosexual as presexual because all heroic questors must subdue their threatening sexuality for atonement with the father.⁵⁷

Kim rejects the tempting woman because he is a priest on a quest; Dravot should have: "The Bible says Kings ain't to waste their strength on women when they have a new raw kingdom to work over";⁵⁸ and Natty Bumpo is permitted his forays into darkness because his innocence is close to sublime: "I have heard . . . that there is a feeling in youth which binds man to woman closer than the father is tied to the son."⁵⁹

All these works, English and American, reveal man's sense of sexuality as a source of shame. Sometimes the emphasis is placed upon the dangerous power of the rebel son, sometimes upon his animal lust; but woman in her various aspects as forbidden mother is always anathema. After all, Eve started all the trouble and the chaste male friendship offers a possibility for bypassing the hero's parricidal intent.

The colonial novel as an adventure story for boys (and works like Kim and the dozens of cautiously expurgated versions of "A Boy's life of T. E. Lawrence" belong in "the children's section of the library" where Fiedler places the classic American novel)⁶⁰ fulfills the same need for escape

from disturbing adult conflicts. But here Rider Haggard is the acknowledged master. Understanding the uneasiness that prompts adolescents to hiss the appearance of women in cowboy movies, the narrator of King Solomon's Mines promises that this is no love story and that the only woman will be a witch over a hundred years old.⁶¹ The white god's magic (fire sticks, false teeth, and wonderful white legs) is also good clean fun; still, the same crucial issues are at stake. That is why the adventure is justified as the search for a brother, not for gold, and the noble explorers renounce the treasure with which they might have ruled the world. Why isn't clarified. Perhaps Haggard didn't know, nor did he know why the native girl had to be killed to prevent miscegenation: "The sun cannot mate with the darkness."⁶² His explorers become rich, though not rich enough, and gain the power of those who cross the threshold. No other white men are permitted to cross the mountains, but their names "shall be as the names of dead kings and he who speaks them shall die."⁶³

She makes the consequences of sexuality clear. Here the unattainable fruit-eating snake-girded temptress who promises eternal knowledge and power actually turns into a witch thousands of years old. Here love literally kills. It destroyed the hero's family, and he is raised by a misogynist uncle ugly enough to be "protected" from woman's fatal charm. The hero is beautiful--beautiful enough to tempt and destroy the temptress, and finally, he too

renounces the dangers of women and power. He returns to his uncle and, just as in King Solomon's Mines, the boys live happily ever after in the end. Obviously the flight from sexuality is not a uniquely American problem.⁶⁴

But even beyond universal guilts, colonial fiction is rich in individual ones that offer some support for Fiedler's suspicions. Without question, an impressive number of colonial writers, if not actively homosexual, were extremely uncomfortable with sex. Although a survey of any group of writers, indeed any group of subway riders, might yield the same statistics, jungle and barracks tend to attract men who are ambivalent about women. T. E. Lawrence admired the "sexless and pure" relationship between Arab boys (30) that provided "more than the contact of flesh and flesh"; (509) Conrad's fecund jungles castrate; Forster's cave is a homosexual threat; and Kipling, though he would vehemently have denied it, was at home in the world of children and soldiers for much the same reason. In fact, this may explain the curious resemblance Cooperman discovers between The Naulahka and A Passage to India.⁶⁵ Even in Kipling's hearty defense of imperial values, a mystery in a cave awakens obscure sexual threats ("And the grey snake coiled on the altar stone-- / Ere I fled from a fear that I could not see, / And the Gods of the East made mouths at me.")⁶⁶ Kipling wrote The Naulahka with his friend Balestier--not, apparently because Balestier could write--and Leon Edel has observed that Kipling handled Balestier's death by

marrying his more masculine sister.⁶⁷ Perhaps this is why The Nahlakha is such a hearty defense of civilized values.

Sometimes colonial women evoke the threats of sexuality, sometimes they are associated with the repressions of civilization, and sometimes there is even a distinction between the two in civilized white wives and lusty native mistresses; but dark women invariably unman, and colonial wives like Conrad's castrating Edith, Orwell's sadistic Elizabeth, Cary's dense Celia, and Greene's nagging Louise are not exceptional in preventing the fulfillment of their men's lusts or noble dreams. Marlow would keep women "in that beautiful world of their own, lest ours gets worse" (121); Celia, odious in pregnancy as Adela in sterility, rides herd on the husband she sees as a Johnson, "a ring-tail baboon";⁶⁸ and Querry is robbed of his peace with Deo Gratias and killed by the sexuality of a woman described as a typical "colon."⁶⁹

Colonial women are particularly virulent with natives. Maugham's women police the color line; Fielding discovers "that it was possible to keep in touch with English and Indians, but he who would keep in touch with English women must drop Indians" (62-63); and Orwell's servants flee at the arrival of a colonial wife: "English women being considered a race apart, possibly not even human."⁷⁰ Indeed, the closing lines of Burmese Days are Orwell's hostile account of Elizabeth's successful career after destroying Flory. Her snobbery hardens, she rides herd on the servants, and

generally assumes "the position for which nature had designed her from the first, that of burra Memsahib."⁷¹

Although much of this may be the hostility of men who had no great love of women, in truth, women did "make trouble."⁷² Even Mannoni notes "the astonishing fact that in Madagascar the European women are far more racialist than the men."⁷³ Of course, generalizations can only be glib, but it is possible to speculate, at least on the phenomenon in novels. Doris Lessing, a colonial woman astute about women, gives us a heroine whose "profound distaste for sex"⁷⁴ and "dark attraction"⁷⁵ is manifested in her hostility to "primitive creatures with ugly desires she could not bear to think about,"⁷⁶ and Mary's motives probably aren't unusual. Sexual repression is encouraged in women, and one might expect their rejection of darkness to be more intense than their husbands. Furthermore, maintaining conformity to protect the security of marriage, an essential female function, would be even more essential, and that much more difficult, in the presence of lust-inspiring natives. Fiedler is correct in noting that women are dangerous when he compares Thoreau's account of scalp hunting Hannah Dustin with the pure love of Henry and Wawatam in A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, but Hannah's story is hardly "a special American version of the Fall of Man."⁷⁷ Nothing the American novel produces quite equals the rapacious racism of women in colonial novels.

