Masks and Archetypes:
Jungian Theory and the play of character in
A Midsummer Night's Dream

This thesis is submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool, for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy,

by Alan Geoffrey Roberts.

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Degree being vizarded,

Th'unworthiest shows as fairly in the mask.

Troilus and Cressida (I.iii.84).

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Abstract

This thesis examines two approaches to dramatic characterisation: the psychological, which is drawn from the works of Jung; and the social and anthropological, drawn from the work of Lévi-Strauss and Vladimir Propp. Both these approaches are then applied to Shakespeare's use of character and plot in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This is done firstly to define an *archetype* and its function in the theatrical context; and secondly to distinguish such archetypes from dramatic stereotypes of character, which I have called *masks*. The Introduction lays out the reasons for this term and the range of the thesis, which is divided into three sections. Section I is the definition of an archetype, section II deals with universal representations as necessities in the structure of narrative, and section III relates both of these approaches to Shakespeare's *Dream*.

Chapter one draws from the work of Joseph Campbell on the unconscious as the instinctive level of response to the heightened stimulus that art generates. I contend that Shakespeare in using 'dream' imagery and 'fairy' universals is presenting an analogue for the unconscious, rediscovered by Jung from his patient's discourses and similar mythological systems. Chapters two and three present a list of archetypes of the unconscious, as described by Freud and Jung, as instinctive valencies: chapter two dealing with the initial separation of an individual awareness; chapter three with the individual in relation to others and society.

Section II, chapter four, begins with exploring Aristotle's use of the term 'universal' and the theatrical function of 'catharsis' in Greek drama. Jung's concept of individuation and the function of archetypes for the transmission of collective ideologies is related to this cathartic function of drama in chapter five, which goes on to examine Campbell's contention that the mythic image of order rests on the astronomical regulation of farming and husbandry. Chapter six recounts the structuralist analyses of folktales by Vladimir Propp and Claude Levi-Strauss in terms of both plot and role functions. The universality of theatrical role forms are then generally explored in the historical context of *Commedia dell' arte* in chapter seven. This leads in chapter eight to an exploration of dramatic stereotyping as signifiers of the discourse of dramatic action.

In section III, chapter nine Propp's plot roles are related to the roles of Shakespeare's *Dream*. In chapter ten the classical and mythological roots of Shakespeare's personæ are related to the archetypal images described in chapters two and three. The conclusion presents the complexity of the play as Shakespeare describing and defending an unconscious and universal level of metaphoric order.

INTRODUCTION

THESEUS The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth from earth to heaven.
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name. [V.i 28][1]

The use of the word *Mask* in the title and body of this thesis is to avoid a long-standing confusion around the word *persona*, and an allied looseness in the application of the term 'personality'. In an examination of the archetypal nature of *dramatis personæ* as units of dramatic discourse these distinctions need to be formalised early; it is very important to establish the limitation of terms such as *persona*, character and archetype, as they are now in general use, and so have a vague significance, rather than specific reference or structured purpose. For I will argue that Shakespeare inherited, analysed and then encapsulated in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* a structured pantheon of imagery and metaphor of just such a distinct reference, and with such a defined purpose, that it is a deliberate justification of his art. In this I align myself with David Young[2]

by whom the play has been considered as Shakespeare's *'ars poeticæ'*, but I would also stress that ultimately the playwright propounds a fundamental poetic basis of mind, in an almost postmodern tolerance of multiplicity of meaning.

That there is a form, or an accessible law, to the 'poetic' will be examined as a concept in Aristotle. Then, in terms of personæ as a deep structure of mind, this 'poetic' will be examined in two ways: as an aspect of the unconscious reflected in the work of Carl Jung and the concept of the archetype; and as a function of formal discourse in the analyses of Vladimir Propp and Claude Lévi-Strauss. Within each of these areas the limitations of the term *persona* has to be clearly established.

The Latin use of *persona* was literally as a mask for the theatre, and echoed the Greek *prosopon* - a mask or face (literally *pros* - towards or at, *ops* - the eye). So in that sense the word refers to the 'character' or facade that is adopted, put on, or a part to be played. Eric Partridge traces this meaning in *Origins* in the legal sense as a 'status in the eyes of the law' and is opposed to *res* - property.[3] This ancient use of *persona* in its legal and civic sense, is the use I want to attach to the word *mask* and with it, all the political associations of status and property. For it is this stereotypical style that is included in its *harmottos* or 'fittingness' to its social category as dramatic mimicry that needs to be emphasised in the context of this work. In *Character: Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage*, Edward Burns translates this *harmottos* of these categories from Aristotle's *Poetics* as the hierarchical distinctions of young/old, male/female, free/slave, which is the meaning I would

wish to maintain, and which is directly relevant in the context of this work.[4]

Unfortunately, the word *persona* which is often used in this theatrical context, also has the modern associations of 'personality' which is, to a large extent, the opposite of this original meaning; probably tracing it in Latin to *per* - through, *sonus* - sounding, and going on to use the word to mean the essential being, the 'person' in the modern sense who is behind the facade, and who is sounding through the wood and canvas, or in this context the socially constructed, contrived and presented characterisation. The *Oxford English Dictionary*[5] gives both interpretations, from 'an individual human being, man woman or child' to 'a character sustained or assumed in a drama or the like' and more, extending its application even to a corporate body as an 'artificial person' as regards its rights and duties in society. It is one aim of this work to delineate the very nature of this distinction between these aspects of the term, the social *mask* or facade aspect of dramatic *persona*, and its opposition to what might be called the more 'real', individual, conscious centre of human 'personality', as it is expressible in the play form.

There are similar problems involved in the term 'character'. Similar in that they stem from a confusion as to whether it is the essential consciousness of a being that is referred to, or whether it is the actual and external 'marks in the world' (Partridge, p. 188), by which we discern such an essence, to which we refer. Character is usually seen as the closest English term for the Greek *ēthos*; Partridge links this meaning with *ethos* - custom (as in ethnic - of racial character or custom). According to H. G. Liddell and R. Scott[6]

ēthos originally meant a figure stamped onto a wax tablet, or the stamping device itself and hence means the recognizable sign of something (H.G.Liddell and R.Scott, p.426), but already by the time of Plutarch writing the life of Alexander it had the application of *'the centre from which the choices of good and evil which motivate action can be seen to come'*[7] where again the unseeable essence is being referred to, which I am reading as the conscious centre of the being - sentience - as opposed to its properties.[8]

So to avoid these problems of the term 'personality' and of 'character', and to enjoy the evocations of the term's association with 'making', 'make up', both theatrical and otherwise, and 'machination' and 'disguise', that accrue to the word, we can fruitfully use the term *mask* to refer to this assumed role. It also reflects my hope of showing that the value and force of the *mask* is in direct descent from, and completely congruent with, the ritual and theatrical use of masks to depict the constructing of status and classification of behaviour roles within a society; and that these stem from, and relate to, society's manipulation and management of instinctive drives and their stimulating forms, already present in the human psyche. The nature of these forms are often referred to generally, in drama criticism and theory, by Jung's very specific term, as 'archetypes'.[9] The elements of these archetypes draw heavily from the classics of literature, and they would be familiar to patients and therapist alike. To examine how these forms, when encoded within the psyche, relate to the character *masks* that recur in plays and rituals, and the valency this relation gives to them, is then to examine cultural descriptions of the mainsprings of human

motivation, and the significance it gives to dramatic action. I hope to show how Shakespeare, specifically in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in his incorporation of ritual and mythic themes of metamorphosis, is consciously examining exactly the same area and attributing the same emotional potency to the imagery of roles and plot-forms as those Jung had abstracted from the poetic fictions of the 'unconscious'. That is it was abstracted from patient case histories, dream imagery and literary and mythological structures, and subsequently codified this century as archetypal.

To that end the study breaks into three distinct sections. The first section looks at psychological theory for a definitive outline of the nature of, and possible function for, the 'archetype'. There has been much recent discussion of the nature of character archetypes,[10] particularly in relation to gender, some of which rests on a resurgence of interest in the work of Joseph Campbell since his death in 1987, and the use of his theories by film writers and directors, such as Christopher Vogler, George Lucas and Steven Spielberg, drawing specifically on Campbell's ideas in his seminal piece *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (first published 1949). Christopher Vogler (*The Winter's Journey* 1993), Camille Paglia (*Sexual Personae* 1990) and Robert Bly (*Iron John* 1991) all make reference to Campbell's work. I have drawn extensively on his ideas from *Primitive Mythology* volume I of his four volume *Masks of God*, for the analysis of the valency of unconscious archetypes in his association and synthesis of the researches of the ethologist Niko Tinbergen with those of Jung.

In linking these disciplines Campbell qualifies Jung's clinically based concept into a more behaviourist and verifiable working

definition of the term 'archetype'. It emerges as a propensity, unknowable in itself in the nature of an instinct, but which then is clothed by, or clothes itself in, the details of experience; and is thus both universally, and individually, relevant. It was Campbell's proposals in *Primitive Mythology*, and his and Carl Jung's vast analysis of mythological themes in terms of the unconscious, that related directly to the plot references and personæ of *The Dream* and excited my interest in relating such an analysis to the *masks* of drama.

The time scale of drama, and the necessity of establishing character quickly, for changes and developments to be recognised, encourages the use of both stereotypical and archetypal forms. The conflict between the two, I will argue, is in the Aristotelian sense drama, and is essential in that the description of the relation between the stereotypical *mask* of personality (the socially expounded and propagated forms) and the emergence and revelation of more fundamental and much older unconscious propensities. The relation of the social to this psychological unconscious, as described by Jung, is the very significance and force of good theatre, both tragic and comic, as advocated by Aristotle.

The second section (*The Archetype in Early Theatre and Folklore*, ch. 4, p. 73) brings this psychological outline of what an archetype is, to examining the concept of a universal archetype as 'poetic', as a similarly unknowable propensity, universal enough to be recognised in simple narrative, undefined if not indefinable, yet traceable in the establishment and transmission of ritualised cultural forms. In this the focus is placed first on Aristotle's definitions in *The Poetics*

and the suggestion of a 'universal' and 'unconscious' agenda within the plot reversals and revelations of early theatre; and then on looking closely at the more recent analyses of folktales in the work of Vladimir Propp and Claude Levi-Strauss on the categories and basic units of ritualised storyforms. These theories are examined for paradigms of narrative that would illuminate the archetypical, or stereotypical, repetition of plot-forms, and the existence of 'types' in folk drama and historic popular theatre, and specifically within *Commedia dell' arte*, for its relevance to Shakespeare generally, and *The Dream* particularly.

The third section (*The Archetypes and the Dream*, ch. 9, p. 182), is given to exploring what meanings such recognisable forms, and their use, illuminate when applied to Shakespeare's manipulation of such categories of plot and mythology in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The *mask* is then presented as being a political construction, in that it is to do with the status or hierarchy of a behaviour construct in its relations with other behaviour constructs. Here I mean political in the complete sense of the word, being about the power that one role has over another, and which includes the particular deliberate 'Politics' of government, and, of course, goes far beyond it. Stories, or narrative of any kind, are always political, it is always an encoded world view that we are coaxed to step into, and apply, if only for a little while. All are value-laden and opinionated, whether deliberately contrived or not. They are in that sense 'ideology' in the very specific usage of the word by Terry Eagleton[11] of implicitly purveying values. Whether they are conveyed in conversations or in plays, novels, soap operas, fairy tales, great

works or 'B movies' our need of stories seems immense. Our need is also very old. If we accept that the cave murals and the tiny carved animal and 'venus' figurines discovered by palaeontologists, were probably for ritual use, then human beings have re-presented life back to themselves for some thirty thousand years.[12]

It is through stories that we form our understanding of ourselves and the world we inhabit, as it is through the linguistic formulations that we frame all our descriptions, including those of ourselves. We are social creatures and are taught even in what we perceive and how we are to think and structure precepts. We can see stories as completely technical devices in that they present us with the matter, or the tools, of interaction with the world. They are giving us a pre-digested or pre-analysed view of a situation and are thus constructed fictions, often with a moral if not a prescribed outcome. And all tales are inflected, if not downright propaganda. All are value-laden, in that all carry concepts of the world, which, implicitly or explicitly in the hierarchies embedded in the language, are swallowed along with the adventure, wonder, curiosity or rapture, and which structure our observation of the world.

But stories as well as being prescriptive, can also give, in the mirror they hold up to life, an interiority, in their reflecting the subjective internal experience of choice of behaviour, ultimately a malleable experience of what we call mind. It is as if, when enough views have been imbibed, and their oppositions and contradictions similarly absorbed, there is a debriefing effect, and they give a point of choice. This point is sophisticated enough to be outside of some, if not all, inflection and bias, and to be then open for the

mind of the individual itself to separate from the process and to be creative in choosing its opinion, and its role. This is the same psychological quality of 'individuation' that Carl Jung was to present as the ultimate state and goal of the mature psyche,[13] and it is of the same sense and order as the dramatic representation of the processes of conscious choice or 'interiority' that gives such a sense of depth of humanity when displayed by a dramatic character. Out of such proximity it is possible to present theatre as the most efficient individuator, in Jung's term, that civilisation has yet produced. Shakespeare does this dramatic description of the processes of the individual so well, as to suggest the possession of an intuitive understanding of the unconscious and its archetypes; drawn, I hope to show, from a classical and mythological understanding of the psyche, as well as an enriched comprehension of the reticulation of plot and the conflicts of motivation necessary to express it.[14]

Historically we can say that Greek theatre grew out of ritual and ceremonial, which are in anthropological terms great mechanisms for the production of social consensus; and the development of theatre has implied a generally similar function. Sometimes it is produced for a small elite or an enclosed little society within a society, as with the tragedies of Seneca written to be read by like educated and minded friends. The origin of theatre was, I hope to argue, the human representation and enactment of the societies' most significant symbols and mythologies. Theatre has never lost this function, although there are some technological advances (radio, television, cinema) which have shared and somewhat dissipated and extended its ritual cohesive function.

The ontological significance of such ritual enactments can be lost on those of us of a literate twentieth century culture, unless we look hard at the meanings trapped in the forms. The ritual is a concrete enactment of the relations society deems important for its cohesion. Its function is to transmit a fixed stereotypical form. The negative interpretation of the term 'stereotype' as expressed by such as E.M.Forster in terms of the 'flat characters'[15] of *personæ* as opposed to the rounded or individual substantive beings that the novel can present, and the general pejorative flavour it carries, is therefore misplaced in this context of drama. It denies the necessary rapid establishment of 'type' from which individual complications can then be articulated.

For example, in Roman and medieval society, hierarchy was immediately on display in clothes and in manners of speech. Dressing out of type was in fact illegal and much legislated against in these cultures, and the legislation very detailed. Historian Joyce Youings gives several examples of the extensive nature of these sumptuary laws, enough to comment:

> Knights and burgesses at Westminster in 1510 would not have been particularly surprised or affronted to be called upon to agree to yet another statute defining the quality of dress permitted to each rank of society from members of the royal family down to labourers and servants.[16]

The fixity of the culture's structure was thus frozen in its symbols, and embodied and very visibly displayed in every commonplace situation and transaction. Thus the childlike actions of clowns, and fools, would have a subversive liberating and exciting effect in mimicking the mighty, and rattling and even lampooning this fixed hierarchy that could so readily be evoked and re-presented at

festivals and fairs (particularly, one would suppose, on those 'groundlings' who suffered from its everyday minutiae of imposition).

Such a rigid, symbolically conveyed world view, tangibly and unequivocally represented in every image of the culture would surely be spellbinding. More so, I feel, than any word-based system, and much more in need of the contrary action of slapstick, and visual humour of the clown. So much so that Oliver Taplin can base analysis of Greek comedy[17] and P.L.Duchartre can base an analysis of the *Commedia dell' arte*[18]. purely on visual representation.

The mythic forms of these narratives are archetypal, that is they are deep structures; in some way there is a form, or rather a proclivity to a form, inherent in the human mind. Whether this is genetically or culturally transmitted is not clear, but what is clear is its ubiquity. It is this that is the constant or the 'eternal' allowing any transfer, and it is this that validates any change and enhances any reception. There is a deep structure in stories that informs character and plot, response and outcome; this is necessarily psychological but it is always expressed by being encoded in a local or familiar form.

If it is these stories that encode the political verities, then the force and impact of the story is its relation to a truth already established and its power to reflect this in some way. Meaning and value rest on this deep structure, and it is association with this level that can justify the purveyor of any tale and the ideological *masks* that are peddled with it.

NOTES

1 All references to the text of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are from the New Penguin series (London, 1967), edited by Stanley Wells and delineated throughout the thesis in square [ ] brackets.

2 D. Young, *Something of Great Constancy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966).

3 E. Partridge, *Origins* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), p. 487.

4 E. Burns, *Character: Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage* (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 22.

5 *OED* Vol vii. (1961), p. 724.

6 H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 426.

7 Plutarch, *Alexander* translated by E. Burns in *Character: Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage*, p. 3.

8 Martin Spevack gives twenty uses of 'character' and twelve of 'characters' with a wide spread of meaning, from a literal signature to personality. *The Harvard Concordance to Shakespeare* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1973).

9 We can also associate the 'type' aspect of the term 'archetype' as a stamping in (from the Greek *tupos* - to stamp or mark, Partridge, p. 746) with a further translation of 'character' from the Greek but distinct from both *ethos* and *ēthos*, that of *kharaktēr* - a marking tool or engraving instrument (Partridge, *Origins*, p. 92) Similarly H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 1801).

10 Here I am referring directly to an article by Rupert Widdicome, 'Discovering Legends in his own Lifetime', *Sunday Times*, 4th September

1994. Widdicome's article is particularly about Christopher Vogler's contribution to Disney's *Aladdin* and *The Lion King*, but also refers generally to the work of 'story analysts' of television and cinema storylines. I am also referring to Christopher Vogler's *The Winter's Journey* and Robert Mckee's series of lectures on story structure; also to Robert Bly's book *Iron John* (Longmead Dorset: Element, 1990) about male initiation, and the subsequent extensive media coverage it received, and to Camille Paglia's *Sexual Personæ* (London: Penguin, 1990). All four make reference to Campbell, the first three specifically, to his analysis of myth to only one plot-form, the 'monomyth' or 'the hero's journey' from *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*). And similarly, although without referring to Campbell, Ted Hughes, *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992) also works from a rigorous analysis to mythological roots subsuming all of *The Complete Works*, characters and plots, to four types of agents and two enmeshed plot-forms.

11 The largely concealed structure of values which informs and underlies our factual statements is part of what is meant by 'ideology'.

Eagleton uses this term as synonymous with literature: *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), p. 14. I have extended it to cover all narrative and discourse, which is I feel completely in keeping with the view he expounds throughout his book but particularly in chapter one 'The Rise of English'.

12 Joseph Campbell dates these artifacts loosely at 30,000 years old (*Primitive Mythology*, p. 379). Richard Leakey is more precise and links them to 'the first appearance in Western Europe of sophisticated technology' and places these artifacts and figurines at 35,000 to

30,000 years old. R. Leakey, *Human Origins* (London: Orion, 1995), p. 38.

13 For Jung these moments of choice are very formative:

> All these moments in the individual's life, when the universal laws of human fate break in upon the purposes, expectations, and opinions of the personal consciousness, are stations along the road of the individuation process. This process is, in effect, the spontaneous realisation of the whole man.
>
> C. G. Jung, *Dreams* (1974; London: Ark, 1986), p. 78.

14 Ted Hughes's analysis in *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being* echoes this point beautifully. He comes extremely close in his appendix II (p. 514) to Jung's ideas of self and shadow, and animus and anima, although drawing these 'four personæ' completely from classical myths, he finds them reflected in all of Shakespeare's plots, but particularly clearly drawn in the two poems 'Venus and Adonis' and 'The Rape of Lucrece'.

15 E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1962), pp. 75-6.

16 Joyce Youings also supplies evidence of the minutiæ of these laws:

> Gentlemen with lands or fees of 100 pounds a year might wear velvet in their doublets but only satin or damask in their gowns and coats.
>
> J. Youings, *Social History of Britain: Sixteenth Century* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), p. 110.

17 O. Taplin, *Comic Angels and other approaches to Greek Drama through Vase Paintings* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993).

18 P. L. Duchartre, *The Italian Comedy*, trans R. Weaver (1928. New York: Dover, 1966).

SECTION I. THE ARCHETYPE.

> What is partial and reductive in most Freudian interpretations of art is that they focus on sex without realising that sex is a subset of nature. Joining Frazer to Freud, as I try to do, solves this problem. Everything sexual or unsexual in art carries world view and nature theory with it.
>
> (Camille Paglia, *Sexual Personae,* p. 315.)

CHAPTER 1.

ARCHETYPES AND ART.

In discussing the possible nature of archetypes I shall be drawing extensively on the work of Joseph Campbell, particularly from *Primitive Mythology.* Campbell tackles the subject from three directions: the behavioural scientific approach, focussing on known aspects of animal innate responses; the anthropological and ethnological approach, where examples are drawn from the length of history and pre-history; and the psychoanalytical[1] predominantly Freudian approach, which he modifies with extensive qualifications from Jung.

The concept of the 'Archetype' was first presented by the clinical psychiatrist Carl Jung (a co-worker with Freud in the early years of psychoanalysis)[2] to account for the frequency of images and situations which he came across in his analysis of patients, and which echoed images and situations from the mythologies and fairytales he was familiar with. Although other terms for this effect, in its various inflections, have been coined,[3] Jung's term and his theory is the most open regarding its origin and I feel the clearest and the

simplest, particularly in regard to literary imagery, in relating its theory to its data:

> What we properly call instincts are physiological urges, and are perceived by the senses. But at the same time, they also manifest themselves in fantasies and often reveal their presence only by symbolic images. These manifestations are what I call the archetypes. They are without known origin; and they reproduce themselves in any time or in any part of the world - even where cross fertilization through migration must be ruled out.
>
> (*Man and his Symbols*, p. 69.)[4]

The phrase 'They are without known origin' is a key one in that Jung considers it possible for ideas to reside in a 'collective unconscious', accessible to us as individuals in certain circumstances. Freud's 'archaic remnants'[5] theory is similar to Jung's but of a more prescribed origin. Freud's basic idea, covering the universality of certain forms, is that they are ideas which are widespread because they are laid down by the primal scene of family life. They are universal because the family is universal, and they are grounded in the anatomy of the human being, in the appetites and various requirements of its physiology and the conflicts these engender within its environment. Such forms as the Oedipal complex and Anal fixation can be seen to be universally represented in the literature of the world, and can then also be considered in the context of a common programming for mankind.[6] The difficulties of analysing what the archetypal forms might be can be presented if we look at the possible influences acting in the context of Freud's basal 'Oedipus Complex' in the male.[7] The nature of the type of programme, and processing, becomes a much more complex chicken and egg if we consider the different primal anthropological scene of Sir James George Frazer:

> In this sacred grove [at Nemi] there grew a certain tree round which at any time of the day and probably the night a strange figure might be seen to prowl. In his hand he carried a drawn sword, and he kept peering warily about him as if every instant he expected to be set upon by an enemy. He was a priest and a murderer; and the man for whom he looked was sooner or later to murder him and hold the priesthood in his stead.
>
> (*The Golden Bough,* p. 2.)[8]

In that Frazer's highly melodramatic appraisal of the ritual murder and replacement of the priest-king at Nemi has been seen as explaining most of the content of the myth of Oedipus (the new king or priest often called the 'son' or reincarnation, or renewal of the old one[9] and a symbol of the shift from matrilineal to patrilineal descent), it carries Freud's analogy much deeper and further. Jung's position seems to be an acceptance of both contributions, and as more complete, describing more situations, is superior to either. The Oedipal complex, when seen in the context of Frazer, must contribute to the explanation of the myth, and many others. But so must the myth be seen, in the light of data about the extent of the immolation of kings in the ancient world, as a vestigial and individualised shape of the history of a prehistoric rite of much greater extent than even Frazer imagined:

> The great god must die; forfeit his life and be shut up in the underworld, within the mountain. The goddess (and let us call her Ishtar, using her Babylonian title) follows him into the underworld and after the consummation of his self-immolation, releases him. The supreme mystery was celebrated not only in renowned songs, but also in the ancient new year festivals, where it was presented dramatically: and this dramatic presentation can be said to represent the acme of the grammar and logic of mythology in the history of the world.
>
> (Leo Frobenius, *Schicksalskunde in Sinne des Kulturwerdens,* 1932, from *Primitive Mythology,* p. 166.)

The evidence of the proliferance of ritual regicide and the often

associated matrilineal descent in planting and herding cultures ranges from the Incas to the Chinese, and its persistence and survival from the earliest examples of these cultures to Indian provinces and amongst the Yoruba of Nigeria and the Shilluk of the Sudan,[10] until late in the last century, would suggest a significant cultural participation in its transmission. Although migration is now considered to have been far more prevalent in the ancient world than was thought when Jung was writing,[11] 'cross fertilization' would still not seem to explain the universality of some forms and does not account for the appearance of quite specific forms in often unsophisticated and illiterate individuals. Jung's theory of a 'Collective Unconscious' does:

> I found that associations and images of this kind are an integral part of the unconscious, and can be observed everywhere - whether the dreamer is educated or illiterate, intelligent or stupid. They are not in any sense 'remnants'. They still function, and are especially valuable [...] just because of their 'historical' nature.
>
> (*Man and his Symbols*, p. 69.)

Because Jung takes the open-ended, experiential view of the reception and broadcast of these forms for both individuals and societies, his analysis and stratification of them is far more extensive, and far more positively productive in allowing meaning to constantly extend. It is very interesting in this context to examine the idea of a theory or concept having its moment, of its being of the *'Zeitgeist'*, of the spirit of the time. It is interesting because it assumes some sort of collectivity or communally maturing or evolving social mind, giving a heightened significance to the effect and reference we are dealing with as the value of drama; and indeed was also examined by Jung at a later date in his career.

Campbell demonstrates[12] how this view of the meaning of the mythological (which is for him the creative aspect of thought) for its importance to the structure and coding of the mind, was a view that was forming throughout the century leading towards the ideas produced by Freud and Jung. The Grimm brothers had gathered the fairytales of their collection with the hope of re-forming from them an Indo-European mythology in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The deciphering of the Rosetta stone in 1821 had unearthed, in the hieroglyphs subsequently translated, literature and myths proving to be of far greater antiquity than anything previously known (by some 2000 years - *Primitive Mythology* p. 135). Yet in its stories, scholars found many of the same structures and forms as were in the familiar Greek and Biblical canons, classified at the time as great literature and absolute truth respectively.

Campbell points to examples of the resurgence in art and literature of the serious treatment of mythological or symbolic forms in representing the psyche, as in Goethe, Wagner, Melville and Ibsen. In the way he stresses the precedence of 'Art' before 'Science' in these cases, Campbell underlines the very Jungian attitude of a synchronistic radiating *zeitgeist* at work, anticipating and predicting the formulations and conclusions of the scholars and scientists:

> One thinks of Goethe, in every line of whose Faust there is evident a thoroughly seasoned comprehension of the force of the traditional symbolism of the psyche, in relation not only to individual biography but also to the psychological dynamics of civilization. One thinks of Wagner, whose masterworks were conceived in a realization of the import of the symbolic forms so far in advance of the allegorical readings suggested by the Orientalists and ethnologists of his time that even with the dates before one (Wagner 1813-1883; Max Muller 1823-1900; Sir James George Frazer 1854-1941) it is difficult to think of the artist's work as

> having *preceded* the comparatively fumbling efforts of the men of science to interpret symbols.
>
> (*Primitive Mythology,* p. 17.)

The unique value of Campbell's approach to this study is in introducing, to the area of archetypes, tenets from another discipline that go towards the description of the type of mechanisms that might be 'perceived by the senses', 'manifest in fantasies' and 'reproduce themselves in any time or in any part of the world'. He draws into the field the work of animal behaviourists, particularly Tinbergen and Lorenz, but enhances the purely scientific significance of their findings:

> Chicks with their eggshells still adhering to their tails dart for cover when a hawk flies overhead, but not when the bird is a gull or a duck or a pigeon. Furthermore, if the wooden model of a hawk is drawn over their coop on a wire, they will react as though it were alive- unless it be drawn backward, when there is no response.

taking them into art:

> Even if all the hawks in the world were to vanish, their image would sleep in the soul of the chick - never to be roused, however, unless by some accident of art; for example, a repetition of the clever experiment of the wooden hawk on a wire[...] unless we knew about the earlier danger of hawks to chicks, we should find the sudden eruption difficult to explain [...] Living gulls and ducks, herons and pigeons leave it cold; but the work of art strikes some very deep chord! (*Primitive Mythology,* p. 31.)

Such engraved patterns of behaviour are termed IRM's (Innate Response Mechanisms) by Niko Tinbergen, and Campbell draws many examples from Tinbergen's *The Study of Instinct* (Oxford University Press, 1951) from many and various animal kingdoms. The trigger for the reaction is sometimes called a 'sign stimulus'. The entity that recognises the sign stimulus, and responds in whatever way, cannot be said to be the individual creature, as it has no individual experience

of it at all. This is provable in the case of young chicks, as stated, but is also familiar from the often repeated televised nature films of migrating species. A very familiar one is the scene of turtle hatchlings emerging from eggs buried high up tropical beaches, unerringly turning and scrabbling past a gauntlet of predators for the unknown and unknowable safety of the ocean. Some 'thing' or 'what' is recognising and organising these processes. This 'thing', or 'what', is acting in a collective manner, that is, across the species and unconscious to the individual creature.

