

THE ROLE OF MYTH IN THE MODERN NOVEL: AN EXAMINATION OF  
FEDERIGO TOZZI'S IL PODERE

BY



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ABSTRACT

This thesis consists of an examination of a selected number of myth views. It is suggested that myth is not the private preserve of any one academic domain, but rather belongs to all disciplines. If confusion exists over its definition it is due to 'limited views' engendered by diverse schools. It is further suggested that developed definitions hold no sway over myth's function. To demonstrate the above points, this thesis examines the novel Il podere, by Federigo Tozzi, and also attempts to point out that: 1) individual growth is not haphazard but follows a mythic structure, 2) myth determines societal superstructures, and 3) mythic analysis of literature, especially the 'psychological novel', will not only add to the richness of literary understanding but also offer artistic depth. It further suggests that myth research should not be taken as finite, and proposes that literary critics closely follow cultural change and monitor new research, especially the concept of 'reality' as held by other cultures.

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### 1.0.0 Introduction:

The abstract nature of myth defies definition; not for lack of use, but because each user accommodates it to self-needs. Consequently, any statement as to its definition would be polemical, for myth adapts itself to both a given time and discipline.

Historically it can be demonstrated that whenever man felt his destiny was beyond his own control, the study of myth gained in impetus, distinguishing its definition or clarification by its emphasis on the need for myth. Conversely, whenever man felt the need for re-assurance that he was master of his own fate and in control of his own destiny, myth interpretation and function suffered. Between each historical myth crest definitions and functions broadened fuelling the controversy as to its definition.

On viewing the diverse embellishments to the meaning, it is worthy to note that each addition was in fact an accommodation to the latest social/scientific discoveries/observations in vogue; when the Darwinian approach was experiencing its intellectual nadir, numerous evolutionary myth definitions emerged, each purporting to be the ultimate answer. Today, 'scientific' investigation and discovery into 'inner reality' and 'observed' animal expression are adding new dimensions and modifying our approach to myth. Each new trend continues to arm all camps obfuscating further the issue.

Myth obfuscation can be traced back to its semantic roots or to the moment man ask himself: "What is Man? What are his needs?" The answer to both is similar, yet divergent. The issue is polemical.

As long as scholars have different immediate and long term needs, there can be no agreement as to meaning and/or function. Those scholars

who accept that myth derives "via" mythos from the Greek root mu (meaning to make a sound with the mouth) do so because they probably feel the need or desire to stress the symbolic non-structural interpretation of myth. Those who prefer to believe myth derives "from" mythos do so, in all likelihood, because it facilitates their defence that myth be 'a structured narrative genre'.<sup>1</sup>

Within these two approaches lies the entire spectrum of myth probabilities, and within it also lies myth's literary controversy: "Is myth a narrative structure or a symbolic poetic expression?"

In quest for an answer, myth literary scholars avidly borrowed from all disciplines (anthropology, philology, philosophy, ethnology, psychology, to mention a few) and crossed into all fields (ritualists, diffusionists, evolutionist, culturalist, parrallelist, Freudian, Jungian, structuralist, and others). But all of this cross-fertilization failed to settle any issue, since different approaches merely continued to emphasize different aspects and functions. Nevertheless, out of all this an awareness grew that one approach does not necessarily exclude others. Thus emerged a third option where myth is defined as: 'a transmutable narrative-symbolic structure conceived in depth, functional at all levels'.<sup>2</sup> Such a definition infers that myth pervades all cultural productions. In other words, cultural productions are stimulated by mythic needs. If that is in fact the case, then an analysis of cultural productions, especially those which are more symbolic than functional, should give the analysis a view of different components whose sum can point to what myth is.

1.1.0 One of the cultural products which reflects and chronicles best man's historical evolvement is literature. For this reason it has become the main

source from which many myth's scholars draw assumptions from. But literature is wrought with subjective elements, and therefore, the assumptions deduced are often disputed.

It was not until Sir James Frazer published The Golden Bough that a quasi-dialectical approach to myth emerged.<sup>3</sup> Many were the writers who saw in Frazer's book unfolding of a new literary trend: a literary genre which sought to demonstrate and explain human universals. Their enthusiasm gave rise to the myth literary schools. One of the first to emerge was the Cambridge Myth-Ritual School. Charged mainly by Frazer's works, it suffered from too 'limited functional view'. It identified myth and ritual as one where myth became meaningful only in a ritual context. That is, myth is viewed as the narrative correlative of the ritual act.<sup>4</sup>

The myth-ritualists were followed by a second dialectical approach, that of the culturalists. Unlike the latter who viewed some cultural productions as myth enactment, the culturalists conceived society as the shaping force behind the loss of myth. Cultural evolution corrupted myth to a state of either folk-tale or legend,<sup>5</sup> denying myth a central creative role. The culturalists discarded the relative importance of the narrative choosing instead to focus their attention on the apparent and not so apparent set of structural contradictions: the relationship between its various components.<sup>6</sup> Forcing myth scholars to look beyond the mask was the culturalists' major contribution to the study of myth.

Much of the popularity of the above approaches was its claims to being objective. The subjectively oriented found new impetus with Sigmund Freud's publication, Totem and Taboo. In Totem and Taboo, Freud demonstrates parallel developments/structures between some neurosis and certain myths. These

parallel connections spurred numerous scholars to re-examine myth's existence in terms of human psychology.<sup>7</sup>

When Carl Gustaf Jung founded his own myth school, new subjective inroads were formed. Jung refused to associate myth with neurosis. He theorized that myth is a product of genetic inheritance, 'the collective unconsciousness'. As such, myth can neither be a product nor a generator of neurosis; it is an unconscious educational vehicle for the survival and growth of the individual. Jung's works succeeded in giving myth study not only respectability, when studied as a component of the metaphysical real, but also unrestrained confidence to some of his followers. This confidence raised myth to the cult level, some went so far as to boast that myth is:

the penultimate truth, of which all experience is the temporal reflection. The mythical narrative is of timeless and placeless validity, true nowhere and everywhere,<sup>8</sup>

Boasts of this type forced many to negatively over-react.<sup>9</sup>

Another school emerged--one which sought to straddle both the subjective and the objective--that of the collectors, the indexers of myth. Among its founders are such scholars as: Robert Graves, Theodor Gaster, C. Kerényi, S.N. Kramer. Their scholastic eminence served not only to add luster to literary myth research, but also to establish it as a discipline on its own.

Each of the above schools found itself at odds with one another. Not unnatural when each seeks to attract attention to its own particular merit. It was left to Joseph Campbell to bridge the existing myth chasms and to give balance to the study of myth. In Mask of the Gods and Hero with a Thousand Faces, he demonstrates that mythology cannot be the property of one single theorist. It matters little whether one is a diffusionist or a Jungian for any honest myth study must lead to a better understanding of the individual and



with it to a better comprehension of literature:

When scrutinizing in terms not of what it is but of how it functions, of how it has served mankind in the past, of how it may serve today, mythology shows itself to be as amenable as life itself to the obsessions and requirements of the individual, the race, the age.<sup>10</sup>

1.2.0 Before delving into any myth analysis it is necessary to define/understand how any given author may employ myth in a given genre. The analyst must ask himself: "Does the author 1) re-narrate a myth adapting the setting to suit a selected historical moment (e.g., Jean Anouilh:Antigone); 2) prefer to interlace a myth throughout his work (John Bowen:A World Elsewhere); 3) set the novel in the modern world but makes use of patterns and references of diverse myths throughout his work (James Joyce:Ulysses); or 4) create a novel such as Tozzi's Il podere, in which a mythological motif prefigures the narrative (in whole or in part) without conscious specific mythological references and patterns?" Once the stylistic device is determined, the analyst must further ask: "Can a corresponding myth analysis be applied?" Each of the above myth functions demand a variation of mythic analysis.

1.2.1 It must be further underlined, literature like art has no universal formula. Both, literature and art, must present a form, an image or an idea in such manner as to communicate an impact affirming man's existence,<sup>11</sup> rather than recounting a thought or feeling. To do so, according to Philip Wheelwright, both must employ myth;<sup>12</sup> it alone is the vehicle which can carry an epiphanic impact.<sup>13</sup> Presuming that Wheelwright is correct, then a literature free of the mythic cannot affirm man's existence, and as such would cease to be literature. At best, it would be a narrative statement justifying man's earthly position. To convey the above described impact, language of dissociation, "steno-language"<sup>14</sup> must be severely limited. "Steno-language" would

distcrt. It is incapable of expressing: 1) the strife between the self and society, 2) the 'id' and the 'ego', and 3) life's urge and death's. It is the language of everyday commerce, not the matrix of the emotive, the occurred idea, the contemplative and the subjective. It is foreign to a literature which searches for direct and immediate verbal expression. Therefore, one of the first priorities in determining whether literature is mythic will be an analysis of the employed language: "Is it a language which searches to employ the emotive whenever it attempts to express man's interiority and his accommodation with the empirical?"

1.2.2 Once aware of the mythic model employed and the linguistic approach, the analyst should be aware that mythic-criticism does not offer a final solution: it offers a valid and valuable alternative approach to literature. Its primary merit being its facility in espousing extra-literary knowledge which should expand the critics' approach to, and the multifarious ways of experiencing/expressing reality. Myth analysis urges the critic to look beyond the cultural mask, stressing the need for greater attention to the local: to search for the propellant cultural symbols, to discover how they function, to affirm man's universality. That is, the analyst must discover how these symbols came to be, and how they are functioning. Are the symbols still valid or have they become icons? Do they force man to be subsevient (the causation of negative reactions, thus paving the way for tomorrows tyrant: i.e., Giacomo Selmi<sup>15</sup>) or do they allow for the expansion of one's Weltanschauung (laying the foundation for a possible messiah, i.e. Remigio Selmi<sup>15</sup>)?

The analyst should not become entrapped by symbolic allurements. He must be able to lift the cultural veneer and point out how well the author handles the development of his main characters vis-a-vis the struggle within: 1) the

self, 2) himself and the family, 3) himself and society, and 4) himself and his cosmos.

Numerous critics<sup>17</sup> have claimed that myth is either inconsistent or in opposition to literature. If we accept Phillip Wheelwright and Susanne Langer's definition of myth, art and literature, that all three offered parallel directions (a search for identity without ultimate answers) and, in addition, literature is seen as a chronicler of life (usually centering on the growth of the individual) then, (as Joseph Campbell maintains) the premise that myth and literature are mutually supportive would logically follow.

One of the most often heard criticism against myth literature's analysis is that "it is a tool of escape".<sup>18</sup> Such criticism is not totally incorrect, for myth literature's analysis can become that, though it need not. That particular approach is one which derives from a 'limited functional view'. Myth's interation with life prevents it for being solely "a tool of escape". Were it such, it would not stress (as our analysis of Il podere will bear out) man's coming to terms with the unconscious. Neither culture nor gods are sufficient buttresses for man's insecurity. While myth, as defined by Campbell<sup>19</sup> and more recently by Levi-Strauss,<sup>20</sup> can be that buttress. Therefore, when myth succeeds in being a buttress, it becomes the stuff which literature can draw from. But it must be stressed, once again, that myth is not literature per se; it is the structure, at best, of 'psychological literature'.

It should be remembered, like all schools of thought, myth criticism has its own internal obstacles: it makes value judgments, and like all schools it cannot be an end product. But limitations must not be allowed to become negations for the merits of myth-criticism are significant.<sup>21</sup> Though it does not teach how to practise technical skills, it does encourage to experience the

motive behind production. It can free us from the bonds of too-dominant a realism it also reminds us of the 'cause' behind production. It places the individual's literary work into the long perspective of the developing human imagination expanding man's horizon. But it ought not be forgotten that while myth analysis exposes the scholar to more data, data per se gives no answer--the final interpretation and judgment still remains and will remain the task of each individual.

1.3.0 To demonstrate the validity of myth criticism, this thesis will begin by answering two basic question: 1) "What makes something mythic?", and 2) "What do mythic events and the narrative have to do with us?"

To find an answer to the first question, we will look at diverse critics and examine three myth study approaches: 1) the philosophic, 2) the psychological and 3) the literal.

The second question will be answered through an analysis of Federigo Tozzi's novel Il podere. We will try to demonstrate that it is by way of the narrative that myth's development and function can best be exemplified. In so doing, myth will be viewed as expression of symbols and of images basic to the human psyche. Consequently, the analysis will be directed not at the author, but rather at the literary characters (principally Remigio Selmi) the author's mythopoetic productions. We will also examine the function of myth and its relation to the narrative development hoping to discover the personal myth of the protagonist, Remigio Selmi (the personal will also be the universal, accepting that the veil of the immediate and the local hides the universality of the deeper level).

In conclusion, since no work of criticism is final and 1) myth definitions are solidly based on personal world views, 2) we only accept or develop definitions which are comprehensible and meet personal standards (to go beyond

is to confuse; it threatens one's capacity for the abstract)<sup>22</sup> and 3) we are all, to some degree or other, prisoners of temperament and acculturation (factors which determine what definition and function we give diverse terms), this thesis merely proposes to: 1) reflect the historical situation of the various critics (their works being a reflection of their particular socio-educational base), 2) see if their myth analysis can serve as valid approaches to literature, and 3) assess the merit of such analysis in the understanding of literary works.

1.4.0

Footnotes

1. Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 366-67.
2. A definition surmised by this writer.
3. John B. Vickery, The Literary Impact of the 'Golden Bough' (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 88-93.
4. Stanley Edgar Hyman, "The Ritual View of Myth and the Mythic", in Myth and Literature: Contemporary Theory and Practice, ed. John B. Vickery (Lincoln, Nebraska, University of Nebraska Press, 1971), pp. 47-58.
5. Bronislaw Malinowski, Myth in Primitive Psychology (Westport, Connecticut, Negro University Press, 1971), pp. 26-35.
6. Claude Levi-Strauss, "The Structure Study of Myth", in Myth a Symposium, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1955), pp. 81-106.
7. Norman O. Brown, Love's Body (New York, N.Y., Random House, Inc. Vinatage Books, 1966).
8. Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (New York, N.Y., The World Publishing, Co., Meridian Books, 1949), p. 382.
9. Philip Rahv, Myth and Literature, pp. 115-19.
10. Ibid., p. 382.
11. Susanne K. Langer, Feeling and Form (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1963), p. 268.
12. Philip Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality (Bloomington, Indiana, University Press, 1962), pp. 45-69.
13. Ibid., p. 137.
14. Ibid., pp. 13-17.
15. Giacomo Selmi, a secondary character of major importance in Tozzi's novel, Il podere: Federigo Tossi, Opere: i romanzi (Firenze, Vallecchi, editore, 1961).
16. Remigio Selmi, the main protagonist in Il podere.
17. John B. Vickery, ed. Myth and Literature: Contemporary Theory and Practice (Lincoln, Nebraska, University Press, 1971), pp. 109-136.

18. Philip Rahv, "The Myth and the Powerhouse", in Myth and Literature: Contemporary Theory and Practice, ed. John Vickery (Lincoln, Nebraska, University Press, 1971) pp. 115-19.
19. Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology (New York, N.Y., The Viking Press Inc., The Compass Edition, 1972), p. 472.
20. Claude Levi-Strauss, Myth and Meaning (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1978), pp. 5-14.
21. Campbell, Creative Mythology, pp. 3-8.
22. Kurt Goldstein, M.D., "Concerning the Concept of 'Primitivity'", in Culture in History: Essays in Honor of Paul Radin, ed. Stanley Diamond (New York, N.Y., Columbia University Press, 1960), pp. 117.

### 2.0.0 Myth and its critics:

As one would expect extreme views exists: one propounding that myth does not exist and the other that it does. Between these two lies the spectrum of opinions.

2.1.0 Approaching the subject from an Hegelian perspective, positivistic evolutionists refute the existence of modern myth. They are convinced that myth is the private preserve of the 'savage'<sup>1</sup>--the primitive. This supposition is based on the theory that only a preliterate consciousness which is free of binary oppositions and reflection is capable of producing myth.<sup>2</sup> In other words, only where the 'instinctive'<sup>3</sup> and unconscious reactions are given full play can myth be created. What is required is a mythopoetic setting in which the organism can relate directly to its environment. If the setting changes and this spontaneous relationship is denied, then myth ceases to be myth. This is what occurs with the advent of 'culture'. According to the positivistic evolutionists, therefore, myth and culture are in opposition: while myth is a meta-biological response, culture is a speculative and explanatory one.<sup>4</sup>

Lord Raglan's analysis of the 'savage' gives substance to this view. His studies demonstrate the incongruities between a universe where mythic thought exists and western society where mythic thought does not exist. The 'savage' remains in his state because he lives in a mythic world, a world which disallows interest in anything "which does not impinge upon his senses". Consequently he "never has a new idea even about the most familiar things".<sup>6</sup> Even if he desired to be speculative he could not be. He lives in a world which is ruled by non-reflexive symbols of immediate experience, symbols which defy the speculative and the scientific.<sup>7</sup> Ernst Cassirer demonstrates this non-reflexive nature of myth with the following points: 1. mythic experience revealed itself as an



"expression of emotion",

2. myth was man's first intellectual leap and

3. myth is closely associated with emotion.

These features lead him to conclude that myth must be a direct gesture of emotional expression.<sup>8</sup> Because such gesture are incapable of creating a self-image, he argues that the mythic mind is unable to distinguish or differentiate itself from the cosmos. Thus, entangled in a web of emotion, the mythic mind is easily imprisoned in one single object and is consequently denied the reality principle:

The ego (spends) all its energy on this single object, lives in it loses itself in it. Instead of a widening of intuitive experience, we find here its extreme limitation.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, Cassirer concludes that whenever myth's hypnotic fixation occurred it strained to renounce reflection, jeopardizing cultural achievements. He theorizes therefore that western cultural advancement could be directly attributed to its ability to conquer myth, the irrational libidinal drive in man. This conquest not only erodes but subdues<sup>10</sup> and eventually eradicates myth, allowing the establishment of an aesthetically liberated life. Society is then (theoretically) free to develop its cultural modes to their ultimate perfection.<sup>11</sup>

In response to those who may feel that the loss of myth signifies a loss of the wealth and fullness of immediate experience, Cassirer asks that they consider the case of lyric poetry. It is his contention that this cultural production best reflects man's emotional state and that it will eventually replace myth's last hold on western man:

Among all types and forms of poetry, the lyric is the one which most clearly mirrors this ideal development. For lyric poetry is not only rooted in mythic motives

as its beginning, but keeps its connection with myth even in its highest and purest products. The greatest lyric poets, for instance Holderlin or Keats, are men in whom the mythic power of insight breaks forth again in its full intensity and objectifying power. But this objectivity has discarded all material constraints. The spirit lives in the word of language and in the mythical image without falling under the control of either. What poetry expresses is neither the mythic word-picture of gods and daemons, nor the logical truth of abstract determinations and relations... This liberation is achieved not because the mind throws aside the sensuous forms of word and image, but in that it uses them both as organs of its own, and thereby recognizes them for what they really are: forms of its own self-revelation.<sup>12</sup>

As such, the revival of myth would 1) threaten to erode those cultural modes which have or which have attempted to replace it and 2) would, according to Phillip Rahv, herald a regeneration of the womb-maze associated anti-progressive forces which would invite cultural genocide.<sup>13</sup> Such assumptions rest on the premise that myth springs from the dark, the void from which man exited prior to the acquisition of human awareness.<sup>14</sup> If this is so then myth cannot be a refuge: man cannot survive on emotional intuition alone. It is for these reasons that the positivist evolutionists view the myth-cultists as sowers of defeat and human resignation, as anti-intellectuals bent on upsetting established scholarly traditions.<sup>15</sup>

In contrast to the positivists view, the myth-cultists see themselves as saviours of man: defenders of what is noble in the 'savage' and resurrectors of man's lost potentials. They resent being referred to as "escapists" incapable of handling historical reality. In their view it is the positivists who see history in terms of only 'cause' and 'effect' who are the escapists. Is not an escapist defined as one who refuses to see all facets of an issue and do not the positivists exclude what is not clearly definable and comprehensive? The cultists advance the theory that an historical consciousness based only on 'cause' and 'effect' of process can be exchanged for a broader and more

comprehensive consciousness -- one engendered by myth. It is their belief that mythic consciousness offers not only higher knowledge but ultra spiritual insight as well.<sup>16</sup> This insight comes with the experience of the timelessness of existence. In myth, one is able to feel the past, the present and the future as one.<sup>17</sup> One can reach "beyond the limits of ... empirical life".<sup>18</sup>