Fiedler's generalizations, though provocative, are not

always accurate. American novelists are no more immature, sexless, misogynistic, or homosexual than their English brothers. True, the classic English novel set in drawing rooms and directed to the middle class reader does have great heroines rarely found in American novels,⁷⁸ but how sexy, really, are Emma or Becky Sharp? As sexy as Hester Prynne? If the American novel is a boy's book, it isn't because the American novelist has uniquely American sexual problems, but because the American self-image, that of an innocent child, reinforced the all too human desire to remain an innocent child, and the American was fortunate in having a backyard Eden in which to pretend. Englishmen like Shakespeare and Defoe had been escaping to fantasy islands all along, and once the island-without-men became a British protectorate they certainly lost no opportunity in getting away.

The American fantasy seen at its purest in Cooper, gives us a marginal world, a hero who is "one of those who pass their time between the skirts of civilized society and the boundless forest,"⁷⁹ friendship with a dark man who embodies the alien world, and a sexual threat so intense that the fantasy can be maintained only by a celibate hero, a dead heroine, and the promise of an afterlife "when we may assemble around his throne without distinctions of sex or rank or color."⁸⁰ The fantasy looks familiar because heroes like Kim, Lord Jim, and T. E. Lawrence were also pathfinders and chainbearers with "no cross" in their

blood, and the American author is no less ambivalent about his dream. Naturally Cooper glorified the redskin. D. H. Lawrence understood why when he spoke of the lovely half-lies of a henpecked husband saturated with luxury who had a secret longing to "belch."⁸¹ Cooper also glorified redskins because he was killing them off to make way for a "superior" culture.

But Kim and Huckleberry Finn would be the logical place to compare the fantasy world and the dream of reconciliation in one context that openly fears democracy and one that nominally supports it. Both works are rites of passage in which a black-white child is fathered by a native in an in-between world where such things are possible. Both works use the aberrant relationship to act out rebellion and both end with compromise--Twain's equivocal ending arousing at least as much critical outrage as Kim's concession to imperial service.

Either because Twain was more temperamentally rebellious or because his culture endorsed defiance, he confronts the challenges Kipling evades, and his is the tougher book. In Kipling's benevolent India, road and river are equally sacred; the Lama is respected, pure, and scarcely black; natives are happy; dark enemies are Russians, and conflict is contained beyond the pages of the book. Twain's world is far more dangerous. Jim is very black, associated with Injun Joe and primitive magic, and the master-slave relationship is openly acknowledged. Towns dehumanize, forests are

perilous, and Twain forces Huck to confront evil in the social world on shore.

The contrast is reflected in the narrative techniques of the novels. Both heroes have their ancestry in the picaresque whose reaction against social values is reflected in the irreverent formlessness of his story. Twain, however, comes closer to maintaining the picaresque stance in that the values of society remain opposed to the values of the book. There is never any question that Huck might accept them, just as there is no doubt that Kim will. Huck is cut off from society at the onset--with the rejection of the money and the symbolic death of Pap--and the book concludes, not with the hero's recognition of his identity with his father, but with the revelation of his father's death. Huck can only flee. He tries on many identities, but only for their possibilities, and the only pattern in the book is his continuing evasion of any social role. Kim is not about possibility and adventure, but education and compromise. His shifting identities exorcise aberrant selves and his adventures are a test leading to his acceptance of social values and predestined fate. Significantly, an omniscient narrator imposes the values of adulthood on Kim, while Huckleberry Finn maintains the self-contained world and language of the child.

It's about what one would expect. The American, we are told, sees himself as an innocent parricide, and the continuing problem in his novels is how to remain free of

social restraints--while the imperialist, terrified of the dark possibilities of freedom, would naturally chasten the rebellious child and embrace social rules. Actually, the similarities between the authors' rebellious dreams outweigh the distinctions of cultural context. Kipling, no less than Twain, identified with naughty boys; Twain, no less than Kipling, was afraid of such freedom. Both men conceded to civilization and were bullied by its women. Kipling's work was censored by his mother; Twain's by his wife.⁸² It is just that the conflict was more difficult for an American author straining against the American dream. That is why Huckleberry Finn reveals the oppressive guilt so absent in Kim, and why Twain's ending is contrived and impossible to accept.

The test of the hero's values indicates the way the problem is handled. Kim's "I am not a Sahib. I am thy chela" is Huck risking his soul for Jim. In doing so, Kim becomes a Sahib, and Huck is assured a place in heaven. Kim's, the standard test of Christian humility, is not much of a test. It doesn't negate the Sahib's code; it redefines it. Huck truly believes that the laws of society are the will of heaven and that he will go to hell. That's quite a decision. Still, Twain is safe in assuming that his readers will understand (Kipling would have had no such assurance). The old joke has it that Johnny Jones was the only kid who wouldn't raise his hand when the teacher asked who wanted to go to heaven because he didn't want to go to heaven with

"that crowd." Of course, we would prefer Huck's hell to society's heaven; the book itself doesn't take much of a risk.

Kipling needn't admit conflict between society and moral values. Kim's rebellion is a harmless part of growing up, not incompatible with sahibdom, because Kipling and his reader believed that a sahib was a fine thing to be.. Once this premise is accepted, the conclusion comes about gracefully. Twain had a different sort of problem--how to resolve the American dichotomy between innocence and experience, while resolving his own need to be a good-bad boy, and handling the technical problem of ending a quest for freedom which, of necessity, cannot be ended. Naturally we feel the jolt.