The precision of the image is often confounding. The method of its passage from generation to generation is yet only conjecture. However, as Campbell points out, whatever builds and conveys it (and natural selection seems inadequate for such a sophisticated image), there is the 'ghost' of a hawk woven somewhere into the nervous system of the chick. This ghost it is totally unaware of, until it, or its ancestor as a still functioning 'remnant', sees a specific silhouette and is then apparently moved beyond its own deliberate or voluntary scheme. Some of the material acts only when the creature reaches sexual maturity; it cannot be triggered in the young, although they are surrounded by the sign stimulus daily. They have to be physiologically ready to respond, for the environmental key to fit the neuronic tumblers. Our own experiences of puberty surely describes how similar key and tumbler responses may possibly be present in humans; it is this aspect of instinct Shakespeare depicts so well in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*[13] in suggesting how such material is experienced by individuals.

Some IRM's are like an inherited propensity that latches on to a

form and treats it as a sign stimulus from then on. These apparently function as an open or imprintable response mechanism:

> But on the other hand, a duckling will attach itself, as if to a parent, to the first creature that meets its eye when it leaves the egg - for example, a mother hen.
>
> (*Primitive Mythology*, p. 35.)

Konrad Lorenz has even been so adopted, indicating that similarity of shape or even suitability of function is not always a factor (Lorenz was 6' tall at the time and had a beard). I am relating these strange and absurd qualities of instinctive functioning because of the congruence of their description with the presentation of what I hope to show as the idiosyncrasies of instinct in *The Dream*. This latching upon 'the next live creature that it sees',[14] has a distinct fairy quality, very reminiscent of the enchanted couplings discussed by Shakespeare.

Another aspect of IRM's important to this study and to the whole concept of archetypes (for the comment it makes upon the designed exaggeration of masks, costume and make up) is the fact of 'super normal sign stimuli'.[15] This is where a creature with, say, a penchant for a specific colour trigger in mating, can be readily induced to choose a dyed or similarly daubed surrogate. The grayling moth (*Eumenis semele*) naturally chooses a darker female, and a deeper, or stronger hue will convince a lonely moth to prefer a painted partner, or even a painted fleck or other inanimate object, to paler natural talent available. The intensified stimulus can, although ludicrous in every other way, be irresistible in this one aspect and so commands the response, however inappropriate. A quality of instinct Shakespeare surely echoes in Titania's inappropriate and

ludicrous infatuation with an ass, whose only deeper, stronger or indeed larger-than-human qualities are the priapic subtext that is the humour of their relation.

We humans are generally considered far more sophisticated in the levels of response that are available to us than the creatures cited. The bluntly overriding force of the sign stimulus and its mechanistic reaction is not in the nature of the response of a personality, but we all have 'doted' on someone or some thing, and as *The Dream* suggests, we can and do have our moments - indeed even our season of enthralment. Furthermore, we are not required by nature to be so instinctively programmed for survival, as the chick or the baby turtle necessarily are; we take upwards from twelve years to mature and are social, cultural and gregarious beings. It is fortunately immoral to isolate a child and study it in the same clinical way that animals have been scrutinised (although evidence from twins raised separately do indicate some innate responses[16]). Campbell suggests that, because of the prematurity of our birth, humans could possess a more open reflex structure, and, conjectures from this, that perhaps residing in our much larger brains is the power to control and inhibit, or in some way, interact with such responses.[17]

The complex socialisation of man has meant that no definite forms of the impact of the hawk/chick intensity have ever been identified. But if we think along lines of colour intensity linked with mating, and allow our minds to cross disciplines somewhat and consider the widespread and ancient arts of cosmetics, scarification, and even fashion, we can see a softer, more malleable open-ended impulse:

> The now well proven fact that the human nervous system was the governor, guide, and controller of a nomadic hunter,

> foraging for his food and protecting himself and his family from becoming food in a very dangerous world of animals for the first 600,000 years of its development; whereas it has been serving comparatively safe and sane farmers, merchants, professors, and their children for scarcely 8000 years (a segment of less than 1½ per cent of the known arc). Who will claim to know what sign stimuli smote our releasing mechanisms when our names were not Homo Sapiens but Pithicanthropus and Plesianthropus, or perhaps - milleniums earlier - Dryopithecus?
>
> (*Primitive Mythology*, p. 34.)

The value of such behavioural studies to artists in all media and to psychologists, and particularly the Jungians (but of any clinical persuasion) is in the *de facto* presentation in the animal kingdom of a form of collective psychological influence of the species on the individual. One of these is of a closed, ancestrally fixed immutable type; and one of an open nature, capable of postnatal influence and hence individual and unique configuration (such as a duck which is certain its mother was a Swiss zoologist). These open type of innate responses would then be capable of cultural, social, and environmental influence and interaction, if operative in man.

The presentation of these theories here is not meant merely as a scientific justification of the work of the twentieth-century artists, from all fields, drawing from and experimenting with archaic themes; nor is it a vindication of the 'mystical' aspects of Jung and his theories. It is meant to align Jung's work with other disciplines, qualifying and structuring a hitherto obvious yet nebulous aspect of experience, the unconscious. Linking Jung's archetypes with Tinbergen's 'Innate Response Mechanisms' here, and as I will do in later chapters, linking it also to the work of the Structuralists Propp and Lévi-Strauss, places his psychological categorisation of

case histories into a scientific and anthropological context. As with his work on *zeitgeist* and the areas such as coincidence and 'synchronicity' mentioned earlier, Jung's analyses and categories seem very close to the work of the Structuralists in establishing patterns that clarify, and in some senses quantify, areas of obvious but intangible quality. These are acting as laws for mythological and metaphorical association. It is the examination of such laws of metaphorical association, or discourse, that aligns these theories with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

That some forms or images are very potent, of themselves, and have a structuring and organising effect in the mind, despite their apparent initial irrationality (in fact, as Campbell goes on to say even because of it), is a startling and important thing for science to be saying; even though it may have been unaware of what it had said. Much of the rapture and enjoyment of art is of a physiological, whole nervous system response. He cites here a wonderful passage from A. E. Housman:

> Poetry seems to me more physical than intellectual [...]. I could no more define poetry than a terrier can define a rat, but that I thought we both recognised the object by the symptoms which it provokes in us [...]. Experience has taught me, when I am shaving of a morning, to keep watch over my thoughts, because if a line of poetry strays into my memory, my skin bristles so that the razor ceases to act. This particular symptom is accompanied by a shiver down the spine; there is another which consists of a constriction of the throat and a precipitation of water to the eyes; and there is a third which I can only describe by borrowing a phrase from one of Keats' last letters, where he says, speaking of Fanny Brawne, 'everything that reminds me of her goes through me like a spear'. The seat of this sensation is the pit of the stomach [...].
>
> Poetry is not the thing said but the way of saying it [...], that the intellect is not the fount of poetry, that it may actually hinder its production, and that it cannot

> even be trusted to recognise poetry when it is produced.
> (*The Name and Nature of Poetry.*[18])

This almost behaviourist[19] approach brings the nebulous, indeed as we are arguing even perhaps aspects of the numinous, into a codifiable and classifiable realm. Such a use of psychological theory to establish value, as Campbell does, is completely congruent with the axioms of literary criticism as used by I. A. Richards,[20] although Campbell's process is far more clearly and widely delineated. Campbell set out to classify mythology and the families of myths as Linnaeus had the plant kingdom, as the brothers Grimm, and Frazer had begun to do a century earlier, but incorporating the colossal developments and refinements that twentieth century archaeology, palaeontology, philology and psychology had added to the field.

We have followed Campbell so far in his review of some of the animal behaviourists and related them to Jung's theory of the 'Collective Unconscious'. I would like to consider now the other two approaches of Freudian analysis, and the psychological stages that Freud postulated as physiological necessities, which Campbell meshes with the anthropological and mythological approaches adroitly, using them to indicate the possibly archaic and collective manifestations of it. In doing this I feel he gets as close as one can get to the nature of an archetype. These approaches are broad as categories, but not vague, as they are casting a net wide to catch a set of imprints for the whole of a species. To become more distinct, as we shall, we will have to become more local and more limited.

NOTES

1 In 1913, Jung, splitting from Freud, adopted the term 'Analytical Psychology'. Freud retained 'Psychoanalysis' and it is only to his work and the work of his followers that the term can be correctly applied. J. Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975) p. 312.

2

> Throughout the six years of their friendship (1907-13), Freud and Jung were in complete agreement in attributing a fundamental importance to unconscious processes in the genesis and treatment of mental illness and the production of dreams.
>
> Anthony Stevens, *Private Myths* (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 51.

3 In *Private Myths*, Anthony Stevens produces a table to describe the 'seminal nature of the Archetypal hypothesis' appearing in psychologically related although very different disciplines (it is interesting that as a Jungian, Stevens omits Freud's archaic remnants from this table):

Table 1: Parallel Concepts to Jung's archetypes.

Ethology	Tinbergen	IRMs
Psychology	Bowlby	behavioural systems
Anthropology	Lévi-Strauss	infrastructures
Psycholinguistics	Chomsky	deep structures
Sociobiology	Wilson	genetically transmitted response strategies epigenetic rules
Psychiatry	Gilbert	psychobiological response patterns
	Gardner	deeply homologous neural structures
Cognitive science	Cosmides	Darwinian alogrythms

To this table we could also add from Campbell in *Primitive Mythology*

Ethnology	Bastian	elementary ideas

		(*Elementargedanke*)
Poetry	Houseman	symptomatic bodily responses (see p. 24.)

4 C.G. Jung, *Man and his Symbols* (London: Aldus, 1964).

5 Although Freud accepted that some 'archaic remnants' were occasionally revealed in dreams, he attributed little significance to them, believing that most of our mental equipment is acquired individually in the course of growing up. (Stevens, *Private Myths*, p. 51.)

6 Interestingly on this point of the collectivity of the unconscious, Freud states in *Totem and Taboo* (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1940) p. 209 in relation to the depiction of guilt specifically in Greek tragedy:

> In the first place it can hardly have escaped any one that we base everything on an assumption of a psyche of the mass in which psychic processes occur as in the psychic life of the individual. Moreover we let the sense of guilt for a deed survive for thousands of years, remaining effective in generations which could not have known anything of this deed.

7 I have found, in my own case too, falling in love with the mother and jealousy of the father, and I now regard it as a universal event of early childhood [...] the Greek legend seizes on a compulsion which everyone recognizes because he feels its existence within himself.

Freud, 'Letter to Fliess' no. 71 15th Oct 1897, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol I, ed. J. Strachey (London: Hogarth 1965), p. 265.

8 Sir J.G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, Vol I (London: Macmillan, 1890), p. 2.

9 The relation of the Oedipus myth to ritual regicide and matrilineal descent is strongly put by Campbell, Wallis Budge and Graves, but most clearly and succinctly by Albright:

> Kings were expected to kill their predecessors or pseudo-fathers. 'Son' meant 'successor,' and 'sister' was synonymous with 'wife'.
>
> W.P. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (New York: Doubleday, 1968). p. 94.

Robert Graves, drawing attention to the ritual form of death that

Laius (murdered by Oedipus) shared with Hippolytus (murdered by Theseus) states that (see ch. 10, p. 170):

> Laius's murder is a record of the solar king's ritual death at the hands of his successor: thrown from a chariot and dragged by horses.
>
> R. Graves. *The Greek Myths*, Vol. II (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1962), p. 13.

10 Frazer in *The Golden Bough*, (p. 295) describes this and a similar practice in the Sudan as contemporary with him (1854-1941). The Sudanese example Campbell relates directly to the *Book of a Thousand Nights and One Night* and its nuclear tale of Shehrzad's particular predicament (*Primitive Mythology*, p. 153).

11 Leo Frobenius gives theories of diffusion and culture areas relating to these migrations

> It now seems clear that this constellation of ideas and customs sprang from the region between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf and spread thence southeastward into India in the Dravidian culture sphere, as well as southwestward across South Arabia into East Africa.
>
> (*Schicksalskunde in Sinne des Kulturwerdens* published 1932, *Primitive Mythology*, p. 166.)

12 Campbell on p. 17 lists as precursers of the recognition of the force and the significance of the mythic within culture: 'Novalis (1772-1801)'; 'Schopenhauer's dream psychology and philosophy of instinct (1788-1860)'; 'Kierkegaard (1813-1855)'; 'Ibsen (1826-1906)'; 'Nietzsche (1844-1900)'; 'Melville (1819-1891)'; 'Goethe' (1749-1832); and 'Wagner (1813-1883)'.

13 Referring here particularly to the sudden enchanted responses of the young males:

> LYSANDER Content with Hermia? No, I do repent
> The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
> Not Hermia but Helen I love. [II. ii. 119]

DEMETRIUS Lysander, keep thy Hermia. I will non.
If e'er I loved her that love is gone.
My heart to her but as guestwise sojourned,
And now to Helen is it home returned,
There to remain. [III. ii. 173]

14 OBERON Fetch me that flower -
The herb I showed thee once.
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
[II. i. 172])

15 N. Tinbergen, *The Study of Instinct* Cited in *Primitive Mythology,* pp. 43-5.

16 H. Gleitman, *Psychology,* second ed (New York: Norton, 1981), p. 635.

and Eysenck. H. J. *Crime and Personality* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 202.

17 *Primitive Mythology,* p. 39.

18 A. E. Housman *The Name and Nature of Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933), cited in *Primitive Mythology,* pp. 40-1.

19 The term behaviourist here refers to that therapeutic form of psychological reductionism 'directed in the main at symptom reduction rather than elaborate functional analysis'. D. Pilgrim 'British Psychotherapy in Context,' in *Individual Therapy* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1990), ed. Windy Dryden, p. 9.

20 I. A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (London: Routledge, 1924), particularly ch. 7.

CHAPTER 2.

> The word "type" as we know, derived from the Greek τψποσ, "blow" or "imprint"; thus an "archetype" presupposes an imprinter.
>
> (Jung, *Psychological Reflections*, p. 339.)[1]

THE PHYSIOLOGY OF ARCHETYPES.

The nature of an archetype has two aspects, two qualities, always blended but discernible: its universal aspect with which we can recognise its meaning for all humanity, and the local aspect by which we can recognise its application for a particular culture set, nation, tribe or group (*Primitive Mythology*, p. 461). We can often feel the unity and the similarity implied by the correspondences found between images from completely different parts of the world. This is the 'universal' archetypal aspect, present in an image or form of a character, or plot, but always with this it has its locational and its geographical, climatic and social idiosyncrasies. Sometimes the details of the plots are so embedded in their locality, so specific to a particular time and place that initially, unless there is that faint tickle of recognition, or a hint from some earlier analysis, then we might readily accept the tale as uniquely indigenous.

Such universality must stem from some sort of common quality or 'elementary idea' inherent in the human condition and/or experience; some aspect that plucks a chord in individuals, often widely diffused

in time or location, suggests the non-individual level, of just simply what it is to be human.[2] The qualities that are common are formed into images and shapes, the repeated patterns of which will be the very nature of the archetypes. There are not that many essentially; a few geographical, and some social and political. These latter will, I hope to show, stem from the true root of universality to the human condition, that is our common physiological and anatomical nature, and the necessary cultural accommodations they require. The more grounded in our anatomy and physiology the themes and characters are, the more basic in that sense, the more common to humanity will be those themes. Variations from this universality will then be the environmental, that is, the geographical and social oppositions and conformities with that physiology.

Initially the idea of the commonness of the human condition, the 'Universals', being just 'physiological' may seemed inadequate and limiting, lacking in a dimension or extension of meaning; but then a new attitude enters if we take on board the effect Houseman describes (pp. 25-6), and the physiological, chemical, even mechanical responses that he finds poetry generates in him. Houseman's difficulty with the disruptive effects of poetry while shaving is a measurable and presumably repeatable response. The trigger, the 'sign stimulus' is a poetic idea or image that has been designed to effect just such a response, (though not, perhaps, in this particular situation) and honed by a poet bristling with the same rapture; and it is rapture that Houseman is describing here. Campbell is using him to indicate that the richness of that extramundane experience is grounded in our physicality.

At first, the association invokes echoes of Pavlov[3] and the scientific reduction of our consciousness, and its nervous sophistication and integration, to primitive and mechanistic circuitry and reaction. But with Pavlov the contrived situation was a primitive, mechanistic, and a brutally simplistic one, and the nervous system so trapped reacts intelligently from its bedrock necessities. The complex possibilities of response to a sophisticated demand by a similarly sophisticated environment is what enhances the situation here with Houseman, the concept of the nervous system and the physiology being incorporated in the response.

Campbell has drawn attention to how the nervous system can hold images and potentials for images that are species directives ('species' directives in that they act *supra* individually, with information that that particular organism has not individually collected or absorbed). That the body holds images that may never meet the environment they complement, can be assumed for humans as well as for chicks; that these images can be intensified and manipulated (as with the Grayling Moths) can reasonably be assumed for us as well, as was inferred from the cosmetic arts.

In terms of scientific fact we do not know how the environment-organism relation lays such images, or how many, or of what extent they may be, or perhaps what possibilities of response future developing environments could trigger. There is both complexity and potential sophistication inherent in such a system, even if the individual is unconscious of it, and possibly a great extent of relational freedom for an evolving system, within an evolving system. Campbell at this point suggests the plenum silence of this unconscious

and its potential interaction with the world, far beyond what we knowledgeably might say or guess, that is perhaps waiting, unknowable, within us:

> Recognising that in that silence there may be sleeping not only the jungle cry of Dryopithecus, but also a supernormal melody not to be heard for perhaps another million years.
>
> (*Primitive Mythology*, p. 49.)

Before going on to the physiological necessities of the human condition Campbell draws attention to what are two universal terrestrial qualities that would be part of all such images, integral to all human experience with only possibly minor local variations. These are the experiences of gravity and of light and dark.

Gravity, as he points out, not only continuously conditions all the business of being human as the mainstay of all physical inertia and the oppositional resistance of much of what makes physical activity into work, it gives also the exhilaration of an effortless free ride when if, however rarely, it is apparently not present, as in leaping, diving, flying, surfing etc. It also shapes and forms the very structure of our bodies and the layout of our organs and the density of our bones. Its effects are constantly testing, and are often the measure of our strength, and even of our resolve to action. The long term effects of the weight of our very substance is written into the sag, droop and wrinkle of the essence of how we recognise sagacity and age.[4] Such delineaments mean that the quality of gravity (or its liberating absence), will necessarily be constant though perhaps implicit in the structuring of any archetypal form.

A facet of the resistance of materials that allies with gravity, and needs to be considered with it, is friction, and slide or slip as

its opposite. Although not mentioned by Campbell, it surely has its place in archetypal structures as a symbolic aspect of opposition and freedom. It is inherent in the whole experience of effort, of drag and of release, of the heat of frictive work and the balmy ease of lubrication, which should place it as at least a sub-heading within his scheme, in that it plays its part in the composition of several of the archetypal images and motifs. An example, of which, would be the jovial, sleek, smoothness of oiled and fattened skin, and its opposite of the dry, dessicated, irritable saturnine type; and their contrary suggestions of the pampered and the deprived respectively.

Light and dark[5] are similarly constant qualities structuring the very business of being human and written into the behaviour of our bodies in the diurnal cycle of activity and sleep, or more symbolically the cycle of waking and dreaming consciousness:

> Long before it was the object of scientific study, light, and especially the sources of light, were venerated as divine - an image of godly nature. Mythologies of all civilisations are rich with tales of the sun, moon, and stars, of fire, rainbow, and aurora.
>
> (Arthur Zajonc, *Catching the Light: The Entwined History of Light and Mind.*)[6]

As Campbell observes 'the world of myth has been saturated by dream' with its own logic, and made of 'a subtle substance that is capable of magical and rapid transformation, appalling effects, and non-mechanical locomotion' (*Primitive Mythology*, p.57). The experience of light from above us and darkness below, of danger in shadows and murk where clarity and guidance are nullified, are of the very nature of axioms and are fundamental to all of our opposites, light and dark, heavy and light, easy and difficult, guided and lost, and even structure our hierarchies of above and below.

We will expect to find these qualities constantly involved in the universal images as help or hinder, friend or foe, depending on the function required in the specific situation; for sometimes we need to be obscure, lost, heavy, as well as clear, sure and light, in terms of what we have to do, and where, when and with whom. What universals govern what, impels the functions of all that humans require, and rests on the physical needs of being human. So we begin at the beginning:

> The sun, rising triumphant, tears himself from the enveloping womb of the sea, and leaving behind him the noonday zenith and all its glorious works, sinks down again into the maternal depths, into all-enfolding and all regenerating night.
>
> (Jung, *Psychological Reflections,* p. 328.)

BIRTH.

For Campbell the birth process is the archetype of all trauma:

> The congestion of blood and sense of suffocation experienced by the infant before its lungs commence to operate give rise to a brief seizure of terror, the physical effects of which (caught breath, circulatory congestion, dizziness, or even blackout) tend to recur more or less strongly, whenever there is an abrupt moment of fright. So that the birth trauma, as an archetype of transformation, floods with considerable emotional effect the brief moment of loss of security and threat of death that accompanies any crisis of radical change.
>
> (*Primitive Mythology,* p. 61.)

Campbell puts birth as the universal experience of transformation[7], the crossing of any threshold or the undergoing of change where there is any sense of loss of security. That is, I presume, where there is any clinging to the old state and resistance to the new for whatever cause. The impact of the recurrence of these psychosomatic effects (breathlessness, constriction, dizziness etc.)

will reflect the intensity of the fear of the new state or situation that triggers it, and can be associated with any resistance to any change, however apparently unfounded and misguided these fears might ultimately be, or perhaps rationally appear to be, later.

These effects are the standard physical correlates of stress and panic, which may of course be associated with and attached to any situation. Indeed, that they often are, Freudians would suggest, is because of incomplete and unresolved trauma remaining stored in the nervous system, like a spectral dread of any loss of security and familiarity, or resistance to the new.

Here Campbell draws the obvious extension to the religious and mythic themes of rebirth; 'from the darkness of the womb to the light of the sun' and also through every rite of passage, such as from childhood to adult life and 'from the light of the world to whatever mystery of darkness may lie beyond the portal of death' (Ibid. p. 62.), which has, as he points out, been symbolically presented as a return to the Earth womb for millenia:

> Neanderthal skeletons have been found interred with supplies (suggesting the idea of another life), accompanied by animal sacrifice (wild ox, bison, and wild goat), with attention to an east-west axis (the path of the sun, which is reborn from the same earth in which the dead are placed), in flexed position (as though within the womb), or in a sleeping posture - in one case with a pillow of chips of flint. Sleep and death, awakening and resurrection, the grave as a return to the mother for rebirth; but whether Homo Neanderthalensis thought the next awakening would be here again or in some world to come (or even both together) we do not know. (Ibid., p. 67.)

One naturally thinks here of the universal story structure of Order - Chaos - Order, as exemplified in Wilson Knight's *The Wheel of Fire.*[6] This is analysis moving towards the ultimate abstraction of

what is giving tension and hence interest in any creative work; it involves the loss of security and its possibility of recovery, which has sequence and process in time, or leads us through something and towards resolution.[9] It is the essence of Drama and has its tonal correlates in other art forms, such as those in music of the home key, and in painting of the colour ratio. Simply, put it is the stepping out from the safe into the unknown, ultimately to return to something new, but again safe in some way. From the presented order of the womb, the provided, structured womb world of innocent acceptance, the given homeworld, progress is made through the disorder of expulsion (often self-expulsion and the chaos of anti-order), to the return to order. But this is a now new order, in which participation is now required from the experiencers of the chaos, if are to be properly heroic.[10]

The condition of the child in the womb we can consider to be bliss. It is enfolded in an environment that is completely responsive to its needs. Temperature, light, nutriment, evacuation, even gravity and friction are tempered and moderated by the fluid action of the great mother, who is surely here the symbolic model of all self-gratifying paradises, whether planetary or heavenly. So here is an experience of a paradise already lost before we drew our first breath, an environment dedicated solely to our passive and dormant well-being, never to be found again on this Earth however far we search and quest.

And here within this pre-birth context, we also gain the experience of water, as the source out of which we emerged towards self-conscious, self-reliant, independent life. Water as source of individuality, is baptism as renewal, regeneration. To such an

independent being it then is also symbolic of any return to the womb-like state, generating the negatives of dissolution and unconsciousness, as with the waters of Lethe[11] and its forgetfulness, or the hero Cuchulain set to battling with the sea in Yeats' poem:

> Cuchulain stirred,
> Started upon the horses of the sea, and heard
> The cars of battle and his own name cried;
> And fought with the invulnerable tide.[12]

The body is some ninety per cent water, salt water, that is, and our blood like the amniotic soup is a richly nutritive enclosed sea, necessarily flowing past and around our every cell.[13] Dissolution is ultimately, and observably in more primitive cultures, the way of all tissue.[14] the ocean of life inexorably calling back its own:

> A corpse rising saltwhite from the undertow, bobbing landward [...] Bag of corpsegas sopping in foul brine. A quiver of minnows, fat of a spongy titbit, flash through the slits of his unbuttoned trouser-fly. God becomes man becomes fish becomes barnacle goose becomes featherbed mountain. Dead breaths I living breathe, tread dead dust, devour a urinous offal from all dead. Hauled stark over the gunwale he breathes upward the stench of his green grave, his leprous nosehole snoring to the sun.
>
> (Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* quoted by Campbell, *Primitive Mythology,* p.50.)

Combinations of the two images of woman and water as in mermaids, sirens, witches with cauldrons, goddesses with life-renewing springs, wells etc. Ladies of the Lake and Rhinemaidens, abound in tales throughout the world. They are always dually aspected with both the furthering and renewing of life and also the reabsorbing and reclaiming of it; which leads onto the next universal archetypal experience and possible imprinted image.

MOTHER.

> The relationship of suckling to mother is one of symbiosis: though two, they constitute a unit. In fact as far as the infant is concerned - who is still far from having conceived even the first notion of a dissociation between subject and object, inside and outside - the affective aspect of its own experience and those external stimuli to which its feeling, needs, and satisfactions correspond are exactly one.
>
> (*Primitive Mythology*, p. 67.)

The newborn individual is no longer engulfed by the total positivity of the pro-child mother environment, but is now in a more direct, and responsive, relation to her. At this time is experienced the steady dawning of the separation, the mother does not now anticipate everything, and certainly not as immediately as before. There is now a time lag, however short, of hunger, cold, or of some form of unease and disquiet before gratification (even with the most diligent parent), that implies a split between her and her offspring of both physique and psyche.

How the child experiences this process will surely govern the meaning of the female to her or him, but it must experience here some dissatisfaction in the failure to gratify their every whim. The cry of the infant is initially a demand for what it feels rightfully belongs to it; there is no request in the sound. It may falter into that as the realisation dawns, but the insistence of the immediate howl contains no asking, no doubt as to what is due, or rather overdue. As time progresses its needs and drives will be less and less contained by the mother and more and more they will be driven to relate to the world. Slowly the reality first of paradise, then of the Madonna and child are lost forever. Only the images remain:

> I have no idea when I began to perceive with the monstrous

> selfishness that dependency lends to a child's eyes that my mother was not perfect: I was not her whole life.
>
> (Nancy Friday, *My Mother My Self.*)[15]

If it is the world's doing, the world's pull, then the great mother is innocent. If the separation is her push, it is her rejection, then she is the cause of the loss, and probably the anxiety, breathless trauma, seizure and panic that any subsequent rejection recalls.

The juxtaposition of bodily bliss and decomposition within the female image, with the child, the eater, becoming meat, eating and being eaten, are common images: Hansel and Gretel's witch, Kali the Black One eating her devotees (as symbol of all-consuming time), and Grindl's Dam, as awesome slighted women are a few that spring easily to mind. Campbell cites a beautifully surreal example elsewhere in the same volume of the potent, cautionary, image of the Navaho 'Vagina Girls' whose genitalia sport snapping teeth (*Primitive Mythology,* pp. 74-5).

If the difficulty of life is positively received then the relation seems to take on the quality of a test, or a quest, a proving of worthiness.[16] Campbell brings in here as part of this matrix of imagery the labyrinth symbolism that is equally both universal and ancient. It seems to straddle the two aspects of paradise regained, as re-entry into motherland and relation with the woman as a problematic individual. Theseus, perhaps most famous for his successful sortie in the bowels of the Labyrinth, succeeded only with the aid of a maiden. Titania's seduction of Bottom is perhaps also a burlesque echo of the infatuation of Queen Pasiphae with a beautiful

bull, the Minotaur being the monstrous outcome of the coupling. It was Ariadne's thread that enabled Theseus to retrace his path after slaying the bull-headed Minotaur, and his subsequent rejection of her, Shakespeare reminds us, is an important detail of Titania's influence on his previous inconstancy:

> Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
> From Perigenia, whom he ravishéd,
> And make him with fair Aegles break his faith,
> With Ariadne, and Antiopa? [II.i.80]

Titania also mentions very soon after (nineteen lines) the 'quaint mazes in the wanton green/ For lack of tread are undistinguishable' [II.i.99]. Such mazed courses were cut in turf for young men to run and have associations with May eve.[17]

Aeneas was similarly first challenged, then aided by the witch-like Sibyl, but often the lady in question is a maiden, a potential spouse, as with Theseus and Ariadne. The maze image of the Labyrinth, examples of which are scratched on tombs and burial mounds not only around the Mediterranean but from Melanesia to New Grange in Ireland, resemble nothing so much in nature as the intestines. These internal chambers from which we have all at some time emerged link also to the weaving knotwork thread of a path of fate.[18]

Involved in this context are the fates, always female, who enchant the paths of heroes and heroines. Marina Warner relates the word 'fairy' back to the Latin *fata*:

> The fairies resemble goddesses of this kind, for they too know the course of fate. ***Fatum***, literally that which is spoken, the past participle of the verb ***fari***, to speak, gives French ***fée***, Italian ***fata***, Spanish ***hada***, all meaning 'fairy', and enclosing connotations of fate; fairies share with Sybyl's knowledge of the future and the past, and in the stories which feature them, both types of figure foretell

> events to come, and give warnings.
> (*From the Beast to the Blonde*, p. 15.)[19]

Such ladies are the three weird sisters who cast Macbeth's fate, his 'weird' or individual way in the world, members of this company whose evil cauldron - usually a nutritive symbol, is here in its negative aspect conveying dissolution, waning as well as waxing, like the moon goddess in her crone or diminishing facet.