Both schools of thought base their myth speculation on evolutionary suppositions. The first rejects any thought of a return to the past; the other longs for it. The positivists maintain that man's genesis came to be with his first conquest of myth, that is, with the recognition of myth's negative qualities. Thus a return to the state where myth 'once again dominates his life' must be regressive. The neo-romantics hold the opposite view claiming that myth is the genesis of man. Man became estranged from myth when he refused to recognize its totality. From that moment on he ceased to live up to his full potential. By negating myth he had divorced himself from nature and had therefore lost both purpose and direction. The first act of negation not only alienated man from his cosmos but also guaranteed that his alienation would increase proportionately to his cultural development. Thus, like the positivists, the neo-romantics live in fear of the fall of man. It is their belief that we will eventually reach the Spenglerian Age of Prose where 'reason' will replace 'sensuality', where the Idealized exaltations will be reduced to 'banal dissolutions', where the 'holy' will be usurped by the vulgar.<sup>19</sup>

The neo-romantics pine for a return to the age of poetry, the 'age of gods' as Giambattista Vico called it. They seek a return to the source, to man's first historical setting where (supposedly) 'theological poets' sang a divine mythological language which was inarticulate and crude being comprised

of signs, gestures and tremendously energetic, even brutal sounds-- a direct language which was one with Nature.<sup>20</sup> Here man was free of cultural chains, enveloped in an innocence in which all was instinctively perceived and directed by myth. This allowed man's production to be spontaneous, unconsciously harmonized to his cosmos, collective in content and universal in meaning.<sup>21</sup> Man was free from the burden of reflection and binary oppositions. He was able to transcend "the here and now, the sphere of the profane and the secular"<sup>22</sup>. This was before the Dionysian Age: before 'progress' and intellectualization vanquished the noble savage and his mythopoetic vision.<sup>23</sup>

The neo-romantics condemn modern man for having exchanged "the direct, emotional and inarticulate" Weltanschauung for the objectively indifferent 'tree of knowledge'.<sup>24</sup> Nostalgically, Henry Frankfort portrays his version of man's early relationship to his surroundings:

The world appears to primitive man neither inanimate nor empty but redundant with life; and life has individuality, in man and beast and plant, and in every phenomenon which confronts man .... Any phenomenon may at any time face him, not "It", but "Thou". In this confrontation, 'Thou' reveals its individuality, its qualities, its will. 'Thou' is not contemplated with intellectual detachment; it is experienced as life confronting life, involving every faculty of man in a reciprocal relationship. Thoughts, no less than acts and feelings, are subordinated to this experience.<sup>25</sup>

The neo-romantic approach is essentially hypnotic. This can best be exemplified by the myth ritualists. The neo-romantic ritualists hold that myth's primary function is to impinge upon the senses.<sup>26</sup> Thus, myth should not be analyzed but experienced: reflexion and division are foreign to it.<sup>27</sup> The vehicle of this experience is recital. Recital activates the motor response of ritual, a response which creates a feeling of oneness, a communion with nature. Through-ritual, the importance of the word (the myth or part of the myth) is revealed and becomes all important. The word not only designates

the object, it is the object--Gestalt. The ritual of recital thus allows one to experience the word as it was revealed to pre-historical man. In the beginning the word image "had to be true and powerful, because it was not a thought-out word, but an experienced one: the being, Sein, of the thing themselves".<sup>28</sup> Therefore recital enables one to discover the origin and thus the power of the word; the word reveals its magic, the 'divine truth'.<sup>29</sup> In this manner, recital/ritual, myth and truth are all revealed as one. The divine proximity reveals itself in ritual as act and posture and in myth as the true word. It is thus presumed that ritual lifts man to the divine and the divine makes itself evident through myth.

2.2.1 In summary, the neo-romantics see 'cause' and 'effect' in terms of event rather than process. In their search for primordial truth (primordial truth defined as man's emergence from the unconscious to the conscious)<sup>30</sup> they take what appears to be the most direct and effective path to the revelation of the 'primordial act'. They presume that the 'primordial act' must have been instinctual; it must have preceded the word. In its evocation of the revealed, the word, it gave formulation to the conscious or the quasi-conscious. Thus, many turn to ritual as the instrument of revelation. But by placing their faith in myth-ritual's revelatory hypnotic powers they lend themselves to attack. They are especially vulnerable because their insights are neither measurable nor totally communicable.

Quite naturally, the anti-myth critics view the myth-cultists' premises as myopic. In their opinion the neo-romantics are victims of the lure of false promises and fail to recognize the pitfalls of myth:

1. that a mythic time is illusory and wishfulfilling and
2. that there is no escape from historical time.

Those who search for escape do it out of fear, fear of the "hazards of Free-

dom".<sup>31</sup> These cultists, so positivists maintain, would be better off if instead of searching for the "magical (source) of myth", they would look to the future and note that historical necessity makes it imperative that nature reconcile itself with culture;<sup>32</sup> dissociation from culture can only portend the fall of man.

The positivists hold that the cultists must be made to see that myth is the product of a certain kind of thinking, one which was conceived by environmental conditions, threatened, and then replaced by higher symbolic creations. They define myth as falsehood: the private preserve of 'those who do not know better' (the primitive or savage) and the illusion of the primitivists. It is illusion because myth ceases to be revelatory as soon as culture prevails. In other words, as soon as man gained sufficient freedom from life's hardships to have time for reflection it should have become evident that myth was no more than a series of utterances and evocations of emotion. In short, myth ceases to be as soon as one becomes aware of its limitations. Those who seek to give it added significance only perpetuate a "falsehood".<sup>33</sup> That is, by attempting to make myth more than it is, the cultists give it a false importance.

With the advent of culture therefore the positivists maintain that myth ceases to function as anything more than a linguistic or literary artifact. It is either without form and therefore non-existent or existent (e.g. E. Cassirer) but with a utilitarian function (e.g., George Sorrel). It would therefore appear that the positivists' position depends on the stressing of one particular aspect of myth over all others. As such it seems to be a 'limited point of view'.

2.3.0 The divergent views on the existence or non-existence of myth are significant because they reflect a wide range of current literary thought concerning the applicability of myth and myth criticism to literature. Accepting

the premise that modern myth does not exist acknowledges the principle of genetic or cultural evolvement which suggests that myth has ceased to function or to exist because modern man has outgrown it. As such it dismisses a priori the notion that myth is literature or that myth has a central position behind modern literary productions. Even though this premise was not universal it has nevertheless left its imprint. It is to this imprint that we must now turn to.

As we have already observed, myth (either that of the primitive or of western man) is universally accepted either as a finite structure or as a search for expression. The positivists see myth as a crude and primitive search for expression, therefore implying that myth 1) is a prison of impressions, 2) negates experience, 3) refutes 'cause' and 'effect', 4) avoids confrontation and 5) dismisses logic.<sup>34</sup> In other words, according to Cassirer, it stands against all of what art (literature) struggles to be,<sup>35</sup> striving to supplant cultural achievements. Naturally this implies that it cannot be literature.

These exponents point out, if confusion existed between myth and literature it was due to the genesis and the parallel development of myth and language. Mythic search for expression gave rise to 'proto-poetic' activity<sup>36</sup> which in turn lent itself to literature. But to equate the three (myth, language and proto-poesis) would be genetic fallacy. Sharing and borrowing does not imply absorption. Literature differs from myth not only because it is governed by the need for expression but also because it aims at a 'sympathetic' existence with nature. Literature attempts to detach itself from its subject, since it requires invention, judgment, trial, rejection and contemplation. Literature always creates an 'illusion' of experience by calling to play memory mixed with extraneous elements (invention), assumptions and speculations. A

memory which organizes, selects, simplifies, the subjective and employs language to construct a heterocosm conscious of its public. Myth on the other hand is defined as being impervious to memory, structure and contemplation.

The 'proto-poetic' myth positivists conclude that what western society is left with is not myth but fossils of myth; indicating that if there were to be a school of myth criticism, it would be found in the study of myth residua--the study of the transmigration of symbols.

Therefore, if myth is not an expression but a narrative structure of traditional characters developed to meet the cultural needs of primitive times and places, then culture would probably be unilinear. The natural cultural advancement would direct away from myth, and the only place in which we would find it in written literature, would be in archeological resting place or oral literature of primitive peoples. Either way it must be seen as being beyond the reach of modern man. Therefore myth criticism would have to be restricted to literature of other cultures--past or present. On the other hand if these critics insist on resurrecting narrative myth or applying myth analysis to non-mythic literature (dealing with modern western literature) they do so because their interests must be that of inseminating and perpetuating their particular world views.

Western cultural advancement has isolated western man from myth and denied him the possibility of recreating it. According to Frank Kermode, myth lies beyond the dissolving reach of Western mind.<sup>37</sup> Since myth cannot re-capture, those who think they are 'creating' myth are actually creating externally conditioned approximations of it: their myth is a lie. Consequently any narrative myth or pseudomyth becomes fiction. Their search for past resurrections marks them as reactionaries, undesirables who seek to impose archaic modes which are



totally out of touch with empirical conditions.

The positivists see 'the reactionary's myth productions' as literature of propaganda: formula created and appealing to the irrational. In other words, it contains some or all of the following: 1) relies in stirring emotional responses, 2) is based on predetermined archetypal plots and 3) uses flowery stylistic devices as 'fashionable gimmick'. Raphael Patai writes:

... myth is a traditional character... Over and beyond the general outline, .... myth exhibit a great elaboration of detail, containing many little intricacies ... characterized by a delicate pattern, and containing many other minute features for which no functional explanation can be found. These features ... are developed ... in order to arouse and hold the attention of the listeners and thereby increase their (myths) likelihood of survival ... those myths (which) are more likely to endure (are those) which can better attract their audiences ... myths share with decorative patterns, with style, and certain other features of culture and intrinsic tendency to elaborate.<sup>38</sup>

What mythic literature seems to lack is any apparent moral function.<sup>39</sup> That is, it is a literature of irreducible mental properties which bear no apparent relation to the empirical world, the outside world is devoided of meaning.

It should be added, if literature of 'pseudo-myths' is to be accepted as literature of false merit, literary critics would hesitate before making it their centre of attention, lest it should damage their academic credentials. As such it would naturally become literature of marginal interest.

2.3.1 For the neo-romantics myth is identified with literature. Its primary function is to inform the heart, man's emotions and secondly, the intellect. Myth literature of major importance is seen as one of 'quest' myth literature<sup>40</sup> employing whenever possible, though not always a necessary ingredient, a language which stirs our deepest and meaningful senses, namely 'poetic', 'tensive' and 'depth' language.<sup>41</sup>

For this school myth serves as a literary model. It indicates the type of

symbolic language the poet should cultivate in order to capture the magic of the word and transmit it to his readers. To achieve this, some suggest that a break from the discursive and mnemonic structures must first be obtained; from the discursive because it employs 'steno-language'--this language is uneconomical, it employs too much time between the perceived and the explained, proving itself inadequate for direct emotional communication--and from the mnemonic because all memory is filtered experience and as such no longer true. Others maintain that the same end can be attained through the use of narrative psychological development.

Norman O. Brown, in Love's Body<sup>42</sup> best exemplifies the first group. It is his contention that the writer should break away from 'literalism' and the 'fetishism of documentation' and develop a new language which can break through the falsifying, stultifying and repressive universe of 'ordinary and academic discourse'. He attempts to recapture the cognitive powers of the imagination by using symbols and by breaking the normal flux of language, and developing a language of self-sufficient fragments, short paragraphs and aphorisms whose inner connection, the flow of the argument is of a musical rather than a conceptual order. This is achieved by introducing 'variation on theme' and progressing through repetition and dissonance. These are his elements of structural harmony and development and his means of capturing 'mythic consciousness'.

Norman O. Brown's approach is the result of believing that myths are not figures of speech but of thought. They represent symbolic universal truths<sup>43</sup> which depend on evoked epiphanies.<sup>44</sup> Therefore to express those emotions<sup>45</sup> and to communicate to share them with others, is of ultimate importance. Unlike the linear language of logic, 'tensive language' does not dull the senses between experiences.

However, this type of language has its limitations. It does not really

lend itself to the novel--to the language of plain sense and exact denotation--but is better suited for poetry. Moreover, with its emphasis on extracting a series of heightened moments, it demands the stirring of brief inconclusive hints of ultimate paradoxes. In order to constantly stimulate man's brain receptors it makes extensive demands on its writers. It demands that the language keep abreast of or precede cultural productions. It cannot afford the luxury of semantic-symbolic repetition but must constantly guard itself against becoming repetitious, against concretizing its own linguistic production. One might say it hints at intellectual snobbery. In order for it to break from 'literalism' and 'documentation' it must pretend to know, or at least be aware of, the total 'ordinary and academic discourses'. Moreover, it is intellectually dishonest and dangerous; dishonest because it infers that only those who are capable of creating and understanding its language will also hold claim over the emotions, hearts of men. Thus while it propounds to span the chasm of human alienation, it lays the foundation for a language of domination and manipulation indirectly suggesting that the cure can be more dangerous than the sickness.

The other neo-romantic approach, that employing narrative psychological development, less concerned with linguistic architecture, concentrates on psychological structures. These theorists see mimesis of experience as literary ornamentation and point out that the main literary trust is the study of the mind. In fact, if mimesis enters at all it succeeds in displacing the artist's true meaning. As such, literary characters and events are viewed as inarticulate responses to certain archetypal situations. Thus, the main protagonist no longer acts for himself but responds in manner parallel to a corresponding classical mythological hero. This formal literary approach focuses on the unconscious: as a result, it has a tendency not only to overlook individual's

idiosyncrasies, but also, artistic and verbal creation. Its main appeal is in opening a storehouse of psychological probabilities and in demonstrating how the life of any individual corresponds to that of some mythological hero. However, the appeal of this approach quickly diminishes if one is lured to it by its claim that it is based on scientific foundations. Most of its depth-psychological hypothesis not only remain unproven but also are held in disrepute.<sup>46</sup>

2.4.0 If George Lukacs was correct in stating that 1) historical periodicity exists only in men's minds and 2) all genres of expression are one<sup>47</sup>, then it would be correct to deduce that the emotive, regardless of setting or form, will remain constant. The importance lies not in the vehicle of expression as in the expression itself. Thus, regardless of era, man's message has been and will continue to be the same. If so, in myth analysis, not only is it important to look at all of myth's components and give each one its due value, but also it is imperative to always view the myth in relation to man. Therefore we now turn to some anthropological approaches to myth.

The evolutionary approach neither prove nor disprove its existence. In addition such an approach is strewn with the pitfalls of suppositions and pre-established premises.

The positivistic evolutionist approach presupposes that the mythopoetic mind is mentally and culturally deficient. Most contemporary scholars would refute such a premise maintaining that primordial man, as well as the 'savage' is capable of dialectical thought, for example, when confronted by practical situations the primitive reasons much as we would, were we to seek shelter, food, or escape.<sup>48</sup> It is claimed that he is hesitant to implement a logic of binary oppositions<sup>49</sup> because the 'pre-logical' mode of conception<sup>50</sup> better

satisfies his own structured abstract needs.<sup>51</sup> Unlike dialectical man who feels in control because he measures, therefore he understands, the primitive feels secure only when he has established a reciprocal relationship with his surroundings. Hence, he avoids the overuse of the dialectical mode earning the label of 'savage' and mentally inferior.

Primitive man's precarious dependence upon nature demands that he avoid the division which threatens the harmony of interaction with his cosmos. This mythic mode provides him with that necessary security he needs to carry on with his everyday tasks. It does this 1) by not recognizing fixed divisions, 2) by establishing a primitive element of participation and sympathy of kinship between society, nature and nature-otherness, and 3) by allowing objects and phenomena to be at once themselves and not themselves. The fulfillment of these needs establishes an extra-sensory link between the percipient and the perceived, allowing him to satiate man's eternal quest: the ascension to Platonic heights and the descension to Freudian depths. If the primitive preferred to rely on the mythic, it was not because he lacked curiosity, inventiveness or genetic completeness, but rather because he had a need for security.<sup>52</sup>

It was this need for security which made their myths appear contradictory. Whenever primitive man was confronted by nature his main concern was not knowledge or the 'how', but absorption or the 'who'.<sup>53</sup> He did not wish to withdraw from the presence of phenomena, and felt more comfortable with a multiplicity of explanations. His mind, not unlike ours, only approaches the description of felt intuitions. Thus, any one single explanation would be inconsistent with: 1) his life-style, 2) the constant changing emotional conditions and 3) the ever changing patterns of nature. A logic of binary oppositions would impede his integration with his surroundings. Since he

depends more directly on nature than culture, there can be no neutral objects, no 'its'. All phenomena have to have the "unpredictable character of an individual, a presence only insofar as it reveals itself."<sup>54</sup> Therefore, it emerges that primitive man's cosmos perspective must differ from that of Western Man because he finds a communal relationship, a reciprocal response from his surroundings.

Much of what has been written concerning the primitive is in need of revision. Until recently numerous scholars, largely victims of Cartesian logic, were convinced of the objectivity of their own method, unaware that we are all victims of our own cultural constructs. In so doing they fashioned 'a primitive' molded to suit their own intellectual needs. Some saw him as the child of modern man, others as a base and brutal primitive, others as the noble savage. The taint of that association coloured their cultural interpretations and with it the definition of myth.<sup>55</sup>

2.4.1 One anthropologist who has contributed to our understanding of the primitive was Paul Radin. His studies led him to speculate that there are two types of men, each engendering two distinct modes of thought. It is these two types, the thinker and the man of action, which determine the meaning as well as the function of myth. Therefore, if one is to make a study of myth, he must approach the subject from an analysis of the myth in relationship to the subject who uses and/or believes in it.

The majority (men of action) find security in socialized myths.<sup>56</sup> They do so because they are desirous of facile security: to avoid responsibility of their own internal awareness. Hurried by the desire to be needed to belong, they readily adhere to myth as dogma.<sup>57</sup> As a result, to an outsider, like Malinowsky, their view of myth appears false and coercive. This in turn led to equating myth with the false, the untruth--fiction, a verbal

structure which satiates felt internal requirements, as opposed to 'true fiction'.<sup>58</sup> Historically, this 'objective' viewpoint has impeded myth study merely by strengthening the negative elements Christianity placed on myth.

The thinker instead is the creator and the regenerator of myth. He cannot endure the socializing restrictions which the masses impose upon him. In their haste to get on with the business of the world, the masses concretize myth. In response to group tyranny, the thinker becomes mythopoetically active. He occupies himself in supplying the masses with sufficient doses of the abstract to make life meaningful, and less brutal. Thus assured, the masses will be able to devote their full concentration to their everyday business.<sup>59</sup> The thinker, therefore, must re-animate the old myths making them once again relevant and communicative, eternal and universal.

In his studies of the primitive and contemporary man, Radin found that these two types are universal. Therefore, he concluded that both literary and non-literary man must have always responded to myth in a similar manner: one seeking to structure the world in a meaningful way, the other to respond to that structure in accordance with the meaning conveyed.

If Radin's conjectures are held to be true, then man's mythopoetic faculty is a living reality. Hence, it can be safely deduced that both the neo-romantics and the positivistic myth critics, by treating myth as a product of the primitive and/or primordial environment, abuse myth. Abuse because they lump all myth believers into one group and classify all myths which do not conform to their premises as being either an aberration or an incomplete analysis of either the non-abstract such as function or local differentiation,<sup>60</sup> and/or of the abstract such as the interpretation of symbols and structures. Of the two, abstract analysis is the most dangerous as

its seductive powers can easily entrap and lead one's imagination "to run wild like vegetation in a tropical forest".<sup>61</sup> This was in fact the situation that produced the romantics and the anti-romantic myth critics.

2.5.0 Having established that myth might exist and function at different levels depending on its recipient the next question which arises is the one of value. Opinion concerning myth's value are extremely varied. Therefore, we will examine some of the spokesmen whose field of study is literature and attempt to cover as much of the existing range of criticism as possible. These critics can be divided into two main groups: 1) the myth-skeptics and 2) the myth exponents.