Chase, pushing the point too hard, contends that Huck's life "simply continues its pattern of unresolved contradictions"⁸³--that that's what makes him the typical American hero. Perhaps Huck does not resolve contradictions, but the book certainly does. Morality is opposed to society, and Huck's honesty will not permit compromise; his quest is a dream, and its failure potentially tragic. But comedy seeks resolution and Twain needs resolution--the tacked on farce is his compromise with the world. At the moment the logical consequences of irreconcilable opposition must be confronted, Twain resorts to a darky act--not unlike Kipling's Babu--one that reduces the subversive issues to a joke and inverts the real values of the book. The moral norm of the

novel, the one provided by Jim, disapproves of just this sort of practical joke.

Huckleberry Finn admits the need for conformity in its equivocal ending, while Kipling, secure in his faith in the order of class distinction, need not go underground; however both works conclude by compromising with social reality: Kim becomes a Sahib, and Huck becomes Tom. Twain must make the split that keeps Huck pure because the recurring problem in the American novel is the need to preserve mythic innocence, not the need to contain accepted sin. America's heroes, its Ike McCaslins, Natty Bumpos, and Ishmaels, do not seek power within a tradition of kingship; the problem here is not the ruler exposed in his unworthiness to rule, but the expulsion from Eden through a violation of fraternity. In both cases, however, the spectre of the dark man and the wilderness exposes potentially tragic human limits.

Obviously, the dream of white kingship can take root at any time, on any terrain--even our own. It is significant that a nineteenth-century American writer like Melville used the relationship between an imperialist and a black man to question a rational universe, and that a contemporary British author like William Golding should turn a tradition of island literature, the Eden motif, and a child's fantasy of British imperialism to a similar purpose in The Lord of the Flies. In 1857 R. B. Ballantyne placed three plucky rugby types on a "coral island" and admired their resource-

fulness in turning a savage country into an imperial Eden.

It's capital--first rate--the best thing that ever lay before three jolly young tars. We've got an island all to ourselves. We'll go and enter the service of its black inhabitants. Of course we'll rise to the top of affairs, White men always do in savage countries. You shall be King, Jack; Ralph, Prime Minister.⁸⁴

And they do. They convert pirates, teach cannibals to eat cooked meat, and tame unruly nature. In 1954 Golding placed the boys back on that island with somewhat different results. This time the boys are prey, not to pirates and cannibals, but to the beast in themselves. Given the opportunity to recreate Paradise, the boys reenact the Fall, and the tears Ralph sheds for "the end of innocence"⁸⁵ continue to be shed in contemporary colonial novels. Even the mid-seventies crop of colonial fiction evokes the same phrases. A Newsweek reviewer uses "a fable of lost innocence" to describe Rumer Godden's most recent (1975) attempt to use inter-racial relations in India to explore "the limits of the British moral tradition."⁸⁶ and another reviewer suggests that J. G. Farrell's The Seige of Krishnapur (1974), "a melodrama of shattered innocence," is telling the same story:

As always in these contests of tea, cucumber sandwiches and fair play v. the dark demons of the blood, nice guys finish last, or else they turn out to be not so nice after all. Something like this is what Farrell seems to be preaching in his deflowered English Eden.⁸⁷

Even in its dissolution the colony remains a fine place to view the decline of the West.

The colonial novels of Conrad, Kipling, and Forster are all stories of deflowered English Edens. Sometimes the story is told in terms of political power: Nostromo tells of exploitation, revolution, and capitalist greed. Sometimes the colonial writer places English culture on an alien soil to test it: in A Passage to India British moral values are exposed. But for the major colonial writers the imperial myth, and the novel itself, were ways of enacting and expiating their own imperial dreams. However deeply an artist feels about political, social, philosophical and moral issues, their artistic recreation will be of first rank only when impelled by the author's most deeply felt conflicts and dreams--and such needs only enhance the author's involvement with the political and social world.

It is precisely because Conrad was a renegade obsessed by heroic fathers and guilty about the demiurgical aspirations of his art that he saw political power for what it was, the Adamic fantasy of a rebel son. Almost obsessively, Conrad acts out his fantasy of rule and punishes himself for the gratification, yet--more accurately, because--the exposure of kings was necessary for Conrad's psychic survival, it becomes not only the novel's most excoriating "comment" on political imperialism, but the most penetrating exploration of all man's pretentious, perhaps redemptive, dreams.

Kipling voiced the code of a nation confronting the terrors of modernism with community, action and will; and

colonists, impressed by his realism, suspected that they had been created by Kipling; but this is precisely because Kipling's own child-like fantasies fulfilled the colonist's need for kingship over a dark world beyond the pale, and the needs of a nation trying to grow up in the modern world. Even now, even when repelled by Kipling's odious values, we too respond to Kim's childhood dream of adventure in a world we can rule and get away with it.

To Forster the fantasy colony offered even more threatening dangers, which no doubt is why the "meaning" remains so deliberately veiled. Certainly A Passage to India can be read as an intelligent, albeit mystifying, comment on inter-cultural relations; but to Forster, at a time when he was struggling to function as a novelist while forbidden his only true subject, the alien world was an opportunity to mask, while confessing, his particular lawless dream. Like all Forster's essays and fiction, A Passage to India tells us a good deal about the snobbery that erects barriers between men and the sterile restraints of British culture, but it is essentially a novel about the feelings Forster was "afraid to feel."

Fantasies and myths and fictions, Frye tells us, resolve necessity and freedom by offering us a vision of fulfilled desire, while at the same time placing before us the obstacles that prevent the fulfillment of our desires--woefully inadequate man and powerful gods.⁸⁸ The would-be kings of the nineteenth and twentieth-century colonial novel

are British imperialists, their conflicts are shaped in relation to contemporary philosophy and psychology, but their stories are Adam's in Eden. What better metaphor for the new gods of the modern world than Kipling's Peachy, resurrected by a "miracle" to wander the earth as a mad prophet bearing Dan's crowned withered head and singing of a Second Coming:

The son of Man goes forth to war,
A golden crown to gain:
His blood-red banner streams afar--
Who follows in his train?⁹¹