The maze-like designs both upon, and of, many prehistoric tombs, is to be as much like the visceral body of the mother as possible. If the interred is to be reborn, a labyrinth at, or about the entrance, is like the serpentine internal organs. It also acts to present a puzzle and a challenge, the struggle with and relation to one's own unconscious programming - the great game:

> Its principle seems to be the provision of a difficult but possible access to some important point. Two ideas are involved: the idea of defence and exclusion, and the idea of the penetration, on correct terms, of this defence [...] The maze symbolism seems somehow to be associated with maidenhood [...] The overcoming of difficulties by a hero frequently precedes union with some hidden princess.
>
> (W.F. Jackson Knight, quoted by Campbell, p. 69.)

So, 'She' (as Shakespeare reflects in all the females in *The Dream* in relation to their menfolk, including Hippolyta) is both the task and the reward.[20] Once achieved, of course, this reward in turn becomes the task and then again the reward, as Theseus was to find out. To these two aspects of 'the Goddess' or the female, as Maid and Mother, we can by association link Maid - Wife, or describe them as Daughter - Woman. We are describing them by time relation. To a male they could be Daughter - Wife. If we then add to this pair, the Old Woman, as the Witch perhaps, or the Crone, and she is already evident

in the tales mentioned, we have a trinity of Maid, Woman, Crone, a recurring group in mythology, often symbolic of the inexorable processes of time (Graves considered them as three aspects of the moon Goddess waxing, full, and waning[21]), the way of the world, nature as giver and sustainer and, ultimately, taker-away.[22]

NOTES

1 C.G.Jung, *Psychological Reflections* (1945 London: Ark, 1986), p.339.

2 This is described by Adolph Bastian, quoted by Campbell, as 'elementary ideas' Elementtargedanke and 'ethnic ideas' Völkergedanke:

> The elementary ideas are never experienced directly, in a pure state, abstracted from the locally conditioned ethnic ideas, through which they are substantialised.
>
> (*Primitive Mythology*, p.461.)

3 O'Sullivan presents Pavlov succinctly as the formulator of a 'classical conditioning' experiment wherein a dog is shown to transfer its 'unconditioned' (instinctive) response of salivation, to a stimulus of food, over to a 'conditioned' (learned) stimulus, the sound of a bell, with sufficient repetition; becoming one of the cornerstones of behaviourist theory.

Geraldine O'Sullivan. 'Behaviour therapy', in *Individual Therapy*, p.253.

4

> Pantalone traditionally raises his comedy completely from the juxtaposition of these contraries, presented with the mask and gait of age he contradicts his infirmity with an exaggerated codpiece and lustful responses, and his stooped and lame shuffle with sudden gambols and leaps.
>
> P.L.Duchartre, *The Italian Comedy*, trans. Weaver (New York: Dover, 1966), p.41 and illustrations pp.333-4.

and from *As You Like It* the same contradictions:

> The sixth age shifts
> Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
> With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
> His youthful hose well sav'd, a world too wide
> For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
> Turning again toward a childish treble, pipes
> And whistles in his sound. (AYLI II.vii.163)

5 Bettelheim comments on the presence of the diurnal cycle in Little Red Riding Hood's being swallowed by the wolf:

> The theme of night devouring the day, of the moon devouring the sun, of winter replacing the warm seasons, of the god swallowing the sacrificial victim, and so on.

But then having made such a significant case for the wolf as an archaic fear trigger, he then rejects it as obscure and so impractical:

> They seem to offer little to the parent or educator who wants to know what meaning a fairy story may have to the child, whose experience is, after all quite far removed from interpretations of the world on the basis of concerns with nature or celestial deities.
>
> B. Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), p. 13.

6 Arthur Zajonc *Catching the Light. The Entwined History of Light and Mind* (London: Bantam, 1993) p. 8.

7 In contrast E. M. Forster considers both birth and death as 'not experiences', which of course without a recognition of a possible residual influence in the unconscious they must seem:

> We were all born, but we cannot remember what it was like. And death is coming even as birth has come, but, similarly we do not know what it is like. Our final experience, like our first is conjectural. We move between two darknesses.
>
> E. M. Forster. *Aspects of the Novel* (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1962), p. 53.

8 G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire* (London: Methuen, 1949).

9 Wilson Knight's concept of order - chaos - order presented in *The Wheel of Fire* and his list of Shakespearean polarities (p47-48) is more specifically tragic and therefore I feel is not ultimately as abstract as that of Lévi-Strauss of 'contradiction moving towards resolution' discussed in chapter 7.

10 Freud's description of guilt in the 'oldest Greek tragedy' is significant in this context in terms of the function given to the chorus in relation to such a birth-rebirth of a group hero:

> A group of persons, all of the same name and dressed in the same way, surround a single figure upon whose words and actions they are dependant, to represent the chorus and the original single impersonator of the hero.
>
> Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo* (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1940), p. 206.

11 The spring of Lethe was the water of forgetfulness by the gates of Hades and the first thing to be seen in the underworld for the newly dead. See W. K. C. Guthrie. *The Greeks and Their Gods*(Boston: Beacon, 1955) p. 292.

12 W. B. Yeats 'Cuchulain's Fight with the Sea.' *Collected Works* (London: Macmillan, 1933), p. 40.

13 It is interesting to note Freud's footnote to the removal of the primal father (*Totem and Taboo,* p. 206) uses Ariel's song from *The Tempest* which enhances the same imagery of dissolution as the Joyce extract but with implications of renewal and permanency:

> Full fathom five thy father lies:
> Of his bones are coral made;
> Those are pearls that were his eyes;
> Nothing of him that doth fade
> But doth suffer a sea change
> Into something rich and strange.

14 In this context, of the salt watery nature of protoplasm and the

womb, Paglia cites Ferenczi from *Thalassa: A Theory of Genitality.* as explaining how 'Woman's body reeks of the sea':

> The genital secretion of the female among the higher mammals and in man ... possesses a distinctly fishy odour (odour of herring brine) according to the description of all physiologists; this odour of the vagina comes from the same substance (trimethylamine) as the decomposition of fish gives rise to.
>
> (Ferenczi, quoted in Paglia, *Sexual Personae*, p. 92.)

15 Nancy Friday, *My Mother My Self* (Glasgow: Fontana, 1977), p. 20.

16 Forster sums up a similar list of human experiences as tests and refers, obliquely, certainly to Freud, and possibly to Jung in his reference to 'collective' or group experience, thus:

> Some say that sex is basic and underlies all other loves - love of friends, of God, of country. Others say that it is connected with them, but laterally, it is not their root. I suggest that we call love the fifth great experience through which we have to pass. Forster. *Aspects of the Novel*, p. 56.

(the other four being birth, death [see above note 7] and food and sleep.)

17 P. Holland, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Oxford Shakespeare edition, 1994), p. 160.

18

> Woman's body is the labyrinth in which nature works its daemonic sorcery. Woman's body is the primaeval fabricator, the real first mover. She turns a gob of refuse into a spreading web of sentient being, floating on the snaky umbilical by which she lashes every man.
>
> (Paglia, *Sexual Personae*, p. 12.)

19 Marina Warner, *From the Beast to the Blonde* (London: Paladin, 1994), p. 15.

20

> In a myth of the Melanesian island of Malekula in the New Hebrides, which describes the dangers of the way to the Land of the Dead, it is told that when the soul has been carried on a wind across the waters of death and is approaching the entrance of the underworld, it perceives a female guardian sitting before the entrance, drawing a labyrinth design across the path, of which she erases half as the soul approaches. The voyager must restore the design perfectly

> if he is to pass through it to the Land of the Dead. Those who fail the guardian eats.
>
> (*Primitive Mythology,* p. 69.)

21 R. Graves, *The White Goddess* (London: Faber and Faber, 1952),

p. 142.

22 Birkhäuser-Oeri suggests that the preordained nature of such imagery as the crone-woman-maid in fairy tale is similarly an echo of Hesiod's spinners (Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos) to counteract any presumptive egotism on behalf of the heroine/hero, to remind them they are not free agents:

> That is something known to anyone who has experienced the effects of the unconscious because its images predetermine what happens to us. Such experiences force us to adopt an attitude of respect for the unconscious and its world of imagery.
>
> *The Mother: Archetypal Imagery in the Fairy Tale* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1980), p. 126.

Macbeth's three witches are of this order, similarly raising this theme of predestination and free will. Marina Warner *From the Beast to the Blonde,* p. 15) equates these three aspects as:

> Woollen thread on a distaff, on a spindle [...], the past which is already spun and wound on to the spindle; the present, which is drawn between the spinners fingers; and the future, which lies in the wool twined on the distaff, and which must still be drawn out by the fingers of the spinner onto the spindle, as the present is drawn into the past.

CHAPTER 3.

THE ARCHETYPES OF THE SOCIAL AND THE ANTI-SOCIAL

> That ended the procession proper, but it was followed by a laughing and cheering rabble giving mock triumph to Baba, the clown of Alexandria [...] He rode in a public dung-cart, to which had been yoked in a row a goat, a sheep, a pig and a fox [...] His sceptre was a cabbage stick with a dead bat tied to the end of it [...] Baba's sack-tunic was torn behind and disclosed Baba's rump, painted blue with bold markings to make it look like a grinning human face.[1]
>
> (R. Graves, *Claudius the God*)[2]

EXCREMENT and the FOOL.

Freud places great emphasis on the effect of disciplining the child not to play with its own faeces. A child's fascination with its own excrement is considered by Freud to be a first creative act, a prize and a suitable gift.[3] The child considers the excrement to be its first manufactured object, which is presented for the approval of his parents, and their rejection of it, and of his involvement with and manipulation of it, is thought of as a major repression, the first really intense social pressure.

The emphasis he places here on what appears on first examination to be a minor impulse, hardly a need, seems taken out of all proportion. Into this area, which seems, at first, so at odds with normal experience, Campbell adds convincing evidence by taking this complex imprint much more deeply than Freud could at the time, into world mythology and ethnology, and produces, in symbols of

retroflexion and rejection of society, a very convincing argument (*Primitive Mythology*, pp. 71-3).

Parents encourage and often reward evacuation during early training, while at the same time abhorring any close association with, or exploration of, the end product. The fascination the child feels for this creative act, although blocked by his parents, does not go away.[4] Along with its fascination with its own excrement, and its every presentation, and bound tightly to it, and arising at any thought of its expression, will rise the reorganising and suppressing responses the family and society require, and have impressed onto the child:

> The pleasure of the impulse constantly undergoes displacement in order to escape the blocking which it encounters and seeks to acquire surrogates for the forbidden in the form of substitutive objects and actions [...]. The mutual inhibition of these two contending forces creates a need for discharge and for lessening the existing tension, in which we may recognise the motivation for the compulsive acts. In the neurosis there are distinctly acts of compromise which on the one hand may be regarded as proofs of remorse and efforts to expiate and similar actions; but on the other hand they are substitutive actions which recompense the impulse for what has been forbidden.
>
> (Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, p. 52.)

Hence as Campbell points out in his section on this taboo (*Primitive Mythology*, p. 71), throughout all the higher mythologies whether Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Hindu, Christian, Jewish or Moslem, filth is equated with sin and cleanliness with virtue. So pervasive is it that the association seems logical, when it is only normal and normative. If we accept Freud's supposition about the neurosis as Campbell does, then it leads on to all sorts of sublimative actions, from alchemists turning base metals into incorruptible gold, to the cultured interests in the daubing and smearing plastic arts, painting,

sculpture, architecture, collecting of any kind, coins, precious stones, for as Campbell states:

> the value of gold, of the marble and clay of the sculptor, and the materials of the painter may be supposed, furthermore, to have been the greater inasmuch as all were derived from the bowels of the earth [...] the seat of Hell.
>
> (Ibid., p. 72.)

The emphasis on this apparently simple inhibition as a cornerstone of society's authority over the individual, becomes much more convincing if we look at its institutionalised and often sanctified opposition. In 'practically every primitive society ever studied' the smearing of paint, clay, ashes or dung confers a magical beauty and ritual protection. Often the sacred taboo breakers of society, when so smeared, daubed, and subsequently all licenced as clowns, may then, as resurrected toddlers, again confound and contradict all the rules the Lord Chamberlain will allow. Thus by their example releasing and relieving some of the pressure of rule holding in all of us.[5]

When the repression regarding a particular situation is widespread within a group, deliberate regressions, like those of licenced fools (neurotic activity when present in a normal individual), would be a relieving and releasing action, that is a comical action, to members of that group burdened with such a repression. Whichever infantile projections they would display, would be empathically releasing the tension of the crowd.[6] The repertoire of the rudery and clumsiness of clowns imitates the antisocial irreverance of the toddler, to rekindle innocence, and induce this temporary release in us. Good clowns will deliberately extend for us the delicate moment of choice as they, and we, perceive a possible

naughtiness, looking to us for endorsement as their bodies quiver in the agonism before the abandonment of their far too fragile restraint. In this way a Harlequin allows us, even as children, to feel superior to him, superior in duty, yet envious of his innocent freedom. And similarly it's not uncommon to see children looking round apprehensively, nervous of their laughter at the antics of clowns, wondering if they should enjoy this display of what probably they have just recently been chastised for. The clown sects of more fundamental cultures interestingly also have in many traditions the taboo breaking initiation rites of eating shit and filth, or presenting it at the most pompous and dignified of situations:

> Among the Jicarilla Apache of New Mexico the members of the clown society are actually called 'Striped Excrement'. They are smeared with white clay and have four black horizontal stripes crossing their legs, body and face.
>
> (*Primitive Mythology,* p. 73.)

SEX.

Some of the roles that are sex differentiated appear to exist in primate communities, which, if confirmed, would suggest that they predate mere cultural input. Jane Goodall has observed distinct and stereotyped sexual role differentiation amongst chimpanzees;[7] if we accept the evidence of primate behaviour as relevant to the roles of our human ancestors, then it suggests that the roles are prior to what we could call human social or linguistic conditioning. The objective in looking at chimpanzees is to examine the communities of our closest mammal cousins, not to suggest any limit to male or female possibility of function, but to examine the imagery of representation, recognising its prescriptive nature. The aim is not 'biologism' but 'the deconstruction of sexual identity' to quote from Toril Moi (*Sexual*

Textual Politics, p. 14).[8] For as she says of both Virginia Woolf and Freud (p. 10) we are tracing what 'unconscious drives and desires constantly exert a pressure on our conscious thoughts and actions', by, in this case, indicating the layers from which the primitive spectres of both sexes may rise to haunt us, and be reflected in our drama.[9]

Similarly, I recognise that it could also be that the social conditioning of the observer is projecting onto the situation, although, with Jane Goodall the nature of the way she relates information and incident certainly appears particularly impartially recorded. What emerges from her study is that it was the females who were consistently caring for the young, and that their role was directly to preserve the species, by the maintenance of the well-being of the tribe's children. She splits behaviour into three types: friendly, sexual and unfriendly, the most important being:

> The caretaker relationship of mother and child usually leads to friendship between mother and older offspring, particularly (at Gombe) between mother and adult daughter - the strongest of all bonds among adults.
>
> (Goodall, *The Chimpanzees of Gombe*, p. 174)

The archetypal imagery echoing such forerunners of universal Great Motherhood can be found in many symbolic representations as diverse as Kali, Isis and the Madonna and child. Goodall notes that, with chimpanzees, the mother was a significant presence and a powerful influence on the infant. That the transition into adulthood and the parting from mother could be a problem, and a behavioural hurdle, with pronounced disruptive behaviour and very emotional outbursts.[10] This implies a distinct break, rather than gradual passage, or indeed some

form of instinctive hiatus.

Interestingly sexual relations can be either friendly or 'definitely unfriendly', in that sense it is only distinctly and instinctively functional, as she puts it, that 'the desire of the male meshes with the receptivity of the female'.

The male role appeared to be to range and to scout, to know where to find food, which either sex gathered individually, and to be some form of defence to protect the tribe or their food supply from attack, sometimes from other tribes and sometimes from predators. These are the long term concerns the male exhibits. He is heavier than the female and physically generally more able in combat. Whether he has developed a heavier musculature for this different function, or whether the function followed the heavy build, is not known. Whichever came first, his specifically martial role means that his function is necessarily very limited. This hunting and warrior aspect of communal life is similarly well represented in legend and myth, whether in killing monsters or enemies of the group, as with the examples Beowulf, Heracles, and Theseus, or as defenders of the tribe and extenders of territories such as in the historically-based heroics of say a Hereward, Alexander, Julius Caesar or Nelson, who have all been significantly mythologised.

Both types are amply recorded in narrative but what is interesting is the recognition of the inverse tradition, particularly in theatre, of the empty braggart, the blustering cowardly 'Capitanos' of *Commedia dell 'arte* from 'Miles Gloriosus' to 'Scaramouche' and 'Falstaff'. This reflects a hollow martial attitude and demeanour, seen by Goodall in the tribal chimpanzee, that is completely

inappropriate and quite unnecessary (and of course untested) when times are good and territories safe. The males' status at such times can only be an empty boast. Male chimps spend a great deal of time just grooming and being groomed, in order of protocol, once the bullying and bragging have established who is top male, and who is to be groomed first.

The empty braggart also anticipates some recent ideas expressed by the anthropologist Kirsten Hawkes (see Dunbar, *Grooming, Gossip and the Evolution of Language*, p. 176).[11] Firstly, she contends that hunting is uneconomical as a food provider, trapping works much better and is far less arduous, and secondly, that the urge to hunt is part of the mating game, that in fact hunting is a type of risk enhanced 'lek' - or area for displays of prowess to impress females of each male's proficiency. Robin Dunbar extends this by association to war and sport, the risk value of all such 'heroic tasks' being how difficult it is to cheat; 'it is difficult to imagine any more exacting test than hunting in the world of our ancestors' (Ibid., p. 182).

In hunting and gathering tribes too, the men have this same problem of status and purpose, particularly when things are going well for the tribe, and there is plenty of food. The men's club here is not involved in de-lousing, but instead goes in for various forms of war games and hierarchical protocols:

AGAMEMNON Why then you princes,
Do you with cheeks abash'd behold our works,
And call them shames which are indeed nought else,
But the protractive trials of great Jove
To find persistive constancy in men,

The fineness of which metal is not found
In fortune's love?

Troilus and Cressida (I.iii.23).

There has to be something 'important' for the males to do. War and the hunt then become ritualised into games, team raids and long ritualised preparations. They are of course very important, serious and sometimes even lethal to participants, but all unnecessary for tribe survival at any time of peace and plenty. These men's clubs or societies do provide the strict hierarchies and maintain the physical skills and attributes of war and hunting, should subsequently the times demand them.

That such patterns appear to be archaic, and that we can still see similar images operant in our contemporary society suggests that they are archetypal, but this supposition has also been questioned in terms of what Stuart Wavell describes as 'primotology being manipulated to reinforce the way we would have liked our ancestors to have behaved'[12]. The image of the all-mother we have already discussed, along with whether she was good or bad and the impact that that has upon the child. Compared with this the male equivalent image is quite distinctly judgemental and competitive, that is aggressive; although, he may be considered as positive to our wellbeing as defender, or negatively opposed to it as antagonist. The possible echoes of such images as 'Madonna and child' and the 'champion among men' could then be coming to us from a very ancient source, present in chimpanzee village life, and in the pack hierarchies and tribes of most collective mammals. The female chimps will play with their little brothers and sisters as if they were dolls. The males are not

observed to do this at all, but wrestle and test their strength, challenge each other, then push each other about, then push females about and the other males. If successful, ultimately they will, having pushed everyone else about, challenge the top male.

According to Freud, the child becomes very aware of the *petite difference* between Dick and Dora about the age of four. This small physical distinction leads to the girl child believing she has been castrated, and the young boy to believe that it is a possibility for him too:

> Each sex is jealous of what the other has which it lacks, much though each sex may like and be proud of what belongs to it - be it social role or sexual organs [...] (to some degree this is due to early psychoanalysis one-sidedly stressing the so called penis envy in girls, which probably occurred because at that time treatises were written by males who did not examine their own envy of females [...])
>
> (Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 266.)

All punishment from then on, for the boy is apparently directly linked to this fear of castration; whereas the female is riddled with envy, an envy that is only satisfied when she can produce a son. These views come in for a lot of strong criticism and are now largely considered now as unproven, if not unprovable.[13]

There is much more evidence for the part of the male fear of her envy, than there seems for the existence of the envy itself. The misogynists' debilitating fear of mental and/or physical castration is well represented in the ogress and cannibal witch. We have already seen these images, frequent in fairytale, as aspects of the non-providing mother, and seen also as the phallic mother with her long nose and fingers and whiskery chin. But again these are also age metaphors, and since time will ultimately devour us all, so these will

echo fearful images whatever sex we are to portray (Cronos would be a male equivalent).

A more useful aspect of the archetype of sex differentiation, and which is a reflex of the male fear of the powerful creative aspect of woman,[14] is in the widespread evidence of female imitative actions.[15] Circumcision, sub-incision, and various forms of genital mutilation and bloodletting, during initiatory rites, are often practised by old males on young males, usually at about the time of the onset of menarche in girls. Even in developed cultures an equivalent male initiation is undergone at this time. Add to this the ubiquitous cross-dressing of male shaman, and the case for male envy of, and spite towards, the fecundity of woman becomes overwhelming, and certainly more widespread than any that has been made for penis envy.

The theatrical and ritual use of cross-dressing, still extant in Pantomime Dames and Principal Boys, is related by Camille Paglia (*Sexual Personae*, p. 44) to the repression or taboo breaking of emasculation, transvestism and celibacy by such shaman and priests (described as the less 'severe choice' to transsexualism by Paglia). The link is confused by the restraints historically placed on females appearing onstage; and not just in Classical, Medieval and Renaissance European theatre traditions; Japanese Kabuki theatre reflects a similar attitude of repression of female participation as the repression of the erotic.[16] Beginning originally with female dancers Kabuki was deemed salacious. Subsequently their replacement young men were also banned as salacious. Ultimately only shaved headed and restrained performances by elderly male actors were allowed; presumably imitating the ruling geriatricy. The intensity of

any theatrical presentation is an enhanced image and is therefore a powerful, and obviously in the context of these societies, a very subversive sexual stimulant.

We have already mentioned the Grayling moth effect, where art can enhance an innate response, and suggested that the action of masks or make-up is similar to cosmetics and fashion in producing super-stimulants. Masking and make-up (mascara comes from the same Arabic root word *maskarah* - a buffoon. Partridge, p.383.) are very ancient arts; both lapis powder and kohl have been found in tombs from the time of the pyramids.[17]

We also associate the glamourous large dewy eyes, and hence relatively small nose and ears, but without the large sensuous mouth, with babyhood, and this figuration has appeal to both sexes. These are the 'cute' symbols that enable us to distinguish the baby animal from its adult form, and make it difficult for most of us to mistreat 'young' of any species or even reject any appeal their faces make. Hence the totally impractical and highly successful soft toy industry, and the wonderfully cute and expressive appeal imitated in cartoons.

And, because all of us respond to and identify with the 'cute' playful character, it is ubiquitous in comedy as the roles have to win us, and they have to win us quickly. Often it is the innocence and charm, focussed in a role that hooks us to the play. Not only is the visual image important, but dramatically there are also specific behaviour symbols, stances and gestures, that are expressions and triggers of sex, age and status, that require strong responses and are hence 'signs' when presented on the stage.

Keir Elam quotes Jiri Veltrusky's succinct assessment that 'All

that is on stage is a sign'.[18] The proposition I am drawing from Campbell here is echoing this in that the stage is a zone of heightened awareness, of what is already a sign, the meaning being essentially and primarily instinctive and biological, whatever secondary significance the actual performance accumulates. Theatre in all its forms has constantly used these IRM's in its masks, costumes, movements and gestures, exaggerating and amplifying the signals of the species back at itself, for adulation, or parody.

There are of course still many cultural, and indeed individual, variations between our responses, which imply a great deal of learned as well as individually imprinted factors, largely formed, as emphasised so strongly by Freud, in relation to the parent of the opposite sex. This leads us on to the next archetypal pattern.

OEDIPUS and ELECTRA.

The family romance of a little one enmeshed with two big ones in a complex love and hate tangle is to the Freudians the imprint of imprints 'I want to state the conclusion that the beginnings of religion, ethics, society and art meet in the oedipus complex' (Freud, *Totem and Taboo,* p.208). All the future effects of life pattern, culture, religion, marriage, occupation, are considered to stem from the universality of this complex. Stated simply it says that at about five or six years of age a boy or girl becomes besotted with the parent of the opposite sex. In the boy's case his desire is to get rid of Father and be alone with Mother. The compensatory fear, that is triggered by the desire, is that of castration by a jealous Father. Campbell quotes Geza Roheim in this context, in pro-Freudian stance stating that 'the father is the first enemy and every enemy is

symbolic of the father' and 'whatever is killed becomes father'. (*Primitive Mythology*, p. 129.)

If the girl is attached to Father, she is therefore her mother's rival. Her great fear then is that the old witch will kill him and draw her back to be a child again, or worse perhaps, to be drawn back and smothered in the old pre-sexual, pre-conscious limbo of the womb.

This concept which was tremendously influential in the first decades of this century, was apparently based on a very small sample of investigation by Freud. According to Charles Rycroft it arose out of self-analysis upon the death of his father.[19] According to Jeffrey Masson (Projects Director of the Freud Archives) principally it was one patient 'Dora' (Ida Bauer), a sixteen year old suffering from depression. Both the treatment of this girl, and the subsequent theorising by Freud, has been very effectively and extensively criticised.[20] Nevertheless the symbols used by Freud do give a vocabulary to the area of parent-child relations, and what might be unconscious or latent there, although it would be inappropriate to think of them as clinically defining it.

Campbell, in a similar way, is not convinced of the universality of the Oedipus and Electra patterns but he does direct our attention to how the many mythological plots in his and many other books 'furnish abundant instances of this romance of a Lilliputian and two giants'.[21]

An obvious and fascinating 'romance' in this context is the tale of *Hamlet*. It has its killing of fathers, one of which leads to a seduced mother, and then the other to a distraught daughter; one being poisoned, the other one drowned. But if kings and queens are easy

metaphors for cold and distant parents, then many tales, Grimm and otherwise, are recruited to the ranks of this archetypal plot. One immediately thinks of *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty*.

And if, as Freud states, all that is killed becomes the loved and hated father, then much of primitive totemism, and the associated mythology of animal ancestry, also join the ranks of this theme. Similarly with the ancient practice of matrilineal descent, mentioned earlier in the context of Oedipus, where the superseded and violently deposed old king is then venerated, often the bloodline being imbibed ritually, or various potent parts being actually eaten, as a form of continuity or renewal, by the new incumbent. From this attitude it is only a few steps to the familiarity and the chivalry afforded to the defeated opponent - after the bout:

> This was the noblest roman of them all.
> All the conspirators save only he
> Did what they did in envy of great Caesar;
> He, only in a general honest thought
> And common good to all, made one of them.
> His life was gentle, and the elements
> So mixed in him that nature might stand up
> And say to all the world, 'This was a man!'
>
> *Julius Caesar* [V. v. 75.].

So speaks Anthony over the corpse of 'honourable' *Patrician* Brutus, expressing the archetypal paradox. Freud[22] gives a humorous account of this ambivalence acting in reverse almost, here directed towards an elected king:

> the savage Timmes of Sierra Leone reserve the right to administer a beating to their elected king on the evening before his coronation, and that they make use of this constitutional right with such a thoroughness that the unhappy ruler sometimes does not survive his accession to the throne; for this reason the leaders of the race have made it a rule to elect some man to whom they have a

particular grudge.

This pattern is explained thus:

> Here the importance of a particular person is extraordinarily heightened and his omnipotence is raised to the improbable in order to make it easier to attribute to him the responsibility for everything painful which happens to the patient. Savages really do not act differently towards their rulers when they ascribe to them the power over rain and shine, wind and weather, and then dethrone or kill them [...]. The prototype which the paranoiac reconstructs in his persecution mania is found in the relation of the child to the father [...] distrust for the father has been shown to be intimately connected with the highest esteem for him. When a paranoiac names a person as his 'persecutor', he thereby elevates him to the paternal succession and brings him under the conditions which enable him to make him responsible for all the misfortune which he experiences.
>
> (*Totem and Taboo,* pp. 76-77.)

This goes some way towards the explanation of a repetitive theme in many tales of quests, particularly in the west, of finding or reconciling oneself with the father. Many heroes begin their tales lacking that parent, which seems to give a maternal, indefinite and unsatisfying atmosphere to their lives. To find the father (the enemy, the inheritance), is the same as finding who they are, their role. The father then being the one who grades us, perhaps by his opposition, in a way that Mother with her unqualified and unstratified love would never do. The Father is then the Judge, or is at least judgemental; finding the Father, or his rescue or regeneration, is the test. Or in other circumstances overcoming the Father, killing or replacing him and his judgement of us, is the test.