2.5.1. The myth-skeptics can be roughly described as those who maintain that myth or myth criticism is not a theory of ultimate significance; being at best "a method of study in terms of specific significance, it can cohabit happily with a great many other approaches".<sup>62</sup>

Like all critics their views are determined by approach and Weltanschauung. Rene Wellek, applying deduction by association, dismisses myth's importance to the arts. He maintains that myth criticism is of marginal interest, since it can only deal with epigoni writers.<sup>63</sup> Of similar opinion is John J. White who claims that myth writers are epigonal because myth limits scope constantly forcing them into thematic repetition. This not only makes for monotony, but also imbues their works with a sense of futility. Gilbert Highet criticises not myth but the writers. He maintains that sterile imaginations turn these writers to search for structure and theme in myth.<sup>64</sup> In agreement, Margaret Dalziel alleges that these writers make reference to past myths only in hope of enobling works of dubious value.<sup>65</sup>

The aforementioned critics' analysis led to predetermined negative deductions. Assuming that myth is limited to people of inferior potential then



it cannot add any new dimensions to our life. In addition, assuming as they do that myth was created to meet the needs of neophyte cultures, then attempted resurrection in western culture (society) is doomed to failure since it would be out of tune with historical needs. This approach also implies that myth, an archaic form, affirms the fact that modern man's needs differ from those of mythic man.

Graham Hough attacks not the writers but the literary critics for their intemperance, enthusiasm, and romantic tendencies. He contends that myth has been assigned a central position only because it is assumed to be literature's precursor. In so doing the myth exponents not only commit or are victims of genetic fallacy but are forced to pay too much reverence to literature's genesis and not enough to structure, form and function. It is his opinion that a mythic roots fixation confuses and incapacitates judgment interfering with their ability to differentiate between myth and literature. He claims they are incapable of seeing myth in non-literal terms and of admitting that "there are fields where myth has nothing to say", i.e., literature.<sup>66</sup>

Hough's assumptions are restricted by the limitations placed on function. To him, myth is a transmitter of impulses, a vehicle for transporting symbols, thus, at best, it can be allegory or a metaphor, a storehouse of archetypal images, never narrative.

Less concerned with style, pragmatic Harry Levin, turns the issue around. He cares not for the damage these exponents cause in literary studies but instead asks what benefit can we extract from their flights of fantasy. He believes that myth employers become the portenders of reality. Unable to cope with the existing insecurities and ambiguities of life, they instinctively find shelter in archetypal images.<sup>67</sup> When these fail, as he presumes they

must, myth writers turn to the study of realism. In so doing they demonstrate how the myth-quest directs attention to the development of the modern novel.<sup>68</sup>

All of the above mentioned theorists are victim/products of archaic/over-simplification of definition--accepting myth as commonly defined by the dictionary. The acceptance of myth according to any given definition limits one's awareness of the subject; an act which is often necessary if one is to get on with other matters of importance. An expanded awareness can be threatening; it can undermine established precepts.

For Harry Levin a more comprehensive definition would have required a re-examination of his working definition of 'realism' in fiction. Of importance to him is not the definition of myth but of realism. Therefore he accepts one which would give support to his own academic needs. His definition of realistic fiction is one which undermines preconceptions in its search for objective representative. Thus myth, as icon and liturgy (banal literature) serves as a natural starting point for his theory on the development of realism in literature. Consequently it serves him best to see myth as a structure and to employ it as such.

Like all 'skeptics' his position at first glance appears to be one with the positivists, but a closer view will demonstrate the difference. The positivists stress myth to be predominantly an emotive need for expression. The 'skeptics', instead, prefer to view myth as form and structure.

Haskel Block also recognizes some potential in myth criticism; he presumes that the major weakness of the system lies not with the theory but with the practice. He does not criticize the user's ability or competence or limits myth's definition, but their lack of temperance. He feels that untempered enthusiasm threatens the precariousness of a system already plagued with

limitations. They thus undermine their own attempt to develop a myth-criticism school. He is aware that as a new school of thought it must be given time to grow, to mature into a well organized discipline. In his opinion most of its exponents are in a state of intuition incapable of total coherent expression. He therefore feels that they must be given more time to draw from the diverse disciplines which contribute to the understanding of myth.<sup>70</sup>

Despite his apparent attempted objectivity, Block also limits himself. In stating that myth's principal value is anthropological he minimizes its literary role.<sup>71</sup>

All that can be generalized about the above myth-skeptics is they believe that myth is an archaic form of conceptualization, and thus is of limited literary value.

2.5.2 The myth exponents' response to these skeptics is that they are all victims of tunnel vision and as such are unable to experience its totality. In order to analyze the qualities which make myth an essential ingredient of literature we must turn to four myth exponents: 1) Philip Wheelwright, 2) Richard Chase, 3) Northrop Frye and 4) Joseph Campbell.

According to Philip Wheelwright, myth can be and is literature. Myth is not (as Cassirer would have it) an approximation of the 'production', but 'instant production'. Since myth is preceded by feeling and thought it must be an 'act of creating'. That mythic feeling and thought which Cassirer confused with myth which preceeds the 'act of creating', Wheelwright terms a 'mythoid'. A 'mythoidal situation' occurs whenever a sense of presence or idea of the numinous is experienced. This sense of presence urges the beholder to narrate and personify. In so doing myth 'becomes', it is created. This distinguishes myth from 'mythoid' which 'is' always there--thought and feeling are not

creations but ever present elements in man.

In response to the claim that myth is non-dialectic, Wheelwright states that the created gulf between the 'is' and the 'becoming' gives birth to a separation of spirits/daemons, giving myth its dialectical qualities. Because myth is the 'act of creating', it is imbued with the numinous and is also dialectical. As such it must be literature. For Wheelwright, it is literature which seeks to express the inner reality. Its importance lies therefore not in the story but in the "interplay of human thought, feeling, imagination and language".<sup>72</sup>

While Wheelwright examined myth's origins Richard Chase examines its similarities with literature. He studies narrative myth and concludes it is literature, because it has: 1) structure, 2) artistic qualities, 3) didactic impulses, 4) dialectical elements and 5) because it emphasises the community of experience.<sup>73</sup>

Chase finds that myth has two functions: to act as a Promethean agent mediating between man's inner and outer self, and to direct man towards a common goal. He thinks that myth teaches man: 1) to use his energies against the tyranny of oppression, 2) to share the numinous, and 3) to give life a significance which is never stated but which is transmitted through the power of its message--its words, its symbols and its structure.

In analysing both myth and literature Chase observed that while narrative myth always possessed literary merit only good literature possesses all the qualities of myth. By his definition, myth is always an aesthetic experience. Literature, on the other hand, need not always be.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, if any literary work was imbued by myth (aesthetic experience) then it must be superior to that which is not.

To arrive at this, Chase is forced to distinguish art from myth. Myth cannot be art because it is the "indispensable substructure" of art: art is form and structure, myth is the transmitted experience. According to Chase, in order for art to succeed it must be imbued with a sense of the mythic, otherwise it would be form without content. If art is mythically imbued, with content, it then recaptures "a certain magical quality, a richness of image, a deeper sense of primeval forces, a larger order of aesthetic experience".<sup>75</sup> He, therefore, surmises that any literature which fails to solicit our deepest experiences, needs and aspirations must be non-artistic literature. Since myth is the substance of art, non-artistic literature is non-mythic. It also follows that any literary study whose quest is the mythic would also serve as an artistic sensor--a validator of literature--a vehicle for either improving artistic production or heightening that experience.<sup>76</sup>

It should be further added that Chase dismissed a priori the artistic value of literature which professed to be mythic solely because it employs mythological structure and/or references. Such literature he termed as 'paramyth', He writes:

A paramyth differs from a myth because it is no longer closely involved in the aesthetic emotions, it can no longer furnish that peculiar mythic complication of brilliant excitement, of the terrific play of forces natural and human, of the upshot of the play, of reassurance, of reconciliation. A concept, an allegory, or symbol made for the moment distinguishable but not disinherited from its matrix but suffused once again with the literary--mythic psychological--only these may be justifiably called "mythical ideas".<sup>77</sup>

Less partisan than Chase, Northrop Frye claims that myth must be a pre-literal system which gives structure and meaning to all literary works. If it has not been readily recognized as a literary agent, it has been due to

Freudian 'displacement'. In short, mimesis of experience which satisfies the 'pleasure principle' has succeeded in disguising, displacing the reality principle', concealing the mythic patterns. As a result, bogged by the mimetic mantle, critics have been unable to recognize myth in literature forcing them to deviate from literature's primary concern--the search for inward meaning.<sup>75</sup> This meaning is revealed when attention is focused on myth.

Not only must myth be viewed as the key to man's inward direction but it must also be accepted as a dialectical verbal structure which seeks to harmonize the unconscious with mimesis of experience. It is dialectical because it succeeds in fusing man's non-realistic (pre-logical, pre-human, pre-literal) elements through his dream consciousness. To harmonize external reality with the internal the 'pre-' patterns constantly surface demonstrating a desire to be one with nature.

The best evidence for this is to be found in an analysis of man's dreams. In dreams myth intercedes to mediate between outer and inner reality, to give balance to man.<sup>79</sup> In so doing the conscious and the pre-conscious are harmonized. Myth and literature function in the same manner. Literature is not reality, it can only approach reality. It is dictated by myth, archetypal structure, and embellished by mimesis of experience. It is a 'heterocosm' of its own. In analysing the patterns of literature the critic will discover the unconscious drive of the author.

Joseph Campbell moving through the application of psychological deduction sees the affirmation of man. He assumes that by itself the rational does not sustain man. In order to supplement the rational man must depend on the intuitive, be it biological, psychological or sociological.

Man's mythic vision is one where the above three elements (biological,

psychological, sociological) are constantly kept in harmony. Whenever one achieves dominance over the others, the mythic vision is threatened. Example: 1) if the ever present intuitive sociological drive were allowed to dominate individuality would be lost, 2) if the biological were to act this way personal growth would be limited to motor-activities, and 3) if the psychological were to hold sway interiority would become all important and mimesis of experience would be viewed as a threat. The above, in one form or another, are ever present from the moment of inception to that of death. This fact led Campbell to suggest that the mythic element suffuses all of life's endeavors. As they accompany man, they grow and surface whenever man's sense of balance is threatened. By demonstrating that 'birth' has its own agony, by offering a series of growth epiphanies they prepare the individual for the ultimate epiphany. Campbell surmises that man must therefore be the product of mythic imprinting. Thus if man were to be denied myth or a part of its totality there would be an arresting of both human and cultural growth (cultural because myth's constant search for expression finds its outlet in its productions).

Campbell claims that any any given period of his life, man is limited; he cannot be all at once. He is either a child or an adult, a servant or a baron, a male or a female and so forth. He can only begin to feel totality once he becomes part of society. There, regardless of how unimpressive his role, he feels himself to be an organic and imperishable living unit. Only once he has experienced this baptism of participation is he in a position to question society and his role in it. Here begins the quest for the 'true individual'.

What propells and sustains man through his passage of life--infancy, childhood, adolescence, maturity and old age--is mythic imprinting, images of

the self, the past, the other and the future. These image forces him to act, to participate, to defend, to grow in a given manner by bringing these implanted, experienced images together into the 'mythogenic zone', the individual's heart.<sup>80</sup> Without myth's propellant nature and its ability to unite, filter and harmonize, man would become a premature victim of nature--nature finds its nourishment in death in order that it may serve, nourish the living. If man is given time to attain his ultimate goal, the discovery of the self and its relation to the cosmos, then as an act of self-defence he must constantly seek to reaffirm myth's presence. And he does. He has learned to adapt it to the ever changing geo-cultural and historical conditions. During these adaptations its name and vehicle of transmission may change but never its ultimate function or total structure.

In order to demonstrate the above, Campbell calls our attention to the most efficacious of myth's transmitters--the arts. He points out that, regardless of age, myth is one with art. The most efficacious myths are those which employ art best. The relationship between the two is one of reciprocity and regardless of age or mode the two, art and myth, are thematically constant.<sup>81</sup>

One suspects that due to the flux theory of values, there can be no permanent workable definition of art. Therefore the best possible definition comes not from what art is, but from what it ought to be. It ought to be a conscious symbol free from manipulation, integrative, reaching beyond linguistic and structural limitations, transposing the mind in experience past ego-ethnic-geographic barriers leading either slowly or in leaps to the ultimate euphanic moment. The end goal becomes one with myth--the discovery of the self and its relationship with the cosmos. What primarily distinguishes the two is that one is tangible and the other is not.



What unites these four critics is their belief that myth is a coherent part of literature; it is a factor of both daily influence and abstract significance<sup>82</sup>. In addition they all adhere to at least one or more of six general principles:

1. The mythopoetic faculty is not only inherent in the thinking process but it also answers a basic human need.<sup>83</sup>
2. Myth forms an historical and psychological matrix out of which literature emerges. Its archetypes give literature structure, linguistic order and style.<sup>84</sup>
3. Myth stimulates the artist's creative expression because in order to communicate it effectively, he must constantly seek new ways to express it. A reliance upon past expressions must be avoided because it can endanger the impact of a new production--overly used language leads to the stultification of communication.<sup>85</sup>
4. Myth provides a framework of references for the literary critic. That is, the study of myth is the subject of a diversity of disciplines: 1) history and anthropology (Frazer: myth is a primitive attempt to explain the world of nature); 2) literature and language (Muller: myth is a prehistoric poetical fantasy misunderstood by proceeding ages); 3) sociology (Durkheim: myth is an allegorical repository for sociological instruction); 4) psychology (Jung: myth is a group dream of archetypal urges of man's psyche);

- 5) philosophy (Coomaraswamy: myth is man's traditional vehicle for his profoundest metaphysical insights); 6) theology (Hans Kung: myth is God's revelation to his children); and so forth. Myth study therefore refutes academic insularity: the interdisciplinary connections encourage a broadening of one's concept of life.
5. Myth's ability to move us profoundly is due to its mythic quality, its possession of mana, the numinous, a unity of feeling with the cosmos.<sup>86</sup>
  6. In literature myth is neither a structure prop nor an embellishment but rather a reflection of man's totality.<sup>87</sup>

All of these critics agree that the key to the understanding of literature is the understanding of man. Thus they turn to mythic analysis in order to search for the archetypal.

According to the above critics any of these six principles validates the premises that myth is literature (or is at least a major coherent part of literature). They therefore maintain that myth criticism is an essential element in any literary analysis. They do not feel that myth criticism invalidates any of the other literary approaches. They take the position, if myth or the mythopoetic vision were denied: 1) man's poetic vision would suffer (Philip Wheelwright);<sup>88</sup> 2) man would be enslaved to the scientific, the rational, the mechanical (Richard Chase);<sup>89</sup> 3) not only would it demonstrate man's arrogance and deny his past, but also negate man's total potential, epiphanic vision (Northrop Frye);<sup>90</sup> and 4) man as we know him would not exist (Joseph Campbell).<sup>91</sup> In summary without myth criticism literature's full potential could not be exploited.

By now it should be obvious that for myth exponents myth is more than an historical pause in man's intellectual ascent: it is a universal expression of human consciousness. Rather than the transient vocabulary of the 'savage', they see it as the internal language of man.<sup>92</sup> That is, myth is a language of imprinted image whose mode of expression is determined by the available geo-cultural tools. Its structure is not accidental or unrelated but invariable being conditioned by man's total make-up. If we are able to remove its cultural veneer, or what Campbell calls the Mask and Frye 'displacement', the essence of man is revealed. Thus revelation of the archetype is therefore not an exercise of bravura but literature's primary function.

All of these critics are united in maintaining that if we are to gain a better and fuller understanding of man we must probe into myth's structuring forces: 1) unconsciousness (pre-consciousness), 2) microcosm, and 3) cosmic interdependence.

2.6.0 Wallace C. Douglas accepts neither the myth skeptics nor the myth exponents position. He maintains that myth and associated terms merely give expression to a particular Weltanschauung. The culture issue is fundamentally 'polemical'. The existence, function and definition of myth is not an issue of academic merit but one of 'moral attitude'. On one side there are the 'cultists' who desire to attain a magical spiritual world, and on the other side are the 'censors' who see the necessity of existing in a factual world. Confident in their belief that both of their feet are solidly planted in a factual world the 'censors' scorn the 'cultists'; the 'cultists' just as confident in their view, maintain that man is more than the sum of external reality. Neither one validates or invalidates myth's place in literature, they merely give value to two diverse dialectical positions.<sup>93</sup>

This cursory analysis of myth and its accompanying controversy has shown that the diverse definitions of myth serve not only to support one's theories but also to validate one's Weltanschauung. That is, myth definition appears to be used primarily as a tool to give support to diverse intellectual positions. Therefore any myth analysis is a study of man's cosmic view.

2.7.0

Footnotes

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### 3.0.0 Towards a definition of myth:

It is presumed that societies which are aware of myth are those where the tender-hearted man holds more sway than his counterpart, the concrete thinker.<sup>1</sup> What divides the two is cosmic perspective: should man be ultimately guided by his mind or heart? Those who praise man's mental prowess eventually seek dominion over nature while the other seek accommodation and an understanding of it. Those who seek nature's suzerainty do so by: 1) applauding their own superiority, 2) dissociating themselves from nature's other--the quest for Gaia<sup>2</sup>, 3) correlating the subjective with the irrational, and 4) refuting the non-socializing function of myth. In so doing they (seek and) are forced to employ myth as a tool of manipulation, overlooking and undervaluing myth's non-socializing functions. To do otherwise, to accept biosyntonic explanations, not only would interfere with the concrete thinker's concept of getting on the world's business, but also would erode their base of power.

3.1.0 Despite existing tensions the two types of men find accommodation.

A workable concord has been found in culture, culture becomes the product of dialectical physical realities accommodating themselves to the worlds of myth and dreams.<sup>3</sup>

Culture meets the needs of all from the shallowest who identifies with the local scenery, to the thinker who searches with its aid the 'foreground to the void'.<sup>4</sup> Between these two extremes are found the stages of the way, paths which lead from the most superficial to the deepest of images. In short, cultural analysis point to myth's structuring forces. Such probing directs, from the study of the ethnic to that of the elementary idea (archetype), to probe into myth's psychological structuring forces: 1) polarity (male-female), 2) passage from infancy to old age, 3) tenderness and bruta-

lity, and 4) dialogue with the universe and self.

3.2.0 As myth moves the individual from one extreme to the other it is the task of culture to accommodate man to these paradoxes--to find a level where he can deal simultaneously with his internal and external reality. As such myth can neither be a tool of imprisonment, nor one of liberation. As a product which responds to internal primary needs (catharsis) of self-expression,<sup>5</sup> it can be an agent of liberation. If, on the other hand, it is a product engendered by secondary sign stimuli (cultural productions) which respond to subordinate needs such as power, wealth, and status, then it becomes an agent of imprisonment. When man allows non-primary sign stimuli to dominate, he performs a ritual of self-debasement, relegating personal freedom to a world of wish-fulfillment and dreams.<sup>6</sup> To rediscover that freedom he must analyze primary needs and their cultural accommodation: he must turn to the genesis of mythic imprints and their function.

If we agree that the mind seeks to communicate through universal symbols and images and to reveal the immeasurable felt reality, then to understand these symbols and images we must pass through the gates of upadhi--the gates of unconscious deception. Behind these gates lies mythology--the masked (face of) reality. We must look beyond culture for culture acts as a mantle of pleasure insulating us against life's realities. By limiting our concept of reality, culture has succeeded in creating a chasm of dark unknown which are only now and again revealed to us in our dreams.<sup>7</sup> To bridge that chasm and better know the meaning of reality, to discover if illumination, rapture, resurrection lie behind the darkness of the grave, we must turn to myth.<sup>8</sup>

Despite its numerous similarities when responding to man's instinctual needs, such as the need for: 1) abstraction,<sup>9</sup> 2) self-expression,<sup>10</sup> 3)

blending the rational and the irrational into composites of understood symbols,<sup>11</sup> myth cannot be completely identified with the metaphor with which it has due to their many cultural similarities. Like the metaphor, myth is also a manifestation of man's desire to transmit his deepest, darkest self-feeling as totally as possible. Both succeed when they are able to convey their message from heart to heart by way of the brain, that is, when they seek to communicate what is collective in man. Their moral functions are also one; both wish 1) to persuade, 2) to attain a common accord with the social order, and 3) to remain in harmony with the universe. Coercion is their anti-thesis; not only does it harden individuals into figure of living death (those who survive under the tyranny of coercion do so by decreasing their own level of sensitivity), but also it denies growth and integration. Despite these similarities, the metaphor lacks myth's human comprehension and is thus incapable of fulfilling all of myth's roles. Furthermore, since myth never completely detaches itself from human life, it cannot be an intellectual creation like the metaphor.