Notes and References

Chapter VI

1. Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph (Oxford, 1922).
2. "Lawrence Vindicated," The New Republic (March 21, 1955), p. 18.
3. T. E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph (New York, 1935). Unless otherwise noted, all references from Seven Pillars of Wisdom will be taken from this text.
4. T. E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom (Oxford, 1922), p. 1. Quoted in John E. Mack, A Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T. E. Lawrence (Boston, 1976), p. 193.
5. Conrad, The Rescue M.S. Quoted in Moser, Joseph Conrad, p. 153.
6. Curiously, the same actor was cast in both movie roles.
7. Mack, pp. 420-21.
8. Conrad, "Autocracy and War," p. 145.
9. Lawrence of Arabia; The Man and the Motive (London, 1961), pp. 243-44.
10. Mack, p. 222.
11. Ibid., pp. 210, 214-15.
12. Actually, the "we" Mack describes as Lawrence's "literary" way of referring to himself (p. 215) is somewhat more complex. Sometimes it is a way of concealing responsibility; obviously references to "Western" sex guilt and "punishing appetites" refer to himself. More often, however, it looks like the royal "we," and the syntactical confusion between Lawrence and "Him" further suggests that much of Lawrence's problem was the fatal split between the ideal kingship of the body politic and the limitations of the body corporal that has tormented many real and fictional sovereigns.
13. Richard Aldington, Lawrence of Arabia (London, 1969), p. 381. Apparently Conrad knew Lawrence casually. He sent him a copy of Mirror of the Sea addressed to "Mr. Lawrence," but there are no indications of a significant personal relationship between the two men.
14. In Lawrence's account of the white king enslaved by his natives, and in his description of his attempt to escape

private conflict in the Arab cause ("my imitation of their bondage to the idea." [p. 548]), the words themselves suggest conscious influence.

15. Mack, pp. 219-220.

16. Ibid., p. 220.

17. Mack suggests that Lawrence saw his once noble, dashing, hard drinking father brought down in rank and tamed by his domineering mother, and he feared that she would do the same to him; however, the letter Mack quotes also reveals Lawrence's fear that she was too "wrapped up" in his father to care. (p. 31).

18. Mack, p. 221.

19. My sources for information about Orwell are Orwell's Such, Such Were the Joys and The Road from Wigan Pier, and Stansky and Abraham's The Unknown Orwell. Emily Hahn's biography of Sir James Brooke, Brooke of Sarawak (London, 1953) discusses Brooke's Anglo-Indian childhood, and relates his mysterious wound and rumored celibacy to his role as white ruler (pp. 14, 16, 25-26.).

20. Orwell, Such, Such Were the Joys, p. 16. See Chapter VI, note 15.

21. Morton N. Cohen, Rider Haggard (New York, 1960), pp. 25, 50-51, 114.

22. Brodie, p. 30. Brodie also suggests that Burton's idea of great deeds was anti-social because his mother adored scamps like her blackguard brother (p. 22) and because Burton had neither affection or respect for his insignificant father. Burton, in fact, was delighted by the idea that a morganatic liaison would make him illegitimate: "Why! I would rather be the bastard of a king than the son of an honest man." (p. 30).

23. Mack, p. 199.

24. Review of Seven Pillars of Wisdom, The Bibliophile's Almanack for 1928 (London, 1928), p. 39. Quoted in Mack, p. 218.

25. "T. E. Lawrence: The Problem of Heroism," A World More Attractive: A View of Literature and Politics (New York, 1963), p. 2.

26. Ibid., p. 20.

27. Ibid., p. 36.

28. Ibid., p. 39.
29. Van Ghent, p. 234.
30. Auerbach, pp. 550-53.
31. Leavis, p. 41.
32. The American Novel and its Tradition (New York, 1957), p. viii.
33. Ibid., p. 5.
34. Ibid., p. 2.
35. Chase gets much of his American tradition by a kind of circular reasoning whereby Moby Dick is more characteristically American than Billy Budd because it is "a novel of tension without resolution" (p. 114) and the way we know that American novels are "tension without resolution" is because that is what Moby Dick is. Similarly, Cooper is "not at his best" in Satanstoe, which is a "culture making" novel, while in The Prairie he is inspired by the "exhilaration of escape from culture itself." (p. 7). Even Chase is forced to admit that "Cooper found it necessary in America to be both a conservative and an anarchist" (p. 52); we are all both-- everywhere.
36. Ibid., p. 3.
37. Ibid., pp. 1-28.
38. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, p. 31.
39. See especially R. W. B. Lewis, The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy, and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century (Chicago, 1958).
40. Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860 (Middletown, Conn, 1973), pp. 37-38.
41. Studies in Classic American Literature (New York, 1964), pp. 3-8.
42. The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization (Baltimore, 1953), pp. 1-4.
43. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, p. 27.
44. Slotkin, p. 35.
45. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, p. 366.

46. Ibid., p. 367.
47. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, pp. 366-67.
48. Ibid., p. 365.
49. Ibid., pp. 24-26.
50. Greene, The Heart of the Matter, p. 82.
51. Ibid., pp. 83-84.
52. Greene, A Burnt-Out Case, p. 73.
53. "The Basement Room," The Story; A Critical Anthology, ed. Mark Schorer (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1967), p. 139.
54. Cary, Mr. Johnson, p. 167.
55. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, p. 113.
56. In Love and Death in the American Novel Fiedler maintains that the word "homoerotic" has been misunderstood. No, Fiedler does not attribute sodomy to either characters or author, and he has tempered his position since the attention getting overstatements of "Come Back to the Raft A'gin, Huck Honey!"; still, his meaning is clear. He insists that we be "appalled" be the homoerotic relationship" (p. 349).
57. Fiedler also distorts the evidence when he contends that the American hero must remove the taint of being born of woman by being reborn with the dark companion as nurse and spouse (Love and Death in the American Novel, p. 358). Nonsense. Fathers like Sam are always the initiating figures for heroes like Ike McCaslin--throughout mythology and fiction. In colonial novels we find the same relationship in works like Lord Jim and Kim.
58. Kipling, "The Man Who Would Be King," II, 138.
59. James Fenimore Cooper, The Last of the Mohicans (New York, 1958), p. 284.
60. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, p. 24.
61. "She" and "King Solomon's Mines," (New York, 1962), p. 6.
62. Ibid., p. 233.
63. Ibid., pp. 252-55.