RITES OF PASSAGE.

> it requires twenty years for the human organism to mature, and during the greater part of this development it is dependant, utterly, upon parental care. There follows a period of another twenty years or so of maturity, after which the signs of age begin to appear. But the human being is the only animal capable of knowing death as the end

> inevitable for itself [...]. So we see three - at least three - distinct periods of growth and susceptibility to imprint as inevitable in a human biography: (1) childhood and youth, with its uncouth charm; (2) maturity, with its competence and authority; and (3) wise old age, nursing its own death and gazing back, either with love or rancour, at the fading world. (*Primitive Mythology*, p. 60.)

Goodall cited the problems that leaving mother caused the infant chimpanzee; for humans this threshold too is immensely important. Birth, as we have said, is a rite and a passage, but an unchosen and to a large extent, an unconscious one. The traumas of toilet training and the assumption of our sexual type are surely as unchosen, albeit more conscious, or at least more accessible to recall. Our participation in all these processes is certainly involuntary. The title 'Rites of Passage' refers directly to the changes that we participate in deliberately attaining adulthood, marriage, and gaining wisdom. These thresholds are crossed deliberately, or so it seems at the time - although with hindsight we can see the age related nature of the mechanisms; which look more and more like imprints, and can make our steps seem less than completely chosen, and less than completely conscious.

Here the imprints are more sociologically conditioned, triggered by devices to do with our tribal or cultural position, and are hence of a variable type, but serving the universal function of releasing the dormant behaviour requirements of such periods of human biography, and as importantly, making the change irrevocable.

The rites of passage of puberty and maturation and of old age and wisdom, can, in this sense, be described as the quest for the Father. If Mother is the all loving and accepting - the familiar, the known - then in leaving the nursery paradise of her thrall is to pass on to

the adult land, where endeavour and failure is possible, if not highly likely. As has been outlined earlier, we are then entering the judgemental domain of the father. The similarity between this trauma and the other great passage at the end of life is very obvious; as this world is home, easy and ordered for us at the end of our days, we can look to the beyond of death as a passage into the unknown final test, in the realm of the Almighty Father.

Here we are just focussing in on the quality of the passage, the test and rebirth of the individual, that is the conscious individual, here deliberately involved and participating in the process, or in deliberate avoidance of it, as the case may be. The initiator, father or father figure, is similarly conscious too. The individual interacts with him as a person, he is reasoned with, duped sometimes, but always measured against a standard. The relation is very different from that with the mother in the aware but not consciously directed struggle of birth.

The 'Rites' of the passage consist in making conscious and deliberate the necessary changes of state and of function that humans pass through. Campbell, from his extensive studies of the mythic forms of many societies, and Jung and Freud from their years of clinical work with patients, all stress the importance of making the new mind-set conscious to the individual, and of the definitive blocking of any return to an earlier form. Campbell sees this as very important for the society:

> We may say that whereas the energies of the psyche in their primary context of infantile concerns are directed to the crude ends of individual pleasure and power, in the rituals of initiation they are organised and implicated in a system of social duty, with such effect that the individual thenceforth can be safely trusted as an organ of the group.

(*Primitive Mythology*, p. 118.)

The paradigm of the 'Rite of Passage' is the puberty rite, which is pertinently only cultural in the male. For the female there is with her rituals the distinctly timed and biologically obvious onset of the menarche. For the boy there is the need to become adult, a demonstration to parallel the apparent physical changes the girl will have in menstruation, which will continually remind and define her significance as a woman, mature enough to reproduce. With the male there is little to show for the sexual maturity that he achieves, added to which is the difficulty he has in expressing his maturity, as in most societies, he has not the wherewithal to support any family he might generate for several years after he is physically capable of doing so. It is for the men's club, the father or fathers of the group to enrol the boys into society and enforce the required behaviour, and perform the scarification that stamps his body as adult. Father is then the symbol of socialisation. His love is conditional; he wants a success and his love is dependent on that, unlike mother's love, it is hierarchical rather than associational, and it has to be won.

'Father' then as father, or king, chief - top male - is then the challenge of achievement, and also the challenger. He is the encourager and the opponent, the adversary who holds the key to development and who assesses the scale of achievement. The archetypal plot of the search for him, or for his renewal and replacement in marriage, is the search for our role, our own independence, maturity and individuality. Being without a father is almost compulsory for a hero, as is his rejection or inadequacy for the heroine[23]; and it is

usually the origin of the quest. A motherless child would be seeking love and acceptance, a fatherless child is seeking purpose and value in something outside herself, or himself, whether within their society or beyond it. And here lies the beautiful irony that to renew father's role is to reject, replace and displace him; in this sense such aggression is supportive of the function, although destructive of the person. The killing of the king is the renewal of his role, and yet also the replacement of him, necessary to win the princess. The abandonment of the inadequate father is, for a girl, similarly necessary for the winning of the prince. So what seems malignant and destructive when taken at first at the personal level, is necessary, and ultimately beneficial for the society.

Cultures and societies change and grow by this agonism, or else they must stagnate in the exact repetition of their forms. Through, and in this contest is individuality formed. Individuals are by definition somewhat distinct from initiatory consensus, and are indeed measured by their resistance to conformity, mythically and historically. The greater the overcoming, the greater is the renown in the eyes of men and the gods.

History and mythology start in this renown, in the enjoyment and recording of particular, unique events, not the humdrum or the repetitious but the momentous. The great stone tablets were and still are erected to commemorate persons and actions that stood out in the eyes of their fellow citizens. They are then a celebration and endorsement of individuality. In this way societies become aware of themselves (as individuals themselves do), by opposition to consensus and conformity. Such opposition, contra-diction and contra-action is

conflict and is then drama. In the city states, specifically in those of Greece, we see the emergent self-consciousness reflected in the slow emergence of theatre from corporate religious exercise.

NOTES

1 C.S. Lewis links this apparent ridicule at a hero's triumph and the earthy love of *homme sensuel moyen* with the large ears in *'The Dream'* as a concession to Nemesis:

> The appearance of such figures in a poem does not mean that the main tendency of the work is satiric: it almost means the opposite. When the soldiers followed Caesar in his triumph singing *'calvum moechum adducimus'*, this did not mean that the purpose of the triumph was to ridicule the general [...]. Nemesis needed to be placated just because the ceremony as a whole aimed at the glorification of the general. Paid with thanks.

and similarly with the 'Pyramus and Thisbe' ending to the play:

> In the same way, the comic figures in a medieval love poem are a cautionary concession - a libation made to the god of lewd laughter precisely because he is not the god whom we are chiefly serving - a sop to Silenus and Priapus lest they should trouble our lofty hymns to Cupid.

C.S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 173.

2 R. Graves, *Claudius the God* (1935; New York: Vintage Random House, 1962), pp. 381-2.

3 Campbell relates Dr Freud's suggestion that:

> the infantile urge to manipulate filth (excrement) and assign it value survives in our adult interest in the arts - painting, smearing of all kinds, sculpture, and architecture. (*Primitive Mythology*, p. 72.)

4

> If one is not aware of these profound connections, it is impossible to find one's way in the phantasies of human beings in their associations, influenced as they are by the unconscious, and in their symptomatic language. Faeces - money - gift - baby - penis are treated there as though they meant the same thing, and they are represented too by the same symbols.

S. Freud quoted in J. Mitchell, *'Psychoanalysis and Feminism'* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), p. 102.

5 Allardyce Nicoll gives a description of Harlequin's 'inner qualities' which place him squarely in this toddler stage of development as a child/adult:

> Harlequin exists in a mental world wherein concepts of morality have no being, and yet, despite such absence of morality, he displays no viciousness [...]. In contradistinction from many of his companions, too, he exhibits little malice [...]. Maybe a partial explanation of this quality may be traced to another aspect of his nature - his inability to think of more than one thing at a time or, rather, his refusal to consider the possible consequences of an immediate action. He gets an idea; it seems to him at the moment to be a good one; gaily he applies it, and no matter what scrape it leads him into, he never gains from his experience: one minute later he will be merrily pursuing another thought, equally calculated to lead him into embarrassment.
>
> A. Nicoll, *The World of Harlequin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), p. 70.

6 With particular relevance to later comments on Bottom in *The Dream*, Jung's theological example for the function of the 'Trickster' is of the 'wildness, wantonness, and irresponsibility of paganism' manifested in the *festum asinorum*, 'celebrated mainly in France' during December to commemorate the flight into Egypt. Jung is quoting from Charles Du Cange, *Glossarium ad scriptores mediae et infirmae latinitatis* (Paris 1733-6) and goes on to record the hymn sung at the event:

> From the furthest Eastern clime
> Came the ass in olden time.
> Comely, sturdy for the road,
> Fit to bear a heavy load.
>
> Sing then loudly master Ass,
> Let the tempting titbit pass:
> You shall have no lack of hay

And of oats find good supply.

Say Amen Amen good ass, (here a genuflection is made)
Now you've had your fill of grass;
Ancient paths are left behind:
Sing Amen with gladsome mind.

C.G.Jung, *Four Archetypes* (1972; London: Ark, 1989), p.139.

7 Jane Goodall, *The Chimpanzees of Gombe: Patterns of Behaviour* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp.189-207.

8 Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics* (London: Routledge, 1985), p.14.

9 I am here agreeing with Toril Moi's contention about examining multiple determinants, but uneasy about the stress she places upon 'reductive'.

> If a similar approach to the literary text, it follows that the search for a unified individual self, or gender identity, or indeed 'textual identity' in the literary work must be seen as drastically reductive.
>
> *Sexual/Textual Politics* p.10.

10

> The symptoms include a huddled posture, a typical 'sad' facial expression, listlessness, withdrawl from social activities (particularly play) and a somewhat impaired coordination.
>
> Goodall, *The Chimpanzees of Gombe,* p.101.

11 R. Dunbar, *Grooming, Gossip and the Evolution of Language,* (London: Faber and Faber, 1996), p.176).

12 Stuart Wavell, 'No Place for Monkey Business', *The Sunday Times,* 12 February 1995. The thrust of the article is that not all chimpanzees behave in this way, some tribes of Bonobo monkeys are led by groups of females who, by establishing strong bonds between them, can dominate the males. Dr Francis White contends that this model of behaviour is neglected for research by funding bodies because it is

seen as an aberrant form of the generally male dominated tribes of common chimpanzees, rather than suggesting a flexibility of social structure. Dr. Alison Jolly, quoted in the same article, describes a general shift away from any parallels being drawn between social behaviour of chimps and humans, and goes on to suggest that research and funding has retreated from Bonobos, not out of conspiracy, but puritanism, as their bonding techniques and general sexual promiscuity 'makes Sodom and Gomorrah look like a vicar's tea party'.

13 Particularly well argued by Germaine Greer in *The Female Eunuch*, pp. 91-96. culminating with:

> Basically it all comes down to the same fact: the Freudian system describes the *status quo* as a *desideratum* of the nineteenth-century middle class. Facts are irrelevant to what is basically a value system..

14 Of particular significance is the mechanism put forward by Jungian Anthony Stevens for the establishment of the mother complex in the mind of the child from the interaction of the archetype and the individual's own mother's behaviour:

> As Bowlby and his colleagues demonstrated, the neurophysiological structures concerned with the perception and experience of mothering activities, as well as the behavioural repertoire necessary to relate to the figure providing them (usually the mother), gradually mature under the organising influence of innate 'behavioural systems' (the mother archetype) functioning within the child.
>
> (A. Stevens, *Private Myths*, p. 137.)

15

> The boy is led from the pole and placed full length, while the company sets up a great shout. Immediately a third man, sitting astride the boy's body, grasps the penis and holds it ready for the stone knife, while the operator, appearing suddenly, slits the whole length of the urethra from below.
>
> 'We are not afraid of the bleeding vagina, we have it ourselves.' (*Primitive Mythology*, pp. 102-3.)

and as echoed in the castration rites of Attis and Cybele:

> Then he ran through the city, holding the bloody pieces in his hand, till he threw them into one of the houses he

passed in his mad career. The household thus honoured had to furnish him with a suit of female attire and ornaments which he wore for the rest of his life.

(Frazer, *The Golden Bough,* p.347.)

16 Kabuki was originated by female dancers in 1603, many of which dressed as men, women were forbidden to perform by 1629. The young men's Kabuki that succeeded them was similarly banned in 1652 for being as seductive as the females. Men's Kabuki followed with the actors shaving their foreheads restraining their movements.

O.G.Brockett, *History of the Theatre* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1991), p.266.

17 P.Glyn, *Skin to Skin: Eroticism in Dress* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1982), p.28.

18 Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (London: Routledge, 1980), p.7.

19 Charles Rycroft, *A Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* (London: Penguin, 1968), p.105.

20 But perhaps even more important for the outcome of the case were the views that Freud brought with him concerning female sexuality, since Freud himself said that the case and its resolution centred on the sexual sphere. These views are explicitly stated in the text[...] 'Dora', only fourteen years old, is sexually approached (deviously at that) by a man old enough to be her father (and with two children of his own), married to a woman who is having an affair with her father, and she is expected, by Freud, to immediately yield, ecstatically and without hesitation to his sudden unwanted sexual advance. Dora's behaviour, then, is for Freud *proof* that she is suffering from hysteria, that she is denying (or repressing) feelings she should have had.

J.Masson, *Against Therapy* (London: Fontana, 1992), pp.91-2.

21 Bettelheim's point is relevant here in restating the primacy of such unconscious motivation, and the importance of its presentation:

But my interest in fairy tales is not the result of such a technical analysis of their merits. It is on the contrary, the consequence of asking myself why, in my experience, children - normal and abnormal alike, and at all levels of intelligence - find folk fairy tales more satisfying than

all other children's stories.

(Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment,* p.6.)

22 Freud makes an interesting comment in this context:

> These races *(savage and semi-savage)* are dominated by a superstitious fear of the spirits of the slain, a fear which was also familiar to classical antiquity, and which the great British dramatist brought to the stage in the hallucinations of *Macbeth* and *Richard the Third.*

(Freud, *Totem and Taboo,* p.62.)

23

> Recently it has been claimed that the struggle against childhood dependency and for becoming oneself in fairy tales is frequently described differently for the girl than the boy, and that this is the result of sexual stereotyping. Fairy tales do not render such one-sided pictures. Even when a girl is depicted as turning inward in her struggle to become herself, and a boy aggressively dealing with the external world, these two together symbolise the two ways in which one has to gain selfhood: through learning to understand and master the inner as well as the outer world[...] The male and the female heroes are projections onto different figures of two artificially separated aspects of one and the same process which *everybody* has to undergo in growing up[...]
>
> ...Male and female figures appear in the same roles in fairy tales, in *The Sleeping Beauty* it is the prince who observes the sleeping girl, but in *'Cupid and Psyche'* and the many tales derived from it, it is Psyche who apprehends Cupid in his sleep and, like the prince, marvels at the beauty she beholds.

(Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment,* p.226.)

SECTION II. THE ARCHETYPE AS UNIVERSAL IN EARLY THEATRE AND FOLKLORE.

> The joy which is so strangely the heart of the experience (of tragedy) is not an indication that 'all's right with the world' or that 'somewhere, somehow, there is justice'; it is an indication that all is right here and now in the nervous system.
>
> (I.A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism*, p. 193.)

CHAPTER 4.

CATHARSIS (Aristotle and the Universal).

> It will be clear from what I have said that it is not the poet's function to describe what has happened, but the kinds of thing that might happen, that is, that could happen because they are, in the circumstances, either probable or necessary [...] for while poetry deals in universal truths, history treats of particular facts.
>
> (Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. T.S. Dorsch, p43.)'

Aristotle, in stating here the distinction between historical and artistic truth, is putting the poetic as the probable or necessary, that is philosophically ***a priori***, as opposed presumably, to the unpredictability of history. As when he later discusses plot:

> for there is a big difference between what happens as a result of something else and what merely happens after it.
>
> (Ibid., p. 43.)

The superiority of art over history is the latter's contingent, unpredictable and hence unreliable outcomes; the asymmetrical and irregular sequence of real events in time is unsatisfactory to the 'poetic' in us, as in the 'poetic' justness of an outcome, or come-uppance, that balances the preceding action:

> For this reason poetry is more philosophical and more worthy of serious attention than history; (Ibid., p. 45.)

The importance Aristotle here gives to the universal over and

above the actual, stresses the mind's input and its tautologous recognition of, and preference for, mindful selection and structure.[2] That we select, even out of history's events, to recount those that are structured and logically meaningful to us, again illustrates the joy of structure finding structure. He gives the example of the statue of Mitys at Argos, which fell and killed the man who had caused the death of Mitys, and emphasises in its unexpected nature how 'chance occurrences seem most remarkable when they have the appearance of having been brought about by design'. (Ibid., p.45.)

If the structure of a story is too apparent to us, then the plot will be much too mechanical. If the plot is too haphazard, and we cannot discern a design or a structured selective process at work, then we will find its accidental nature unsatisfactory. So we want to find the plotting, hidden as it were, amongst the incidents recounted; not too apparent, but nevertheless existent. This is what gives to the story the unity of design. That for instance the statue of Mitys killed the man who brought about his death, links the malefactor's death and the presumed crime of the death of Mitys (Ibid., p.45). Had the rock any form other than that of Mitys, then the association is broken, unless we can find or emphasise some other common feature, such as the violence of the two deaths, to further tie them together, for instance if, perhaps, Mitys had himself been killed by plummeting masonry.

To link the two incidents in a narrative is to imply a causality, that the death of the one is the effect of the death of the other. Put baldly, its illogicality is obvious, in that the one can not be the direct effect of the other, as there is apparently no agent to

link the two facts; were such outcomes to become regular the legal profession could be greatly reduced. The satisfying nature of the balance of retribution is also obvious. It implies that some 'unexplained' agent has balanced Mitys' account. The indirectness of the come-uppance stresses its aptness, that is its 'poetic' essence.[3] The outcome does not have to be by an indirect agent to be poetic, but that it is so underlines this poetic, or universal (*katholos*) rather supernatural, aspect of justice using an indirect agency. Revenge by Mitys' mother-in-law, or the judiciary, might be just but to be 'poetic', it must imply the balancing, resolving force of the universal.

The balancing and resolving aspect of the universal when evoked by plays is the essence of their value for Aristotle. In discussing the evocation in the hearer or reader of 'pity and fear' (by which he seems to mean the empathic response in identification with the protagonists), he mentions the pivotal *Katharsis*, translated by Dorsch as 'purgation' - 'pity and fear bringing about the purgation of such emotions'. Catharsis in its modern usage is linked with the therapies of psychology, particularly with those of Freud and Jung; it is also Aristotle's 'purpose' for tragedy as restorative of the correct proportions, or mean. The origins of the word *Katharsis* present several images:

> Its early usage was as "CLEARING" as when a person clears land of twigs and stones. As "WINNOWING" in the threshing of grain. Diocles used the term as "CLEANING" as in the process of cooking food. Theophrastus used it as "PRUNING" in relation to trees. Philodemus and Epicurus used the word as "CLARIFICATON" achieved by explanation. Galen as

> "HEALING" by the application of medicine. And Chysippus as "PURIFYING" by fire.
>
> (H. Liddell & R. Scott, p. 851.)

The type of making better, or returning to the mean, that catharsis, as in its modern usage as therapy, brings about in these images is in keeping with the two types of analysis that we have applied to the 'universals' we have discussed so far. Both forms of analysis are particularly represented and expressed in the approach to the cathartic effect of dreams that each produces. Freud's method, that we have discussed via Campbell, stresses the images as symptoms of a past personal drama, although with varying levels of common or 'universal' elements stemming from necessarily shared human experience and needs. The catharsis here would be one of reconciling the unresolved past of mothers, fathers or siblings with the present situation that it is dominating inappropriately. These are clearing and purifying or purging actions, the fear and pity releasing pent up feelings, as we identify with the protagonists in a story. The poetic rightness here is to restated justice, and the fear and pity from the injustice suffered at the hands of our family, arising from the fact that, despite perhaps many intervening years, our undeserved misfortune still rankles:

> Nor again should an utterly worthless man be seen falling from prosperity into misery. Such a course might indeed play upon our humane feelings, but it would not arouse pity or fear; for our pity is aroused by undeserved misfortune, and our fear by that of someone just like ourselves - pity for the undeserving sufferer and fear for the man like ourselves - so that the situation in question would have nothing in it either pitiful or fearful.
>
> (Aristotle, *Poetics*, p. 48.)

Jung's approach is that stories are prescriptive, and indicate to

us resolutions of the emotions they arouse regarding our situation. This points to a future, more healthy, or harmonious state; as with the pruning and winnowing images of catharsis, emphasising organic growth towards a finished state. It also presumes an agent, albeit illogical or unexplained, that is husbanding this growth, and a prefigured state or outcome that it is being directed towards. Practically the unconscious is serving the same function for Jung in its collective nature as Aristotle's universal is, linking and harmonising the disparate and the meaninglessness of 'undeserved suffering'. (Ibid., p.48.)

Aristotle's prefigured state would reside in *hexis*, one of the three aspects of the soul he describes in *Ethics*. *Hexis* is an innate quality of the self, given rather than developed, one of the 'possessions' such as virtue, which constantly interact with our feelings (*pathos*) about external events. It is in the free conscious choice (*proairesis*) of our actions in the world, drawn from how we respond to the feelings generated in us by events that *ethos* or character develops and expresses itself.

An example of a play that fits the first Freudian type of analysis is obviously Sophocle's *Oedipus Rex* with its ritual playing out of a pattern. As an audience we are drawn into the naturalness of the action and feel with the protagonists in recognition of shared pattern. The climax and conclusion of the play is compelling because of its emotional familiarity, and its tragedy, its shock, is the extreme term it is taken to. Similar types of play are *King Lear* or Albee's *Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf*. In such plays the personae are readily prescribed by Campbell's phrase quoted earlier (*Oedipus*

and *Electra*, p. 60.) of the Freudian domestic drama of 'lilliputians' and 'giants'. The therapeutic action is in the recognition of the repressed role or emotion. Freudian meaning in a play is then, for us, the presentation of a lost facet of our personal life, reflecting actions and plots that took place between the members of our family (particularly well depicted by Albee). The impact of the play will rest on the intensity of the feelings withheld, and the action of their revelation.[4] This echoes Aristotle's endorsement in chapter eleven of *Poetics*, of 'reversal' and 'discovery':

> As the word itself indicates, a discovery is a change from ignorance to knowledge, and it leads either to love or to hatred between persons destined for good or ill fortune. The most effective form of discovery is that which is accompanied by reversals, like the one in Oedipus.
>
> (Aristotle, *Poetics*, p. 48)

In this sense Aristotle's 'purgation' seems strongly similar to Freud's in seeing the plots and myths as symbols of sickness, as irresolution and repression, the very observation of which will transform our relation to them.

The Jungian approach is less Aristotelian in the sense that it points to myths and plots, like dreams, as not only reflecting man's psychological state, but as indicating possible future states, and this encourages transformation, and suggests directions. This eschatological type of analysis accommodates plays very difficult to describe in terms of purgation. Plays such as Shakespeare's *The Tempest* do not just hold up a mirror to the world, but are so structured as to prescribe responses. The play holds up a model of perfected relations and postulates a realisable 'justice' as opposed to redress or expiation and although there is an element of negative

passions, even of revenge (as with Caliban, and indeed Prospero himself), these are channelled and balanced rather than purged. This could generally be said of comedy as opposed to tragedy, except in the seriousness of the suffering depicted, as the protagonists are viewed as able to work out a resolution. The resolution solves and to some degree redresses the injustice, as in the marriage of Ferdinand and Miranda; the next generation represents a harmony of disparities of function in states and persons analysed in the action of the play. Several playwrights provide 'Political' or propagandist resolutions: Priestly often does (it is particularly noticable in *Summer Day's Dream*); Brecht[5] in the introduction notes to one opera even goes so far as to give a table of how his 'Epic Theatre' will present opportunities for the audience to make decisions where 'social being determines thought reason', as opposed to the 'Dramatic Theatre' it is meant to replace.

Similarly instead of imitation (*mimesis*) only, there is also in the metaphor of the play (*poiesis*) the creation of human meaning. In allowing this quality to the author of a play, Jung acknowledges the poetic universal (*katholos*) that Aristotle mentions as describing poetry as more 'worthy of serious attention' than history, but furthermore invests its truths, based in artistic sensibility, with the facility to guide. Aristotle comes short of this view in the tone of:

> The least acceptable of these alternatives is when someone in possession of the facts is on the point of acting but fails to do so, for this merely shocks us, and, since no suffering is involved, it is not tragic. Hence nobody is allowed to act like this, or only seldom, as when Haemon fails to kill Creon in Antigone.
>
> (Aristotle, *Poetics*, p. 50.)

> Suppose next that a description is criticized as not being true. The answer might be, 'No, but it ought to be like that'- just as Sophocles said that he drew men as they ought to be, whereas Euripides drew them as they are. However if neither of these claims fit the case, then an appeal might be made to tradition, as for example with the tales about the gods.
>
> (Ibid., p. 70.)

Aristotle, in evoking 'pity and fear' as 'purgative' agents, and in the above by appealing to tradition, is adopting a moralising voice. His is a qualified and traditional acceptance of the universal, suitable for civic expression. Universal for him seems akin to 'common sense', implying a training towards a prescriptive consensus attitude. What is being trained here are the feelings - *pathe* - into accord with the group. Jung by contrast presents the universal as involved in 'individuation', that is a post-social development. In that sense although stories contain recognition of archetypal behaviour, the individual's sensibilities, when disengaged by the act of recognition, and only then, are capable of true creative action. Greek Theatre presents little evidence for any such open-ended responses. It is outlining always the consensus of social archetype, both positively and negatively, and is in this sense but a step from liturgical ritual. The chorus constantly directs us how to feel, describing the relevance of the action for us. And the greatest sin is:

> Mark this; not only you
> But every mortal soul
> Whose pride [*hubris*] has once transgressed
> The law of reverence due
> To parent, god or guest,
> Shall pay sin's just, inexorable toll.
>
> (Aeschylus, 'The Chorus of Furies to Orestes'.)[6]

Hubris[7] can also be translated as 'violence' and 'riot' as in 'breaking out' (H. Liddell & R. Scott, p. 1674.); it is however usually translated as the sin of pride,[8] an individual's imprudence in daring to follow their own will. Something that was surely a threat in such small, and in the case of Athens, democratic city states. The shock of 'discovery' and 'recognition', as Aristotle puts it, of a universal form is consistently used to emphasise an inexorable social rule; as the way for most governments the prevention of crime and the protection of civil liberty necessitates police forces, and the prevention of atrocities requires war. For Aristotle particularly, but also for the Greek Drama generally, the hub of consensus is, as Freud was to show in his choice of nomenclature for neurosis, the universal archetypes of the family:

> Now if a man injures his enemy, there is nothing pitiable either in his act or in his intention, except in so far as suffering is inflicted; nor is there if they are indifferent to each other. But when the sufferings involve those who are near and dear to one another, when for example brother kills brother, son father, mother son, or son mother, or if such a deed is contemplated, or something else of the kind is actually done, then we have a situation of the kind (tragic) to be aimed at [...] This then is the reason why, as I said before, our tragedies keep to a few families.[9] For in their search for dramatic material it was by chance rather than by technical knowledge that the poets discovered how to gain tragic effects in their plots. And they are still obliged to have recourse to those families in which sufferings of the kind I have described have been experienced. (Aristotle, *Poetics*, pp. 50-1.)

Drama in the western classical tradition emerged slowly out of corporate acts of worship, theatre out of ritual, in the unique political atmosphere of fifth century Athens. This movement reflects the gently relaxing, though still vital needs, of social coherence as the state shifted from compliance towards consensus. So that when an

eponymous Thespis[10] (winner of the drama contest at the Athenian Dionysia in 534 B.C.) detaches himself from the chorus and enters into dialogue with the hero, or god, being celebrated, it is surely the image of the individual beginning to participate in, or at least to voice an opinion about, his own governance. To go a step further than this and (as Phyllis Hartnell describes him[11]), be the first unsanctified, and in that sense unsanctioned, person to imitate a god, is to usurp the ritually sanctioned prerogative of a priest or king. It is to generate a dialogue or a drama, and initiate a conflict or contradiction into the proceedings *engaging* the sensibilities of the audience rather than directing the participation of the congregation. The sociological function of myths and rituals is most succinctly presented by Radcliffe-Brown from his work on the pigmies of the Andaman Islands:

> A society depends for its existence on the presence in the minds of its members of a certain system of sentiments by which the conduct of the individual is regulated in conformity with the needs of that society. Every feature of the social system itself and every event or object that in any way affects the wellbeing or the cohesion of the society becomes an object of this system of sentiments. In human society the sentiments in question are not innate but are developed in the individual by the action of the society upon him. The ceremonial customs of a society are a means by which the sentiments in question are given collective expression on appropriate occasions. The ceremonial expression of any sentiment serves both to maintain it at the requisite degree of intensity in the mind of the individual and to transmit it from one generation to another. Without such expression the sentiments could not exist. (*The Andaman Islanders*)[12]

Aristotle is writing in the context of acceptance of just such a function for such ceremonies as theatre had grown from; the development of using actors, lay people rather than priests, creates the possibility of a forum for the discussion of that society; rather

than its mere transmission. Its ritual significance is seen in the retention of the altar to Dionysius and, in the proximity of the theatres to the temples, and in the strict maintenance of its restriction to religious festival dates. It was also heavily patronised by the state, which paid the actors, and by the local dignitaries, who chose the plays and funded the staging. The reins were still in the same hands as before, but the grip was eased. This is the context in which Aristotle is writing, and so it is, understandably, a sophisticated consensus that he emphasises.