If myth is man's awareness of his own potential, it must be more than communication. It must also 1) sustain man, by responding to his metaphysical, sociological, cosmological and psychological queries, 2) adapt itself to the evolvement of man and his society,<sup>12</sup> and 3) shape man in such manner as to make all of his experience communicative. To do this, myth must precede culture. Therefore, not only cannot culture supplement myth, but it becomes subservient to myth. It becomes its vehicle of expression.

If myth is 'felt expression' then it must precede culture. Meaning, to know myth we must enter the portals of 'displacement' and unconscious deception. Once that has been done we must look into mythic images and their

probable genesis. Thus, this writer propounds, we should probe into man's psychological make-up, assume that all mankind shares a common inherited neurological structure, and conclude that those images are produced by 1) innate instinct, 2) biological needs, 3) sociological demands 4) awareness of death, and 5) the mnemonic.

3.2.1. According to animal behaviourists,<sup>13</sup> all animals including man, are born with an inherited instinct (nervous structure) for the preservation of the species. This inherited structure is designed to enable him to respond defensively to circumstances never before experienced.

Three are the number of observed innate response. First, whenever man is presented with a given inherited stimulus or image, his innate releasing mechanisms (IRMs) will always react in a given manner. As the stimulus/image varies so does the response. This does not imply that reactions can be accurately predicted. Man has also been shown to possess an innate prepared plasticity. For example, if called to respond or adapt to situations which required central excitatory mechanisms (CEMs) intervention before all of his CEMs are fully developed, he does adapt very successfully.<sup>14</sup>

The second innate reaction comes into play as soon as man matures biologically, that is, as he achieves new 'inner readiness' new IRMs are brought into focus. He now becomes susceptible to 'imprint learning' which occurs whenever the CEMs receive stimulus not only from within but also from without. These stimuli move him, at times even against his better judgment, to 'appetite behaviour'. It is this type of reaction which demonstrates man's direct response to his environment.

The last innate reaction is one determined by construed images. Some animals have been proven to respond more effectively to culturally construed images than those supplied by nature. Adolf Portmann surmises from this that

those animals who do so are seeking an evolution of a new form.<sup>15</sup> If this is to be true, perhaps man's reaction to culturally developed signs could, at some specific moment, be motivated by the same needs. If this were the case, then not all of man's actions are of a learned conditional response. It is possible that man is in possession of an innate inclination of his creative organic imagination to extend himself beyond nature's limits. In other words, can man be seeking to emerge into a superior form?

### 3.2.2 Biological images:

Were it to be shown that the human nervous system is free of innate forms/images, man's maturing consciousness would then be responding to sign stimuli acquired through his biological make-up. That is, man's inherited nervous system has learned to respond to the structuring forces of life on earth. These biological socialized structuring forces of human growth (according to Philip Wheelwright are: 1) ascent/descent, 2) light/darkness, 3) male/female, 4) life/death and 5) knowledge/ignorance)<sup>16</sup> have accommodated themselves to the biological triangle of: 1) love/aggression, 2) desire/fear, 3) dependency/command/urge for release. The two, society and the nervous system, have created a series of mythological images which determine human growth.

This growth is comprised of three distinct stages: 1) infancy/growth, 2) maturity/insecurity, 3) old age/death. Each stage, depending on inner readiness or biological development,<sup>17</sup> absorbs numerous unconscious imprint images which determine one's life history. The task of a functioning mythology is to discover what these images are and to use their acquired sign stimuli to release life's energies in an appropriate manner, one which is neither harmful to the individual nor to society.

Those images which were impressed in the first stages of development, between birth and maturity have been by far the most studied and therefore the best understood. The first images to be experienced are those which accompany the birth trauma. They are: 1) a brief moment of lost security, of suffocation which evokes death's first threat, 2) a desire to return to the actionless bliss of the womb, and 3) the fear of re-experiencing the womb's darkness.

The second series of early image imprints are those experienced at the mother's breast. Here the child finds the lost symbiotic bliss of the womb and the fear of how easily that union can be denied. Denial of the breast rents assunder the child's self-centered universe, giving rise to a totally new awareness. An awareness of the 'I' and the 'thou', of subject and object, the feeling of being internally drawn apart. During this stage of life's many paradoxes, perhaps the most influential, makes its first appearance. The female figure demonstrates a capacity of being both a giver and a taker of life's nourishment.<sup>18</sup>

The third imprint, assumed to be universally developed in the infant, is the demonstrated fascination with one's excrement. Since western society regards this creative activity as unattractive, a socially determined reorganization of responses have been imposed. The heavy hand of censorship intervenes to curb the child's experienced spontaneous interests and evaluations. Therefore, certain images are repressed, but not eradicated. On occasion, disguised forbidden images reassert themselves as for example, in the child/man's desire to turn the base into a presentable gift, to transform the ugly into the beautiful, to remove evil, to experience degradation as a path to salvation, to fuse opposites, to create or find a utopian world, and so forth. According to Freudian analysis, each one of the above acts shows a 'displaced'

fixation, a fascination not for the beautiful or the precious but for the base.

A forth constellation of childhood imprinting is an awareness of sexual differences, those which differentiate boys from girls. While the girls feels that she has been castrated, the boy experiences the fear of 'liable to be'. In time, the girl by giving birth fulfills her desired madonna image, quenching her penis envy. The more paranoid male never completely loses his fear of the castrating female. Hence, for the male, as long as he is driven by sexual impulses, (the stronger the impulses the greater the fear) the female will loom as a potential enemy, a devouring/castrating ogress.

3.2.3 During the latter stage of growth, usually around the ages of five and six, the father image makes its psychological appearance in the form of an ogre. (The universality of the Oedipus Complex has been challenged by some anthropologists, such as Malinowski. It has also been vigorously supported by other anthropologists. Foremost among the latter has been Geza Roheim)<sup>19</sup>. Consciously or unconsciously the boy desires the removal of this ogre. He is his rival. So insecure does the father make him that he demands his mother's full attention. Feeling that his animosity is reciprocated, the father emerges as a second potential castrator. (The corresponding Freudian complex for the girls is that of Electra, where the mother replaces the boy's threatening image of the father. The mother becomes the temptress, the girl's rival. Fearing that the mother-ogress desires the destruction of the father, to protect the father and simultaneously to catapult herself into the role of the madonna, the girl inwardly seeks the destruction of the mother.) The need for his own security urges him on to eliminate this intruder. If doubts arise concerning his misplaced loyalty, they are often displaced by what he inter-



pretends to be maternal encouragement against the father. As a result the thought of killing, or destroying the father not only seems necessary, but also becomes justifiable (In some societies in fact all forms of killing are seen as symbolic forms of patricide).<sup>20</sup>

This desire to destroy the father evokes a series of corresponding guilt-complexes. Complexes which call for atonement, and lead to excesses such as: to submit to the jurisdiction of the father or the father figure and to reject the female and her associated charms. It is these excesses which prepare man to accept those cultural outcrops which lead to the denial of the total individual: 1) worship of the omnipotent father, 2) 'the myth of the machine', 3) monkdom, 4) puritanism, 5) celibacy, 6) Platonism, and so forth. These cultural outcrops with their corresponding social organizations prevent a progression into the next mythological stage. Thus they not only ensure the entrenchment of those organizations and social attitudes but they inhibit human growth.

3.2.4 In the second stage of human development, maturity/insecurity, the child's awareness expands to the universal 'thou' to the exterior world. The expansion of the 'I' to the 'thou' gives rise to the child's need for self-identification--the need to have his own place within the cosmic world. But, before that can be achieved, he must traverse into or be initiated into the world of the insecure adult.

During his developing years as he learns to make better use of his physical skills, personal interest expand, moral judgments broaden and notions of status increase and the youth formulates his own metamorphosizing mythology. The child's mythological cosmos is a non-static one which readily adapts to changing conditions. It is a personal mythology dealing with: 1) his own creation, 2) that of the world and 3) the ensuing and changing inter-

dependence between the two. It is a mythological world governed not by physical but moral laws. There are no dissociations. All of life's enigmas are answered. Creation is fused with elements of participation, animism and artificialism. (This world should not be confused with that of primitive man, least we forget that he too once was a child.) This world demonstrates a natural suppression of the ego and the development of the desire for participation. It searches for equilibrium between ego and praxis, between the internal and the external.<sup>21</sup> It exhibits universal bio-syntonic tendencies. It is a world which is in keeping with nature, desiring to behave as one single organism.<sup>22</sup> Only after this natural desire for participation develops will the child be ready for socialization and social imprinting.

### 3.2.5 Socializing images:

Though ready for adulthood, the child is not yet an adult--at least not until he submits to the will of society. Passage is admitted only after a process of imposed symbol indoctrination. In western society the educational system, an elongated primitive rite de passage, becomes the chief socializing agent. The socializing process is an attempt to displace the ego reliance of the individual from the family to the group. The child is asked to substitute one for the other. As he enters into the world of Man, he is given a new set of sign symbols to which to respond. Since these new symbols are adapted from those developed during his infancy, the transition should not be traumatic. (It will not be traumatic provided he does not become over-dependent on earlier imprint(s).) The new symbols are impressed in such manner as to recondition his entire system of innate releasing mechanism. If this indoctrination process fails, either in part or entirely, the youth remains isolated, alone. He will be disoriented and aberrant--marked as an outcast. On the other hand, if it succeeds, it means that the youth has been sufficiently freed from the threatening and alluring pre-socializing imprints.

That is, it seems that the innate female system of references must be conquered by displacement. The child is socially desexualized by the asexual forces of: 1) pleasure, 2) power, and 3) duty. Only once that occurs can the child take his place in society. As an integrated member of the extended family he will be free to develop, to move on to the next mythological zone--preparation for Death.

### 3.2.6 The Ultimate Image:

In man's waning years the presence of death grows, formulating man's last mythologizing zone, those which can evoke both dread and awe. Like all archetypal figures (the mother, the father, the world tree, the hero, and so forth) death is shrouded with its own contradictions which threaten, protect, malign, benign. As such it has fashioned two contrasting and contradicting mythological worlds--'the natural and the magical.'<sup>23</sup> Both are conditioned by the surrounding environment and/or culture.

Unlike the other archetypes that of death is more of cultural production than a natural development. One's views stem from the planter's cyclical concept of death and rebirth; the other derives from the hunter's concept of punishment and reward. Contradictions between the two stem from a single psychological factor--the reconciliation between the ego and the praxis. Confusion arises whenever praxis is presumed to be fixed. That is, praxis, an ethnic idea and form locally coloured and reflecting attitudes either of resistance or of assimilation, is presumed to be an elementary idea. Thus, we must search behind each mask, each paradox to discover that which is never directly represented: the elementary idea. Mythology, a carrier of archetypal images, never reveals the total secret of humanity. It teaches the way to play the game. With one foot in praxis and the other in the elementary idea, mythic images point to the way life ought to be lived. They point to life's

early compromise and its subsequent quest.

### 3.3.0 Mnemonic images:

If mythology does not spring from man's biological or innate needs, then it must spring from his awareness of the past. Such an awareness can take three forms. The first is an awareness of the individual's potential and his subsequent choice not exploited. The second is remembrance of past pleasures. The third stresses the role of the unconscious.

3.3.1 Otto Rank claims that awareness to be, but not taken--an awareness of missed opportunities--gave birth to myth's images. He maintained that with each maturing step, man is accompanied by a new experience: a choice. Most of the time he will choose the safer path. Each safe path becomes a missed potential. Each missed potential creates a new imprint, an imprint to be redeemed. It is his opinion that these redeemable imprints constitute neurosis which in turn form the structuring framework of myth.<sup>24</sup>

If these neurotic redeemable imprints are to be the stuff of myth, then myth should be synonymous with neurosis. But according to our definition, neurosis is incompatible with myth. It seems therefore that redeemable imprints cannot be myth, since, as already mentioned, myth seeks integration of: 1) man with man, 2) man with nature, and 3) man with the cosmos. Neurosis, on the other hand, is a search for the separation of the individual from his fellow man. Neurotic vision, desirous for redemption becomes inward and retrospective, ego-centered and past-oriented. Myth, instead, is future oriented. It seeks the present and future wellbeing of the individual, demonstrating this tendency by leading the libido into ego-syntonic channels, discovering what is common and unifying in mankind.

3.3.2 A second awareness of the past is in the etched images of first experiences. Because first experiences are virtually impossible to erase, they are

always the most memorable. This does not imply that they are always understood. They are our subconscious and as such they affirm the universal, the common shared experiences such as 1) birth trauma, 2) nourishment of mother's breast, 3) collective participation, 4) rite de passage, and so forth. Because they affirm what is universal and common to all they can be the stuff of myth.

3.3.3 Both the missed opportunity and the first impression can condition man's behavioural patterns and give the false appearance that mythopoesis springs not from the unconscious but from the subconscious. Were this to be so, myth would not be in need of the biological and the innate unconscious responses. Were myth dependent only on the subconscious, it would view the future in terms of earlier self-development and as such impede human potential. Impediment because the subconscious can neither explain the future oriented elements of the archetype nor the motivating force of the instinct drive.

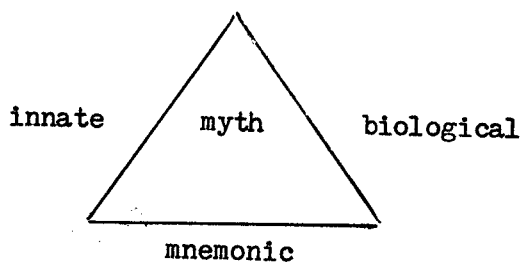
Carl G. Jung maintained that the unconscious plays a major role in the formulation of myth. He was of the opinion that myth stems from a kollektive unconsciousness. Myths are therefore common to all men, as common as man's physical characteristics are to one another. Having found residua of mythic thought in some specific dreams and poetical works, he presumed them to be productions which had been stirred by a specific emotional significance, none which went beyond any special definitely conveyed meaning. He thus attributed this to the unconscious forces which he called 'primordial images' or archetypes. From these archetypes he deduced that they could not be personal or aculturation productions but rather genetically inherited experiences.

Freud also accepted myth as a symbolic language of the unconscious. But unlike Jung's racial inheritance theories of future direction, Freud interpreted myth as an expression of irrational anti-social impulses which do not express

feeling or thought but are primitive remembered relics of psychic life: they are the residua of primordial man.

Though both psychoanalytic theories answer what creates myth and what its symbols might mean, both stress the fixed in human conditions. They deny conscious myth creation and imply that the individual's direction is determined a priori. Their importance to myth study lies in their relation of the (possible) significance of mnemonic imprints in the understanding of myth. But at the same time they are limiting in that they deny the subconscious and the conscious a central creative position.

In summary, the mnemonic mode has a central role in the imprint creation of myth. For the non-abstract mind it best communicates what is universal in man--the Common Shared Experiences. But it must be stressed that inborn images by themselves cannot form myth's structure. They cannot explain all of man's imprint reactions, especially those more commonly found during man's middle years, for example, reactions to the multiple roles of father, husband, member of society, of species, and of the cosmos. Biological responses, likewise, impose a lacuna which makes its presence felt during early infancy and again in the waning years. Myth becomes comprehensive only when all modes--innate, biological and mnemonic--are taken into consideration. According to this writer, together these three form myth's structuring triangle--culture's cornerstone:



Each partially answers what the other is unable to, and their shared similarities serve to strengthen the image, goal and function of myth.

#### 3.4.0 Function of Imprinted Images:

Theoretically the function of each mythic imprint should be 1) to bind itself to the individual, 2) to hold him in awe, 3) to simultaneously attract, repel and inform without harming, and 4) to allow the individual to experience for himself the meaning of harmful. These imprinted images must function as carriers of the individual through the diverse stages of life, from birth to death. If they do not, it means that the individual is incapable of accepting the realities of life: that all things have a place and a function and that man lives in a community which attempts to be in harmony with the Whole.<sup>25</sup> It should also mean that somewhere in the individual's development, a certain image or series of images have been prematurely imposed causing one or more of the previous images to become so alluring as to deny disengagement and transport. It denies further growth.

It must be stressed that if the image fails to transport, the fault lies not with the image but either with society or one or more of its members. Whenever new imprints are imposed before the child/man has adequately developed (physically, psychologically or sociologically), failure becomes inevitable.

Since man is born some fourteen or twenty years too soon he must accept the aid and given structure of his fellow societal members. Therefore, at first, before his awareness extends beyond himself, he is sustained by innate and biological mythic images. As his circle of dependency increases he must allow some of his earlier intuitive and/or instinctive imprints to be rechannelled. Rechannelling is attained by carefully imposing an orchestrated socializing mythology adapted from man's infancy imprints. Rechannelling will determine how the individual unfolds. It can either speed-up his cosmic integration or paralyze him in a world "filled with straw" and "broken glass",

or else force him to find his own path.

3.4.1. This enforced mythic conditioning will naturally restrict his mythopoetic faculties. As a result, throughout his maturing years, he will in one form or another constantly rebel against the imposed tyranny. If he sufficiently matures, that is, mythic imprinting has been aided not impeded, he will learn not to fear the imposed suppressions. Regardless of how stringently imposed they might be they never negate man, for his natural curiosity, sense of self-preservation,<sup>26</sup> individualism<sup>27</sup> and growth constantly challenges the established order. They challenge it most vehemently when the governing mythology, as in Il podere, is entrusted to practical men and not visionaries. Were it not challenged, man as we know him could not exist.

3.4.2. Whenever society fails, either temporarily or permanently, to provide adequate energy-evoking and energy-directing symbols, the individual is forced to find his own. If that is to be the case he instinctively attaches himself to those images which in the past have served him best. In so doing not only will he find shelter from that particular society, but also from time. That time will be needed to re-experience the failed imprints, to discover if it was he or society which failed? To do this he must rely on the mnemonic. Were he not to question social imprinting he would either become the tool of society: "Theirs not to reason why/Theirs but to do and die.", or sanction society to develop indoctrinary tools which are not in keeping with man's natural needs (they would deviate from mythic imprinting).

Since society feels that its function is to serve the needs of the individual, it has little or no tolerance for the regressors of the transgressors. It prefers to abandon, punish, ostracize and crush its heretics. Where



they not treated as such they would threaten the very foundation of society. Their questions, non-participation and criticism would put to doubt its most sacred symbols. If integration is to occur, it can only be on society's terms. If society's imprints failed once, as it will be argued they did with Remigio, they will fail again, unless the non-socialized individual is willing to unilaterally surrender his individuality. If they failed, they did so either because the individual was not ready for it or because that particular society's imprints were not in keeping with man's natural mythic imprinting. Therefore, if the individual is to grow, to emerge from the shelter of his early infancy imprints, he must look beyond that particular society. He must find integration with that society which his mythic imprints point to that of universal man.

To reach that society he must learn to dominate his ego and accept himself as a unique but meaningful functioning part of the Whole. Such metamorphosis occurs when the intoxicating and terrorizing aspects of life have been overcome. That is, the individual accepts life to be transitory and allows the mythic images to govern. As such these images transcend the metaphor; they serve as life-givers. They give both substance and pattern to man's question for they alone must serve him if all else fails.

3.5.0

Footnotes

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4.0.0 Federigo Tozzi's novel, Il podere is one of the literary examples of how the mythopoetic mind can be made to function. This is done through the alienation of the protagonist from his social milieu, showing how the mythic image, the mythopoetic mind, intervenes to: 1) sustain, 2) propel, and 3) lead to the ultimate human goal--man's accommodation with death. No matter how impaired the growth process is the mythic imprint will always intervene preventing total mental paralyzation.<sup>1</sup>

Tozzi achieves this by depriving his protagonist of any form of external assistance in his struggle for social acceptance: 1) a nourishing mother, 2) a supporting father, 3) an encouraging peer group, 4) a solid economic base, 5) a sustaining social structure and even 6) a benevolent Mother Nature. Stripped of all necessary support his protagonist is nevertheless able to function effectively, in that he attains the desired end goal.

The following pages will consist of an analysis of Il podere. It will attempt to probe into the protagonist's unconscious behaviour and reveal that the structure and the movement of the novel is in keeping with the mythic: 1) that it moves from ego orientation to cosmic orientation, and 2) that it searches first to accommodate the individual into the social structures which surround him.