64. Morton Cohen's biography describes the sort of man who would write such books--a rejected son whose father was responsible for ending Haggard's engagement to the woman he loved. Haggard married, not the unattainable woman but a solid second choice, and continued to feel guilty and inadequate about sex. (pp. 50-53, 224). He also had a doll called She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed that had been used to terrify him into childhood obedience (p. 25).

65. Cooperman, p. 9.

66. New York, 1898, p. 175.

67. "A Young Man from the Provinces: Rudyard Kipling and Wolcott Balestier," The Age of Kipling, p. 69.

68. Cary, Mr. Johnson, p. 98.

69. Greene, A Burnt-Out Case, p. 77.

70. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 100.

71. Ibid., p. 244.

72. Fielding expects those women to "make trouble" (p. 158) and Benjamin answers Johnson's ingenuous "I think government ladies make station more civilized" with: "My experience is that ladies make trouble in all stations." (p. 55).

73. Mannoni, p. 114-15.

74. The Grass is Singing (New York, 1950), p. 46.

75. Ibid., p. 190.

76. Ibid., p. 115.

77. Fiedler, Waiting for the End (New York, 1964), p. 113.

78. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, p. 25. Fiedler admits that ancient and medieval literature got along nicely without romantic love. However the novel has been obsessed with love; therefore, not to be obsessed with it is immature and peculiarly American.

79. Cooper, "Preface," The Leather-Stocking Tales (New York, 1952), p. 5.

80. Cooper, The Last of the Mohicans, p. 368.

81. D. H. Lawrence, Studies in Classic American Literature, pp. 47-63.

82. When Kipling showed his mother some "tales of the opposite sex" written in his "indecent immaturity" his mother's response was "Never you do that again." (Something of Myself, II, 121). Later his wife assumed the role of governess and matron, even sending him off to bed when he had had too much to drink. (Wilson, The Wound and the Bow, pp. 94-96). Twain's wife also saw to it that Twain remained civilized and cut the naughty parts out of Huckleberry Finn. Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain: A Biography (New York, 1912), p. 101.

83. Chase, p. 148.

84. The Coral Island (London, 1858), pp. 27-28.

85. The Lord of the Flies (New York, 1959), p. 186.

86. Review of The Peacock Spring, Newsweek (April 12, 1976), p. 101.

87. Maddocks, p. 93.

88. See especially Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, New Jersey, 1967).

Appendix A

Rimbaud and Kurtz

Although Georges Antoine Klein, an African trader, is generally accepted as Conrad's model for Kurtz-the-colonist,¹ Arthur Rimbaud is a tempting candidate for Kurtz, the colonist-artist. Rimbaud, the mad wicked poet, was the apotheosis of everything Conrad abhorred; but Rimbaud, equally terrified by his "season in hell," also acted out the opposing role, and the curious conjunction of the visionary artist freeing himself by dark passages into African primitivism, and the bourgeois merchant cultivating success, respect, and a studied dullness,² comes remarkably close to Conrad's own resolution in Marlow and Kurtz. In the end even the narrator of "Une Saison en Enfer" rejects the dangers of divine ecstasy: "I who called myself magus or angel, exempt from all morality, I am thrown back to the earth with a duty to find and a rough reality to embrace."³

Admittedly, the poete maudit as well as the king of the natives precedes the many actors who have played the part, and the similarities need not be conscious. Given the same needs, writers tend to draw upon the same symbols, and Rimbaud's needs--Edmund Wilson calls them the need to placate a wandering father and practical mother⁴--were the sort Conrad understood and met with the same roles as colonizer and savage. The other side of Rimbaud, the Company Director, is the Black Man of "Une Saison en Enfer"

who cries: "I am a beast, a savage."⁵ And Marlow, trying to explain that drumbeats are "not inhuman" to Company Directors, is a Rimbaud crying: "Merchant, you are a savage. Magistrate, you are a savage."⁶

Nevertheless, the resemblance may be more than unconscious. Conrad was familiar with French literature, Villiers's Axel, had opened in 1890, and Symon's articles on symbolism were in the air.⁷ Conrad was impressed with Symons, and Axel Heyst is the last of his colonial kings. Conrad also knew Rimbaud's poetry, and possibly Rimbaud--certainly he knew him "by reputation." Rimbaud died in Marseilles in 1891, and Conrad lived there before and after his jungle trip (1890-1891).⁸ Furthermore, Brussels, the setting for Marlow's entrance into Hell, was the setting for much of Rimbaud's satanic nastiness as well as the publication of "Une Saison en Enfer."

Conrad, characteristically, claimed that he couldn't understand Rimbaud;⁹ but the Conrad who lamented his career with "one's will becomes the slave of hallucinations, waits on imagination alone. A strange state, a trying experience, a kind of fiery trial of untruthfulness,"¹⁰ knew more about the voyant experience than he cared to admit. This is the side of himself Heart of Darkness attempts to exorcise. If Conrad had Rimbaud in mind, he probably wouldn't have admitted it.

Their seasons in hell, however, are much the same. Rimbaud's "Le Bateau Ivre" is also the fantasy of an

audacious child sailing his boat in a puddle and dreaming of adventure. (Baudelaire's "Le Voyage," which influenced Rimbaud, even verbalizes an audacity like Conrad's: "For the child fascinated by prints and maps," he writes, "The universe and his hunger are of a size.")¹¹ And Rimbaud also uses a nightmare descent down an impassable river on a rudderless boat surrounded by savages as a metaphor for the voyant experience. The fantasy kingdom, in this case, is a child's vision of colonial America, and references to foreign invaders and commercial exploitation give it ballast, but the colonial experience is the same dream--a dream shared by poets and children--of sailing to a world where imagination is powerful. And Rimbaud also concludes his contrast between the poetic imagination and harsh reality with a return to safety. In the end the drunken boat is found to lack the discipline to be a commercial ship, the courage to be a flag bearing ship, and the humility to consort with the old ships used for port traffic. Conrad, the practical seaman, would have been particularly taken with that.