Freud and Jung have identified the areas of myth, dream, ceremonial and religion with neurosis, so reading all these phenomena as psychological structures as opposed to anthropological ones; and therefore presenting these areas as expressions of the unconscious. In Freud's case these are presented as products of an individual unconscious and essentially neurotic; while in Jung's case they are products of a collective unconscious and therefore possibly interactive, and so creative and educative. Both discuss, as does Aristotle, the life-binding quality of images and the power they have over us, of representing life-fixating processes. These processes we can recognise in terms of the *masks* of personality that developed from the Greek gods and heroes of the Dithyramb, echoing through Roman theatre and *Commedia dell' arte*, down to the theatre of 'types'. This is to suggest that the archetypal forms are the consensual social forms, each extending but still fastened to the unconscious, universal, behaviour-patterning forms of the family.

NOTES

1 *Aristotle: Horace: Longinus: Classical Literary Criticism,* trans. T.S. Dorsch (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), p. 43.

2 Aristotle's very prescriptive view of his ideal viewer as opposed to ideal reader of drama as presented in Athens, is illuminated by Terry Eagleton's contention about Greek tragedy's 'eternal charm' (that had apparently concerned Karl Marx (Eagleton p. 12)). Aristotle, an unashamed elitist, describes quite clearly the response that is required, and the machinations to achieve it. Despite this, and for example in the extensive recent work on Greek productions, extrapolated from the images on pottery by Oliver Taplin, we do interpret literary works in the light of our own concerns

> Indeed that in one sense of 'our own concerns' we are incapable of doing anything else - might b
>
> e one reason why certain works of literature seem to retain their value across the centuries. It may be of course that we still share many preoccupations with the work itself.
>
> (T. Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction,* p. 12)

Which is my contention, and that these are both psychologically determined and socially framed.

> But it may be that people have not been valuing the same work at all, even though they may think they have.
>
> (Ibid., p. 12)

That we bring value to a piece of work is necessarily true, but a great deal of what survives is not valued, as other than archaeology, so the text must have a distinct relevance as a stimulator of what we project onto it.

3 There is also an element of the 'reversal' (Aristotle, *Poetics,* p. 46) in such an incident in that there is a sudden change from one state of affairs to their opposite; from injustice to justice in this

case.

4 E.M. Forster limits the application of Aristotle's principles of plot in contrasting the novel with the drama and (describing Aristotle's triple processes as complication, crisis and solution) endorses the superiority of the novel (unknowable to Aristotle) over drama in the depiction of 'subconscious' realms, as the soliloquy, the only device for the dramatist to show 'self-communings' is inappropriate to the task:

> A man does not talk to himself quite truly - not even to himself; the happiness or misery that he secretly feels proceed from causes that he cannot quite explain, because as soon as he raises them to the level of the explicable they loose their native quality.
>
> (E.M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel*, p.92.)

But this is Aristotle's point, that it is in action (*praxis*) alone that character is more directly revealed, despite vacillating 'self-communings' going on - even in the novel. Surely *Hamlet* goes a long way towards establishing this dramatically, his actions describing a nobility of character, denied, by him, in his every soliloquy.

5 Bertholt Brecht, *'The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny'* trans. J.Willett in *Brecht on Theatre* (London: Methuen, 1964), p.37.

6 Aeschylus, *The Orestian Trilogy*, trans. P.Vellacott, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), pp.156-7.

7 *Hubris* is translated by Partridge as 'violation, excessive pride' which he relates to *hybrid* - 'the piglet resulting from the union of a wild boar and a tame sow' (Partridge, *Origins*, p.300); this relates directly to Ted Hughes's description of the wild boar as Shakespeare's paradigm symbol for 'the Goddess's divine, infernalised rage'- as a force of both disruption and of renewal:

> At the same time, according to the Tragic Equation, the death-rebirth does not happen without the charge of the boar.
>
> T. Hughes, *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being*, p. 480.

8 Graves translates it as 'shamelessness', *The Greek Myths,* Vol II, p. 395.

9 Here again the relevance of the family, or clan, as Freud's totem consanguinamous object of veneration, and in this case even of established phratries (*Totem and Taboo,* p. 24) clearly places this in the 'poetic' and universal realm of ancient remnants.

10 Opinions on these aspects of the stories surrounding Thespis are gleaned from: Glynne Wickham, *A History of the Theatre* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1985), p. 32; Oscar Brockett, *History of the Theatre* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1968), p. 15; *Phyllis Hartnell, A Concise History of the Theatre* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968), p. 10.

11 Phyllis Hartnell, *A Concise History of the Theatre,* p. 10.

12 A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *The Andaman Islanders* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1933), pp. 233-4.

CHAPTER 5.

> To speak of 'literature and ideology' as two separate phenomena which can be interrelated is, as I hope to have shown, in one sense quite unnecessary. Literature in the meaning of the word we have inherited, *is* an ideology. It has the most intimate relations to questions of social power.
>
> (T. Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, p. 22.)

JUNG'S ARCHETYPES (Conformity and the Instinctive).

> The original structural components of the psyche are of no less surprising a uniformity than are those of the visible body. The archetypes are, so to speak, organs of the pre-rational psyche. They are eternally inherited forms and ideas which have at first no specific content. Their specific content only appears in the course of the individual's life when personal experience is taken up in precisely these forms.
>
> (Jung, *Psychological Reflections*, p. 38.)

Jung presents the Archetype via his theories of the unconscious aspects of the mind, going so far as to describe at one point the instinctual, non-rational as 'the participation mystique of the herd' (Ibid., p. 30.). In doing so he makes them extremely relevant to the theories of Aristotle on the universal form of the 'poetic', and so to Shakespeare's use of 'poetic' as it is expressed in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He also gives the clearest description of an unconscious that seems capable of relating the biological 'hard wiring'[1] of innate response mechanisms to the paradigm aspects of personal and collective narrative, in case history and in myth. It is Jung's cultural and creative concept of the archetype that gives it this value, and reference to the structure and personæ of plots.

By calling them the 'collective unconscious' he gave to the identifiably common qualities of the unconscious, a form, a unity and an identity with which Freud had not credited them. In so doing he ascribed to humanity not only a common but also a collective, that is participatory, ancestral past. This is to go a long way beyond Freud's common, but perennial, formative event of the family.[2] From this concept of a body of common or collective being, the unconscious and the conscious psyche can take on the progressive character examined in terms of drama in the previous chapter.

If the unconscious is inherited, by whatever means, and is truly collective, that is, gathered from the whole of the race or species, then the quality of the little life of the individual has a meaning in terms of the great life of the whole; that is, it has an influence upon it, however small. The choice of the individual is in contributory relation to the inherited content of the culture; thereby not only putting the individual and his motives at centre stage as Freud had done, but also expressing a qualification - that we are answerable to some ultimate instinctive level which is larger than ourselves.[3]

For Freud progress is only in terms of society, that is it is society's progress that legislates and endorses action for the needs of the individual; whether this is for an elite of individuals, one exalted personage, or for the common good. Written history and the records and the laws that we keep, and advocate, are then the fragile measure of progess, and its only mechanism.

For Jung, progress, of whatever type, stems from a different order altogether; the individual's contribution is written into the

collective cultural psyche and hence alters, ultimately, what it is to be human. It has a social and political dimension in terms of its expression, but it also implies another level or chamber of validity. The idea of a 'collective' unconscious gives the concept that we have an instinctive universal level, or nature, that we can interact with, a modern interpretation. It is similar to Aristotle's use of the 'universal' and gives validity and recognition to earlier forms of interaction with the unconscious, those of dreams, myths, rites, religion, and art.[4] It also gives an endorsement to the functional inter-relation of these products, in that whereas for Freud these artifacts reflect mankind's problems, for Jung they instruct and balance, the holistic nature of the unconscious deconstructing any egoic emphasis made by constantly representing its dualistic opposite, and binary other.

The progress that Jung postulates he calls individuation, which is the integration of the collective unconscious with the individual consciousness:

> The inevitable one-sidedness of our conscious life is continually being corrected and compensated by the universal human being in us, whose goal is the ultimate integration of conscious and unconscious, or better, the assimilation of the ego to a wider personality. (Jung, *Dreams*, p. 78.)[5]

The use of 'universal human being' in this quotation emphasises the importance that Jung gave to the historical expressions of the variety of human culture. The process of individuation is presented as an inexorable evolutionary action, leading mankind from the primitive levels of instinctual existence to conscious and rational reflection on, and participation with, the nature of life. For him, as with Aristotle, art is in this sense more important than history,

because it develops. In this same sense Jung identifies the realm of the gods as personifications of the universals with the instinctive non-rational forces acting within us; these being the 'given' level of our awareness.[5] Since the realm of the instincts (as forces, or vectors) is not directly accessible to us, as the eye cannot see itself or the hand hold itself, the realm of the gods is the experienced zone of interaction of the universal and the individual. For the collective unconscious is for us the pantheon of archetypes:

> The archetype or primordial image might suitably be described as the instinct's perception of itself, or as the self portrait of the instinct, in exactly the same way as consciousness is an inward perception of the objective life process.
>
> (Jung, *Psychological Reflections*, p. 40.)

So Jung is presenting the individual as the growing tip of the collective unconscious, as it were, and our individual consciousness is its, that is the collective unconsciousness's, awareness of itself, present in any objective situation. *'The instinct's perception of itself'* is the nature of individuation as the relation of its universal forms and the world. These universal forms Jung considers to be axiomatic, in that it is they that condition what is and is not important, even what does and does not become conscious:

> All the most powerful ideas in history go back to archetypes. This is particularly true of religious ideas, but the central concepts of science, philosophy, and ethics are no exception to this rule[...] they are variants of archetypal ideas, created by consciously applying and adapting these ideas to reality. (Ibid., p. 39.)

The collective is progressing to greater comprehension of itself through the awareness of individuals. It is forming and reforming itself constantly in relation to reality, but that reality is unknowable to individuals, except via this pre-formed and

unconsciously re-forming psyche. This then is for Jung the meaning, value and necessity of cultural communication and relation between human beings, as each is a representative of that collective in a relatively unique, albeit similar situation.

In many respects the major forms of the archetypes that he has drawn from his work in analysing dreams and myths are very similar to the forms from Freud previously examined (chs. 2 and 3). So the areas of 'Mother' and 'Rebirth' relate directly, and Jung's 'Spirit' covers a lot of the male/father image we have taken from Freud (via Campbell), and his 'Trickster' or 'Shadow' incorporates several aspects covered in the section on excrement. To these we must add the 'Persona' or in Freud's terms the 'ego', the not unbiased, acknowledged concept of the self, and its opposite the 'Shadow'. Anthony Stevens describes these two archetypal images in *Private Myths* very succinctly as:

> Alliances and conflicts occur between these various groups *(within the self)*, this one being favoured and developed, that one rejected and repressed, the former contributing to the persona (the personality we show to the world) and the latter cast into the shadow (the personality we keep from view). Analysis which takes individuation as its goal makes these polarities conscious and recognizes them as parts of a total Gestalt, as individual components of a suprapersonal unity. (A. Stevens, *Private Myths*, p. 205.)

The distinction that Jung gave to the quality of these symbols is that they are not seen as negative only, that is stemming from unresolved and unconscious actions in the formation of the psyche. They maintain that aspect, but they rest on a positive and balancing force within the unconscious. This force is not just trying to resolve or requite itself, but is also capable of moving the individual, and to that extent the culture, towards a goal of greater

freedom and responsiveness. Freud does not ascribe any such facility as this to the unconscious. Jung, by describing symbols in this way, gives even intensely repulsive and negative presentations of the archetypes a positive function; often as reflecting and modifying overbearing and restrictive socialisation. It therefore emphasises the value of balanced opposition in all areas of existence as being developmental. Jung is then making a Hegelian statement that for the whole psyche, both reasoned and instinctive, conscious opposition, struggle and synthesis is development; and that it is by such struggle and synthesis by individuals that a culture can progress.

Jung's concept of the apparent self-balancing force of instinctive levels of the psyche, represented in the feelings of the collective or group, and his placing of great emphasis on culture and cultural forms, presents itself as a good working definition of drama (as Aristotle describes it in *Poetics*). Drama is essentially a making conscious of oppositions, and an outlining of the struggles drawn from these and then either a questing for, or a firm advocacy of, some form of synthesis. The presence of a non-active or non-participatory audience turns a metaphorical presentation or ritual into theatre, allows for Aristotle's 'discovery' and 'reversal' and adds the influence of the collective response. The characters upon the stage are signifiers of the interactions of the archetype and the individual. If ritual is recognised as a most potent socialising agent, then theatre enters this same ceremonial area as the most prodigious individuator. The audience is an immediate and responsive collective - but also individuating individuals.

Theatre presents persons and relationships directly before us,

and proceeds to demonstrate the levels of interactions the author and director want us to focus on, making them explicit. It does this, with varying degrees of success, through the action of the play. It demonstrates these interactions to each 'individual consciousness' in the audience by as many of the mechanisms of 'signs' at its disposal, and that it can muster, that will best convey or manifest this meaning or interpretation of such interactions.

Individuation is by Jung's definition the integration of the collective unconscious with the individual consciousness. In the theatre the individual is witnessing the play's demonstration of a network of relations, whilst usually, and arguably most effectively, embedded in the collective group of the audience. The response of the audience, by the force and immediacy of their reaction, comments upon and hence also shapes, whether by compliance or contradiction, the response of the individual.

All public media have this collective quality by definition, but only theatrical drama has this immediacy and consensus of audience response, constantly interacting with the narrative. For in theatre the 'narrators', the actors, in turn respond to the audience. The actor's craft is to 'perform' the work, it is to interpret, mould and qualify the audiences reactions, manipulating emphasis, drawing out or clipping them short, dwelling on or passing quickly over and heightening the emotional impact of the piece. So the individual is experiencing his own reactions and responses to the work as first the writer, then the director, and then the actors have shaped it; and with all these, the 'collective' response audibly if not tangibly expressed around him.[7] Each member of the audience, if the work is

being successful, is being held at this individuating point, at the juxtaposition of individual and collective responses.

When Jung presents archetypes he does so by presenting many cultural and personal variations, instinct being clothed for us in our experience. Which is to say that the force of the archetype is the force of the instinct reflected back at us - as inherent qualities of the triggers that have apparently moved us. So his archetypes are also extensively presented:

> Like any other archetype the mother archetype appears under an almost infinite variety of aspects. I mention here only some of the more characteristic. First in importance are the personal mother and grandmother, stepmother and mother-in-law; then any woman with whom a relationship exists - for example a nurse or governess or perhaps some remote ancestress. Then there are what might be termed mothers in a figurative sense. To this category belongs the goddess, and especially the Mother of God, the Virgin and Sophia. Mythology offers many variations of the mother archetype, as for instance the mother who reappears as the maiden in the myth of Demeter and Kore; or the mother who is also the beloved, as in the Cybele-Attis myth. Other symbols of the mother in a figurative sense appear in things representing the goal of our longing for redemption, such as Paradise, the Kingdom of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem. Many things arousing devotion or feelings of awe, as for instance the Church, university, city or country, heaven, earth, the woods, the sea or any still waters, matter even, the underworld and the moon, can be mother symbols. The archetype is often associated with things that stand for fertility and fruitfulness: the cornucopia, a ploughed field, a garden. It can be attached to a rock, a cave, a tree, a spring, a deep well, or to various vessels as the baptismal font, or to the vessel shaped flowers like the rose or the lotus. Because of the protection that it implies, the magic circle or mandala can be a form of mother archetype. Hollow objects such as ovens and cooking vessels are associated with the mother archetype, and, of course, the uterus, *yoni*, and anything of a like shape. Added to this list there are many animals, such as the cow, hare, and helpful animals in general.
>
> (Jung, *Four Archetypes*, p. 15.)

I have quoted Jung's descriptive list in full to convey the immense number of associations that he considers are necessary to

present the outline of how an archetype is perceived. Although there are many connections that may perhaps be new to us on the list, there are none that do not connect with motherliness in the developing terms of the list and as we follow the extension of his thought.

Nevertheless there are many that, as the links become more abstract and metaphorical, would make the same order of connections in other directions; certainly many that link with femaleness of a less particularly post-parturition and matronly type, what Jung refers to as the 'Anima'. Similarly, some would also connect even to maleness although here an element of opposition is present (as Neptune is a very masculine and generally irascible association for the sea for example). Similarly the granularity and abrasive harshness of matter, as sand or gravel, would stress its male aspect, as opposed to its fluid plastic and receptive female quality.

The archetype is the urge, need or drive of the body, as an aim in the world, and as such, the importance of its imagery is felt emotionally, rather than argued rationally. Since these refections have been captured from the world to represent emotional valence and direction, they are then only potent as images (and I would argue dramatic images). They are not to rest as words, but have to build a symbolic image. Whether personally, ancestrally or collectively captured or assumed, the capture was pre-linguistic (Jung describes it earlier as 'pre-rational'); their impact is only experienced in the image, however it may be built up.[*] Words, actions, scenes must trigger images which, if they are successful for us, are then experienced internally as a heightened emotional reality. Words can build the images to create these effects, and these effects can be

contrived and logically analysed, but if they stay as words, as analytical ideas only, they never vivify this image level and operate as archetypal images; and so never reach this emotional intensity and become such moving and hence motivating experience.

Jung, in placing a transcendent value in the unconscious, is putting a transcendent meaning on this heightened emotional experience; one that is naturally and historically placed upon it as the action of the gods, nature, or 'the universal'.[9]

Images, as demonstrated by Jung's references to the 'mother', have many components, all with various associations none of which are fixed, so that they are describable and interpretive without being definable, except, as said earlier, in terms of general biological function. If Jung's contention regarding the collective aspect of the unconscious effect of symbols is accepted, then we must add to this axiomatic biological function his teleological sociological function, the symbols acting like a standard, rallying and drawing behaviour after them:

> As we can see from the example of Faust, the vision of the symbol is a pointer to the onward course of life, beckoning the libido towards a still distant goal- but a goal that henceforth will burn unquenchably within him, so that his life, kindled as by a flame moves steadily towards a far off beacon.
>
> (Jung, *Psychological Reflections*, p. 47.)

Jung gives such values to all the symbols that we have mentioned (Mother, Rebirth, Spirit, Trickster, Anima and Animus - the male equivalent within the female), complementing and extending the more prescribed and limiting meanings that Freud ascribes to them although noticeably they are the same core of symbols viewed differently, rather than completely different symbols. In the light of recent

criticisms of Freud, describing his theories as more dogma than science, imposed unequivocally on colleagues and patients alike, then Jung's less strident and more aesthetically founded analyses, with their far more positive role for art and literature as symbolic language rather than as a clinical 'science', is far more satisfying:

> In Freud's work, texts from Sophocles, Shakespeare, Rousseau, Goethe, Ibsen, E.T.A.Hoffman, Balzac, Dostroevsky, Jens, Peter Jacobson, Schnitzler and Strindberg (to name only the major sources) are given evidential 'clinical' status.
>
> (George Steiner, 'A Remark on Language and Psychoanalysis', 1976)[10]

Steiner, drawing from an article by Jaques Lacan,[11] goes on to describe the 'free association' of psychoanalysis as 'a humorous ruse' and 'language-analysis', and the bringing to consciousness of the problem the mere enunciation of a deep linguistic structure, or in Steiner's words *'concealed metaphor'*:

> It follows that the unconscious is 'structured', that it has a syntax, precisely in the sense made familiar to us by the deep-structure postulates of transformational generative grammars and by the Lévi-Straussian model of binary symbolic arrangements underlying all social and aesthetic forms of human understanding and activity. (Ibid., p.53.)

Jung's system must suffer from this same criticism and translation into an applied linguistics but his far wider cultural canon, more open interpretation and less prescriptive attitude presents his archetypes as I have argued via Joseph Campbell, as much more than concealed metaphor. They are emotive deep structures that are universal in that they are collectively described and analysed; they are also psychological in that they emerged in individual discourse in a clinical situation. His analyses, to a far greater extent than Freud's, are the culmination of such types of analysis in

the nineteenth century as were to demonstrate how folk motifs and mythologies, can be understood as (that is translated into) psychologically meaningful and contemporary images, as opposed to being faulty and fearfully distorted history, science or cosmology.

THE UNIVERSAL AS METAPHOR Of SOCIAL ORGANISATION (The Seeds of Plot).

> Just as the father represents collective consciousness, the traditional spirit, so the mother stands for the collective unconscious, the source of the water of life.
>
> (Jung, *Dreams*, p. 145.)

The term Mask is the political expression of the instincts, as the archetypes, when they are projected onto the social relations of the group. The tension this generates is the seed of drama in its theme of the innate nature of the individual in contradiction of, or reconciliation to, the strictures of the social system. It throws up 'types' and 'roles' as the social system extends the archetypal relations of the family into the functions of the group. The term is distinct from the terms 'type' and 'role' in emphasising this archetypal paradigm; the needs of the species at the core of the individual being beneath and behind any social structures and artifacts subsequently endorsed. It is political in the same sense that Terry Eagleton describes all literature and narrative as being political (as transmitting ideology[12]), and it is essentially hierarchical in that it is to do with the power and function of relationships between roles. The power and function of these roles drawing constantly from archetypal triggers.

The functions of such roles changed in complexity for independent hunting and gathering tribes, small rural villages or

large urban communities; animal or crop totems and gods giving way to mythologies of gods in their all too human interactions:

> Of course the ram in this case was simply the beast-god of Thebes, as the wolf was the beast-god of Lycopolis, and the goat was the beast-god of Mendes. In other words, the ram was Ammon himself. On the monuments, it is true, Ammon appears in semi-human form with the body of a man and the head of a ram. But this only shows that he was in the usual chrysalis state through which beast-gods regularly pass before they emerge as full-blown anthropomorphic gods.
>
> (Frazer, *The Golden Bough,* pp. 500-1.)

Freud's ready use of Greek mythological images to represent 'complexes' of diverted forms of gratification merely reflects the original significance of these narratives as terms and discourse for their communities. In Jung's view the needs of the species, seeded in the first few years of life but perhaps inhibited from direct and primal expression immediately, can develop and enrich the individual and the society by attaching its needs as love, hate, emnity and loyalty onto the ideals and imagery of the community, or collective, and its environment. Thus the needs and drives of the individual, as a language of images, are transposed or converted into the needs of the society and generate its significant forces or gods. Eagleton describes the same concept but weights it differently:

> Because religion is for all kinds of reasons an extremely effective form of ideological control [...] it works much less by specific concepts or formalised doctrines than by image, symbol, habit, ritual and mythology. It is affective and experiential, entwining itself with the deepest unconscious roots of the human subject; and any social ideology which is unable to engage with such deep-seated a-rational fears and needs [...] is unlikely to survive very long.
>
> (T. Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction,* p. 23.)

If the forces personified as ideals or goals are then the gods, whether of village or nation, stratified and dogmatised into the

system or 'social ideology' to be maintained, then the *mask* is the level of theatre at which they begin to change from a rigidly defined religious function to a more mutable, interactive, level. Edmund Leach describes Lévi-Strauss's contention that at this point of development the structural categories that are readily available for such analysis are:

> For human (as distinct from animal) survival every member of society must learn to distinguish his fellow men according to their mutual social status. But the simplest way to do this is to apply transformations of the animal level categories to the social classification of human beings. (Edmund Leach, *Lévi-Strauss*, p. 38)

The animal heads and qualities of the totem gods of myth become the animal masks and types of mummery, pageant and fable. As drama develops out of religion and theatre out of ceremony the gods have equally to get more functionally diverse. So mythologically, more gods are generated as more jobs are delegated. Wole Soyinka describes this same point of development in the Yoruba cosmology, the pantheon of gods being created out of a totemic unity by the slave Atunda's shattering of the race's solitary primogenitor:

> The creation of the multiple godhead began a transference of social functions, the division of labour and professions among the deities whose departments they thereafter become.
> (Wole Soyinka, *Myth, Literature and the African World*, p. 28)[13]

And here the creative aspect, the 'shard of original oneness', resides after the fall in the technologist Ogun, the master of craft and proficiency.

Campbell stresses the importance of this point in the development of communities, that the collective group changed significantly in the near east with the invention of agriculture. To the loose social

order and the simple, family-like, tribal structure of hunter-gatherers where no-one works for another, and all are self-reliant in food production - settled agriculture brought initially a very fixed and rigid order.[14] The needs of the agriculturist for special skills and ordered labour contrive the system of village and town, and generate fixed relations between men in tiered levels of power, function and ownership. Sir James Frazer describes the process:

> The men who for one reason or another, because of their strength or the weakness of their natural parts, were supposed to possess these magical powers in the highest degree, were gradually marked off from their fellows and became a separate class, who were destined to exercise a most far reaching influence on the political, religious and intellectual evolution of mankind. Social progress, as we know, consists mainly in a successive differentiation of functions, or, in a simpler language, a division of labour. The work which in a primitive society is done by all alike and by all equally ill, or nearly so, is gradually distributed among different classes of workers and executed more and more perfectly.
>
> (Frazer, *The Golden Bough,* p. 105.)

The elemental, natural, usually seasonal 'fertility' forces and tribal structure complicate to accommodate these new requirements as the gods develop and become equally urbane. Which allows that the basic needs of the organism, and the species, can then become so obfuscated as to be denied expression, and be so sublimated, with so many provisions for gratification, that any independent action or thought by any working member is difficult; subservience becomes the rule. It has to be for that form of society to survive, or more pertinently in Eagleton's opinion, for that established hierarchy and its vested interests to be maintained. The intense importance of the ritual expression of hierarchy resides in such widespread practices as the mass burials of complete courts with the death of the god-king,

where courtiers, wives, soldiers (even cattle and domestic animals) apparently followed their kings voluntarily into the grave as chattels.[15] Such rigid subservience is as incomprehensible to our modern sense of self valuation and individuality, Campbell suggests, as it would have been to the tribal comradeship of the neolithic hunter gatherer. But this image of collective sacrificial suicide/slaughter conveys the intensity of the compliance established, and goes some way to explain the offhand cruelty of ancient myth and symbol.

Significantly, echoing tribal totemism and ancestor worship, such power of compliance was still drawn within these city-states from primal family structures such as that of primogeniture, often matrilineal (as it was still, much later in some of the Greek city-states) and from inheritance and blood allegiance, which in terms of descent from the gods is very much as it had been in earlier tribal systems.[16] Inheritance and blood allegiance were the substance of Greek drama and indeed if we consider this as the question of valid rulership (or to use Marilyn French's term 'legitimacy'),[17] it is the political matter of Shakespeare's canon.

The new complex hierarchy was justified in terms of the new order of technology and the governance that was perceived in the world, in the observation of the seasonal rotation of the Sun, the Moon and the stars, for it was the calendar organisation of planting and husbandry that gave these farmers success in their terrain.

According to Campbell (*Primitive Mythology*, pp. 403-4.), this particular new technology that organised and developed whatever plenty occurred. Excess begot leisure, status and ultimately commerce. For

the agriculturists the precise meteorology of the seasons conveyed tremendous importance and hence power onto the astronomy that could predict it. And as with the all important aspects that influence the wellbeing of the society, its expression was embedded in the narrative and imagery of mythology and in the timing of its ritual enactment. This aspect has great significance for the ritual enactment of folkdrama and also for the archetypal seasonal elements in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. *The Dream* makes steady references to European festival traditions in dramatic re-enactment of May and Midsummer fertility totems and taboos. These traditions are the very stuff of the local mythological calendar. Similarly, Gaster, in the introduction to *Thespis* contends that it is in the ritual enactment of these cycles extant in Canaan, Babylon and Egypt, as 'acts originally performed by the gods', that all theatre is born.[15] He draws a direct line from 'Osiris', the wheat god, 'Attis' the pine, and 'Dionysus' the vine or fruit-tree god, and the ritual drama and then festival drama enacted before his altar in Athens. Gaster describes it:

> In course of time, as new conceptions evolve, the urgency of the primitive seasonal rituals tends to recede. But the pattern lingers on in the increasingly meaningless folk customs and in the conventions of literary style. Recent studies have shown that it may be recognized behind the conventional structure of Greek tragedy and comedy and behind the European mummers play.
>
> (Ibid., p. 18.)

The importance of this seasonal ritual of agricultural life as the civilising agency needs to be seen in its context here in that farming is now seen as perhaps the most significant developer of mankind's language and civilisation. So much so that Steven Pinker in *The Language Instinct* can say, so very succinctly 'Farming is a way

of mass-producing human beings by turning land into bodies'. Pinker goes on to state:

> Every time we use a word like *brother*, or form the past tense of an irregular verb like *break* - *broke* or *drink* - *drank*, we would be using the preserved speech patterns of the instigators of the most important event in human history, the spread of agriculture.
>
> (S. Pinker, *The Language Instinct*,[19] p. 253.)

He is here drawing on the work of Colin Renfrew and the Geneticist Luca Cavalli-Sforca in *Archaeology and Language: The Puzzle of Indo-European Origins*, where Renfrew puts the population rise due to the adoption of farming by hunter gatherers from 0.1 to 5 or 10 per sq. km., and ties to that, rather than to any form of conquest, the spread of Indo-European language and cultural forms. Renfrew then argues that, what is known as the Indo-European language group and its associated culture systems, were spread throughout Europe and the near east, not by a migrating and conquering horde of cavalry or chariot driving 'Aryans' as had been previously thought, but by the slow adoption or assimilation of the bucolic life. An assimilation wave that 'began in Turkey around 8500 B.C. and reached Ireland and Scandinavia by 2500 B.C.'. And farming carried with it the culture of its technology in the complexity of its shared rituals and myths[20] as metaphors for seasonal markers as Gaster indicates, but also encoded in its complexity of language.