#### 4.1.0 The outer world:

Federigo Tozzi's artistic vision mercilessly depicts and exposes the society which each one of us knows best: the society which our fathers impose upon us. In Il podere this society is no longer in touch with the aspirations and needs of the individual. It is one where established provincial socializing mythology suppresses (personal mythology)<sup>2</sup> the fostering of authentic individual, by stressing: 1) the existing conflict between the outer and the inner worlds (the outer world as represented by social institutions--the family,

the church, the law--, set up and protected by established and concretized mythologies; the inner world as represented by the private thoughts, dreams and unconscious behaviour of the individual), and 2) by leading his readers into the youthful naive world of his protagonist, Remigio Selmi. The author desires to draw his readers into the depths of their own lost innocence in hope of regenerating personal endured experiences of accommodation: their own will to the will of their father and to the demands of society.

4.1.1. The outer world of Il podere is ruled by a rigidly defined paternalistic code of behaviour and is deeply marked by an apparent absence of universal aspirations. All of the encountered social organizations are perpetuated by dehumanizing agents of social coercion and ritual. As a ritualizing agent, the church is active in offering last rites (289),<sup>3</sup> leading funerary processions (352), performing mass (442) and warding off God's displeasures (366). But it remains distant and leaves the central characters unaffected, unchanged. At no time does it reach out to comfort, to know and understand man. As a functioning institution it is dead: it neither leads nor guides.

Less ritualized but distinctly more coercive is the judiciary system. It is maintained and perpetuated by an endless number of dehumanizing fogli di carte bollate (416) representing both ritual and authority. None of its 'servants' are motivated by its blind symbol of 'Justice'. Rather, they appear to be there for symbolic dressing--like il brigadiere:

... andò alla Casuccia un brigadiere; che nè meno  
scese da cavallo; e lisciandosi i baffi, chiese  
quanto tempo la mucchia aveva messo a bruciare.  
Poi, non sapendo quel che dire, mise a galoppo  
il cavallo (416)--,

to serve the interests of the powerfully entrenched establishment (313-14) perpetuating injustice by serving best society's superstructure (444-45)--

the doctor, the lawyer, the well-dressed the educated, the established, the money lenders. Those who are preoccupied with the provision of the basic necessities, the assalariati are denied an equal share of superstructural (judicial) benefits (324).

So entrenched are the institutions of Il potere that they are never challenged or questioned. Only man, the individual is (382). Therefore, whenever its protagonists seek 'true' justice they must look to the impartial hand of nature:

... chi fa del male lo riavrà. Il mondo e un peso quel che è fatto è reso (405)

This results in disrupting any harmonious existence which could develop between the two. In fact, throughout the novel nature and society are found to be in conflict. It appears as if the very success of social institutions rests on their ability to strip nature of its bounty (413-16) and force the individual to depend on society, not nature for security. Society reverts nature's role by employing it to strip man of hope (411-12). It seeks to reduce his life to the status of a gladiatorial contestant: survival depends not on who is the fittest but on who is the brutest. Society encourages man to enter the rapacious world of the bourgeois (290), to be snared in una ragnatela of greed appeasement (445) of jealous inclinations (352) and ultimately of violence (446).

4.1.2. Despite the existing social classes, all participants are caught in una ragnatela of laissez-faire. If not passionately, at least tacitly, the protagonists adhere to the principles of social-economic Darwinism. One sees these principles being perpetuated by the elders (Pollastri, Boschini, Lenzi), the educated (Boschini, Pollastri, Bianconi, Sforzi), and the truckers of commerce (Centini, Bubbolo, Giacomo). Those who belong have mastered the game of: profit (Lenzi), false friendships (Chiocciolino), double dealing

(Pollastri), deceit (Bianconi), bribery (Chiocciolino), thievery (Giulia), false testimony (Ciambella), usury (Lenzi), alliances for profit (Giulia, Ciambella) and force (Giacomo). The young are either excluded (431) or at best grudgingly accepted (355). The baser the characters, either physically or morally, the more quickly does society absorb them, as seen by society's response to Sforzi as compared to that of Neretti (323-24, 431).

The most successful are those who best disrupt human communication, as exemplified by 1) Pollastri in handling Remigio's affairs:

... il Pollastri, accontentando ugualmente Luigia e Remigio, trovava sempre qualche motivo per cui era necessario che tornassero da lui. E così le loro chiacchiere, attraverso una ubriacatura legale, diventavano pretese eccessive o addirittura impossibili, in contrasto tra sè e irreconciliabili; proponendo egli, ora all'uno ora all'altro, accomodamenti che non potevano soddisfare nessuno dei due (309-10).

2) Bianconi by encouraging Giulia to bring suit against Remigio:

--Se io parlo al presidente del tribunale che, come ho detto, e mio cugino ...

\* \* \*

--Lo so da me quel devo dirgli. Lei stia più tranquilla d'animo ... (349)

and by 3) Giacomo Selmi whose success was due to his character:

Il Selmi era morto senza lasciare amici. Il suo carattere aspro e cupo gli aveva data fama di cattivo; ed egli, sapendolo, s'era allontanato sempre di più anche dagli amici (304).

The equation of: 'material success = disruption of communication' appears to engulf all. It reaches even the most sterile, like Luigia:

... Remigio la rimproverò:  
--Perché vuol tenermelo nascosto? (296).

The only communication which appears to be encouraged and appreciated is indirect communication--gossip (350, 367, 371, 379). Gossip is what allows Il podere's society to function. Without it there would be little

communication and even a more marked division of class. Gossip places all participants on the same plane; in it there is to be found a unity of spirits--one of suspicion and jealousy. It ensures the maintenance of the illusion that social success is determined by the degree of social disharmony one is capable of generating.

Though gossip and the disruption of human communication gives a semblance of how social acceptance and material success can be attained they are not instruments for social mobility. Material and social success is determined by 1) education and 2) land. While education offers immediate status and a degree of immunity as Neretti demonstrates, it is the social entrepreneurs, like Giacomo, Chiocciolino and Bubbulo, even if more open to social criticism (304) who are the greater objects of emulation. This emulation is of major importance because it underlines the power of society's demythologizing forces, the quest for ancillary human goals.

The outer world of Il podere survives not because it meets man's needs but because it has totally subjected man to itself. It is a self-sustaining, all-absorbing world set in its ways, beyond redemption and alien to man. Alien because it has succeeded in substituting and convincing its social members that secondary needs of power, status, and wealth are superior to man's primary needs. It has succeeded in creating a spiritless dehumanizing world which must be avoided unless man feels more comfortable existing in the non-abstract.<sup>4</sup>

In experiencing these negative impulses, Remigio, like all mythical heroes transgresses from what the group or society considers sacred. This implies that the so-called practical men of that society (Giacomo, Cianconi, Lenzi, Pollastri, Chiocciolino, Bubbolo, Boschini, Sforzi, Centini), those entrusted with harmonizing the individual to society, have failed. Failure to socialize youth by means of existing social tools leads them to employ



force. This use of force indicates that they are 'agent-victims'-- as society's caretakers they are not only society's agents, but also its victims. Victims because by employing non-euphonic socializing symbols they become forgetful of the need for creating a human world.<sup>5</sup> In so doing they create a society which can only be held together by fear, distrust, disharmony, by disrupting human communication.

A careful examination of Il potere's socializing symbols reveals why discord exists. The most alluring symbols are cultural: money, authority, social rank and land tenure. These are all symbols of dominion. Though they fascinate, engage and bind the individual they are incapable of acting as agents of transport and of metamorphosis.<sup>6</sup> As such their tenure of power is transient. The power of these symbols and that of its high priests will wane as soon as the symbols are challenged. Therefore, those who question their value must be: 1) punished--"dev'essere gastigato" (350-51); 2) made to conform, to accept society in toto; failing that 3) the transgressor must be either discredited or destroyed.

It should be pointed out that society always offers a choice. Punishment follows only if the wrong choice has been made. The choices are: either join and surrender, or reject and be ostracized. The act of joining signifies a willingness to become an unquestionable perpetuator of the system and a wish to eventually be accepted as an equal. If the initiate proves to be ill-suited for the task, as the assalariati do, he will be forced to submit and to become what T.S. Elliott described as 'hollow men'.

Society accepts all--but only on its own terms. These terms been total submission. It is the act of surrender which makes integration difficult. Integration can be especially arduous if not impossible for those like Remigio, who have spent an inordinate amount of time in a pre-socialized ego-oriented

maternal world. Such subjects remain relatively impervious to mass hypnosis (442-43) because they are aware, consciously or not, that what passes as freedom is illusory. They are aware that the socialized are encouraged (especially the most insecure, i.e. Sforzi vis Neretti) to suppress the freedom of the non-socialized. For example, Lenzi and Ciambella, lacking the necessary passport into the higher echelons of society such as education, or land holdings, supplemented their lacuna by employing their native cunning as agent provocateur. That is, to increase their own feeling of security, they become society's enforcers par excellence. As such their security and status increases proportionately to their ability to subjugate others. They aid in institutionalizing subjugation. In a society of that type, social structure demands that the insecure feed upon the initiates which in Il potere are the young. Thus the young are invariably forced to emulate the elders, enabling the system to self-perpetuate.

Once socialized they become social enforcers which serves to partially displace their social dissatisfactions. In due time they too will become like the rest--inert to the common needs of man, emotionally (328) and physically (443) scarred:

a forza di vangare, un ginocchio cominciava  
a volergli rimaner piegato; e anche le mani gli si  
erano storte. Altri vecchi ... s'erano conciatì anche  
peggio, sempre di più; con la testa in avanti, per  
lo stare curvi a zoppiare (443).

Of all the protagonists of Il potere only the men who belong to the labour-peasant class question the social system:

Tordo the "assalariato",

Vorrei sapere perché sono venuto al mondo  
e che cosa ci ho fatto! (383);

Ciambella, the proletariat,

Il mondo è troppo cattivo! Si vive troppo  
male! (404).

They do so because: 1) their lot is the hardest, 2) they are denied socio-economic mobility (of all the protagonists the assalariati alone appear to lack social aspirations: none is actively pursuing the quest for a *podere*), 3) they see little hope in it for their children (382), and 4) manual labour, especially in the fields, offers a feeling of oneness with the Earth (363-64). The Earth provides them with all the sustenance they need. (336-37). Moreover, so well entrenched is the social order that they are powerless to effect change (382). Powerless because society has transformed them into men of straw. Like Berto, they have been coerced to accept the premise that:

L'uomo è sempre stato male (382).

Only the young, those that must yet be fully socialized show any semblance of hope, dignity and strength:

... Lorenzo gli disse:

-- Voi state al vostro posto! Noi non siamo ladri, e non abbiamo bisogno di difendorci (334).

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Picciòlo ... (sapeva che) il figlio aveva ragione (408).

but kept him ignorant in fear of upsetting the social order of the establishment.

In keeping with the natural order of non-epiphonic society, primary needs like love are sublimated by social fabrications. Therefore, profit and its accompany residua (fear, gossip, revenge, malice, etc.) guide and direct. Money becomes the mediator for all communication and the fabric from which social structures (family) are established: 1) Giacomo

... sposò Luigia ... doveva ereditare un poderetto  
... (ed) anche perché gli averbbe fatto comodo, la figlia d'una sua nipote (287)

2) il Crestai:

Le due donne capirono che egli parlava delle ottomila lire di Remigio; e Giulia ebbe, per la prima volta, un pensiero che somigliava all'amore; per la prima volta, i loro occhi si compresero fino fondo (402).

The clear limpid eyes of love have turned murky taking on the colour of pestilence (357), of frutta marce (287). Since love cannot and does not offer shelter, all the protagonists are forced to find comfort in their early childhood imprints of insecurity: 1) in dreams of withdrawal such as in the desire to return to the bosom of Mother Earth: "sentivano il desiderio di vivere in campagna" (401), 2) in tradition (366), 3) in ritual (325) and 4) in participation within the group:

si sentì prendere da un sentimento al quale non aveva mai voluto dare retta; e desiderò di credere. Avrebbe voluto rispondere "aspettatemi" (442-43).

The fact that all of the protagonists are forced in one form or another, either to retreat or to suppress (displacing) their fellow travellers' aspiration not only illustrates society's inadequacy in providing for its members but also reveals its own arrested growth.

It was both society's shortcomings as well as its intoxicating allurements which Remigio sought to escape. He did not wish to become another giro imbalsamato (296). When he returned, as far as he could see with the exception of his father's death, little or nothing had changed:

Girò gli occhi per tutta la stanza: era rimasta quasi nuova (296).

Thus, he should have been aware that he returned inadequately prepared for the tasks that lay ahead:

In camera i cassetti erano ancora chiusi con le chiavi che egli non aveva; e non sapeva ne meno che contenessero (296-97)

Had he been fit for the task he would have been able to view and confront his past directly, instead of preferring to view it from "uno specchio antico screpolato" (296). In short, Remigio was a prisoner of infancy imprinting.

With the loss of his father Remigio's position became all the more perilous, because now he was also deprived of paternal shelter and guidance (293). Left alone, his stay in il podere becomes a process of learning (328). In his quest for accommodation, now and then, he is forced to withdraw, because he desires and seeks to find accommodation on his own terms without having to join (442-43). In so doing he: 1) shows an inadequacy in his own past to submit to society, and 2) hides an unconscious desire to do something which is socially forbidden--withdrawal. But as we have already seen withdrawal is necessary as it offers escape and nourishment--escape from repression, nourishment to enable him to surmount those challenges which will present themselves in his quest to determine his own fate. Each withdrawal offers a new inward journey, as well as a new obstacle to confront and overcome.

#### 4.2.0 Inward journey:

Attempted accommodation: When first conceived the individual in the womb feels in harmony, as one with his surrounding universe. That universe, the womb fulfills all of his needs. When he leaves it, he experiences his first disengagement of transport. He leaves a self-sustaining world to experience a new unity with his mother. This unity/engagement is filled with insecurities. Confrontation with unpleasantness stimulates in him a desire for retreat, a return to the womb. This wish for retreat creates an ambivalence of feeling. On the one hand, he depends on his mother for survival, on the other, he experiences moments of insecurity and therefore searches for negative disengagement. But negative disengagement only leads to the past. While the past does offer the security and warmth of pleasant memories, it

also offers the agonizing strangulating memory of the womb-tunnel. If and when the child/man overcomes this terror by accepting it as an integral part of his experience, he will be able to view the womb-maze objectively. When he does, fear becomes a symbol of transport. Neither darkness nor strangulation memories of the womb will deny the engraved light of liberation found at the end of that labyrinth. That light becomes a reminder of his own potential since it was he, not the mother, who decided when the time of birth was to be. Bolstered by self-confidence, and awareness of his other achievements, such as: 1) equating the act of defecating with personal creation, and 2) noticing sexual differences, he is ready to enter the next sphere.<sup>7</sup> But expanded self-awareness, confidence and desire for accommodation with the next order can only be had when and if accepted by those whose sphere he seeks to enter. As previously mentioned, society grants conditional accommodation only if the individual surrenders to its will. Remigio returned from Campiglia deluding himself that he was prepared. Had Campiglia met his needs of retreat and growth he would have returned only to leave again or he would have returned to il podere as a changed person. He would have been able to confront his past directly (296) rather than through the eyes of an adolescent (296-97). It was this immaturity which compelled Remigio to remain. In so doing he undertook the task to mature, to find his proper place in society. To do so he had to overcome his non-socializing imprints: 1) the female attraction/repulsion syndrome, 2) his ego created universe, 3) the Oedipal drive, and 4) atonement for his social crime (seven lean years prior to his return, Remigio committed the unpardonable crime of challenging society's chief structuring force: paternalism (287-88).) Without first overcoming the above, the position he sought which was to absorb his father's position:

Aprì l'uscio della stanza accanto, dove era morto Giacomo; e stette un poco a respirare l'odore rimastovi (297)

would be doomed to failure. Unlike the underdeveloped calf who received all the needed love and attention from Picciòlo's family, "Ci vuol pazienza come i ragazzi" (395), enabling it to survive, Remigion was left alone without a family to aid him to absorb society's and life's realities. He was left to depend solely on his own mythic imprints.

Following his return, those imprints intuitively suggested to Remigio that social acceptance is determined by the individual's ability to allow himself to be initiated into his paternal world in such manner as to surpass his earlier imprints. Therefore, partially due to society's offered allurements and to his desire for absorption, Remigion allows himself to be hypnotized by its symbols of power, the possession of a podere: "... ammirando, senza poter staccare gli occhi da quei biglietti (318). Unfortunately, since he had been abandoned by his mother (287) and left without a guiding Virgil, he was incapable of absorbing society in toto--to accept their way of doing and viewing (442-43). Therefore, now and again he withdraws to reflect, to search for an appropriate guide and shelter. Instinctively: 1) he turns to the world of men, of Pollastri and asks for advice: "Mi consigli lei!" (312) and, 2) to avoid the world of women: "Egli, allora, per non doverle parlare ancora, esci (381). Whenever contact with the world of men proves more than his match, he again withdraws into his private world. When retreating he seeks the company of nature:

Gli parve di potersi nascondere in mezzo  
al podere; e di non farsi mai più guardare  
da nessuno (421).

Nature here functions as a mother and a womb which protects and heals:

Andò a una specie di nascondiglio, che s'era trovato su la greppia della Tressa: come dentro un letto di erba; dove con il corpo aveva fatto ormai una buca (435).

Here he finds escape from the demands of society. Nature not only offers the bliss of timelessness, but also the comforting thought--despite the momentary retreat--that he still formed part of that society without having to be part of it. With one act he could mentally removed himself without leaving it physically. He could simultaneously be and not be.

When not withdrawing or engaging, Remigio listens and watches those engaged with the concrete, the practical, desirous to learn:

(d'imparare) per l'anno dopo, lasciando intanto che mandassero avanti le faccende come volevano (328).

In this manner he was hoping to find that one person who could provide what his own father was incapable of--a path out of that world which he had become so dependent on: the maternal world.

#### 4.2.1 The female sphere:

Mythic imprints demand liberation from each sphere including the maternal. The insecurities which accompany the departure from this world outweigh their merit. Yet, to leave it is no easy task. The thought of doing so grips Remigio with fear. A fear made evident in his claustrophobic seizures and desires for escapism:

... gli fece venire un brivido che lo scosse nel cuore (297),

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Perché non era fuggito? Perché non fuggiva prima di rivedere qualcuno? ... Remigio ebbe paura di non essere più in tempo (416).

The allurement of the maternal world is security. This can be seen by Remigio's 1) unwillingness to stay in la Casuccia (289) under paternal suze-



renity (this point is re-emphasized on his return when he searched lodging in Siena), and 2) his inability to leave it after his father died. He refuses to accept la Casuccia as his father's home, to cut the umbilical cord. Even after he return he continues to view it in maternal terms as the home that nourished him as it once nourished i pellegrini (320). With the demise of his castrating father (296) la Casuccia functions as Remigio wishes it to: a maternal metamorphisizer. The welfare of one determines that of the other.

In la Casuccia, Remigio finds security, strength, hope and comfort:

per non piangere tornò subito a casa (320),

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Almeno, alla Casuccia, poteva stare lunghe ore  
in silenzio (332).

Sustained by it, he is free to either dream of better times or to exist in a state of nothingness (336, 381, 421, 436). Not yet known to him, neither il podere nor la Casuccia could be that shelter, for both realms, that of la Casuccia and il podere, are constantly threatened by the intrusion of ogress-figures: Giulia (337, 356, 436), Luigia (320, 356), Cecchina (328) and Fosca (300). Each one destroys, shatters his dream world (337, 436) forcing him to face up to the realities of life, to turn for security to the world of men and on himself.

Thus Remigio's paradoxical attitude towards women is exposed: involving both identification and fear of assimilation. Identification with the maternal world is made evident whenever he is threatened by the presence of either an ogress-figure or a castrating father (296). In each instance he experiences the fear of losing the mother-symbiotic world. Yet, at the same time, he intuitively fears that maternal world, because it insulates

and leaves him (especially when left without a mother) exposed to the dangers of the ogress elements. This latter point is made apparent by his constant references to spiders and webs, suggesting that the mother is phallic, a potential castrator. (According to Freud the sighting of spiders and associated webs derive from an unconscious association with the image of the phallic mother. Remigio makes frequent references to ragni and ragnatele; all associated with his artificial wombs--la Casuccia and la Tressa.<sup>8</sup>) Thus, fear of becoming effeminated forces him to participate, however slightly, into the world of men. We see him: 1) observing the men at work hoping to learn (328), 2) intervening in the affairs of women (360-61), and 3) heeding the council of men over that of women (344, 355).