Even so, it may be impossible to demonstrate direct influence. Conrad might have found the image of a drunken boat in his unconscious or in literary and mythic tradition. He was certainly aware of the one in The Ancient Mariner, and the dark night passage on a rudderless boat is a familiar image of mystical vision, particularly in colonial fiction where the colonial experience is often

seen as a passage to dreams. Forster's mystical union takes place on a "rudderless dinghy"; Kim's passage to the mountains, compared with a journey to the sea, is a movement beyond wheels and volition; Burton's devil drives a hollowed log up the Amazon; and Lessing, in The Grass is Singing, borrows The Waste Land's rudderless boat for her vision of lifegiving release.

Whatever its source, the image was important to Conrad. The guilty young dreamer chose the Malay word for "rudder" for his earliest pen name,¹² and the image recurs throughout his colonial novels. Jim abandons his ammunition to drift upstream to Patusan; Nostromo has its dark night passage on a rudderless boat in the night in the gulf; and Heart of Darkness opposes the helmsman of the story and the pilot of the frame to the dangers of a passage beyond will (much as "Some Points of Seamanship" is opposed to the poet's cryptic ciphers). However the distinction between the helmsman and the pilot--the pilot is also a company director--ultimately reveals the attraction of chaos and Conrad's ambivalence to rudders.

Although acknowledged, Conrad's debt to French symbolism has scarcely been examined. Frederick Karl observes that the fragmentary scenes of Heart of Darkness function like images in symbolist poetry;¹³ William Tindall notes a resemblance to "le Voyage," finds Baudelaire's dandy in Conrad's jungle, and perceives that Marlow is aware of "correspondences" when he compares a forest to a temple.¹⁴

But the influence may be worth further attention.¹⁵ In its attitude towards language and imagery, if not Conrad's vision of the poet as the "Stealer of Fire," French symbolism left its mark on Heart of Darkness.

Rimbaud saw his experiments with language as well as his descent into primitivism as openly satanic. Like the white man in the jungle the seer takes the first step by becoming an outcast, by stripping away the false order of the familiar, and then by passing through "unheard of and unnamable things,"¹⁶ until he has kicked himself "loose of the earth" and become God. The poet's experiments with language then become a magical formula for that passage beyond form. By distorting reality, the artist creates his own: "I have tried to invent new flowers, new stars, new flesh, new tongues. I believed I had acquired supernatural powers."¹⁷

All of this is in Symons,¹⁸ but even if Conrad hadn't read Symons at the time he wrote Heart of Darkness, even if he hadn't read Rimbaud, his colonist-artist is a satanic magician, and his jungle is the symbolist's hallucinatory world of merging forms. Drums mean "peace or prayer" (105), natives are "enemies," "helpers," and "criminals," (80) Russian is a cipher, and words, "an immense jabber," (120) have no sense. In the end, Marlow insists upon the inadequacy of his words, like the inadequacy of all man's attempts to transcend his limits with maps and books, much as Rimbaud cries: "Do I know nature yet? Do I know myself? No More Words . . . Yells, drum, dance, dance, dance, dance!"¹⁹

Notes and References

Appendix A: Rimbaud and Kurtz

1. Jean-Aubry, I, 136.
2. Edmund Wilson, Axel's Castle: A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870-1930 (New York, 1959), pp. 257-99.
3. Arthur Rimbaud, "Une Saison en Enfer," Rimbaud: Complete Works, Selected Letters. Translation, introduction and notes by Wallace Fowlie (Chicago, 1967), p. 209.
4. Wilson, Axel's Castle, p. 292.
5. Rimbaud, "Une Saison en Enfer," p. 179.
6. Ibid.
7. Symon's articles on French symbolists like Rimbaud and Villiers appeared between 1895 and 1898. See Chapter II, note 181.
8. Jean-Aubry, I, pp. 123, 141.
9. Letter to Cunninghame Graham, August 27, 1898, Jean-Aubry, I, 246.
10. Letter to E. L. Sandison, October 12, 1899. Jean-Aubry, I, 283.
11. "Le Voyage," One Hundred Poems from "Les Fleurs du Mal," trans. C. F. MacIntyre (Berkeley, 1947), p. 317. "Le Voyage" also provided the epigraph for Conrad's Shadow-Line where a voyage becomes a dream passage into a heart of darkness.
12. Letter to Marguerite Poradowska, August 18 [?] 1894, Letters From Joseph Conrad to Marguerite Poradowska, p. 76.
13. Karl, p. 46.
14. "Apology for Marlow," Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" and the Critics, p. 128.
15. A number of curious echoes support the idea of Rimbaud's influence upon Heart of Darkness. Rimbaud's references to language, for example (see note 19); the sacred and profane love in "Une Saison en Enfer" who resemble Kurtz's native mistress and his "Intended": "I may die earth~~ly~~ love or die of devotion. I have left behind me two

souls whose suffering will increase at my going" (p. 181); and Rimbaud's references to the pagan blood of his ancestors, the violating Gauls. Conrad introduces Heart of Darkness with a similar passage.

16. Letter from Rimbaud to Paul Demeny, May 15, 1871, Fowlie, p. 307.

17. Rimbaud, "Une Saison en Enfer," p. 207.

18. Symons's essay on Rimbaud, possibly familiar to Conrad, describes Rimbaud as an artist as well as a man of action, a dreamer whose dreams were discoveries: "the sonnet of the vowels and to trade in ivory and frankincense with the Arabs" were the same to him. (p. 36). Surely this would have struck a respondent note in the novelist who saw the writing of a book as "the conquest of a colony."

19. Having passed through crime, blasphemy, and horror, the narrator of "Une Saison en Enfer" concludes: "I can no more explain myself than the beggar with his endless Patens and Ave Marias. I have forgotten how to speak" (p. 207). These are precisely the words Conrad uses to describe Willems, the man he identified with his own rebellion against the past. (See Ch. II, note 62.)