It was the tremendous success of these planters and husbandmen that meant that the enactment of their processes became such potent metaphors; particularly, according to Campbell, their celestial time-keepers, the zodiacal belt of stars. It was onto the seasonal cycles of the heavens, as the great cosmic law or way of nature, that the

primal needs, as mythology, became projected; developing positive and negative archetypal significances into the various zodiacs and planetary gods of glut and dearth. The annual life cycles were demonstrated in the orderly movements of the sun and the planets; and thus the apparent superiority of some positions and consequent inferiority of others. The unrivalled despotism of the sun was to be a political model for royal authority of monarchs for several thousand years, and the progress of the five visible planets and the sun and moon through the houses of the Zodiac were to be the ultimate justification for royal progressions and rogations through provinces and such autocratic and centralised concepts of order. This order was quite able, as Plato here points out, to redress the fortunes of mere mundane nature:

> The motions akin to the divine part in us are the thoughts and revolutions of the universe; these, therefore, every man should follow, and correcting those circuits in the head that were deranged at birth, by learning to know the harmonies and revolutions of the world, he should bring the intelligent part, according to its pristine nature, into the likeness of that which intelligence discerns, and thereby win the fulfilment of the best in life set by the gods before mankind both for this present time and for the life to come.
>
> (Plato, 'Timaeus')[21]

The seasonal process was the great rolling universal pattern of nature that became the regulator of all, and at every level, if only it was interpreted, channelled or stimulated aright. On this sequence were projected the archetypes of 'Mother' and 'Father' as the Great Goddess and the Sacred King; and these were to be fragmented in their various locations by the seasonal requirements of diverse crops, craft mystery and animal husbandry, into the multiplex of forms and

functions which in Asia minor generated the complex language of Greek myths.

This is very relevant to the political plot of the myths and rituals of the death and rebirth or renewal by the goddess of the sacred king and vice versa in ritual and ceremony. The sympathetic magic of imitation in ritual and ceremony is the basis of both these functions; and if we say its progress into dramatic form is part of the urbanisation of such imitations in the Athens of the fifth century B.C. then it has many similarities with later urbanisation throughout rural Europe, and particularly with that of Elizabethan England:

> There are two reasons for postulating a connection between the latter [the worship of Dionysos] and the English Folk Play. Firstly the play resembles those of the Balkans, and secondly, the festival of Dionysos occurred about the same time as Epiphany when most of the English plays appear. Furthermore, the sacred marriage was one of the rituals in the annual cycle of Dionysos, and it appeared also in the annual cycles of the gods of the early kingdoms of Mesopotamia. Here, the parts were often played by the king and his daughter, and the play took place inside a fragile 'marriage house' or bower. Thus we can carry back the themes of our Plays to the earliest periods of history and say that they probably had their roots in pre-history.
>
> The dying god, or king (they can be much the same), renewed his life for the benefit of the community, but fertility became merely 'luck', the death became the result of a combat, and the miraculous revival was rationalised into the attentions of a comic doctor[...] It is the primitive dramatic attempt to ensure fertility which the texts *[of the plays]* seek to explain, though it is inexplicable in terms of a more sophisticated society.
>
> (Cawte, Helm and Peacock, *English Ritual Drama,* p. 30.)[22]

These myths personify the apparent law of the heavens and hence of the gods and the goddesses for essentially farming communities and compliance, or the lack of it, to this law implied the giving or withholding of life or fertility. For these societies where one poor harvest could mean starvation, fertility and life is one and the same

thing, both for the individuals themselves, and also for the community of which they are merely a part.

The impact of mythic images upon individuals in these societies represents a vocabulary describing in images of the instinctive child-rearing microcosm of family authority, the macrocosm of regulation in the seasonal flux of nature; this was ultimately to be vicariously represented in its political hierarchy in the city state. The ritual sacrifice of the king, or king substitute, after an allotted timespan, or poor harvest, is this political aspect still resting on the agricultural well-being of the society; and ritual seasonal sacrifice is the root of dramatic tragedy of the Dionysia and the comedy of the mummers play. The mythology is the citizen's immediate political environment and contains the roles and *masks* he can play; it is a function of an archetype and a social system, that is for Jung the expression of a changing and developing collective unconscious force in human relationships; a collective unconscious that represents itself as progressive to individuals in terms of binary positive and negative images, to identify with and integrate into their ideals, or to avoid and disassociate themselves from, as outmoded.

In examining the relationship of these archetypes to the generation of plots in this integration and opposition of instinct and society, it behoves us to look closely at the mythic presentation of the family and society in the fairy tale, and the linguistic analysis of the structure of its language of archetypes.

NOTES

1 This phrase for the inherited propensity of a nervous system to seek for a model, to supply an archetypal image at a stage in its development, was used by Robin Dunbar in conversation at Liverpool University (13/8/96) to refer to its necessary circuitry. Jung's placing of the archetype beyond knowing, as a transcendent propensity to a form, rather than any specific form adopted, allows for both a spiritual interpretation, by which he meant the dissolution and rebuilding of the ego by something greater, but also for the more neurological interpretation of Professor Dunbar.

2

> These dream images were called 'archaic remnants' by Freud; the phrase suggests that they are psychic elements surviving from ages long ago [...] a mere appendix of consciousness or, more picturesquely, as a trash can that collects the refuse of the conscious mind.
>
> (Jung, *Man and his Symbols*, p. 47.)

3 Speaking of ideas:

> Although they come into being at a definite time they are and have always been timeless; they arise from that realm of creative psychic life out of which the ephemeral mind of the single human being grows like a plant that blossoms, bears fruit and seed, and then withers and dies.
>
> (Jung, *Psychological Reflections*, p. 267.)

4 Gaster comments:

> The connecting link between these two aspects (ritual and drama) is myth. The function of myth (so obstinately misunderstood) is to translate the real into terms of the ideal, the punctual into terms of the durative and transcendental. This it does by projecting the procedures of ritual to the plane of ideal situations, which they are taken to objectify and reproduce. Myth is therefore an essential ingredient in the pattern of the seasonal ceremonies; and the interpretation of ritual and myth provides the key to the essential nature of drama.
>
> (T. Gaster, *Thespis*, p. 24.)

5 Jung, *Dreams* (1974; London: Ark, 1986), p. 78.

6 Ultimately they are all founded on primordial archetypal forms whose concreteness dates from a time when consciousness did not *think* but only *perceived*.

(Jung, *Psychological Reflections*, p. 265.)

7 Surely it is Brecht's attempt to break this 'collective' response by writing climaxes of scenes that disrupt usual identities. Edward Burns calls these '*anti*-recognition' and therefore 'anti-Aristotelianism' techniques:

> The family structure, the taken-for-granted (or the 'natural', if you like) of motherhood, provides Brecht with his sharpest focus. The Mother does not greet her son in his return from prison, she is busy printing leaflets for the revolution. (E. Burns, *Character: Acting and Being on the Pre-Modern Stage*, p. 206.)

8 for the symbol not only conveys a visualisation of the process but - and this is perhaps just as important - it also brings a re-experiencing of it, of that twilight which we can learn to understand only through inoffensive empathy, but which too much clarity only dispels.

(Jung, *Psychological Reflections*, p. 44.)

9 This aspect of the religious or transcendent function is challenged strenuously by Eagleton, here speaking of religion, specifically Victorian religion which he sees as a negative pacifying agent:

> Its ideological power lies in its capacity to 'materialize' beliefs as practices: religion is the sharing of the chalice and the blessing of the harvest, not just abstract argument about consubstantiation or hyperdulia. Its ultimate truths, like those mediated by literary symbol, are conveniently closed to rational demonstration, and thus absolute in their claims.

Its implicit function is hierarchical unity:

> It provides an excellent 'cement', encompassing pious

> peasant, enlightened middle-class liberal and theological intellectual in a single organisation.
>
> (T. Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* p. 23.)

Which is of course no mean feat in itself.

10 George Steiner in *'On Difficulty, and other essays.'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978) p49.

11 J. M. Lacan, *Function et champ de la parole et du langage en psychanalse*, cited in Steiner *On Difficulty, and Other Essays* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), p. 52.

12 On this point Eagleton is very clear:

> Like religion, literature works primarily by emotion and experience, and was so admirably well fitted to carry through the ideological task which religion left off.
>
> (T. Eagleton. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, p. 17.)

13 Wole Soyinka, *Myth, Literature and the African World* p. 28. Within a few pages Soyinka justifiably criticises Jung's Eurocentric denigration of'Primitive mentality' (p. 35) as being far less differentiated than the 'civilised' while expounding the universality of a collective unconscious. Given that Jung's investigation of primal cultures is inadequate to their understanding, Soyinka's view of the significance of ritual in stimulating archetypal level participation is very close to Jung's on ritual:

> because of the protagonists Promethean raid on the durable resources of the transitional realm; immersed within it, he is enabled emphatically to transmit its essence to the choric participants of the rites - the community (p. 33).

14 If we consider, as Campbell and Frazer did, and as Pinker, Renfrew and Dunbar continue to do, that the Native Americans of the plains of North America in the last century, were living generally in

the patterns of neolithic hunter gatherer tribes, then there is plenty of evidence in the tribes clashes with the American government of a possible apolitical structure:

> Chiefs did not order, they offered advice, and the voice of the chief would not be listened to any more than that of any other respected member of the tribe (p.30).
>
> In a treaty with whites or other Indians of other nations, the leading chief's voice would have no additional weight because of his position. He would be allowed to state his opinion with others of the same standing as men in the same band, but nothing more. [Edward Denig, an American trader, writing in the nineteenth century.]

R.A.Rees and S.J.Styles, *The American West 1840-1895* (London: Longman UK, 1986), p.28.

15 Campbell quotes Sir Lenard Woolley on the discovery of the mass graves of the Lower Euphrates:

> these people were not slaves killed as oxen might be, but persons held in honor, wearing their robes of office, and coming one hopes, voluntarily to a rite which would in their belief be but a passing from one world to another, from the service of one god on earth to that of the same god in another sphere.

(Campbell, *Primitive Mythology*, pp.409-10.)

16 In this sense the totemic quality of such clan loyalty can be seen, using Freud's description :

> The tribal totem (clan totem) is the object of veneration of a group of men and women who take their name from the totem and consider themselves consanguineous offspring of a common ancestor, and who are firmly associated with each other through common obligations towards each other as well as by the belief in their totem.

(Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, p.142.)

17 M.French, *Shakespeare's Division of Experience* particularly chapter three.

18 T. Gaster, *Thespis* (New York: Gordian, 1975), p.17.

19 Steven Pinker, *The Language Instinct* (London: Penguin, 1994), p. 253.

20 If we look at the distribution of the Indo-European languages of Europe when we first see them in the centuries shortly before or after the beginning of the Christian era (or, in the case of Greece, a thousand years earlier), virtually the whole of Europe seems to be Indo-European speaking. The only clear exceptions are the Etruscan language of central Italy, and presumably the ancestor of the Basque language of northern Spain, with Iberian at the east of the peninsula. This is a vast area for such a degree of uniformity.

C. Renfrew, *Archaeology and Language, The Puzzle of Indo-European Origins* (London: Penguin, 1987), p. 145.

21 Plato, 'Timaeus' trans. F. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology* (Cambridge Humanities Press: 1952), p. 354.

22 Cawte, Helm and Peacock, *English Ritual Drama* (London: University College London Press, 1967), p. 30.

CHAPTER 6.

> Playful and as unpretentious as the archetypes of fairytale may appear to be, they are the heroes and villains who have built the world for us. The debutante combing her hair before the glass, the mother pondering the future of a son, the labourer in the mines, the merchant vessel full of cargo, the ambassador with portfolio, the soldier in the field of war - all are working in order that the ungainsayable specifications of effective fantasy, the permanent patterns of the tale of wonder, shall be clothed in flesh and known as life.
>
> (J.Campbell, *The Flight of the Wild Gander*, p.36)[1]

> Deeper meaning resides in the fairy tales told to me in my childhood than in the truth that is taught by life.
>
> (Schiller, *The Piccolomini*, III, cited in Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p.5.)

FOLKLORE AND THE ORAL TRADITION.

It is implicit in Jung's work that whatever images and concepts survive collective transmission and manipulation are doing so because they have significance, and continuing use, for some individual[2], group, people or nation. The more extensively widespread such an image is used therefore, the more pertinent, or the deeper is its significance.

The wider context of this concept gives tremendous emphasis and psychological value to surviving cultural products that survive haphazard preservation (such as the anonymous artifacts of folklore) and hence has added deeper significance and extra impetus to their study. This is itself perhaps the case of different periods and groups reconstructing works and revaluing them as Terry Eagleton

proposes: 'literary works [...] are 'rewritten' if only unconsciously, by the societies which read them; indeed there is no reading of a work which is not a 're-writing'. (Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, p. 12.)

Folklorists and ethnologists might argue that an economic value and efficient use of any concept or image might be more important than psychological use or value in directing cultural influence. Certainly in this sense the success and power of any group will favourably enhance the influence of its forms, and accident, in terms of loss or damage, must also strongly condition survival, but the psychological and cultural use is also strongly emphasised in the examples of strong counter-influence, where influence is travelling from the conquered to the conqueror and strongly influencing the dominant society (Greek forms strongly influencing Roman, Celtic tales influencing Norman).[3] Such effects, acting despite the adverse cultural forces in the status and politics of the dominant culture, points to an important and distinct psychological value to adopted and surviving images and concepts.

Oral and folk traditions endorse this concept of value and significance as continued use. Where a text or an actual object is concerned, accident might preserve an unused piece of work, but ultimately that which is of no relevance will disappear, or be modified to some new function (this point is discussed in ch. 4, note 2, p. 85). Where no text or object exists but the piece survives only by repetition, such as in the oral traditions of myths, sagas, legends, and the performance of ritual drama or folk plays, then the meaning seems to take on more significance by virtue of the commitment

in effort and sheer numbers of people involved in its reproduction. It must still have a place in the group's cultural life. Being so malleable, often fixed by rote in shared memory, it is also very readily responsive to influence. For this reason, any constants that it retains must be significant to a large and diachronically diverse section of people.

So a parallel area of closely observed, collective input into literary themes, which shares so many of the characters, 'masks' and plots of ritual drama, often still depicted in an animal form, is the folktale. It is involved in the same task of carrying the archetypal imagery of the family across to that of the social order in that it has the socialising and mediating function of relating children, as 'little' individuals, to cultural and social meaning; and its ideology is that of the family projected onto the 'kingdom' of the village or town:

> True, on an overt level fairy tales teach little about the specific conditions of life in a modern mass society; these were created long before it came into being. But more can be learned from them about the inner problems of human beings, and of the right solutions to their predicaments in any society, than from any other type of story within a child's comprehension.
>
> (Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p.5.)

Since the Brothers Grimm, the folktale has been seriously studied and catalogued. The use of the term 'folktale' is a rendering of the German word *Märchen* which the Grimm brothers used to denote the type of stories in their collection. More recently it has been used to distinguish these types of oral forms of a tale from the rewritten, sometimes gentrified and often censored versions, that we know as 'fairy tales'. For our use here the distinction is only that one is

another stage further polished variation of the other; the analysts tend to apply themselves more to the 'folktale' as being closer to the oral and hence the collective.

The category of 'the folktale' is a very contrived one in this sense, as it is obviously also the result of the paring effect of the cataloguer, in that, in the same way as 'polished' fairy tales are eschewed, so any individual embellishments of the storyteller are chipped away as inauthentic to the bare story; as Max Lüthi does here, in a sincere but prescriptive manner, to a Lithuanian tale:

> All this is empty embellishment and is completely unlike the true folktale. But in the next sentences, when the thread of the story is resumed, the pure folktale style soon re-establishes itself. (The parts that are still not characteristic of folk narration are italicized; they become increasingly rare as the true folktale style reasserts itself as if spontaneously.)
>
> After the three were wed, a year passed *as quickly as an hour,* and the queen gave birth to a son. Then *the queen's sisters had a lucky opportunity to pacify their hearts. Namely,* the two envious sisters put the prince in a little kettle and threw him into a ditch that ran through the royal palace. Then they showed the king a piece of wood that they had wrapped in swaddling clothes and told him his wife had given birth to it.
>
> (M. Lüthi, *The European Folktale,* p. 102.)[4]

Seen in this way the 'folktale' is probably something that exists much more often in a catalogue, and an index, rather than around a hearth in lamplight.

The extent of the analysis of the folktale by several disciplines has meant that the genre has been very carefully and differently defined. To be able to describe just what it is that is changing, and what is staying the same when a tale is modified, as many of the elements as possible have to be fixed and coded. This scientific or formulaic approach to the components of a piece of work is a very

clarifying act of abstraction. Such abstraction is helpful for the study of the *masks* of drama in that it gives qualification to the nature of the archetypes that the psychologists have isolated, in terms of the roles that they take in the tales, and how the processes of the collective preserve and modify them.

Folktales themselves have an already bare and abstract form which lends itself to the paring effect of investigators, rather like the relationship between a musical score and any interpretation of that score; with the exception that in this case the score is not written or fixed anywhere, in any indisputable way. It is in the same sense that we must be able to hear the simplified tune inside, or behind, any improvisation. In that any reproduction will be to some extent an interpretation, the tales have undergone this distilling process so often that they have become a residue of simple distinction and clarity, for example in the way they transform real objects and place them in a tale in a very clipped and limited way. Folktales do not really describe objects but only name them; as in the above passage, any description (especially after pruning by folklorists such as Lüthi) is minimal. They are pure plot action.

The folktale is thus action orientated, not dallying in wonder at the incredible effects it narrates but moving us on to the next point. Whereas a legend may describe the grandeur, or spectacle of a landscape, and the fairy tale cuteness, nastiness or affection, the folktale never does. If a hero sets off to find his brother and sister and discovers, or rather comes across, or finds himself in, an iron town (Ibid., p. 95), it spends no time in presenting it for us; neither does the hero show any signs of awe, but gets right on with

his task. As a rule only one adjective is usually present as an attribute for each noun, as in 'envious sisters', 'little kettle' and 'royal palace' in the Lithuanian story above.

The lack of description in the folktale gives a strangely unreal atmosphere to the story and a one dimensional and directional aspect to the events. The forest may be dark but it is never named. The hero may be the eldest brother, frequently the youngest or an only child, but he or she is also only named in terms of their actions, or significant attributes, in the story (*Jack and the Beanstalk, Tom Thumb, Snow White*). This gives the hero figure a fixed, plotted nature, in that since we never know why they do what they do, only that they do it; choice and decision do not seem to exist in their world. There is no reference to interiority in any of the folktales characters, they never ponder, vacillate, or even feel fear, instead they do; so we are told that they 'will give their answer in the morning' or that they 'ran away and hid'. It is only ever by this 'doing' in the tale that we know them, and by which their identity is fixed for us, e.g. Sleeping Beauty, Jack the Giantkiller, the Goose Girl.[5]

If an important right choice or decision is to be shown being made, and emphasised as so for the plot, then usually there are other siblings, or suitors, as anti-heroes, to demonstrate graphically the wrong ones. In this sense the lack of description gives to the tales and their characters a definiteness that Lüthi ascribes to the lack of any alternative or deviation from the storyline. It also gives a sequential separateness that renders the tale easily associated with similar stories. In the continuum of plot-character, these tales are

really just as close to pure plot as one can get; character, the presence of a discerning individual responding or developing, is never referred to.[6]

So these tales are all about the right paths to take and ways to behave, it is surprising to observe that the hero or heroine is not the focus of the story through any act of his or her own choice or discernment. In this sense the heroic title is not earned, and contradicts the standard response to these tales.[7] The hero or heroine, more often, is the opportune individual who is given the means of his or her success (magic shoes, golden hair, or wonderfully specific companions) that will solve the tests that await him or her. These are usually for unforeseen, and often quite unforseeable, future situations that the principal character in no way predicts or the reader could anticipate. The opportunities are not in any obvious sense earned; the hero or heroine does not choose to act well; often all they have done is be the youngest, or the smallest, the step-child, or the perceived inferior in the family structure in some way. They restore an imbalance or injustice, but only by 'poetic' or fortuitous means, for theirs is a magically or 'poetically' just universe.

Sometimes they are merely the third traveller across a tyrannous ogre's bridge, or kingdom, and hence they are the third behaviour option, unforseeable to all previous travellers, to be subsequently rewarded with the successful overthrow of the tyrant. In that they act differently from their siblings, or have some distinct attribute, fortune favours them and they are rewarded by being the agents of 'poetic justice' and redress. They are as deserving as Mity's statue

(ch. 4, p. 75) in Aristotle's example of the 'universal' aptness that stimulates *katharsis*, and the 'pity and fear' and 'reversal' of retribution. The hero is the hero, the heroine the heroine, it is they who will trigger the force of restitution and balance the meaning and syntax of the tale; they lead a charmed life simply because of that fact, it is a plot necessity.

THE MORPHOLOGY OF THE FOLKTALE: PROPP AND LEVI-STRAUSS.

The most significant analyses of the folktale, in terms of the invariable, and hence the archetypal, elements of which they are constructed, are those of Vladimir Propp and Claude Lévi-Strauss. Both can be called 'structuralists' in their type of analysis and both came to the study of oral literature from linguistics. Although their works are not similar (indeed their methods are very dissimilar), they are in the same context; Propp was abstracting the linguistic functions from the narrative to discover the structure of the folktale; Lévi-Strauss was analysing most of the orally related traditions of myths, legends, and folktales etc, to discover the laws that would govern any such structure. Propp limited his study to the European folktale as he himself defined it and was suspicious of his conclusions being deployed outside that context; whereas Lévi-Strauss drew upon world mythology and has been criticised for his disregard for historical or geographical distinctions.[6]

Propp's work on the structure of the folktale rests on his abstraction of the simple elements he found in the tales. His abstraction is of such an infuriatingly logical nature as to be obvious once it has been pointed out. His basic idea was that the

diversity of details and incident in folktales was reducible to one fundamental plot, of which all tales offer an incomplete realization. He abstracted this fundamental, or archetypal plot, to thirty-one plot elements, which are always the same and always follow one another in the same sequence. He further analysed the many characters or *dramatis personae*, down to only seven types. His success was in that although the precision of his plot elements is often questioned and qualified, and although his definition of a folktale and the sample that he drew from were considered rather tautological, as all definitive work must be, his method is now fundamental to the study of the folktale.

Propp considered the abstracting action of time on the folktale as that of schematism and repetition, acting over a vast scale of time, from possibly the prehistoric, and certainly medieval times, to the present. To him the tales are a distillation of complexity, the merging and re-animating of ready-made schemes and plots reducing any complexity and realism to 'the magnitude of points receding into the distance'.

Propp's and Lévi-Strauss's methods, working separately, both drew directly from the structural methods of phonology, where the aim is to analyse the components of speech into their basic code of meaning. Myths were considered as a form of language, 'narratology' (Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, p. 12) with its own syntactical structure. Phonology is a discipline within linguistics, where the ambiguous multiplicity of words and sound patterns of living speech is reduced to a small and finite number of significant vowels or consonants (phonemes). This applies directly to the study of any

oral tradition but distinctly and obviously folktale, if we accept that such a code or a meaning might equally reside within its structure; that the tale is saying to us something inside of what it overtly appears to be saying.

The first process in the discipline of phonology is to segment the flow of speech into parts, then to group these parts into distinctive features and finally to assemble all the variants covered by a certain invariant. For example, speech is first separated into discrete units whether phonetically or meaningfully, hence 'reading' could be *read - ing* in terms of its morphology, but *rea - ding* in terms of speech pattern. Both these would have to be codified into *rea - d - ing*. Invariants then have to be abstracted from variant forms, for example we can isolate the phoneme - *s* - in the word *sip - s* (because *s* is the grammatical form indicating the plural, if *sips* is a noun; or *s* indicates the third person singular if *sips* is a verb), but this has not yet identified this terminal - *s* - function with the *s* at the beginning of the word. Decoding only stops when all such meaningful relational features are mapped onto the phonic substance - that is the articulatory and acoustical sounds of the language.

This is exactly the type of method that Propp and Lévi-Strauss applied to the sample of tales that they each considered to be typical (Lévi-Strauss even naming a unit function of a myth as a mytheme (Ibid., p. 104), and although in this sense this distinction is decidedly self-defining, his conclusions outlined a very clear method of handling the similarities and dissimilarities of these stories. If he had not limited his catchment so rigorously he would have had a great deal more difficulty in the segmentation of his subjects. It is

this strictness of segmentation and the clear functional analysis of the narratives that allows for the revelation of the constants so readily:

> In a series of wondertales *(volsebnoj)* about a persecuted stepdaughter I noted an interesting fact: in "Morózko" [frost] the stepmother sends her stepdaughter into the woods to Morózko. He tries to freeze her to death, but she speaks to him so sweetly and humbly that he spares her, gives her a reward, and lets her go [...] In another tale the stepdaughter encounters not Morózko but a lesij [wood goblin], in still another, a bear. But surely it is the same tale! Morózko, the lesij, and the bear test the stepdaughter and reward her each in his own way, but the plot does not change. Was it possible that no one should ever have noticed this before? [...] It is obvious that Morózko, the lesij and the bear performed the same action [...] I devised a very simple method of analysing wondertales in accordance with the characters' actions - regardless of their concrete form. To designate these actions I adopted the term "functions". My observations of the tale of the persecuted stepdaughter allowed me to get hold of the end of the thread and unravel the entire spool. It turned out that all the other plots were also based on the recurrence of functions and that all the wondertale plots consisted of identical functions and had identical structure.
>
> (V. Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore*, p. xxvi.)[3]

So Propp's 'functions' are like motifs, by which plots had been analysed previously, but they are not used at all loosely, they always refer to actions and it is by these actions, as plot elements, that he was able to efficiently segment the tales.

> Function [...] denotes the action of the character from the point of view of its significance for the progress of the narrative. If the hero jumps to the princess's window on horseback, we do not have the function of jumping on horseback (such a definition would be accurate only if we disregarded the narrative as a whole) but the function of performing a difficult task as part of courtship.
>
> (Ibid., p. xxx.)

From these distinctive features he was able to ascertain, from all the variable forms of action, invariants, and their sequence. In

his concept there are in all thirty-one functions possible in the untold paradigm tale. Here are the first seven:

> 1 One of the members absents himself from home, 2 an interdiction is addressed to the hero, 3 the interdiction is violated, 4 the villain makes an attempt at reconnaissance, 5 the villain receives information about his victim, 6 the villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to take possession of him or his belongings, 7 the victim submits to deception and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy.
>
> (Ibid. p.xxviii.)

Each of these are invariable functions, but not all will be included in any one folktale. This aspect has been greatly criticised in terms of its invariable sequence, which only rests on the smallness of the sample that Propp drew. Of more interest to this study regarding plots in drama (and particularly folk drama and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) is his general conclusion that a folktale 'develops from an act of injury or a state of lack, through certain mediating functions, to an eventual wedding or other concluding (or extricating) functions.'

What is of particular interest in the context of archetypes and *dramatis personae* is his abstraction of what role-functions or 'masks' are, for their similarity to Jung's archetypes is distinct and subsumes several personae.[10]) In his analysis a single character may play many roles, that is role-functions in the plot, and many characters may play one role-function. The role-functions are seven: the villain (or antagonist), the donor (giver of the magical gift), the helper, the princess (the sought for person, object of the quest), her father (or the despatcher), the hero, and the false hero (or usurper, or anti-hero).

In all these cases it is the brevity and certainty in which Propp defines these functions of the plot that is most useful, providing firm grips on what are usually very slippery and compounded compositional elements. Similarly his outlining of the linked functions as sequential plot devices is closely linked to those of Goethe, who first applied the term morphology to folktales according to Max Lüthi (p. 129). If not a new idea, it is inovatory for the clarity of expression that he gave it: lack - corresponding to lack liquidated, interdiction - followed by violation, an attempt to deceive - followed by being deceived, test - followed by receipt of a magic agent, contest - followed by victory.

It is obvious that the terms and the functions that Propp abstracted, albeit from such a limited sample of self-defining folktales, have a transference far beyond this application. They are revealing for most other forms of narrative and particularly so for drama and are, as Lüthi points out, valid 'even for non-literary life processes'. That art here imitates life, should not be surprising; that life, and some of its reflections in art, should be so amenable to analysis and formulation is surprising, but also satisfying in that it is a formulation which readily invites extrapolation. The work of Lévi-Strauss is very relevant here, in that he casts a much wider net, (whereas Propp was constantly folding his) and was therefore far more able to propose a possible function, meaning, or purpose, of such a morphology for narrative in general.[11]

Lévi-Strauss and Propp were very aware of each other's work, and although considered conflicting at the time, their published correspondences now seem complimentary. One of the basic criticisms

that Lévi-Strauss makes of Propp's 'functions' is that ultimately nothing is 'molecular':

> However, no motif can be said to be indivisible, since an example as simple as 'a dragon abducts a king's daughter' may be decomposed into at least four elements, each of which is commutable with others ('dragon' with 'sorcerer,' 'whirlwind,' 'devil,''eagle,' etc; 'abduction,' with 'vampirism,' 'putting to sleep,' etc; 'daughter,' with 'sister,' 'bride,' 'mother,'etc; and finally 'king,' with 'prince,' 'peasants,' 'priest,' etc). Smaller units than motifs are thus obtained, which according to Propp, have no independent logical existence.
>
> (Claude Lévi-Strauss, 'Structure and form: Reflections on a Work by Vladimir Propp', *Structural Anthropology, p. 4.*)[12]

This is based on a somewhat incomplete analysis in that Propp's 'functions' would have qualified these motifs beyond the reach of this criticism. As we have already seen, 'dragon' would have been abstracted to 'villain' hence covering 'sorcerer', 'whirlwind' etc, and many more variants besides. For example 'abduction' etc. would become in Propp's categories 'villain takes possession of sought after person'; and the king becomes either,'her father', for which there is provision, or 'the dispatcher', depending upon the nature of the rest of the plot.