To enter the world of men, Remigio must overcome his fears of the phallic mother and above all that of the ogress figures. Fear of the ogress is constantly made evident in his responses to women (as opposed to children, i.e. Ilda). Not only does he view women more negatively than their male counterparts (compare Fosca, Giulia, Cecchina, Sunta del Borgo to Pollastri, Sforzi, Bianconi, Berto), but also telescopes his fear of them to encompass most women. (287) Thus, Luigia is a greater threat before he left la Casuccia:

La sera stessa del matrimonio, Luigia si raccomandò a Remigio di volerle bene e di dirle tutta la verità delle chiacchiere che si facevano; e il figliastro le confermo i sospetti su Giulia (289)

then on his return:

La matrigna fece il viso da piangere.  
Remigio le prese una mano e gliela strinse (441)

because his fear is one associated with sexual proclivity. (fear of the toothed-vagina imprint makes itself evident here<sup>9</sup>). The more promiscuous they are or have been, the more ogress-like became their appearance (288,

300) and proportionately more does his distrust of them grow. In response to this threat, he isolates himself from their influence. He heeds not their council, except Dinda's for Dinda, unlike Fosca (300), gave birth to health children. Moreover, she is well past the age where she would pose a sexual threat (33).

But in a world which is interdependent, total isolation is an impossibility. Intuitively he knows this, therefore he searches to surmount this fear (336), enabling him to establish a degree of communication with them.

Remigio also searches to overcome his mental-social stagnation through imitation of his father. He dreams of marriage to a woman like his mother. She would become his madonna figure acting as guide and protectress. She would protect him from overly rapacious promiscuous women (336), and guide him into society. This dream-woman of his would be all which the ogresses are not. She would not be a Giulia: at "venti anni, già vecchia e logorata", "Magra e gialla", "quasi rifinita; con denti guasti e lunghi (di) un'aria stupida e gli occhi del colore delle frutta marce" (287), or a timid inept Luigia (288). She would be "piuttosto bella, senza ambizioni" (337). In other words, she was to be subservient to him, and acceptable to society:

... avrebbe comprato un calesse e un cavallo.  
e la domenica sarebbero andati dentro Siena:  
a sentir suonare la musica (337).

But his dreams of assimilation would come to nought unless he overcomes certain personal and social obstacles: 1) ability to overcome the fear of the ogress figure, i.e. as best exemplified by Giulia (337-38) and 2) avoid the impulse of letting a woman, dream-woman or not, be his means of social integration. Though women could aid man's socio-economic upward mobility, as Luigia had the potential to do (287) for Giacomo, they cannot be agents

of passage. Therefore that dream-woman at best could only be an instrument of upmanship vis-a-vis his father--unlike Luigia who "doveva ereditare un poderetto" (287), the dream-woman was already abstanza ricca (337). Here we not only observe the degree of Remigio's social naivete but also the extent of maternal imprinting that had to be overcome.

Remigio's uneasiness with women can be seen as an affirmation of man's innate individuality which is fostered by mythic imprints of sexual awareness. Mankind innately seeks to protect this individuality.<sup>10</sup> The awareness of his own maleness not only makes it difficult for Remigio to remain forever dependent on the maternal world, but also allows him to discover that his womb-dependence is a liability. Its offered comfort and shelter are not secure against the intrusion of female-ogresses. (The more promiscuously projected they are, the more threatening they become and the more often they intrude into Remigio's dreamworlds. As already noted, when Luigia became Giacomo's legal consort, Remigio's insecurity reached a new unknown. He lashed out at Luigia, destroying her newly acquired security (287) before she could destroy his--before she could supplant his mother. On his return, he re-experienced a similar threat from Giulia and in a like manner destroyed her security too: for that reason Remigio "scacciò ... la cagna ... degli occhi pesti") (357) They constantly interrupt his womb-bliss imposing the reality of his own situation on it. For example, Luigia:

Qualche ragnatela s'era stesa fra i travicelli  
... A un tratto, l'altro uscio della stanza si aprì;  
era Luigia (297)

Giulia:

--Signor Selmi! ... --Ho da consegnarle questa  
citazione ... lette le prime righe, vide che si trattava  
della causa di Giulia (337-38).

Thus both mythic imprints and praxis--1) the ogress imprint, as well as 2) his own individuality, 3) men's reaction and 4) society's demands--demonstrate that his womb-dependency must not only decrease but also cease.

Since most of Il podere's women loom as potential physical an/or spiritual castrators rarely are they trusted. For example, Luigia is a spiritless castrator; her negativism and her apparent inability to cope with in the social world, only reinforces Remigio's regressive tendencies. They cannot be trusted, not as long as their aspirations are limited to the here and now, to the physical, that is not as long as they refuse to challenge man's ego-consciousness. Instead of seeking to encourage man to pursue life's goal--to transcend fear--they pressure him to compete for the here and now (397, 405). This robs him of self-confidence, increases his vulnerability and thus incapacitates his willingness to abandon his ego. Only when Remigio succeeds in abandoning his ego (441), does he transcend these fears. In so doing no longer is the world viewed in terms of opposites or in terms of regression, instead the cosmos unfolds revealing its indivisibility:

Nell'aria era come un incendio; le galline,  
accovacciate sotto la parata, crocchiolavano di rado;  
quasi non avessero più voce. Sembrava che dovessero  
diventare incapaci a muoversi di lì; come il muro dell'  
aia; come le pietre (441),

with man as an important element of the harmonious whole:

Egli si lasciava prendere dal desiderio di  
sentirsi buono, e sognava che i pioppi della Tressa  
lo sapessero (441).

Only once he overcomes these feminine ambivalent feelings of fear and desire will he, as a man, have society work on his behalf rather than Giulia's. Had he achieved this level, the judgment of il tribunale would have been without doubt in his favour (445).

It therefore becomes obvious that as long as Remigio prefers to withdraw,

to revert to a state of actionless bliss of the womb, there can be no escape." Only action can be his passport to growth. Though his first acts have negative implications, they are reflexes of 1) self-defence (he was protecting his mother's world as well as his own):

Remigio, presala (Giulia) per un braccio, la  
fece camminare all'indietro fina alle scale; e ve la  
spinse (293).

and 2) frustration:

Una mattina, per non piangere, Remigio esci  
di casa; e, per due o tre ore, sfaticò facendo di tutto  
(352),

they are nevertheless also responses of preparation. Preparation--not because the act of toiling is essential--but because it offers an amplification of experience and therefore self-confidence. It must be further noted that manual work is paradoxical. Though used by the men in power as an opiate, a desensitizer, reduction of the assalariati into twisted hulks of men without the will to challenge--it nevertheless does offer contact with the genesis of all life--the soil. As such it becomes a source of new hope.

Tozzi also points out that through manual work alone there can be no entrance into the higher order--too many negative qualities are associated with manual labour. It is the opiate of the masses: it weakens the body (443) and with it the mind, the will to resist (382). It is incapable of overcoming the fascinatium tremendum of the female sphere--the first source of man's nourishment. In fact, as long as labour is harvest associated, that is, its fruits are the gifts of Mother Earth, it can only strengthen the female order.<sup>12</sup> Dependence on the earth gives the practical resourceful man an advantage. By establishing a superstructure which challenges the whims of nature, he is in a position to exploit the less fortunate (those whose fortune depends directly on nature). For example, the assalariato, tied to the soil and its owner,

becomes a prisoner of both the female and the male order. To overcome his subjugation of the two he must first come to terms with society's foundation, nature, and be aware of its unconscious association with feminine imprints. Without this awareness there can be no separation, no accommodation with the local group. But before such an accommodation can be found, one must, as will Remigio, experience the negative, the ogress side of the order. Hence, he must examine not only the allurements but also the dangers of the maternal world. Once that has been done, appropriate action can be taken.

#### 4.2.2 The male spheres:

Remigio's return to il potere, his father's world is accompanied by failure. His Campiglian womb-like exile (285-87) did not function as it should have, as an hermetically sealed alchemical laboratory. Rather, it functioned as a prison. When he re-emerged, he did so unchanged (296-97). There are no indications as to any deep or superficial mental probing into his plight, as to its why:

Erano più di sette anni che Remigio la (Giulia) sopportava; ma sempre di più, la sua avversione cresceva ... perciò quasi tutti i giorni, Giacomo e Remigio questionavano. Alla fine, il figlio dovette andarsene (287),

demonstrating that he expected to re-emerge only when outside conditions appeared propitious. Consequently when he did emerge, he did so unprepared.

Confident:

Egli sbuffò e si mise a camminare su e giù per la stanza, deciso a offenderla (Luigia) di più (299),

--that he could be a match for any woman--but naive (314). He was naive because he was not aware that his premature immersion (premature because he enters it alone without paternal preparation and guidance) into the affairs of men would evoke Berto's wrath (361-62), the wrath of the male order.

As already noted not only must Remigio overcome the fascinatium tremendum of the female order but he must also learn to deal with the world of the father and society--and come to terms with il podere. Il podere, a masculine term, is a cultural symbol of power. Taken in that context, it seeks Remigio's subjugation. But when il podere is associated with la Casuccia it becomes a symbol of nature, a benign-malign mother. Both as a maternal and paternal symbol it has the power to save and destroy. Remigio, as a product of those two worlds, must recognize that symbiosis and come to terms with it.

Remigio found his artificial metaphysical womb not in Campiglia, but nella Tressa and in the solitary darkness of la Casuccia and its aià (331). (Unlike the heroes of older mythologies, Remigio does not encounter one major retreat, but several) There, in that hermetically sealed world undisturbed by external input, the womb acts as an alchemical laboratory transmuting the base into the non-base. This procedure is not a sudden epiphanic moment but a long process distilled from experience. Here the protagonist filters the negative and the positive of his previous spheres. Only after each filtering can its illusory comforts be understood. Only then can the protagonist move on. If this were not to occur, participation in the higher order would be possible but most attempts of coping with it will be accompanied by failure.

Had Remigio been more observant and less ego-centered, he would have been aware of his unpreparedness and understood that the roots of man's paradox is to be found in society's treatment of the base. Society is a superstructure whose life-line is the base. All of its productions stem from it, so must Remigio's Weltanschauung find its source in the base.

His emotionally constipated father and overly protective mother made him impermeable to life's natural forces. In Il podere filth, dishonesty and disease/age form a triad of power. Social virtue/acceptance is determined by



physical or moral affliction--society ruled in favour of Giulia only after she had been sick (444). The only protagonists who approaches a picture of health, vigour, and honesty is the initiated youth who has yet to be soiled and bent by the social system. It appears as if most protagonist are consciously constipating their natural aspirations, sublimating their fascination for the base. That is, they are struggling to elevate their social position by hoarding and/or suppressing their true selves; and in so doing exhibiting an unconscious fascination with the base--one of Siena's most distinguished and respected citizens, Pollastri (rank defined by social position and underlined by the offered meal--Luigia prepared for his visit "una gallina ... quella più grassa" (339) while la Casuccia's staple food was that associated with the old and the infirm: minestra e lessa)<sup>14</sup> is constantly covering himself with cenere (309); and the provincial laureate-poet, Giulio Sforzi appears unaware of his ever present unghie sporche (324).

Il podere seems to demonstrate an unconscious unwillingness to transcend the base. That is mythic imprints tell us that the base is a life-giving, imbued with magical powers: 1) Sunta del Borgo cures people with medicines concocted from the base:

... una secrezione gialla, che certi insetti  
accumulano dentro le loro pallottole di terra (365);

2) the assalariati spread concio (293) to aid life's forces; 3) Pollastri's habit of constantly covering himself with cenere only aided in making him "molto rispettato e tenuto in conto" (309), and so forth. This unconscious dualism of the socialized protagonists towards the base sublimation/ fascination, not only suggests a desire to return to but also to submit to the forces of Nature and become one with Her, to surrender one's ego to her regenerating powers and accept the base and the non-base as one. Never is one mentioned

without the other. They seem as inseparable as life is to death (364). This suggests that Remigio must, beside overcoming his feminine imprints, also learn the realities of life. Lack of awareness of these realities prevents ascension from the child's world. A world of imprinted reactions, of extremes. If the child's vision of the world lacks gradation, it is because it has not been forced to accommodate itself to life's realities.

Of all the characters of Il podere only Remigio expects honesty and justice (329) and experiences vergogna (337). The base abhors him. His first order to the assalariati was not that they be less noisy because his father had just died, but "che smetessero di caricare un carro di letame" (293), to cease to carry on with the life-giving forces. He is incapable of understanding the ways of life, the interdependence of the base and the non-base. He cannot see that life must be constantly reduced to concio before it can be life-giving. He must allow the death of his father to act in a similar manner; he must absorb what he needs (put to use what his father had taught him) and allow the rest to enter (allow the negative memories to dissolve). He must learn that nature is neither all benign (333). It cannot be willed, but must be allowed to run in its course (336).

The degree of Remigio's ignorance concerning life's forces is made apparent in his desire to best his father, to transmute Berto. Unknown to him, since he had not yet been initiated into the world of men, that transmutation can only occur once one's ego-consciousness has been destroyed--reduced to its own state of concio. Therefore, he could not yet be Berto's agent, not until he experienced the freedom of an egoless consciousness. To even hope of success in transmuting Berto, he had to be worthy of belonging. Before he could do that he had to atone for his crime, to conquer his Oedipal drive.

#### 4.2.3 Oedipus Complex:

Of all the imprints in Il podere the most discernable are those which are associated with the Oedipal complex: 1) the return of the son, 2) mistrust of youth, 3) filial guilt, 4) strong maternal attachments, 5) self-mutilation and 6) an inability of its social culture to accept the autochthonous nature of man.<sup>74</sup> It is these forces that our protagonist must overcome if he is to fulfill his own destiny.

Remigio would probably have not returned had he know the price of atonement (297), and of entrance into society. Though, non-atonement, denied paternal forgiveness, meant debarment from the upper social status, he nevertheless catapulted himself into the role of padrone:

... capì che gli sarebbero piaciute per la prima volta; e che doveva amarle, perché non c'era altro per lui (294).

Confident that his new role as padrone was a new beginning and he could now participate and develop freely into an exemplary social figure (336-37), he strove to surpass his father by salvaging that which had been brought to ruin by his father's cancrena (285). At best, his efforts proved illusory, momentary respites as if tying "un cero ... con uno spago" (293): 1) Giulia's pilfering was temporarily suspended, 2) the loyalty of the assalariati was never secured (331), and 3) bourgeoisie vultures were held at bay only for a while.

Remigio's efforts to absorb his father's role were doomed from the inset. Too many factors were set against him. Foremost among these was his youth, the lack of paternal socializing guidance. Though the unsocialized youth has a place (383, 391, 442) in that social structure, it is not in the running the affairs of a podere. The taming of nature, l'usufruire del podere, is left to the elders (313). Even if Remigio had acquired the necessary agrono-

mic knowhow, he could not be allowed to maintain il podere. Society is flexible enough to accept challenges, but not defeat. If it were to accept a raw unsocialized youth to manage the substructure of its existence--farm husbandry--it would be a statement of self-negation. Social status can only be attained if one observes the established pre-conditions. Not even the misfit Berto challenges those pre-conditions. Like the rest he too is a victim, "non andavo d'accordo con il fattore giovane" (382), of the given order, and also its agent because his energies are now directed against Remigio. Berto, refuses to change, to challenge the social structure. His brute energies are dissipated against individuals. Thus, neither he nor anyone else challenges the premise of youth's unsuitability, that he is a disruptor of domestic harmony.

The socialized youth is envied because it has not yet been caught in life's social web, as the elders were:

Ormai sono presa ach'io con il laccio al  
collo e devo fare quel che vuole il destino (441)

explaining why it was mistrusted:

Tu sei una bambina, e devi tenere il tuo posto (431)

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... non aveva nessuna stima del Neretti: È ancora  
un ragazzo ... e non ha giudizio ne meno per se (355).

The elders, those who recognize il laccio al collo, were beyond reproach, "quel che dicono i vecchi è vero". Thus, it is not youth per se which is distrusted, but their lack of social conformity (383, 391, 442). Their refusal to accept the tragic. Sforzi's position gives credence to this. Though young, "era molto giovane" (323), he belonged. Neretti, on the other hand, who was somewhat older, "aveva trentadue anni" (307), is not yet a fully

accredited member (355). Sforzi is, because he had surrendered himself to society. He wore the cloak of the Emperor.<sup>15</sup> Remigio could not be accepted, not until he too learned to wear the cloak.

Remigio's second Oedipal barrier was his (carried) guilt over having spurned paternal guidance. This guilt denied him the courage and confidence needed for carrying out positive action. It gave rise to self-abusement and a need for atonement. Therefore, he unconsciously sought to ruin himself and il podere as well. He neither insures the harvest nor listens to the advice of those who know better such as Neretti (418), and Bubbolo (324). He prefers to listen to his own inexperience--the child of imprinted action--and be carried away by the affairs of women.

When not dominated by fear or guilt, he listens and watches those who were practical, hoping to learn, d'imparare, to prepare himself for social acceptance--to prove that he could do it alone (hubris). Outside those rare moments just mentioned, his actions are female oriented and directed. It is women who determined his future--at least up to the moment he was able to reconcile himself with them (441). His attraction for the womb of la Casuccia and of la Tressa, reinforced by Luigia's advice not to sell (322), and his obsession with destroying Giulia's hopes for la Casuccia (401) kept him from fulfilling his destiny. Thus immersed in a world of women but confronted by the affairs of men, torn between internal action (the need for self-chastisement) and external action (the need to outperform his father) (336-37) Remigio is rent immobile. He is a prisoner of life's paradox: should he act to satisfy his own image (which is in harmony with his own personal or private experiences of the real self) with himself, or should he act to satisfy his own image which ought to be in harmony with the real of the social order?

Remigio's nemesis is: should he accept society's dictum as expressed by Bianconi:

Il suo dovere era di restare in famiglia e di obbedire al padre (350).

and be answerable to the given family structure, or should he fulfill his own internal needs? If he rebels prematurely, there can be no escape from the wrath of society:

un figlio che va via di casa, qualunque possono essere stati i prestiti, d'essere gastigato (350)

Society is structured in such manner as to discourage rebellion: both its infrastructure (the family) and its superstructure (God, the judiciary and economic systems) discourage the disruption of the status quo. Thus whenever one rebels justification can be found within the superstructure, as Berto's words indicate:

... queste cose non avvengono senza che Dio non le desideri (434).

Remigio wavers. When he first left, age thirteen,<sup>16</sup> he did so out of frustration and the need for escape rather than out of knowledge (287). After seven years he returned hoping for immediate social incorporation, to be amato e rispettato (296). Since love and respect were missing, he set in search of them. At first he turned towards the most respectable social member, Pollastri (309), when Pollastri proved inadequate, he turned to the oldest, Picciòlo (442-43). Different as they were (one representing the bourgeoisie and the other the spiritual-magical world) (366) neither was able to satisfy his needs. Both were products of the same society--a society which was alien to his hearth. Therefore his thoughts turned once again to exile:

Ogni cosa gli parve contro; e quel cielo così azzurro pareva che gli disse di andarsene e di rinunciare ai suoi propositi (421).

Incapable of deciding, he incubates himself, rejecting most social contacts. He rejects Luigia's empathy (414), Neretti's desire for friendship (307-08) and even contact with his assalariati. He is like the "calabrone (che) cadde nell'acqua" (381), a creature in an alien element. If incorporation is to occur it can only be in that society where he can be one with himself and others. The only place where Remigio is able to find peace and solace is by dissociating himself from society. He attains this whenever he allows himself to feel one with the land and nature either in la Tressa, or in the solitude of la Casuccia (308-09, 331). In those moments he experiences a oneness with the self, mother Earth and the cosmos.

Men are born from the earth. The moment they emerge they can either be dead (as the still-born calf) (431-33), incapable of walking or incapable of walking properly, as with the bought calf (393). At life's end they once again limp forward (443) or sideways (321) until they are unable to stand:

Sa chi è morto? Quel calzolaio che  
stava vicino alla chiesa del Carmine (326).

In death both youth and the aged come full circle for the end is also the beginning. It signifies a new start, as Giacomo's death did for Remigio.