Appendix B

A Note on the Imagery in A Passage to India

The colonial novel is a special kind of story, set in a unique fictional world, and specific figures and images develop its plot. Some of these grow out of archetypal myth and fantasy--the Eden motif, the island without men, and the Night Journey over the sea; others grow out of the reality of imperialism--the roads, bridges, and machines with which the colonist imposes his will, and the club, the dinner jacket, and the magic ring with which he protects himself from chaos. But whatever its manifestation, the imagery of order and chaos, or will and passivity, returns to expose the pretender's doubtful performance.

Examples are limitless, sometimes even tiresome. Marvin Maddocks is right; when J. G. Farrell's colonists load their cannons with prayer beads, "the volley becomes too pat a way of saying: "Bang goes civilization!"¹ Still, Conrad's machinery rotting in the jungle is a logical way of opposing human desires with cosmic limits; Kipling's wheels and freedom from wheels the logical way of opposing the Western world of action and will with the Eastern one of submission and magic. Findlayson's native assistant prays to "a low-pressure cylinder": "Not half a bad thing to pray to either," says Findlayson.² "When we open this road," says Rhubeck; "When the road is open," says Johnson.³

But A Passage to India's opposition between mechanized

and mystical passage uses the imagery characteristic of the opposition between East and West with particular richness. Even beyond the archtypal rebirth imagery of travel and the "emblems of passage," (314) transportation itself becomes a viewpoint or vocabulary that unifies the narrative and creates its attitudes. Throughout A Passage to India, the human will that divides is opposed by visionary release; action is opposed by passage.

The machinery of transportation belongs to the West as Kipling's "drive the road and bridge the ford"⁴ is ironically echoed in roads "symbolic of the net Great Britain had thrown over India" which catch Aziz in their "meshes" (16). These are the English gods, and their machinery of transportation is power, not communication: "You have so much more power than in England--look at Miss Derek's motor-car." (206) Indeed, twice Miss Derek (derrick) extricates Adela from the mystery as a deus ex machina in a car stolen from her Indian employer.

Naturally, Indians would be too primitive to deal with such power: Dr. Panna Lal, in his new tum tum, damages the club's hollyhocks; Nureddin's car lands in a ditch; and Nawab Bahadur's terrible driving has killed the man whose ghost causes the accident on the Marabar road. Thus, Mrs. Callender observes: "They ought never to have been allowed to drive in; it's so bad for them" (41). Similarly, much is made of the Indian inability to catch trains. Aziz sleeps at the station to defy the stereotype, but Godbole's

lengthy prayers make Fielding miss the train and this, in turn, precipitates the crisis.

Modes of transportation are equally important in indicating and influencing social relationships. On horseback Aziz "felt the equal of any man . . . once on his feet he had creeping fears," (60) and a subaltern who plays polo with him as an equal--"any native who plays polo is all right" (184) later denounces the Indian rapist. Thus, Aziz hides his carriage and approaches Major Callender "more suitably" on foot, "not because his soul was servile but because his feelings . . . feared a gross snub." (16). The inevitable snub follows when two English ladies take his carriage, but it is because he is forced to walk in a gentleman's unsuitable pumps that he pauses to rest at the mosque and meets Mrs. Moore.

Attempts to bridge division, like the "Bridge Party" (38) itself, are given in the vocabulary of transportation. In fact, Forster calls attention to it as a prevailing metaphor when Fielding tells Aziz:

My wife's after something. You and I and Miss Quested are, roughly speaking, not after anything. We job on as decently as we can . . . why don't you talk to Ralph? He's a wise boy really. And (same metaphor) he rides a little behind her, though with her.
(318)

Thus, the friendship between Fielding and Aziz is described as, "I am seen too often in your carriage" (278); Aziz prolongs Fielding's visit by not bringing up his horse, and

they attempt to ride together before their horses swerve apart; an Indian describes his relationship with a ruler with, "you fellows won't believe it but I have driven with Turton in his carriage" (10-11); and Adela describes her relationship with both Indian and English in the same terms: "The man and his wife who hadn't sent their carriage" and "the old man who would lend his car" (220). Finally, Aziz offers his guests an elephant ride as the acme of Mogul hospitality, but the ride only brands them as tourists, and the collector feels responsible for the disaster because he had lent the ladies his car.

Even further, transportation causes the recurrent swerves and collisions that mark attempts at connection. A car that swerves to avoid collision creates the "spurious unity" (88) of Adela's engagement, and tire tracks marking that swerve are related to the footholds on the Marabar hills as she flees the connection of sexual love. "Swerve" remains a negative word; Ralph swerves away from Aziz, and the horses swerve to prevent embrace at the conclusion, negating the collision when Adela is "flung against" (231) Aziz in the procession and Stella "shrinks into" her husband's arms on the raft.

Actually, all human modes of transportation are impossible in a country where something "hostile" in the very soil flattens Aziz's tire, fatigues his feet, and renders the tools of civilization useless: "He had neither bell nor brake, but what use are such adjuncts in a land where the cyclist's only hope is to coast from face to face, and just

before he collides with each it vanishes?" (16). In India "the triumphant machinery of civilization may suddenly hitch and be immobilized into a car of stone," (211) or become a malevolent juggernaut. Ronny says that the case must come before a magistrate: "The machinery has started," and Mrs. Moore adds the sinister prophecy: "She has started the machinery; it will work to its end" (206).

But union, when it comes, takes place through the surrender of such power. Just as Mrs. Moore can save Aziz when she renounces her capacity for action, all the moments of magic occur when the characters are carried away by a coffin-like train, borne to the sea, swept away in a frenzied procession, or guided by "a freshening gale" on a "rudderless dinghy" (312-313). In The Hill of Devi, Forster notes that Krishna himself is called "a raft to sail one."⁵

As the imagery opposes human effort with submission to something beyond, "The inarticulate world . . . closer at hand and readier to resume control when men are tired" (114) actually does take over in creating the drama. All those images of shifting reality support the notion of an area beyond human order; even the central mystery, the "miscreant" (190) in the cave, mocks our attempts, like Fielding's, to turn the "mystery" into a soluble story of detection: "Great is information, and she shall prevail" (191). Mrs. Moore, however, knows "nothing had happened" (208): it is all "a fuss" about nothing. (208).