Lévi-Strauss's article goes on to niggle at the details, but praise the method and the value of Propp's contribution. An important literary point he does make however, is that Propp has necessarily, whether wittingly or not, denigrated the colourful minutiae and detail of the tales as 'arbitrary content'. For Lévi-Strauss, viewing from a wider cultural context, such detail is also coded information, absolutely important, and particularly so in its transformations, as those transformations also carry and reflect the structural 'function' of the whole:

> To maintain, as I have done, that the permutability of contents is not arbitrary amounts to saying that, if the analysis is carried to a sufficiently deep level, behind diversity we will discover constancy. (Ibid., p.5.)

Lévi-Strauss's work is particularly relevant here, as a rider to Propp's analysis, because it puts significance back into the abstraction. His main contention in this area is that the content of myths (and by that term he is referring to all oral narrative forms) is their structure; that the myth is only a vehicle for the conveyance of the structure. This is to say that its 'meaning' is in the processes of thought expressed by its construction and this acts, and is reflected, at every level at which we can engage with its code.

This expression of the mythic thought process, *la pensée sauvage*, is proposed by Lévi-Strauss to be the movement from the awareness of oppositions toward their resolution. Such a proposal is in no way only 'savage' (taking the word as unrivalled, unsophisticated) in that it is present as a deep structure of the most sophisticated narratives, indeed of all artwork; it is generally recognised in fact as a universal form. His work indicates that at all levels of meaning, structure works to convey a mediation of pole positions. The initial part of the structure expresses a contradiction, which, by some means or other is overcome or neutralised. This puts back the contextual meaning and importance into the 'character' of the segments isolated by analysis, as in this example:

> If the oral literature considered is of an ethnographic type, there are other contexts provided by the ritual, religious beliefs, superstitions, and factual knowledge. It turns out that the eagle and the owl together are put in opposition to the crow, as predators to scavenger, whereas they are opposed to each other at the level of day and night, and that the duck is in opposition to all three at

> the new level of the pairs sky-land and sky-water. Thus, step by step, we define a "universe of the tale," analysable in pairs of oppositions interlocked within each character who - far from constituting a single entity - forms a bundle of distinctive features. (Ibid., p.6.)

Lévi-Strauss is here taking examples from the tales of North American Indians, a much wider context than Propp would have allowed, but valuable here in outlining his oppositional method of analysis, the range of context that he brings into consideration extending Propp's ideas to a wider catchment. Propp's methods hold up well, despite Lévi-Strauss regularly upbraiding him for failing to do things he never set out to do. Lévi-Strauss's concept that the abstracted structure itself expresses the meaning and purpose of the narrative, is interesting as it is to make the structure itself a metaphor; a symbolic philosophical premise, expressed primitively, or 'savagely', as image.

This initially seems to deny to the unique nature of content any value, but that he then restates in considering contextual, symbolic reference. His own analysis of myth, abstracted to 'contradiction moving towards resolution', is an advancing variation of 'order - chaos - order' (a meaning totally in keeping with the works of Aristotle, Freud and Jung as we have considered them), but removes us too far away from the narratives. In seeing such a universal structure, easily transferrable to all types of narrative, we lose sight of the individual tale. With Propp's analysis, we analyse to a family likeness of types of plot, keeping close to the flavour and colour given by the progressional details of the particular tale under scrutiny.

The oppositional analysis outlined by Lévi-Strauss is of such a

fundamental nature to human thought in all areas, as to be one of 'the central concepts of science, philosophy, and ethics' to draw from the earlier quotation of Jung (ch. 5, p. 91). It is the form of reasoning often called 'Dialectics', where opposites and contradictions are viewed as the central defining and structuring propositional activity of the mind, and hence are its conceptions of reality.

Opposition, expressed as conflict between characters or role-functions, is the dramatic depiction of dialectic and is the core of all narrative. For Lévi-Strauss to point this out is not innovatory; what is, in this context of analysis, is to point to myth being a form of contextual metaphor, and to outline dialectic as a means of examining the significance of even the minutiae of tales. This focus on the variants balances Propp's level of abstraction perfectly, having been defined by it, and shifts attention back, even more, to the uniqueness of the individual form and the significance of the detail to literary criticism.

The proposition, taken from George Steiner's article (ch. 5, p. 98) that psychoanalysis is actually analysing in this way a syntax of metaphorical meaning (a metaphor 'too parochial' in Freud's case), and that as such had lost ground 'damagingly' to anthropology (specifically Lévi-Strauss) and Jung, is therefore stressing a 'coded' aspect to cultural 'symbolic forms' (George Steiner, *On Difficulty*, p. 54). These forms are archetypes. This encoded structure is what Aristotle calls *poiesis* - the creation of human meaning (ch. 4, p. 80); it is the same syntactical meaning Terry Eagleton delineates politically as 'ideology', that is the structuring and manipulation of archetypal relations. In narrative such

manipulated and structured interactions of symbolic forms, in various allied and oppositional aspects to each other, are in the ascribed personæ of a given plot. The instinctive archetypal level is in the role function.

Steiner mentions that Jung comes very close to the analysis that Lévi-Strauss and Lacan would later abstract from the narrative of psychoanalysis, but with one notable difference, that of presenting of a prescriptive collective unconscious. Jung's collective unconscious evolves individuals, not societies, and this is for him the meaning, or deep structure, of all human symbolism. The 'collective unconscious', that Jung proposed, is then as ideal as Aristotle's 'universal' and similarly adds a greater reference to the opposition between the reconciliation of human needs and their social possibility. This view of Jung's, that cultural imagery has a developmental function, does have credence other than with Campbell:

> Culture represents a novelty in the world of nature, and it could add an effective, unifying edge to the forces of natural selection.
>
> (Richard Leakey, *Human Origins,* p. 16.)[13]

Leakey then goes on from that position, to quote biologist Christopher Wills (*The Runaway Brain,* 1993):

> The force that seems to have accelerated our brains growth is a new kind of stimulant: language, signs, collective memories - all elements of culture. As our cultures evolved in complexity so did our brains, which then drove our brains to greater complexity. (Ibid., p. 17.)

Leakey and Wills are both here describing just the process, or dialogue, that Jung has described in individuals as they interact with their societies. If Jung stresses the individual in the interaction, then Levi-Strauss stresses the consensus or the

initiatory function of culture. Both find the deep symbolism of the structure as opposition or 'contradiction moving towards resolution' as universally displayed in cultural forms, but particularly in its expression in narrative. Whereas Propp, in focussing on a specific area and type of initiatory tale, could be so much more specific about its functions as distinguishable from its personae. The structure that Propp found was pointing towards a particular type of human need and a particular type of resolution.

THE INITIATORY FUNCTION OF NARRATIVE.

The social function of stories is initiatory: all try to convey a different world view, or ideology, to initiate us into a new viewpoint; or with repetition, to confirm or renew an established viewpoint, for the already initiated. The positivity of the folktale, the simple one dimensionality of its characters, the prescriptive happiness of its endings (for the hero or heroine) and the direct nature of its reward and treasure (which is usually auspicious marriage and rulership of the locale, in perpetuity), place it as distinctly depicting the 'rites of passage' for the leaving of childhood and the onset of puberty. It is for this reason that Bettelhiem found them so 'useful', that is therapeutic, for the abnormal or disturbed child, and second only to parental impact in the moral upbringing of the normal child (Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p. 4). Folktales and fairytales are then initiatory rites at an imaginary level, spoken rituals, but nonetheless still vitally intense experiences for the child; and particularly and even compulsively so when the child meets the right tale at the right stage of the process.

As initiatory ordeals, the positive success for the hero figure and the relatively negative outcome for the antihero (the sibling figure), so dominant as themes in oral tales, take on a distinct significance regarding the stages of human life and the socialisation of the needs each stage engenders. If we look at stories in general, from a goal-orientated viewpoint, then a 'stages of life', if not specifically 'rites of passage', classification of stories emerges. Folktales, as Propp points out, usually strive towards a marriage (*Theory and History of Folklore*, xxxii-xxxiii); which implies the particular life stage or level of development: it is this goal that fastens the developmental stage of the folktale to the onset of puberty. Other stories generally do, of course, aim at many different resolutions, and failures to resolve by anti-heroes, but even so there are not many types of resolution, or of failure. There are not many *types* of success presented to us. This suggests a possible structuring of narrative types in terms of the goals or resolutions they advocate.

Campbell, suggests a fourfold analysis of the ends for which heros and heroines strive in narrative in terms of a stratification of initiatory types of tales. He mentions four Sanskrit terms from classical Indian philosophy; *kama* - love and pleasure, *artha* - power and success, *dharma* - lawful order and moral virtue, and *moksha* - release (*Primitive Mythology*, p.461).

Campbell, a Sanskrit scholar, does not place these terms clearly. They are mentioned by Joyce in *Finnegans Wake* (Ibid., p.470). The dictionary definitions (Monier Williams) of these words echo

Campbell's, and trace the concepts to the Rig Veda:[14]

> *kama* - wish, desire, longing; love, affection, object of desire or of love or of pleasure; pleasure, enjoyment; love especially sexual love or sensuality[...]
>
> *artha* - aim, purpose; cause motive reason; advantage, use, utility (generally named with *Kama* and *dharma*); object of the senses, the membrum virile; substance, opulence, wealth, money.
>
> *dharma* - that which is established or firm, steadfast decree, statute, ordinance, law; usage, practice, customary observance or prescribed conduct, duty; right, justice (often a synonym of punishment); virtue, morality, religion, religious merit, good works; Law or Justice personified.
>
> Sir M. Monier Williams, *Sanscrit Dictionary*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899).

The first three of these aims are aims for life in the world, that is life in the social world, for the categories already have the inherent conflict of individual wants, *kama* - love and pleasure, *artha*- power and success, opposed to social conformity *dharma* - lawful order and moral virtue. In the same sense they echo the conflicts of instinct or of nature versus order. With the first two drives we have the Freudian erotic reductionism *(kama)* and the Nietzschian drive to be superior, whether individually or tribally *(artha)*, and all the stories, and subsequently literature. So directed, our heroes and heroines are either erotically or aggressively motivated, or probably both. (This is not to suggest that these two drives are allies, often as in life they are totally opposed; they are similar only in that they appear to be innate biological urges.)

In opposition to these drives is the necessity of social order and organisation and their reconciliation and rationalisation of those impulses by society, *dharma*, and all the rule directed stories, games,

rituals, ceremonies, and literature so angled at direct conveyance of an ideology. Although it is not a drive in the same sense, innate and inherent in the bodily functions, its force must be great, necessarily so to be able to moderate both *kama* and *artha*. Usually there is the full weight of the cultural authority, heaven, the gods and all the ancestors, behind these *mores*. In more elaborate forms we could add to this (as discussed previously in ch.5) the implied authority of the spheres and the hierarchy of the cosmos, or the Almighty himself; and the impact of constant repetition and reflection in all the culture's forms, down to the minutest detail, according to Lévi-Strauss, as demonstrations of the type of resolution that these drives must take.

Archetypes related to these stages would be: Mother for the erotic and comfort seeking stage of *kama*; *artha* would be that military or hunting aspect of the competitive Father or king; *dharma* brings in the image of wisdom, Spirit in Jung's terms as the wise old man or woman.

The fourth of the states of striving, *moksha* - release, Campbell talks of in terms of *desi* - local forms or *mores* which are of the minor local strivings and resolutions of *kama*, *artha*, and *dharma*, and then goes on make the magnificent step to describe *marga* which is the 'mind's awe' and 'disinterested delight' as the aesthetic sense, moving from any aspect of the functional to that of rapture. By ascribing this word, he allies the aesthetic experience to the discovery of the universal (usually considered mystically or religiously in the Vedas), as enlightenment, release and transcendence, implying self-loss in the pure beauty of apprehension[15]

These levels of aim in narrative could also be used as a similar stratification of character in more complex plotting than the folktale displays, with each personae endeavouring to achieve their various aims, which may be shared, refuted or unrelated to other personae. As 'Rites of Passage' the plot-forms imply strata of compliance and participation within a society and similarly they can within the hierarchy of the play.

If applied to the context of a play, Propp's personæ of hero and villain become the advocated and its opposition; princess as object of the quest then becomes the desired, any form of personal success from a crown to wedding ring; and false or anti-hero becomes 'the wrong way', which reflects upon the right mode of action being advocated. If this is seen as advocating a particular cultural ideology then the personæ have obvious cultural functions, tacitly embedded in the structure of the plot. Whether they would be classed as 'archetypes' or 'stereotypes' rests as Terry Eagleton points out (speaking of Lacan's work on psychoanalysis), on the ideological commitment of the classifier, rather than on the psychological or sociological significance of the role itself:

> The unconscious is not some kind of seething, tumultuous private region inside us, but an effect of our relations with one another [...] The best image for such a network, which is both beyond us and yet is the very stuff of which we are made, is language itself [...] Language always pre-exists us; it is always already 'in place' waiting to ascribe us *our* places within it. (*Literary Theory*, p. 174.)

Each persona 'develops from an act of injury or a state of lack' as the subject of their own subplot is in a state of sensual, assertive or dutiful ineffectuality, unable to enjoy, to master or conform to, and then progresses 'through certain mediating functions'

where some form of compliance to a 'given', leads on to success or failure in its terms.

It is tempting here to place the *trivarga* on Shakespeare's ages of man in the sequence of *kama*, *artha*, and then *dharma* in the lover, soldier, patriarch. Putting a sequential time relevance on the aims allows for a further progression, which is not directly present in the folktale, as it sometimes is in the legend and the saga, that of the overview. This is the ability to consider the full movement of an individual development as in the Odyssey, or Peer Gynt, and to reflect upon it from a relatively free point, or to represent various characters within a plot at different levels of shared or various aims and with diverse conformity to a theme and subsequent diverse achievements.

To fasten Campbell's fourth state *moksha* of enlightened or aesthetic achievement which he relates to Joyce and Shelley (*Primitive Mythology*, pp. 469-72) and to Jung's state of individuation, as the achievement of an unconditioned state. This is similar to Aristotle's universal, and presents a four tiered level of apprehension for any narrative; with the fourth level as a rapturous or ecstatic state, literally standing outside the processes of life but witnessing them; as are the artists themselves in the very act of narrative.

A further interpretation from this *trivarga* that Campbell raises is the work of Georges Drumézil on the stratification of mythological pantheons and how they reflect their society's structure directly in terms of its caste system. Here I quote Colin Renfrew's translation

of a relevant passage that relates this Indian analysis of narrative to Indo-European, and therefore Greek and Roman, social systems:

> The highest contains Mitra and Varuna, whom Drumézil considers as collective representatives of the Brahmin caste - sovereignty and religious office [...]
>
> Indra the war god [...] as seen in the *ksatriya* caste.
>
> *Asvins* and *Sarasvarti* [...] that of the food producing caste the *vaisyas*[...]
>
> Thus in early Rome Drumézil sees an expression of the tripartite system in the so-called archaic triad of divinities, Jupiter (sovereign deity), Mars (god of war), and Quirinus (patron of production). Similar classifications have been applied to Celtic society (where Caesar had spoken of druids, knights and common people) and later to Germanic society.
>
> (C. Renfrew, *Archaeology and Language: The Puzzle of Indo-European Origins*, p. 252.)

Renfrew goes on to relate this stratification to the emergence of complex institutions of state societies from what he terms chiefdom societies. It is at this point in development that the psychological archetypes of family life, projected first as ritual gods of the village, become the stereotyped castes and casts of the dramatic roles that complex cities require of citizens.

If stories are initiatory at the levels, stages or Shakespearean ages of life, and beyond (to the contemplative and 'poetic') in the fourth state, then the nature of our heroes and villains, and how they involve us, is similarly a statement of these conflicts and resolutions still operant within us; the universal aspect of them is the 'archetype', the local aspect *masked* in the stereotypes of cultural caste form. The folktale illustrates how the structure of the plot carries the cultural function of presenting the value-laden resolution as heroic, whether this is the value of society or of an individual. Beyond this, an overview is possible of any tale, if we

can universalise its components, taking us, with varying degrees, outside its processes. Narrative loses its merely ideological or initiatory function and becomes 'Literature', when it carries us from the identification with enjoyment (*kama*), mastery (*artha*) and duty (*dharma*), and their opposites of loathing, fear and compliance, respectively, and pitches us into the 'pity and fear' of the aesthetic experience of the whole.

NOTES

1 J. Campbell, *The Flight of the Wild Gander* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1990), p. 36.

2 Eagleton's comment on the post-structuralist birth of individuality is similarly generated in this experience of difference, albeit essentially linguistic:

> Along this metonymic chain of signifiers, meanings, or signifieds, will be produced; but no object or person can ever be fully 'present' in this chain, because as we have seen with Derrida its effect is to divide and differentiate all identities.'
>
> (Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, p. 16.)

3

> The Grimm brothers regarded European folklore as the detrius of Old Germanic belief: the myths of ancient time had disintegrated, first into heroic legend and romance, last into these charming treasures of the nursery. But in 1859, the year of Willhelm's death, a Sanskrit scholar, Theodore Benfrey, demonstrated that a great portion of the lore of Europe, had come, through Arabic, Hebrew, and Latin translations, directly from India - and this as late as the thirteenth century A. D.
>
> (Campbell, *The Flight of the Wild Gander*, p. 20.)

4 M. Lüthi, *The European Folktale* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1982), p. 102.

5 Even those which appear at first sight to be personally named,

such as Rapunzle, are also named by plot actions, perhaps lost from previous forms of the tale. Rapunzle is named after the herb rampion, that her mother desires from a witch, so much so she promises her daughter in exchange for it. (see M. Warner, *From the Beast to the Blonde*, p. 222.)

6 In E. M. Forster's terms, these folktales are barely plots at all as the statement of 'causality' is either lacking or fantastic:

> Let us define a plot. We have defined a story as a narrative of events arranged in their time-sequence. A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality. 'The king died and then the queen died', is a story. 'The king died, and then the queen died of grief', is a plot [...] Or again: 'the king died, no one knew why, until it was discovered that it was through grief at the death of the king'.
>
> (Forster, *Aspects of the Novel*, pp. 93-4.)

Such a definition, in keeping with the interiority that Forster stresses, is beyond the folktale; although 'The king died, and when she was told the queen also died', conveys, as life does, an information packet that suggests a causality, for us to decipher but without fixing it for us.

7

> G. K. Chesterton and C. S. Lewis felt that fairy stories are 'spiritual explorations' and hence 'the most life-like' since they reveal 'human life as seen or felt, or divined from the inside [...] In a fairy tale, internal processes are externalized and become comprehensible as represented by the figures of the story and its events.
>
> (Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, pp. 24-5.)

8 Edmund Leach, *Lévi-Strauss*, p. 8.

9 V. Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore*, trans. A. Liberman. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. xxvi.

10 To relate Propp's roles or role-functions with Jung's archetypes as presented we have only to include the negative as well as positive

aspects, which in the case of the fairytale reflects the sex of the hero/heroine. That is, same sex usually negative, opposite sex usually positive, so that surrogate mothers are usually lethal for girls, as are surrogate fathers for boys. Thus : negative *Spirit* - the villain (or antagonist); positive *Mother* - the donor (giver of the magical gift); *Trickster* - the helper; *Anima/Animus* - the princess or prince (the sought for person, object of the quest); positive *Spirit* - the father (or the despatcher); *Persona* - the hero; and the *Shadow* - false hero (or usurper, or anti-hero).

11 Eagleton describes the work of A.J. Greimas, *Sémantique Structurale* (1966), as going even beyond character as Propp saw it to the structural units of actants: Subject and Object, Sender and Receiver, Helper and Opponent. Tzvetan Todorov in an analysis of Boccaccio's *Decameron,* reduces characters to nouns, 'their attributes to adjectives, and their actions as verbs. Each story of *The Decameron* can thus be read as a kind of extended sentence' (Eagleton p.104-5). This is very far removed from the tale, from the referent it is meant to signify. As with Lévi-Strauss and oppositions, parallels etc, where we approach the total abstraction of signifiers of difference we are approaching what appear to be the very recognition categories of human differentiation and understanding.

12 Claude Lévi-Strauss. 'Structure and form: Reflections on a Work by Vladimir Propp' reprinted in *Theory and History of Folklore.*

13 Richard Leakey, *Human Origins* (London: Orion, 1995), p.16.

14 The Rig Veda is estimated by *Encyclopeadia Britannica* (1990 vol. XII) to have been written 1500-1200 B.C.. This places these categories

of the objectives for striving in life (and hence in stories), as generated at the same period that Propp and the brothers Grimm considered to be the root period for the folktale, and geographically (Northern India) where many, more recent, ethnologists would place the origin of many of the story forms.

15 This aspect relates directly to what Eagleton calls the 'estranged' and 'poetic', that is non-political effect of language denoting its own existence (*Literary Theory*, p.136).

SECTION III. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF *THE DREAM*

> *Nous ne prétendons donc pas montrer comment les hommes pensant dans les mythes mais comment les mythes se pensant dans les hommes, et à leur insu.*
>
> (Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Mythologiques I.*)[1].

CHAPTER 7.

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF PLOT AND PERSONAE IN *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*

The archetypal and stereotypical images that are present in *The Dream*, and which Shakespeare lays out very rapidly for us in the first scene, are easily recognised *dramatis personæ* and would have been standard fare for his audience. The *mythos* that he appears to be unrolling before us is the ancient plot of two lovers separated by a possessive father who invokes all the authority he can muster to keep them apart. Before the scene has ended, a youth will be ordered by the highest authority in the land to obey her father's edict and marry his choice, or face death or the permanent chastity of the nunnery. The plot would have been familiar to individuals in all civilisations, historical or modern, and would have formed the core of many tales, plays and rituals within their experience because its theme is of the essence of the civilising process itself, the conjoining of instinct and community.

Shakespeare in *The Dream*, in choosing *dramatis personæ* such as Theseus, Hippolyta, Oberon and Puck - mythological figures - is

therefore explicitly evoking long-established popular archetypes of human existence. These archetypes are drawn from both classical and indigenous sources; thereby Shakespeare not only links the educated and uneducated strata of his audience but also places figures of local superstition (Puck, Peaseblossom, Cobweb) alongside those of classical myth (Theseus, Egeus, Hippolyta), and puts the urbane alongside the rural. With these archetypes of archaic tribal experience are blended the characterisations of human society, because here he is addressing himself to the exploration of the nature of perhaps the most primary rite of human community, marriage:

> But according to Lévi-strauss (if I understand him correctly), the ultimate basic symbolic exchange which provides the model for all the others is sexual. The incest taboo (which Lévi-strauss erroneously claims to be 'universal') implies a capacity to distinguish between women who are permitted and women who are forbidden.
>
> (Edmund Leach, *Lévi-strauss*, p. 44.)

The play has been regarded as written specifically as an entertainment for an important wedding;[2] this is reflected in the entertainments for the Duke's nuptial night within the play itself, in the mechanicals offering of *'The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe'*. Plays were not usually written for specific weddings; the first play known to be used in this way, in England, was according to Stanley Wells (*A Midsummer Nights Dream*, p. 14.), *Hymen's Triumph* by Samuel Daniel in 1614, just after the generally accepted date for *The Dream* of 1595-7. Up until that date it is considered that marriage entertainments were in the form of a masque or pageant, although a very elaborate form of masque by Shakespeare's time. In that sense the play comes to us, as well as to the Elizabethan audience, already overwritten with many differing

strata of symbolic meaning (a masque in this study will refer to a performance where any dialogue or text is subordinate to the pageantry and display).[3]

At a court masque, as at the seasonal pageants of Twelfth Night, Whitsun, Carnival and Plough Monday, the *dis-guising* was a spectacular and fantastic, flattering restatement of the social order in another guise. The masque was as stratified as the society it was endorsing, and was quite distinct from the concept of the clown as upsetter or reverser of status,[4] for here the very temporary loss of social order was only for its flatteringly rapid reinstatement (presumably implying any alternatives were unthinkable). For this reason the masque was extremely popular with the court; and even such an establishment figure as Sir Francis Bacon (a future Lord Chancellor of the realm, although similarly dismissive of the 'petty wonderments') writes earnestly in 'Of Masques and Triumphs', and betrays a considerable knowledge of the mechanics of production:

> Let the scenes abound with light, specially coloured and varied; and let the masquers, or any other, that are to come down from the scene, have some motions upon the scene itself before their coming down; for it draws the eye strangely, and it makes with great pleasure to desire to see that it cannot perfectly discern.
>
> (Bacon, *Of Masques and Triumphs.*)[5]

The sophistication and the sumptuous nature of these amateur productions is pertinent in that Shakespeare as the Earl of Southampton's man (the Earl was patron of '*Venus and Adonis*', 1593[6]) would have had experience of, if he had not actually served some way in many such eclectic productions; and would therefore have already met in them a blended world of myth and fairy. Jan Kott (*The Bottom Translation*, p.78) mentions such an elaborate entertainment at

Elvetham in 1591 and makes reference to how the quarto of the four day event along with the libretto, the lyrics and the songs were published and twice reprinted, indeed the whole spectacle was produced and performed by many writers, artists and musicians whom Shakespeare would probably have known, if in fact he did not actually view the spectacle or participate in some way himself.[7]

That the text of this and many similar masques, Kott suggests, is the readily accessible source of the diverse mythological and fairy content of *The Dream*, rather than the classics themselves; and Shakespeare's play was not just for an academic elite. The contents and familiar figures in masque would have been part of local gossip, as all actions of the nobility would have been (and still are to this day). They would have also been an important feature of local employment, in that the Elvetham extravagance as Kott describes it must have involved the labours of gardeners, painters and carpenters (the sort of men who would well have understood the value of 'sixpence a day', IV.ii.20) as well as architects and 'poets, artists and musicians' (Kott, *The Bottom Translation*, p.78) Shakespeare and certainly most of his audience of all strata would be acquainted if not familiar with masque, and its various personæ in this way.

Kott also relates how Oberon, or 'king of fairy', appears in many lists of masque costumes (often the only records of such entertainments kept); and Kott, Wells, Young and Foakes all trace the character ultimately to the romance of *Huon de Bordeaux* (first published 1533-42)[8] where, as Foakes points out (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, p.8), Oberon is a mere 'three foot high dwarf'. Shakespeare here again need not have gone directly to the source himself to find a

diminutive king of fairy, with more recent (and probably full-sized) ones popularly in evidence; and certainly most of his playgoers would not have needed to, surrounded as they were by so many literate revellers and enthusiastic amateurs.

Several aristocratic marriages have been suggested as the commission for the play; most rest upon slight circumstantial evidence in trying to place it. Two that recur in commentaries[9] are: the marriage between Elizabeth Vere and the Earl of Derby on the 26th January 1595 and the marriage between Elizabeth Carey and Thomas Berkeley at Blackfriars, on the 19th February 1596. The second marriage has in its favour that the bride's grandfather, Lord Hunsden, and her father, Sir George Carey, were successive patrons of Shakespeare's company the 'Lord Chamberlain's Men'. The bride was also the Queen's goddaughter, so since she is very likely to have been at the wedding the reference usually attributed to Elizabeth:

> A certain aim he took
> At a fair vestal throned in the west,
> And loosed his loveshaft smartly from his bow
> As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts;
> But I see young cupid's fiery shaft
> Quenched in the chaste beams of the watery moon;
> And the imperial votress passed on
> In maiden meditation, fancy free. [II.i.157.]

is taken to imply that she was present at the play's first night, thus tying two threads of association. The queen was also thought to be involved with the marriage of Elizabeth Vere, although there is no real evidence that she attended either wedding. Honigmann (*Shakespeare, the Lost Years*, p.150) makes a lengthy case out for the Derby - Vere marriage, as is in keeping with his well argued

contention that the young playwright worked as a schoolmaster to Alexander Hoghton, regular visitors and near neighbours to William Stanley, Earl of Derby (Ibid., p.7 and appendix C p.150).

Honigmann builds part of his case out of Stanley's general similarity to Theseus: his age, being in his thirties at the time of his wedding, as reflected in Theseus' maturity in the play; his maintaining a company of players and patronising the arts as we see Theseus do; both were considered to be extensive travellers; and as Master forester of Wirral Stanley, like Theseus, is a famous huntsmen, much being made of Theseus' pride and love of his hounds. According to Honigmann's scholarship there was also a new moon on the 30th January, four days after the wedding, so that 'our nuptial hour draws on apace; four happy days bring in another moon' [I.i.3] would aptly link the two marriages within the play's first sentence.