Life exists because it feeds on death. When society or an individual refuses to accept the above reality, it/he is forced to exist either in a state of neurosis and/or to live in a life of ritual--a ritual of purification, i.e., Mass (325-26), regicide (287), self-destruction (446). Thus, Remigio's existence evolves around acts of purification, at least until he is able to overcome his Oedipal guilt-complex. Out of the corpse of his father he must find his own reason for being. In such manner, he affirms man's autochthonous nature (287, 325-26, 443, 446).

Aside from serving to satisfy Remigio's need for atonement, self-mutila-

tion constituted an act of passage. Whenever a rite de passage occurs there must be an agent of transport, a father or his surrogate. The initiate must be transported by someone who understands the ways of that society. If on the other hand the rite is to be a spiritual passage out of society, then that agent must simultaneously be in society as well as out of it and be one with the transportee and yet different from him. Of all the characters, Berto is the only one which fits that description.

Remigion choses Berto to be his spiritual agent (445-46) because the two are one and the same. Both exist at the fringe of society; they are in it yet are asked or forced to leave it. Both live in la Casuccia and are ejected from it by il padrone, Giacomo (328). The life of each took a dramatic turn at twenty. The agents which gave their lives a new direction are women (382). Their volatility is partially restrained by women (434). The fate of one and the other are inextrinsically tied together (446). Their differences also complement. Remigio is the honest blonde naive actionless dreamer while Berto is the dark sinister violent villain (328). One is full of hate while the other is full of remorse. One's compassion towards animals (433) is the other's cruelty (426-27). One wishes to diminish strife (356), the other intensify it (381-82). Remigio keeps his innermost thoughts and opinions to himself; Berto has no secrets. While Berto is all that which Remigio fears and even desires to be (294), Remigion is all that which Berto despises but wishes to have.

Remigio's final act not only atones for his crime but also re-affirms his first act of rebellion. He proves that he no longer has need of his father or any established member of that social group to carry him to his last sphere. By choosing his alter-ego, Berto the man of action, to act as his agent of passage he reaffirms the innate existence of the mythic imprints in each one of us. The child has it in him to be his own father, to trans-



port himself from one mythic sphere to the next. When the father cannot be or ceases to be an adequate agent, the child has it within himself all the necessary needs for auto-transport.<sup>17</sup>

#### 4.24 The child's world:

So far it has been observed that a return to a metaphysical womb is essential in that it: 1) gives an awareness of one's potential, 2) reaffirms the value of the maternal archetype, 3) enhances independence and responsibility, and 4) give pause for analysis. In sum, the womb offers time to develop one's concept of how the universe ought to be (336-37). Each retreat functions as an aggiornamento of one's imprints with life's new realities (330-1, 381, 421, 436), and gives pause for a shattered ego to re-experience liberation and selfworth.<sup>18</sup> If the individual is allowed to emerge on his own without any jarring disruptions he will sally forth with new confidences anxious to join, to assert a place in society and to share his world view with others (332-33). Such was Remigio's case. But he re-emerged from his Campiglian maternal exile unprepared having been spared the direct guidance of the heavy hand of paternal censorship. Thus, while his ego was allowed to develop without having had to participate, his confidence for participation was hindered. The need to belong increased with the growth of solitude:

Solo! Era solo! (331)

Remigio had been deprived of the world of man, a world which ought to give balance to any youth of twenty. The world of participation is necessary because it removes negative self-destructive childhood imprints by replacing them with new ones. It strengthens the imprints of primary indissociation and directs them to respond to the needs of the community rather than the individual.<sup>19</sup> As a result of this deprivation he found himself at odds with

society.

Remigio's Weltanschauung is not that of society but one which is more closely associated with that of the child: a world of extremes, of dream and wish-fulfillment; a universe oriented to self-interests where natural events are interpreted to correspond to personal whims, wishes and desires:

Egli si dimenticò anche della matrigna  
e di Dinda; gli pareva d'esser solo e di amare.  
La Casuccia diventata così fertile che nell'aia  
non entravano più i prodotti del podere. Vendeva  
il fieno a carrate; faceva fare una messa dozzina  
di pagliai, tutti in fila, in modo che della strada  
fossero visti; le viti diventano grosse il doppio,  
con certi grappoli che gli ricordavano quanto da  
ragazzo gli eran piaciuti quelli della Terra Promessa  
... il grano faceva certe spighe che si senti-  
vano pesare tenendone anche una sola in mano.  
Berto, Tordo e Picciòlo diventavano buoni e così  
alacri, che anche da vecchi li teneva sempre con  
sé. (336-37).

For the child the world is highly personal; as long as the primary subjective needs are met the world is viewed as been productive, alive, animistic; but the moment it ceases to correspond positively then it appears to be vengeful and punishing:

... (si trovava) di fronte alle cose, come una ini-  
cizia. Anche il suo podere era un nemico ... La  
casa stessa gli era ostile: bastava guardare gli  
spigoli delle cantonate. Se non aveva l'animo di  
distruggerla e di ricostruirla, anche la casa non  
ce lo voleva. Da tutto, la dolcezza era sparita (410)

It is a world where subject and object constantly kaleidascope impeding the development of notions of individual freedom and self-dependence. A child who is denied proper family guidance during this stage is vulnerable to neurosis with sudden attacks of anxiety, obsessions, and phobias:

Questa volta, non poteva sapere di nulla;  
e si abbandonava completamente al suo sentimento (439)

Proper guidance at an early age is essential for feelings of freedom and independence rest not on any concrete foundation, but on the psychological. The slightest frustrated whim can suddenly destroy the child's fragile world:

Ma, benchè non avesse più pensato a Dio  
da tanti anni, non poteva credere che Dio volesse  
annientarlo a quel modo. Che cosa aveva fatto  
di male? Perché non poteva esistere anche la sua  
volontà? (439)

causing him to shoulder blame and responsibility for its collapse. Whenever that happens and the child finds himself alone, amidst the broken pieces of his imaginary world, whatever confidence had been gained in and from the womb will be momentary or for ever lost. Therefore, as the child's horizon expands beyond the womb, as he comes into contact with society, for: 1) his own security, 2) personal development and 3) social growth, the child seeks entrance into something more concrete. He seeks entrance into the groups, for it offers the feeling of being worthy, needed, appreciated, allowing for greater communication:

Remigio si sentiva portare via la testa, e  
camminava senza sapere dove andasse. Gli pareva di  
fare un chilometro ad ogni passo: e, quando gli  
veniva all'orecchio qualche parola di gente sconosciuta,  
si sarebbe fermato, come per stinto, a raccontare  
tutto. (439-40)

Remigio intuitively knows, if he enters the social world, then he must abandon the childhood world of participation, animism and artificialism behind. For the social world is a world gained not only by induced cultic initiation<sup>20</sup> but also through the expansion of the ego; that is, through the experience of interaction.

#### 4.2.5 The Social World:

By learning to identify with the inexhaustible forces of the group Remigio begins to re-discover his own strength and courage. He learns to 1) free himself from both the inward oriented maternal pull, 2) liberate himself from his dependency on nature's whims and 3) experience the seductive powers of the tribe. Thus, he too longs to lose his ego, to be guided by the will and rules of the group:

... e sentiva che perfino le viti e il grano si  
farebbero amare soltanto se egli impedisse a qualunque  
altro di diventare il proprietario. (410)

In summary, his solitude and felt experiences combined with the tribal lure, forces him to expand his horizon beyond the boundaries of his family (442), and come to terms with an expanded cosmos.

As already noted in his sojourn in la Casuccia, Remigio learns to surmount his childhood maternal dependency imprints 1) through self-assertion--first from the women and later from the men (423-26, 445)--2) by accepting aid from others (326) and 3) eroding where and when possible the power, influence and vitality of the female-ogresses (444).

If Remigio is to succeed he must dominion over the fulcrum of events, over women, because though women give life, they lack the physical and emotional fortitude to sustain it. It is the men and society which provide the necessary end aid. After all does not Ciambelle and the tribunale attest to this (444-45)? Without their aid would not Giulia's causa have failed? Unlike the men, women stagnate growth. They are instruments of social failure. They are not in tune with the timing of social maturity. They prematurely lead Berto and Remigio out of their secure worlds:

Presi moglie e andai a stare un miglio più  
in la (382),

into exile. They 1) allow love to be subjugated to interests:

Sai che la zia si è messa a ridere perché non  
ci siamo baciati? Lei non sa che prima noi vogliamo  
pensare ai denari (402);

2) deprive Remigio of his natural development by tormenting him at home  
(nella Casuccia e nella Tressa); 3) rob him of what is rightfully his (298);  
4) persecute him through the courts, acting as instruments of jealous so-  
cial revenge, and guardians of society's morality (349-52); 5) rallie so-  
ciety's forces against the improperly socialized (349-52). They are the  
propellants of coercive socialization.

Before Remigio can become a member in good standing of the community  
he learns to recognize the social roles played by each gender. In so doing  
he experiences the meaning of humility. Humility is a learned imprint im-  
posed by family and society. Intuitively aware of the need for social com-  
munion, Remigio seeks that experience (submission to a higher order) through  
surrogate fathers: Pollastri, Picciòlo, Neretti and Berto. Though all, in  
their way, induced the desired humility:

1) Pollastri:

Allora, finse di adirarsi, mostrandosi inispettito  
... Remigio, tanto imbarazzato che si vergognava (316-17),

2) Picciòlo demonstrates it by example--not only is he the most physically  
distorted and oldest but also the most humble of the male figures.

Remigio ci pativa, e se con dolcezza gli  
spiegava quel che aveva voluto dire, l'assalariato  
mostrava di non esserne contento; e, qualche volta  
addirittura, disapprovava bestemmiando ... vedendo  
che Remigio ne restava confuso e mortificato (329),

and 4) Neretti by forcing Remigio to experience the ultimate degradation--  
to follow the advice of the most sterile member of the community, Luigia

(439-41). Though all can be candidates, as agents of transport none of the above prove adequate for the task: 1) Pollastri could only offer the world of Giacomo, 2) Picciòlo lacks the power and will to challenge, all he can offer is retreat into another non-personal institution--the church (366, 442-43, 3) Neretti, the unsought surrogate lacks social seniority, and 4) Berto is a social misfit.

Passage without the appropriate mentor dissipates desire and enthusiasm. Nevertheless, guidance must be found, if the 'otherness', the non-subjective, is ever to flower. In this manner, by experiencing the meaning of humility, obstacles of ignorance and disunity are overcome. In humility one is open to suggestions, to accept the will of the mentor(s). In Remigio's case the mentors are: society (since none of the surrogate alone proves adequate, though as a whole they do) and himself (since he intuitively turns to the right person along the way). His surrender (440-41, 445) states that now he depends on society for protection, stimulus and transport.

When society is viewed positively the act of surrendering becomes an act of participation. Thus it ceases to be an act of surrender; it becomes an act of participation:

... andò nel campo; quasi allegro. Parlò con  
tenerezza agli assalariati (441).

In social integration he experiences new strength, power and harmony of being--being at once oneself and yet something totally different. He experiences the intoxicating mystique of surrender and participation, of having a place where he could be noticed:

Nell'aia era come un incendio; le galline,  
accovacciate sotto la parata, crocchiolavano di rado; quasi  
non avessero più voce. Sembrava che dovessero diven-  
tare incapaci a muoversi di lì; come il muro dell'aia;

come le pietre. Egli si lasciava prendere del desiderio di sentirsi buono, e sognava che i pioppi della Tresso lo sapessero (441).

Unlike the maternal or the paternal spheres which allow entrance by way of filial bonds, society's entrance credentials are submission and satisfaction in the knowledge of being no more than a functioning part. Contentment is found not in being only a part but in experiencing the power of being one of the group at the same time being the group. As noted, once one enters society group guidance is essential. The guide(s) teache(s) that youthful confidence and excesses ought to be dominated. These guides point to the road of moderation, compromise and participation, of sharing (439-41). Without such curbing one can neither mentally nor emotionally reach the final unifying sphere of the cosmic order. Therefore, it becomes the main responsibility of the tribe to remove the last remaining vestiges of ego-resisting barriers. This is taught to be a necessary act (the removal of the ego-barriers) if one wishes to be prepared for the ultimate zone.

In summary, Remigio, alone aided by his own mythic direction realizes the need for redirecting the negative impulses (434) from crude destructive energies to the positive ones of belonging (410). His first positive act is to sever the umbilical cord (441). It is not a violent sudden action, but a slow evolvment which begins with 1) his return, soon followed by 2) the death of his father, 3) confrontation with the ogress forces of life, and 4) his first command to the assalariati. Though the above events lead to social integration, Remigio's attempted integration fails, because he wishes to enter under his own terms. His first acts of communication do not ask but demand immediate acceptance: with the assalariati as a command (293, 295), and with Giulia as an act of a silent violence (293).

Nevertheless, as each task is confronted, Remigio eventually proves himself: 1) he does not retreat from il podere, but remains to fight, 2) he faces up to the feminine forces (440-41), and 5) even has them respond positively to his needs (445-46). With the above achieved, a new world opens. It is the world of men where 1) communication improves (446), 2) fear: "voleva ... sorridergli; ma ... aveva paura" (446), is met without resorting to womb-support, and 3) confrontation between the image of the self, of the father and of the past becomes possible:

Remigio, chiusosi in camera, si guardò lungamente allo specchio, con la faccia scomposta; e disse a voce alta:  
-- Perché mi odia a quel modo?  
Spogliandosi, preso da un malessere sempre più vivo, pensò alla vacca ed al vitello morto; e si sentì confortare (435). 22

Thus he is able to meet society head on. Society's final act of initiation, stripping Remigio of all his worldly possessions (445), leaves him unmoved. Remigio finds his own internal rhythm. No longer can society impose. He is above and beyond it. Society's judgment has little or no relevance. His imprints of growth demand that he move into the next sphere, when ready. Thus begins his quest, his search for a new timone (445).

Once he reaches this stage of awareness, for the first time, he commands with confidence and leads not follows (445-46) while his negative self, his alter-ego follows. It is only from then on that those forces which had always plagued his progress become supportive. The assalariata, Cecchina

... la donna più maldicente che ci fosse  
four di Porta Romana (328),

shows her concern for him. This concern serves to underline the extent of Remigio's success in transcending the maternal as well as the social sphere (445). Remigio finally becomes his own person. He succeeds in passing from



the lonely sphere of the womb and ego to that of communion and ultimate knowledge. He does so not only by breaking with the past, but also by not forgetting it. His feet remain firmly planted in the soil, experiencing its pain as well as its bliss--a Christian bliss (as suggested by Christ's crown of thorns) during his passage to salvation:

"... i piedi ci spinavono bene" (446).

In so doing, a new world of multiple possibilities open:

... pensò ... vide ... pensò (446).

As already noted not only does our hero overcome the fascinatium tremendum of the female order but also learns to deal with the world of the father and society. He comes to terms with il podere, a symbol of three spheres.

Like a typical mythological hero, Remigio rejects both society and that which led him to it. He rejects it for a world which is unknown, but not unfelt, the world whose roots are to be found in the self. Rejection is necessary because in so doing it serves to reanimate the mythic imprints. Each rejection is accompanied by separation from the practical world in order to find sustenance in the metaphysical world. The act of rejection calls (forth) for one's rebirth.

#### 4.2.6 The last sphere:

As Remigio searches to bring his individual life into accord with the will of the Whole, his awareness of society's shortcomings increases. Unlike the assalariato Berto he does not compare the past to the present nor does he look to it for a remedy:

... una volta facevano grandi feste da pertutto; e ora, invece è silenzio da pertutto. E non si sente dire più niente (382-83).

He cannot look to the past for his past reflects only remembrances of sterility (296). Moreover fixation with the past leads away from the mythic: mythic imprinting is future oriented. Intuitively aware, Remigio looks to the future and searches to lead Berto in that direction:

Il lunedì mattina, Remigio gli disse di prendere l'accetta e di andare con lui a buttare giù una cascia, con la quale voleva rifare il timone del carro (445),

For the first time he leads; he saw the need for a better society. A society which would not brutally mold (443) the individual to given paternal traditions but would allow him to adjust and exist in harmony with the other and with nature. Remigio found that place not in the maternal world (symbolized by the feminine nouns: la Casuccia, l'aia, la camera, la Tressa) nor in the midst of the paternal (il potere), but rather at the edge of the father's domain: alla proda del confine. His world is not one which is dominated by either masculine nor feminine forces, but one where the two find accommodation: alla proda (feminine) combine with del confine (masculine). Remigio searches for the Androgenous.

If Remigion rejects his father's society it was not because he felt ostracized but because he discovered it to be a fruit of a "tronco di un melo nero e marcio" (435), a product of a dead mythology. When mythology is allowed to concretize and still serve as a socializing model, its production will not only be limited but also deficient; its creation will be similar to that of il melo: "foglie stente e di un verde patito" (435). It generates a spiritless world void of meaning (404-05) where there can be no possibilities of permanent happiness (382). It is demythologized, divisive, lacking even a semblance of unity. Where 1) the aged revenge themselves upon the young, 2) women upon men, and 3) men upon beasts (427). The pollution is all-encompassing and would have absorbed Remigio too if he had not been deprived of it

during his formative years; had he not escaped the full socializing impact of a castrating Giacomo (296). Had he not escaped, his fate would have been similar to that of the assalariati.

The world of the assalariati has no escape. One either submits to it, as Picciòlo and Tordo did, or rebel, as Berto's non-conformity demonstrates. Though the three look to different directions for salvation none appear to be the better for it. Picciòlo looks to religion (443). Berto, to death: "vorrei entrare sotto terra" (383). And Tordo, to nothingness: "L'uomo non e mai contento" (382).

It is this hopelessness, 1) the denial of adequate socializing elements, 2) the deprivation of a voice, and 3) the inability to rise beyond social quagmire which incubates physical and non-physical violence. All are engulfed by it, even the outsider: like Remigio "(che) quasi gli s'avvento" (434).

Whenever a society fails 1) to adequately socialize, 2) to deprive one of a voice and 3) to accentuate the primary goals of man, it encourages violence; violence becomes the only meaningful means of communication. It offers: 1) expression, 2) escape, 3) separation and 4) catharsis. Expression because it comments; escape because it removes one from the norm; separation because it distinguishes one from norm; and catharsis because it releases one's incubated tensions. But more than these, violence becomes the most appropriate weapon for social revenge. It threatens to remove man, from the very fabric of society. For that reason Remigio intuitively employs it against a society which while it gives a semblance of protection it only denies him. With one final violent and ironic act, Remigio denies society's recipient (the present self) and agent (his future socialized self) (446).

Remigio chooses to leave society not because he fails to attain it's goals--1) to develop into a responsible individual (350-51), and 2) to propagate (382)--but because these goals are too limited--they lack any element of the abstract. Thus he turns to the final mythological zone the ultimate abstraction, the space beyond Death.

In his short apprenticeship as master of la Casuccia, Remigio concludes that the rot of society is its very fabric, not its debilitated members:

In mezzo a un prato ... c'era steso in  
terra il tronco di un melo, nero e marcio; che  
però aveva alcune foglie stente d di un verde  
patito (435).

Therefore if change is to be effected, it will not be by pruning its branches but by attacking the trunk:

. . . "buttare giù . . . per rifare il timone" (445).

In other words, he has to detach himself from it.

From such a world view, death, an end to man's earthly goals, ceases to be a menace (446)--as it once did during Remigio's neophyte days when he wept for Moses (337). Since that moment of empathy for Moses, his concept of death metamorphisized. It no longer marks an end, but becomes a rite de passage. It does not serve as an avenue of escape from the anxiety of failure but as a vehicle of transport into the calm of transcendence, where success or floundering become irrelevant. It is a passage into the androgenous where the male forces (father, society, God) and the female forces (mother, womb, breast) merge together and neutralize. For that reason the timone was not found in la Tressa or la Casuccia but "alla proda del confine, del potere", where man had not tampered with nature:

"(dove) non c'erano più le zolle dell'aratura" (446),

where the male, il confine, and the female, la proda sphere came together.

This androgenous vision becomes the ultimate goal, in that it offers liberation from the anxiety created by the separation of opposites. Here men, women and nature become One.

To reach that zone, Remigio chooses the left path, the path of the senses. He does this to demonstrate that 1) his father's society was not in touch with man's senses and 2) the deprivation of these senses will cause its eventual destruction. Non-conventional escape affirms that only new approaches can offer hope. Remigio found hope in that which grows free from the established body:

Quando furono alla proda, penso: Quest'altre  
cascie, tra due anni, saranno cresciute! "Vide un  
pero giovane, che ancora non aveva il pedano forte,  
e penso: "Farà presto le pere e sono di qualita buona!"  
(446).