Throughout the narrative the action is determined, not by men or miscreants, but by the cycle of the seasons: "The sky settles everything" (9); "The weather is the alpha and omega of the whole affair" (49); "The sun dominated as usual." But summer, in India, is the time of fiery sacrifice and April the "herald of horrors" (115). Aziz tells Mrs. Moore that she should never have come when the cold weather was ending: "It will soon be so unhealthy for you." (21)

The trial by fire is most important in the Adela plot where being "touched by the sun" (192) is related to the mystic's desire to be consumed by the god of fertility, but in both cases it is clear that the sun is the direct cause of the women's delusions. Mrs. Moore is aware of the source of her despair: "Even if she got sunstroke and went mad the rest of the world would go on," (150) and Professor Godbole gives the same account of Adela's fantasy: "If a young lady has sunstroke, that is a matter of no significance to the universe" (178). Mrs. Moore is sent away because of the heat and is literally killed by it. On board ship she is warned: "We are safely out of the frying pan . . . it will never do to fall in the fire" (210); but, like the seasonal god Balder, she is sent away on a fiery ship to bring rain.

Even Forster's famous echo functions as a mode of passage, one that negates human efforts at communication only to fulfill the need for renewal on another level. Ronny commands his servant and is answered by echoes, (97) as men are answered when they call to the gods expecting answers; Adela and Mrs. Moore, trying to be friendly to the

Indian ladies, are answered by "the echoing walls of their civility" (43); and the echo in the cave mocks human communication with the isolation of selfhood. But the echo goes beyond a destructive vision to suggest continuity beyond destruction. The caves themselves echo and reflect because of the presence of Brahman in the rock.

While Aziz says that the eye flies return "like all evil things" (279) and Fielding says that "the original sound may be harmless, but the echo is always evil," (276) we have been told that Fielding has "no apparatus for judging" whether the "hundred Indias that fuss and squabble are one," (263) that the echo "belonged to a universe he had missed or rejected." And the mosque missed it too. Like himself, those shallow arcades provided but a limited asylum." (276) The greater arch of the Indian sky does unite Chandrapore and the civil station, and when actions and speeches are given back by the arch of the "overarching sky" (8) they become lifegiving. Thus, everything we see in the novel vanishes and comes back looking different, and this creates the merging and recurring cycles of renewal. When sounds did not echo "life had no consequences, everything was infected with illusion." (140). Birds, trees, and stones return just as Mrs. Moore passes the strange town that vanishes and reappears saying: "I do not vanish" (295). Mrs. Moore acts badly to Aziz but she echoes when she lives on in others. When Aziz echoes "Then you are an oriental," (311) the cycle begins again, and the baby to be born

suggests a future echo. Even the structure of the action is a full circle and when the cycle begins anew, it echoes. Furthermore, the regenerative breakdown of the orderly categories of language is related to the regenerative chaos at Mau. Thus, the returning eye flies of Aziz's room are further associated with life-giving mess and the unifying dissolution of categories implied by the wasp.

But even more than a symbol, the echo is an integral part of the novelist's method. In Aspects of the Novel Forster describes rhythm in the novel as a repetition of a phrase or image, worked and reworked until the effect is greater than anything that has been explicitly stated,⁶; the very texture of his narrative is this sort of reiteration of echoes. The single wasp is neither image nor symbol; it is meaningful only in echoes.

Echoes, in fact, are the artist's device for connection and renewal. Just as the celebrants at Mau "repeat and invert" the name of the deity (319) and Mrs. Moore is transformed into Esmiess Esmoor by an echoing repetition of her name, words and images magically generate new meanings with incremental repetition. Like the town and the bird, they return looking different. "Nothing," we are told, "embraces the whole of India," then Forster repeats, "nothing, nothing," (145) until we know that nothing is what embraces India, the mystery is a fuss about nothing, the meaninglessness of the echo is its meaning, and a movement to nothing is the source of renewal.

Throughout the story words are repeated until they echo. Just as the song to Krishna becomes "audible through much repetition," (310) there is the invocative magic in Forster's many repetitions: "Esmoor, Esmoor" (225, 303); "Come, come" (80, 87, 178, 291); "He comes, he comes" (246); "Gone, gone" (269); "Radhakrishna, Radhakrishna" (311, 313); "Tukaram, Tukaram" (283, 284, 285); "Pomper, pomper, pomper" (135, 136); "Nothing, nothing" (124); "In her letters, in her letters" (312); "Chandrapore, Chandrapore" (26); "You're weak, weak" (190, 216); "Keep calm, calm, calm" (174); "as when he scoffed at love, love, love" (205); "marriage, marriage" (201); "Mosque, caves, mosque, caves" (311); "Aziz, Aziz" (202); "a crank, a crank" (196); "gone, gone" (269); "say, say, say" (200); "Not yet, not yet" (312, 322).

Yet at the conclusion we have returned to a reality beyond the arch of the Indian sky where echoes cease and a "Not yet" (322) postpones fulfillment to an infinitely unrealizable future. The last image to echo is the stone. Brahman is present in the stone, and small stones cry "I am alive, I am almost alive" (151); but even Godbole had failed to accept that stone and the earth sends up "rocks through which riders must pass single file" (322) as the scenery falls like a "gravestone" on any human hope (321).

Notes and References

Appendix B: A Note on the Imagery in A Passage to India

1. Maddocks, p. 95.
2. Kipling, "The Bridge-Builders," p. 13.
3. Cary, Mr. Johnson, p. 179.
4. Kipling, "A Song of the English," p. 169.
5. Forster, The Hill of Devi, p. 180.
6. Forster, Aspects of the Novel, p. 168.

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