His final act demonstrates that even at the cost of the self (l'uva acerba) the old and the established (le rame dei frutti) must be destroyed to make way for youth (le cascie) (446). But before the new can emerge the State of Chaos must have its day (446). All things must first come together: Remigio, grandinata, pampini, uva acerba, rame, frutti schiantati, l'incerato del carro, "il carro che una volta portò il letame ai campi" (293). From Chaos all things are born (295), for nature re-animates (327), re-creates, regenerates.

Remigio prepares himself for the ultimate passage by choosing to break with each of the past shelters. He does not forget, he experiences them subjectively and objectively. In this manner he is able to detach himself from the concrete. Thus, even though he fears Death (337), he can also welcome it (383, 446). To do so, without mythological imprinting this final awareness would have been denied. Objectively Death can be made to sound rational even

attractive, but only he who has experienced all the mythological spheres can feel its ultimate significance that is why it is Remigio, not Berto who walks towards it.

Throughout his stay in il podere, Remigio remains alone, despite Neretti's and Picciòlo's sincere desire to help. All the sustenance he receives for self-progression spring from his own internal world, from mythic imprints (296, 327, 330, 333, 336, 356, 381, 421, 436, 439, 442). Despite imposed social obstacles, it was those imprints which sustained, aided him to flowerr in order that he may find his place in the multifoliate rose. His intuition told him 1) he could not be dissolved away to form an entity which was not in keeping with Nature and 2) he is an important entity unto himself. He intuitively perceives 1) that man can neither be absorbed nor subjugated unless he so desires and 2) that man can be master of his final destiny.

#### 4.3.0. Conclusion on Il podere:

4.3.1 The first function of mythology and its accompanying mythological images is to serve the individual, in this case Remigio. Mythology aids in breaking through personal limitations, it transports the mind past the impediments of fear (self-doubt), resignation (to act according to other's expectations) and desire (to conform). It allows one's experiences to illuminate, to penetrate, transporting one from the insecure maternal world of the self to the secure androgenous world of the All. In this manner Remigio is able to challenge and conquer the imposed obstacles with which universal man must come to terms with: 1) an unstable family, 2) an inward world out of tune with the empirical and 3) a staid sterile society. In coming to terms with the above, Remigio underlines the importance of the individual, showing that 1) the structure of the individual's interiority is the structure of mythological development and 2) the symbolic expressions which solicit our

deepest needs and experiences and aspirations though ethnic on the surface in fact stem from the elementary (archetype).

4.3.2 The second function of mythology is to aid in formulating a cosmological image which is in keeping with current sociological needs (both that of the author and the critic). Thus exposing society's shortcomings. This exposure functions: 1) to bring about its change, 2) to evoke attention, and 3) to solicit public empathy.

The novel, an instrument of social conscentization must serve mythology, just as mythology serves the novel (as the above points out). The novel can become an instrument, an 'indispensable vehicle and structure of myth', its components are never randomly selected. This does not imply a conscious selection, but it does imply a selection that comes from the (h)earth. Thus the setting takes on a major importance; it not only expresses a choice of the (h)earth, a search for peace and harmony, but also it maximizes its reader's conscentization process and prepares him to adapt to the author's symbolic tools.

Il podere's setting is 1900 Siena. A town chosen because 1) it was the author's home, freeing him from linguistic and symbolic inhibitions and 2) it was the birthplace of 'la madre lingua'. The historical period is one of cultural transformation, of crisis, of social unrest. A time which hinted at greater social mobility (il tipografo, Ciambella's aspirations are one with those of the white collar workers, to gain a podere (397-405), but also a time where such mobility was frustrated, hampered by established social structures and mores.

Mythology involves the fashioning of a universe where social and mystical aspirations are one. For this reason the author, Tozzi introduces the theme of death with its consequential divisions of spoils. By employing this

theme he is able to demonstrate mythology's antitheses: 1) human indifference and 2) the imbalanced importance given to cultural productions. In choosing that theme Tozzi not only emphasizes social aspirations (as illustrated by the pursued goals of the socially mobile protagonists) but also social direction (as indicated by the novel's symbols of power: such as social status and wealth).

All characters ensnared in the given social setting: 1) have similar goals, 2) are indifferent and unsympathetic to the needs of others, and 3) search for a way to better oneself. Their goals and direction are cultural creations. They conflict with what Richard E. Leakey maintains to be man's natural needs<sup>21</sup>. The need for social contact and the need for cooperation. This conflict gives rise to mythology: the need for harmonization, to re-direct man's wants so that they are again one with the (h)earth and mind.

Thus the novel directs the reader's attention to the existing disharmony offering a solution: a return to the Earth. It offers an agrarian magico-spiritual cosmological image.

This agrarian cosmological image is outlined and emphasized by 1) the sympathies shown to it by the main protagonists, 2) the given setting, 3) attention given to describing nature (330-31, 336, 435, 436, for some), 4) lack of attention paid to cultural productions ("non si distinguevano bene") (309) and 5) the employment of agrarian-nature word association: Giulia with cagna (351), Berto with occhi porcini (328), Luigia with musettino a topo (323), Pollastri with buzzo a pera (309), Bianconi with un sorriso ... da scimmia (290).

Remigio turns to the soil to find an answer not in response to imposed maternal ties but because the social institutions he meets fail to respond to the needs of the individual. Religion, an institution which should offer a



sustaining cosmological structure, does not do so. The Church ceases to function spiritually, it too has been absorbed, it has surrendered to the forces of a concretized and concretizing mythology: 1) Giulia turns to God in order that he will become an instrument of punishment (346), 2) the sign of the cross atop of the covoni di grano (366) is ineffective against human resentment (416) and 3) the madonna nella stalla could neither save il podere nor the stillborn calf (431-33)). In fact, the Church is so insignificant that a number of the novel's protagonists feel some of its functions can be better accomplished by "un cencio in cima a un palo" (364). The institutionalized Church provides no symbol or gesture which can be termed as 'though-transcending'. Like all the other social structures (the court, the family) whose main functions should aid the individual's search for truth, the Church proves to be equally sterile and ineffective.

Nowhere is there any solid rock of socio-religious authority where those who are afraid to face the unknown obstacles alone can turn to. One is forced to search for truth and the attainment of harmony outside the dissolving reach of society. He must turn to the individual's personal experiences. Thus intuitively Remigio is 1) in sympathy with those who do not form the governing social structures, 2) disparaging and critical towards those who live off the avails of others, and 3) in sympathy with those who till the soil.

4.3.3. The third mythological function points to the philosophy of experience. It demonstrates that social and moral functions are in a constant state of flux. This awareness can be attained when one has absorbed knowledge through experience, especially the knowledge that birth has its own agony. This is a knowledge which is determined by mythological imprinting and it in turn determines both the degree and the direction of the social and moral flux. That is to say, the

length of stay in society is directly determined by the gestation period spent in previous mythological spheres. Thus Remigio's brief socialization becomes self-explanatory. It in turn gives its particular value and coloration to the given themes, i.e., theme of socialization.

The importance of socialization must be stressed, for only once the individual has experienced society's paradoxes will he be able to accept the authority of his own conscience. Before this can be done, he must taste society's offered security, the lessening of self-responsibility. In other words, he must experience society's offered fatalism. Fatalism offers no personal growth; to escape its allurements one must do as Remigio does, learn to transvalue earlier learned values. This is done by the sharpening of personal felt-experienced problems and challenging society, avoiding passivity at all costs. If change is what is desired utmost, either for the benefit of the self or other, then the challenge must be physical and its development, its perception of the problem must be psychological. Thus the theme of challenge provides the structure around which the novel develops. The psychological becomes the sub-structure, and mimesis of experience its superstructure.

Mimesis serves to embellish adding to the novels particular hue and coloration. That embellishment aids in the transmission of the met experiences. It is these experiences construing a particular philosophy which becomes the handmaid of the psychological.

4.3.4 The fourth mythological function is the psychological: the fostering of the individual within his own cosmos. As observed, the individual's social imprinting allows him to experience society in a particular way. For Remigio, his experienced society is violent, dehumanizing and brutal. Due to his reaction to that society, Remigio like all mythological figures demonstrates 1) what components of that particular society are dangerous and 2) points to a

way out. Remigio's offered escape is the path of nihilism. There can be no other way, for Giacomo's society is destructive and spares no one. Remigio's act underlines the importance of the individual. He demonstrates that each of us has but one life and that it must be lived in accordance to personal will, rather than being in accordance with the expectation of others.

If Remigio is successful, it is because mythological imprints, mythology allows him time to pause, to retreat from the world, time to reflect upon the source of his difficulties. He becomes detached, not by leaving the confines of society but by transferring himself from the external to the internal world. This approach of self-questioning shows hope for personal transformation, permitting an insignificant individual to act, to become a person of some merit. It allows him to move so that he may recast the function of his own demon and realign himself with the wider interests of humanity. He learns not to act for himself alone but also for the All. Victory is secured in refusing total conformity and maintaining his critique. In this manner his final act becomes non-tragic. It surpasses the tragic. It is an act filled with hope. It is cathartic. By taking action which is outside the norm of the social setting it should stir emotions, spur discussion, and thus set a precedent for social transformation. It ought to move society out of its own sluggishness.

Remigio's challenge and final act transmutes him into a pharmakos figure, a scapegoat. As such he becomes an instrument of social change. He diverts attention from his own acts of inhumanity (299, 406) focusing attention on society. In so doing he aligns most of the novel's characters against himself, and wins the reader's sympathies. He does so by resurrecting the pharmakos archetype (syndrome) in each one of us, evoking a brechtian catharsis.

He leads the audience to examine their own roles in society. Thus his final act becomes an instrument of moral instruction.

Mythic literature, unlike non-mythic literature, follows the epic mode. It constantly takes its readers back, ever re-affirming man's roots. A cessation of this process endangers the mythic symbols threatening to fossilize them. If these symbols are denied a link with the source further growth is impeded leaving man to flounder in an alien world. In forgetting the past, the source, man moves away from the abstract, filling its space with the insecurity of the concrete. Without abstraction man lives in a world which lacks ultimate meaning, forgetting, becoming unaware that the concrete is transitory, subject to erosion and change. The abstract is man's life-line. It alone is impervious to man's tampering. Mythology's main function is to remind us that life begins and ends in the abstract and that we are never removed from it. It thus serves to give balance to our lives by harmonizing the internal with the external, reminding us of the transitory nature of things. It serves to give equal value to the total composition: 1) the psychological needs, 2) the sociological requirements, 3) the cosmological aspirations and 4) the mystical-metaphysical experiences.

4.4.0

Footnotes

1. Supra, 3.4.2.
2. Supra, 3.4.1.
3. Federigo Tozzi, Opere: i romanzi (Firenze, Vallecchi editore, 1961). Subsequent references to this work will be noted parenthetically by page number in the text, p. 289.
4. Earl W. Count, "Myth as a World View: a Biosocial Synthesis", in Culture in History: Essays in Honor of Paul Radin, ed. Stanley Diamond (New York, N.Y., Columbia University Press, 1960) pp. 580-627.
5. Harry Slochower, Mythopoesis: Myth Patterns in the Literary Classics (Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1970), p. 24.
6. Joseph Campbell, The Flight of the Wild Gander (Chicago, Henry Regnery Co., 1972), pp. 68-69.
7. Supra, 3.2.2.
8. Sigmund Freud, "The Passing of the Oedipus-Complex", in Collected Papers vol. II (London, The Hogarth Press, 1933), pp. 269-76.
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12. Campbell, Primitive Mythology, pp. 313-314.
13. Tozzi, Opere, Ch. I & Ch. IV, pp. 285-293, and 299-305.
14. Edmund Leach, Levi-Strauss (London, Fontana Books, 1970), pp. 83-94.
15. Claude Levi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology (Garden City, N.Y. Doubleday & Co., Inc. 1967), pp. 109-215.
16. Norman O. Brown, Love's Body (New York, Vintage Books, 1966) p. 125.
17. Supra, 3.4.0.
18. Campbell, Primitive Mythology, pp. 78-88.
19. Ibid., p. 81.
20. Supra, 3.2.5.

21. Richard E. Leakey and Roger Lewin, People of the Lake, (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1978), p. 93.

22. Berto incorporates all the above mentioned elements.

#### 5.1.0 Conclusion:

As already observed, the theorists who rejected the idea that myth is literature (or is at least an important component of it) do so because they maintain that culture has supplanted the age of 'true myth'; to do otherwise would deny their particular culture cosmology.

We have also observed that the term "myth" can be ambiguous, in addition we have noted how myth definitions and interpretations (as to meaning and function) merge into one of two opposing camps: the positivists and the neo-romantics; the focus of division being: "whether myth exists or not for modern man". While the positivists maintain that in Western Society only pseudo-myths can exist, the neo-romantics vehemently oppose this view. They claim that myth is living force--an ever-present reality which exists at all cultural levels and societies including the Western.<sup>1</sup>

It has also been pointed out that the positivist's stance is bound by a 'distinct dialectical world view' while that of the neo-romantic's is definitely abstract in nature. Therefore, it becomes apparent that any study of myth cannot proceed without 1) an examination of the cultural background of the critic/writer, 2) an examination of the theoretical base, and 3) an understanding of the critic/writer's purpose. Without the above, the reader would not be aware of whom the critic/writer was addressing. For example, in attempting to demonstrate that myth can neither be art nor literature, the anti-myth critics and myth skeptics address themselves to the Hegelian oriented individual. To give added luster to their work they turn to various supporting sources: 1) the philosophical works of Ernst Cassirer, Susanne Langer and George Sorel, 2) the psychological works of Sigmund Freud, Carl G. Jung and Otto Rank, and 3) the literary works of Sir James Frazer, Rene Wellek and 'the social realists',

just to mention some. Such pantheon of luminaries provide more than adequate leverage for upholding any of the following, discrediting concepts on myth and to its literary applicability: 1) myth is non-existent in Western Society, 2) myth is non-narrative, 3) myth denies the individual, 4) myth is non-mimetic, 5) myth is non-moral, and 6) myth is non-communicative. Thus, if some are swayed by the views and eminence of the above scholars or by their enumerated concepts they will, more likely than not, resist change, limiting their capacity to see myth as either literature or an important component of literature. Therefore, it becomes essential to know what the starting premise of the critic/writer is.

A similar case can be made for those who adhere to a 'narrow mythic view', be they subjective or dialectical. If myth is presented as either/or: 1) ritual paraphernalia,<sup>2</sup> 2) primitive scientific theory,<sup>3</sup> 3) wish fulfillment,<sup>4</sup> 4) group fantasy,<sup>5</sup> 5) justifier of non-logical actions,<sup>6</sup> 6) mediator of contradictions,<sup>7</sup> 7) archetype,<sup>8</sup> or 8) 'living reality',<sup>9</sup> it could severely restrain the range of myth's theoretical applicability. For instance, when myth is viewed as ritual paraphernalia only, it becomes subservient to ritual, therefore limited in expression. Viewed as a primitive scientific explanation, it divorces itself from any idea of self-fulfillment and the world of literature. Seen in terms of wish-fulfillment or group fantasy, myth's realm will be that of the dream and fairytale, a subject of limited literature. As a justifier of non-logical action, it functions as dogma or propaganda. As mediator of contradictions, it attaches itself to philosophy, political science and other related employers of 'steno-language'.<sup>10</sup> If viewed merely as an archetype, it serves best as a structure of symbolic meaning--as an icon, or  
11  
a metaphor. As neurosis, its direction is towards infantile activity. As



collective unconsciousness, its ultimate meaning remains an enigma. And finally, as a 'living reality', it exists beyond the grasp of theoretical thought; 'living reality' is lost during the act of transmission.

Accepting myth as 'limited function', regardless of partisan view, suggests a desire to employ it as a tool for imposing or strengthening a personal Weltanschauung. Under such conditions myth is denied. This does not imply that it ceases to be (despite interpretations or manipulations myth will run its own course and fulfill its own destiny), but it does imply an inability to absorb its total offered potential.

As already noted, myth is not a cultural production thus, scholars who are swayed by a particular cosmological perspective and tend to: 1) oversimplify, 2) over-generalize, and 3) choose the epigonal writers to exemplify myth's literary inadequacies will not be able to prevent myth's literary influence, but will be the poorer for the experience. Even if literary works are mediocre, sterile, fashionable gimmick, structured narrative in search of ennoblement, or literature of escape, as long as they are devised to: 1) communicate the search for a deep and common meaning within the self, 2) transmit self-discovery and felt experiences, and 3) employ mimesis as a means of revealing the universality of experience, they are literature of myth employment.

Myth analysis has a place, regardless of how limited. Though limited might have appeared its role once, with the advent of modernization mythic analysis will gain in impetus, because modern technology is restricting man's total potential.

Man's innate need for expression diminishes proportionately with acquired technology (the more time spent in concrete activities, the less time spent in pursuit of the abstract) and submission to what Luis Mumford calls the 'Myth of the Machine',<sup>12</sup> (accepting given 'sanctified' abstract solutions and hierarchies).

The reduction of 'true leisure' time both decreases the need for complex self-abstraction and increases imperviousness to the aesthetic. Without the aesthetic, existence become shallow and mechanical, totally lacking in individuality. If there is to be any salvation, it will not come from the destruction of the 'Machine' but from the rediscovery of the meaning and function of myth which will increase man's awareness of his own innate potential. Man's importance will be elevated. His threatened dignity will be reanimated because he will be reunited with that which is natural and universal. This will provide the depth of experience necessary for moments of epiphany. From this point of view myth criticism would seem to be essential for it shows the path to man's own worth. It directs him away from the seductive powers of the "termite colony"--away from the security of the social machine in which his position and role is akin to a cog in a wheel. Thus if critics were to turn their attention to the total function of myth they would be aiding man's liberation. That is, they would diminish the desire to remain attached to concrete activity and allow us to search instead for the true meaning of existence. Needless to say, the act would greatly increase the importance of the arts, of literature.

We cannot allow ourselves to dismiss a model of literary expansion on the grounds that it has little to say. If we do we are setting limitations to man's growth.

Myth criticism has made some great strides, but its work is far from complete. Present myth definitions can only be tentative probes, and will remain as such, so long as there is no common agreement to man's totality. What myth does suggest is that the expansion of man's horizon is both healthy and needed. This in turn implies that myth scholars will have to collaborate with those

who not only monitor cultural evolvement but also those who probe into cross-cultural experiences. As knowledge expands and a metalanguage will develop to probe into other culture's state of consciousness (consciousness which are qualitatively different from the "western normal state of consciousness")<sup>13</sup> our cultural perception will change and with it myth's definition will broaden, as will myth's applicability to literary analysis. This brings us to the final point of this thesis.

If myth analysis is valid for literature because literature is a cultural production and cultural productions are influenced by the mythic then the logical progression from here is to develop a myth analysis model which is operative also outside of literature and art.

5.2.0

Footnotes

1. John Knox, Myth and Truth: An Essay on the Language of Faith, (Charlottesville, The University Press of Virginia, 1964) p. 35.
2. Lord Raglan, The Hero (London, Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1936) p. 132.
3. Clyde Kluckhohn, "Myths and Rituals: a General Theory," in The Bobbs-Merrill Reprint Series in the Social Sciences (Harvard University, Harvard University Press, 1942), p. 74.
4. Otto Rank, The Myth of the Birth of the Hero and Other Writings, ed. Philip Freund (New York, N.Y., Vintage Press, 1964), p. 84.
5. Susanne K. Langer, Philosophy in a New Key (New York, N.Y., Mentor Books, 1951), p. 148.
6. Margaret Dalziel, "Myth in Modern English Literature," in Myth and the Modern Imagination, ed. Margaret Dalziel (Dunedin, University of Otago Press, 1967), p. 49.
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8. G.S. Kirk, Myth its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1970), p. 274.
9. Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality, trans. Willard R. Trask, New York, Harper and Row, Publishers, 1963), pp. 137-38.
10. Philip Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1962), pp. 13-17.
11. Harry Levin, The Gates of Horn: A Study of Five French Realists (New York, Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 470.
12. Sheila A. Gould, Dream and Reality Among Five North American Indian Peoples: An Examination of the Literature. (M.A. Thesis, The University of British Columbia, April 1978), p. 167.

6.0.0

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