The Vere wedding date is also suggested by Wells (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, p.12), because of the allusion to the confusion of the seasons in Titania's speech:

> And thorough this distemperature we see
> The seasons alter; hoary-headed frosts
> Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose.
>
> [II.i.108.]

as pointing to a notorious period of bad weather prior to this particular noble nuptial. Such royal patronage seems unnecessary in terms of the mythology and ritual we have already discussed in this context. Compared with the rustic and ancient - but still widespread - significance of the King's virility and coupling to the predictability and fertility of the seasons, such a reference seems trite and empty. The significance of the link between the sovereign

and fertility would have been a commonplace, and it is certainly fertility that is important here to Titania:

> The ox has therefore stretched his yoke in vain,
> The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
> Hath rotted ere his youth attained a beard.
> The fold stands empty in the drowned field.
> And the crows are fatted with the murrion flock.
> The nine men's morris is filled with mud,
> And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
> For lack of tread are indistinguishable. [II.i.99.]

The mention of the 'nine men morris' and Titania's concluding line about these evils:

> We are their parents and original.

are very deliberate and potent reminders to the audience of kingship's archaic and rural meaning. If the particular marriage was definitely known and if such references could be specifically tied to a time or place, then it would be important in the shaping and weighting of the plot, and would need consideration. Shakespeare is considered to have altered texts and written to commission; the character of Falstaff being one example of both activities. In Henry the Fifth, the disclaimer in the epilogue states that Falstaff is certainly not Sir John Oldcastle, whereas a pun still in the text ('my old lad of the castle') and a surviving speech prefix 'Old' imply that the name has been changed to protect the honourable Lollard.[10]

And Falstaff was apparently such a success with the Queen, that John Dennis writes in the prologue to his version of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* namely *The Amours of Sir John Falstaffe* (1706) that:

> This comedy was written at her command and by her direction, and she was so eager to see it acted she

commanded it to be finished in fourteen days.

(Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives,* p.51.)

The fame that Shakespeare has given to Falstaff has extended his significance far beyond any historical reference; and in that sense also, Shakespeare, to have been popular must have been very aware of the conditions and aspects of his time and obviously must have responded to the concerns of his audience. If we could know these concerns definitely, if he had made mention of them or justified them; as for instance a Jonson, or a Shaw continually do, then as with such playwrights they would, and must be, important considerations.[11] Since other writers of his age did comment and refer, we should see this silence as deliberate. With Shakespeare, there are only his works, the poems and the plays; all the commentary and reflection are contained within them, so we see only the universal reflecting on the particular of the narrative, rather than the specific context, or any exterior comment. There would have been many such comments obvious to his contemporaries, but it is not towards the local and the contemporary that he directs our attention.

The Dream needs no such comment or reference, it is itself so full of commentary and reflection as to have prompted David Young to suggest it as Shakespeare's *ars poetica*, a view which I hope to support by expounding some of its archetypal and stereotypical incorporation and commentary, and thereby ultimately its transcendence of them. Shakespeare's refusal to step outside his work, to give pertinence to any local or contemporary events, is, of course, only one way that he universalises the particular.

What is very important is to put the play into the context of the

literary form of contemporary and historical works, to see in what ways the form has been extended or limited by the author. *The Dream* as described earlier comes with many established orders of meaning. The plot form of young lovers thwarted by parents or guardians who insist on other marriage partners with higher economic and social status, or simply with parental approval as in this case, is used several times by Shakespeare, and links this play with a tradition of comedy reaching back to the Greek New Comedy of Menander. It is very important to examine this powerful plot form for it is truly universal, which strongly suggests an 'archetypal' or psychological necessity, it being a potent enough frame to subsume so many theatrical functions and genres over a vast period of time, but perhaps it is more of an ideological necessity, in that it subtends societies' resolution, marriage.

The influential form of New Comedy would have been well known to sixteenth century playwrights, and many of the playgoers, through Latin adaptations of Menander, in works by Terence and Plautus. These would have been accessible to Shakespeare (despite Jonson's comment that he possessed 'small Latin, and less Greek'), being available in translation, as Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, from which many of the elements of *The Dream* are drawn, had been available in Golding's translation since 1567 [12]. Several of the characters may have come from Ovid via Chaucer, but Titania is an exception. Titania is not a personal name but a generic name for a female Titan, and is only used as an epithet of Diana in *Metamorphosis*. Jonathan Bate's comprehensive research into this question concludes on this subject:

> The name 'Titania' is derived from Ovid, where it refers to a range of goddesses of the night - Diana, Latona, Circe,

> Pyrra (in Golding these are always 'Titan's daughter(s)', never 'Titania', so that is another small piece of evidence that Shakespeare remembered Ovid's Latin original).
>
> (J. Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid*, p. 136.)

Which qualifies the 'little' of Jonson's jibe somewhat but also some use of Golding is suggested in the tone, rhythm and approach of *The Dream* echoing Golding's translation, indicative that Shakespeare was familiar with the work. There are also some very striking similarities, as in the use of the moon as a mark of the passage of time, specifically in Book iiv, line iv, where Medea, as a *votary* of another form of Diana, speaks in a tone very similar to *'The Dream'*:

> Thou three headed Hecate who knowest best the way,
>
> To compasse this our great attempt and art our chiefest stay;
>
> Ye charms and Witchcrafts, and thou Earth which both with herbe and weed
>
> Of mightie working furnishest the Wizards at their neede;
>
> Ye Ayres and Windes; ye Elves of Hilles, of Brookes, of Woods alone,
>
> Of standing Lakes, and of the Night approche ye everyone.
>
> (*Ovid Metamorphosis*, trans. A Golding. Centaur Press, 1961. p. 142.)

Similarly when she waits upon the moon in a drawn out night sequence:

> Before the moon should circlewise close both hir hornes in one
>
> Three nightes were yet as then to come.[13]

the words and images resound with Hippolyta's:

> Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
>
> And then the moon, like to a silver bow
>
> New bent in heaven, shall behold the night
>
> Of our solemnities. [I. i. 7.]

The silver bow is a complex reference, here being seen as a direct reference to Diana as the hunting aspect of the 'triple headed

Hecate'. Jonathan Bate uses part of this same passage to illustrate Shakespeare's acceptance of 'some' of Golding's 'Englishing' of Ovid:

The relevant passage in Ovid begins:

> *auraeque et venti montesque amnesque lacusque, / dique omnes nemorum, dique omnes noctis adeste,* of which a literal translation might be 'Ye breezes and winds and mountains and rivers and lakes, and ye gods of groves and of night, draw near. Golding translated this as 'Ye Ayres and windes; ye Elves of Hilles, of Brookes, of Woods alone, / Of standing Lakes, and of the Night approach ye everyone.'

And compares this to Prospero's speech from *The Tempest:*

> Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves
>
> *The Tempest.* [V. i. 33.]

> Shakespeare got his elves from Golding (in Ovid they are Gods and are not associated with the hills) and he also followed the translator in amplifying 'lacus' as '*standing lakes*'. But later in the speech, where Ovid had 'convusaque robora' ('and uprooted oaks'), Golding did not specify the kind of tree ('and trees do drawe'), so Shakespeare must have gone to the Latin for his 'and rifted Jove's stout oak.
>
> (J. Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid,* p. 8.)

As Ovid may have been familiar both directly and through Golding and Chaucer, the influence of Greek new comedy, specifically Menander's work, could have only been effected via Rome. Menander's works as typical Greek 'New Comedy' are considered by Northrop Frye (*The Bottomless Dream,* p. 118) and Kenneth Mcleish (*Roman Comedy,* pp. 17-21)[14] as to be the historical precedent for all comedies such as *The Dream.* Menander's works survived only as fragments, so it is only his influence in Roman plays and in the praise that he earns from Roman and Greek commentaries that Shakespeare could have seen;[15] specifically Terence and Plautus, whose works embodied many of Menander's forms and concepts, and who are thought to have regularly been played at grammar schools throughout Europe, and were much copied and imitated by coteries of literate amateurs, clerics and gentry.

Such amateur worthies who would have responded to the plays of fair and festival very much as Phylostrate does, here quoting from the mechanicals' preamble:[16]

> A play there is my lord, some ten words long,
> Which is as 'brief' as I have known a play,
> But by ten words, my lord, it is too long,
> Which makes it 'tedious'. For in all the play
> There is not one word apt, one player fitted.
> And 'tragical', my noble lord, it is,
> For Pyramus therein doth kill himself,
> Which when I saw rehearsed, I must confess,
> Made mine eyes water; but more 'merry' tears
> The passion of loud laughter never shed. [V.i.64.]

The influence of Menander is worth emphasising here in that the Greek New Comedy associated with him transferred so well to Rome, and became so influential (and was still relevant in renaissance Europe), by rejecting the contemporary satire and personal references of most 'Old' types of Greek comedy, such as the more specific satires of Aristophanes. The New Comedy as reflected in such writers as Plautus transferred so well because it was so very pertinent, crossing even national barriers easily, and remained relevant over large periods of time, by placing emphasis on, and drawing humour out of, the general conditions, castes and standards of human behaviour.

The Latin or Roman form of comedy fixes the stereotypical figures of plot relations as *senex iratus* - the irascible parent or guardian as representative of the older generation, *adulescens* - the juvenile, *dolosus servus* - the crafty servant. In the second century, Pollux[17] had defined the types for Greek New Comedy as: old men (nine types), young men (four types), young women (five types) and sundry soldiers

and parasites; Terence and Plautus had obviously not changed a great deal.

Similarly the format of Shakespeare's play, the five acts (as demarcated in the Folio), is similar in format to the works of Seneca, with interludes of music and diversion, although despite its five act format, *The Dream* divides naturally into three: Athens and the setting out of the problem, the wood at night and the elaboration of that problem and its ramifications and finally the resolution that morning brings and a return to Athens. This section of the play usually involves one or more of Aristotle's 'pity and fear' stimulating revelations, discussed earlier (pp. 76-9). Here within *The Dream* the resolution is presented involving *reversal*, and or *discovery*, which Shakespeare resolves in the inversion of the opening problematic relations. With a strong but benign re-established order framing it, he then presents a burlesque reprise of the theme in Peter Quince's little play within a play.

The basic form of this plot is a very clear expression of Lévi-Strauss' contention that the meaning of a work ('contradiction moving towards resolution', ch. 6, p. 129), is in its structure and it is a model example of its important rider that this structural mediation, of polar opposition, should be echoed or encoded in the minutiae of the tale. *The Dream* conveys this resolution in all details, right down to the measured metre of its syllables, creating an intense and tangible sense of unity out of a very diverse set of personae and circumstances.

Lévi-Strauss' contention would apply equally to Tragedy as to Comedy, in that both reside in the disparity between our endeavours

and our achievements. To define a play as Comedy still draws from Menander, in that it is to say it is about the common and the mundane. Comedy is about the repeatable and everywhere familiar, what we commonly achieve, usually compromise, rather than the heroic and the ideal that we advocate; and humour lies in the disparity between these two aspects. The roots of comedy's official acceptance in Athens lie in the satyr play, the satire or lampooning of the heroic; this was an obligatory conclusion to a set of three tragedies at the Dionysia. Tragedy according to Aristotle gives 'a representation of an action that is worth serious attention',[18] presenting to us conflicts or contradictions of principles pursued to their necessary ends. Resolution is found in the death or destruction of one protagonist or both: as the effect of the edict of King Creon and the loyalty of Antigone are pursued inexorably to their conclusions. Tragedy is telling us the inevitable outcome of modes of behaviour in that society and the theatre becomes the political temple, depicting the civic forms and rituals, which Shakespeare similarly depicts, in all their inexorability, within the first scene of his play:

> THESEUS For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
> To fit your fancies to your father's will;
> Or else the law of Athens yields you up
> (Which by no means we may extenuate)
> To death, or to a single life. [I.i.117.]

The simple dance drama of the hunting, herding or farming communities requires the elaboration and flexibility of language to reflect its growth in self-awareness but it retains the mythic emblems of the rite and festival behind the elaboration that the text presents, echoing in the same way how the mass of society was still

agriculturally involved and employed. The movements of the markets even in cosmopolitan Athens would have fluctuated with the seasons and the harvest. So the subject matter in the Lévi-Strauss sense, and in the archetypal sense, remains the same, the theatres are still dedicated to the gods, still celebrating the village significance of the solar and lunar calendar. Whilst the drama moves emphasis from chorus to soloist to dialogue, the content moves from rite into tragedy to the comedy of manners. So the gods recede from inevitably rewarding human arrogance with disaster and the subject matter of religious power gives way to political.

Shakespeare is deliberately revealing these neolithic roots to 'Boy meets Girl' in Titania's speech. He knows them and recognises them from two sources: from the classical myths, and from the traditions and fertility folklore rituals in the animal masks and motley of the villages around him in the forests of Arden, and in the superstitions of the townsfolk of Stratford. In *The Dream* these are blended seamlessly. We have seen the political aspects in Athens, and heard the petition of Egeus and the judgement of Theseus by the time the female 'parent' figure as Titania Queen of Fairy speaks. We can compare her range and the force of her speech (quoted earlier in this chapter) with a contemporary and similar concept, that is only politically expressed:

> Considering duly that a prince's court
> Is like a common fountain, whence should flow
> pure silver drops in general, but if't chance
> Some curs'd example poison't near the head,

> Death and diseases through the whole land spread.
> (Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi,* I.i.12.)

Antonio's speech is somewhat agrarian, in its reference to the fountain and water supply, and sexual in its 'fountain' of 'silver drops',[19] but has none of the conscious resonances, and hence scale of Titania's, and although he mentions death and disease, its imagery does not have the real force and sadness of her rural images of the drudgery of scarcity and wasted work.

The psychological and ideological necessity of the lovers and the aged parent device is a forceful plot form in its being an archetypal 'Rites of Passage' situation; and its force and its impact come from that archetypal patterning. The stereotyping of its roles comes from repetition of the codified encapsulation of that archetype in the theatrical plot form of 'boy meets girl, boy loses girl, boy finally gains girl'; the archetype we could abstract as in youth versus age. Where age represents the strictures of society, the men's club embodied in the Father, Egeus, senex iratus. This form is present in many of Shakespeare's works: *The Merchant of Venice, Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet* and *The Winter's Tale*; even Brabantio in *Othello*, where the alien Othello, although not young, is impetuous and usurps a father's 'warrant'. Moreover it is so effective that one of the most outstanding genres of the theatre, *Commedia dell' arte,* was constructed upon, and thrived upon, its presentation throughout Europe for over two hundred years.

NOTES

1 Edmund Leach, *Lévi-Strauss* (London: Fontana, 1970), p.51.

Translated as:

> We are not, therefore, claiming to show how men think the myths, but rather how the myths think themselves out in men and without their knowledge.

2 Discussed at length in: R.A.Foakes, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p.3; Stanley Wells, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967) p.20; D.Young, (*Something of Great Constancy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p.5.

3 Jan Kott defines the court masque of the early Tudor and Elizabethan period as comprising three 'sequels':

> 1 appearance in mythological or shepherds' costumes; 2 dancing, occasionally with recitation or song; and 3 the ending of the masque, during which the masquers invited the court audience to participate in a general dance. Professional actors did not take part in masques, which were courtly masquerades and social games.
>
> Jan Kott, 'The Bottom Translation' from *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1987), p.75.

4 Jan Kott put this succinctly:

> The disguises of the masque corresponded to social distinctions. The hierarchies were preserved.

For although mythological or shepherd's costumes were affected 'Dukes or lords would never consent to represent anyone below the mythological standing of Theseus'.

(Jan Kott, 'The Bottom Translation,' p.75.)

5 Essay xxxvii from R.Whateley, *Bacon's Essays, with Annotations,* (London: N.P. 1857).

6 Ted Hughes sees particular significance in Shakespeare's dedication of this poem 'as long as a play' to Southampton

(*Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being*, p. 49). Subsequent editions still carrying the dedication to Southampton were published 1594, 1596, 1599, 1600, and two editions in 1602, the patronage was then contemporary with the elaborate court entertainments.

7 Wells discounts this and all masques, pageants and weddings as a possible premiere venue for *The Dream* based on the theatrical stage directions and chooses to accept the title page declaration that the play was 'sundry times publicly acted by the Right Honourable the Lord Chamberlain his servants'. (S. Wells, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 13.)

8 The English translation by Lord Berners cited in R. A. Foakes, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* p. 6.

9 R. A. Foakes, (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, pp. 2-3) and E. A. J. Honigmann, *Shakespeare: The Lost Years* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), p. 150.

10 Oldcastle was an ancestor of William Brooke, Lord Cobham, Privy Councillor and Lord Chamberlain. Schoenbaum suggests that it was he, or his son Henry an adversary of Shakespeare's patron Southampton that could have successfully protested against the slur. There was even a play attributed to Shakespeare, and included in the Third Folio of 1664, in vindication of Oldcastle's life:

> It is no pampered glutton we present,
> nor aged councellor to youthful sin.
>
> (Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 49-50.)

11 Major Barbara for example gives thirty pages of context and concern. G. B. Shaw, *Major Barbara* (London: Penguin, 1944), p. xxxvii.

12 As counterpoint to Jonson's jibe, Francis Meres in his *Palladis*

Tamia (1598) could write and suggest Shakespeare's familiarity with Ovid:

> As the soul of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagoras, so the sweete wittie soule of Ovid lives in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare, witness his 'Venus and Adonis', his 'Lucreece', his sugred sonnets among his private friends. (G. Wyndham, *The Poems of Shakespeare,* p. x.)

13 Ovid, *Metamorphosis,* trans. A Golding, Bk iiv. line iv. p244.

14 Northrop Frye, 'The Bottomless Dream' from *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* ed. Harold Bloom, p. 118; and Kenneth Mcleish, (*Roman Comedy,* pp. 17-21)

15 Mcleish relates the comment of Aristophanes 'O Menander! O Life! Which of you copied the other?' (Ibid., p. 20).

16 The immediate precedent for Phylostrate's sarcasm would be perhaps Thomas Preston's popular *Cambises* (c. 1561), which was drawn from Seneca's tragedy of the same name, much as Quince has drawn *Pyramus and Thisbe* from Ovid or Chaucer, the full title of which is given by Brockett as:

> *A Lamentable Tragedy Mixed Full of Pleasant Mirth, Containing the Life of Cambrises, King of Persia, from the beginning of his Kingdom, Unto his Death, His one Good Deed of Execution, after Many Wicked Deeds and Tyrannous Murders, Committed by and Through Him, and Last of All His Odious Death by God's Justice Appointed.*
>
> (*The History of the Theatre,* p. 157)

17 Pollux, a Greek lexicographer of the second century A.D., from Brockett, *History of Theatre,* p. 39.

18 Aristotle, *Poetics,* p. 38.

19 The divinity of the royal personage, as reflected in Antonio's speech by image of the prince as the 'fountain', is described by Frazer thus:

> He is the point of support on which hangs the balance of the world, and the slightest irregularity on his part may

Frazer thus:

> He is the point of support on which hangs the balance of the world, and the slightest irregularity on his part may overthrow the delicate equipoise. The greatest care must, therefore, be taken both by and of him; and his whole life, down to its minutest details, must be so regulated that no act of his, voluntary or involuntary, may disarrange or upset the established order of nature.
>
> (Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, p. 168.)

CHAPTER 8.

> My people are not caricatures. They are real (though fiction), and if they are portrayed as caricatures the point of all these plays will be lost. The picture I have drawn is a harsh one, yet my tone is not one of disgust - nor should it be in the presentation of the plays. I am at one with these people: it is only that I am annoyed, with them and myself.
>
> (Arnold Wesker, *The Wesker Trilogy*, p. 7.)'

PERSONA AS LANGUAGE.

In chapter three I quoted Edmund Leach on Lévi-Strauss about the use of animals as categories to distinguish the status of social roles. Leach gives the quotation that ascribes the origination of the concept to Rousseau:

> It is only because man originally felt himself identical to all those like him (among which, as Rousseau says, we must include animals) that he came to aquire the capacity to distinguish *himself* as he distinguishes *them*, i.e. to use the diversity of species as conceptual support for social differentiation.
>
> (Lévi-Strauss, *Le Totemisme aujourd'hui* from Edmund Leach, *Lévi-Strauss*, p. 38.)

Leach goes on to present as an illustration of this key point of Lévi-Strauss's Structuralist Anthropology, that the categories of Totemism are in fact a form of language, exemplifying basic characteristics of human thought. This relates directly to Propp's analysis of the language of the folktale and to the use of paradigm types in the development of drama. Leach's example gives a breakdown of ritual attitudes to animals and plants which govern, and I would add elicit, typical responses towards creatures by the English as:

> (i) wild animals, (ii) foxes, (iii) game, (iv) farm animals, (v) pets (vi) vermin.

Categories of personæ (very familiar to us from myth and folktale), which he then relates as 'in some degree homologous' with categories of socialisation:

> (ia) strangers, (iia) enemies, (iiia) friends, (iva) neighbours, (va) companions, (via) criminals.
>
> (Ibid., p. 42.)

This empirical example of what is possible shows the unconscious structure of a 'kind of algebraic matrix of possible permutations' present as a sorting and thinking process, and one not particularly primitive, although fundamental, just because the headings of the categories are rustic. Leach goes on to say with Lévi-Strauss that the process is a universal cultural characteristic in man. In the context of this study, this is to place him with Jung and Aristotle in describing an innate and unconscious, and therefore intense and emotionally biased, propensity for metaphoric and symbolic connections.

More recent developments in the area of linguistics, specifically those of Noam Chomsky concerning the innate qualities of categorisation in language similarly suggest the employment of linguistic markers - phonemes - (in the way Propp had designated folktale motifs and Lévi-Strauss had presented animals, food and clothing as well as 'mythemes') as symbols for thought. Lévi-Strauss is quite clear that these are, as discussed in chapter six regarding structure as metaphor (p. 124), representative of relationship; particularly the mediation of polarised oppositions.

Totemic species are not based on what is 'good to eat' (*bonnes à*

manger), as they had been considered, or certainly not that alone, they always have a status and a meaning, and are therefore 'good to think with' (*bonnes à penser*)(Ibid., p. 34). The distinctions or totems of the Great Hunt as Campbell points out are not those of the farm or the city, but they are still the fundamental categories of living polarised into friend/enemy, dominant/submissive, sexually available/sexually unavailable; and as such will be fundamental to any cultural elaboration or sophistication.

In terms of drama, if we suggest that what is forming in the categorisation of character stereotyping is a discursive account of social relations then it could similarly be represented in binary or polarised simple signifiers (dra-memes?), although capable of extensive elaboration.

The signifying of characters in the *Commedia dell' arte* is centred about the four 'Masks' as they are usually called, that is Pantalone and Dottore - the two old men (*vecchi*), and Harlequin and Brigella - the two *zanni* or servants. There are always two manservants, not always Harlequin and Brigella, as Goldoni names them; sometimes Scapino or Puncinella, but always the two. The numbering is fundamental to the describing of character, so there are two *zanni* as there is always only one maidservant, according to Allardyce Nicoll (*The World of Harlequin*, p. 40)[2] very rarely do these numbers alter. Such numbering, among the Masks allows for the symmetrical patterning and reflection of attitude and actions.[3] This readily enables the plot to employ Aristotle's 'reversals', 'recognitions' and discoveries in the way it allows the linking and separation of parallel behaviour in the characters. The lovers are a similarly reflecting pair, and

although there is usually only one serving maid (*servetta*), she pairs and mirrors the responses of the female lover (*innamorata*), often her mistress,

These four male roles retained the mask of ritual, and of Greek and Roman Theatre, carrying it into most of the countries of Eighteenth century Europe, playing alongside the more modern made up 'faces' of the Captain (who is occasionally, though rarely, illustrated as wearing a mask), Silvio, Columbina and Francescina. They are the more grossly characterised and because of that they are the essence of stereotype and bring with them all the potency of caricature. The impact of the mask as a recognition device, as totem of a social group, is of importance to the concept of character as a category of a relation in terms of theatre, but not only theatre. Since in disguising the actor, it identifies and exaggerates the persona, its presentation is at the core of how we experience the stereotyping and differentiation of people in general, including ourselves, and is in that sense providing a language or code for such description, discussion and transmission; it also spans the functions of stereotype and archetype. The peculiar issue that *Commedia dell' arte* raises as it emerges in renaissance Italy, and the classical drama forms re-emerge in England and throughout Europe, is of a re-emergence and exploration of the nature of characterisation and individuality itself, and a searching in Shakespeare, for a method for the expression of the interior complexity of individual uniqueness.

The term *Commedia dell' arte* means comedy of professional players, initially supported by a collection from the crowd. It was variously named *commedia all' improviso* (improvised comedy), or

commedia a soggetto (comedy developed from a plot or subject) and originally the term was used to denote the plays performed by professional players to distinguish them from those of the court and academy amateurs. The improvisation and acrobatics were part of their professionalism, stressing the craft or guild aspect of apprenticeship and achieved skills. The term's modern usage centres on the improvisation by *Commedia dell' arte* of dialogue and action, around a scenario, and its distinctive fixed characterisation and categorisation.

In print the *Commedia dell'arte* can be considered contemporary with Shakespeare, Flaminio Scala publishing a volume of fifty dramas in 1611, twelve years before the First Folio. Although an improvised form, with text of relatively little importance, the *Commedia*, in actual performance, is thought to have been at least sixty years older than Scala's publications. The form was variously named in retrospect and there are diverse earlier publications by Cecchi and Beolco that also are formative of the genre, if not actually *Commedia dell' arte*. In their plays both writers carry roles from one play to another, enhancing the facility for extemporising, as in *Commedia*, although differing the situations.

The *Commedia* is then manufacturing a set of 'archetypes' defined, as were the gods of mythology, by binary or polar oppositions and representations, which once established with their audience, and utilising established familiarity, allowed individual actors an almost infinite variety of elaboration on stage and hence longevity.

The restriction of role maintenance, which allowed such identification of actor with role, and encouraged elaborate

improvisation, limited the number of personæ who could be presented within a play.[4] Hence it reduced the scope and scale of productions while enhancing their flexibility and responsiveness. There is a tradition of similarly masked stock characterisation in the popular Roman Theatre form of *Atellanæ*,[5] renowned for its close-fitting masks and for its satirical brevity and topical response to political situations and public figures.[6] It's stock characters are familiar forms reflected not just in *Commedia* but in all farce from Plautus to Ben Travers (and strongly influencing forms as diverse as opera and circus): *Pappus* the old fool, *Manducus* the glutton or ogre, and *Bucco* (fat cheeks) the intriguing and 'cheeky' servant.

These traditions of Greek and Roman theatre survived and were available, and even maintained popularity, despite persistent church suppression; for although the church opposed the licence of pagan writers, by maintaining and emphasising latin scholarship, it constantly presented its intelligentsia with the means and method for its rediscovery.[7]

With the *Commedia dell' arte* the plot outline, or scenario, was not fixed or permanent enough even to be memorised, as in *Atellanæ*, but was written up in the wings for the actors to study as they prepared their scenes. A typical opening for a scene from Scala's *Il teatro delle favole rappresentative* is written down only as,

> OLIVETTA: sent by Flaminia to speak to Isabella about Orazio:
>
> *at this*
>
> PEDROLINO: from Isabella's house, learns from Olivetta how she has come to talk to Isabella on Orazio's and the Capitano's account. Pedrolino sends her indoors saying she should leave everything in his hands: she goes in and he

remains.

(Flaminio Scala, from *The World of Harlequin,* p. 24.)

The parts would be developed to the extent that the actors would prepare *lazzi* - stage business of dialogues, gags or tirades suitable for bending to several situations that arose. Dario Fo draws attention to this seldom emphasised professionalism of one of the celebrated *Commedia* actresses, Isabella Andreine, in *The Tricks of the Trade;*[8] she had apparently published a series of long passionate and amusing monologues for 'a woman in love, expressing contempt, jealousy, spite, desire or despair'. In this sense the actors were not on such a tightrope of improvised theatre and creativity as is sometimes suggested, but they could build up over many performances, and in various manipulations (qualified by the response of the audience) a roundness and depth of unique characterisation which in performance belied any simplistic categorisation or stereotyping.

Drama presents such a short time to develop or analyse a personality, at most a few hundred lines and seldom more than two or three situations that dramatists, compared to novelists for example, have crudely short and small allotments of space and time to present the illusion that there is another self, as human and complete as we ourselves, there, before us on the stage. The *Commedia* engages this problem, giving the role much greater scale and range by retaining the name and role characteristics, dress and of course the mask in some cases. They maintain their character identity beyond more plot permutations than a real human could ever realistically experience. So Pantalone is always old, a merchant, easily duped and irascible, sometimes he is a widower with two sons, one worldly one studious, and

sometimes he has only a wayward daughter, Isabella (who on other occasions, may, instead, be his young wife while he is then the philanderer).

Extending the range of both the time and the space involved in the building of a character must deepen and enrich its perception, if only in terms of the greater time they are before us. It will also involve the vivifying possibility of actions out of character, such as the occasional surprising response that breaks the stereotypical set or norm of the character's *mask*, as a category. Breaking associations that typify a persona, gives the suggestion of a choosing, conscious individual responding within the type. This is a similar sort of process to the generation of 'stars' whose personalities are beyond the role and qualify all viewing of it. Victorian melodrama and popular theatre provide an example of this; the stock nature of the character never varies and is rather flat in each individual performance, but builds over a sequence of performances a sense of character, albeit attached in that case to the actor, not the role.[illegible] Such a history will endow him or her with a persona or stardom beyond the stage, although constructed on it; the flatness of any one performance being rounded and extended by subsequent appearances. This is an 'accumulative' characterisation, like the gradual building of soap opera roles, giving them an accumulating density of character if not depth and is surely of the same nature and construction as the characters of film 'stars' such as John Wayne or Mae West. The stardom of these *characters* means the success of a persona, that as with the success of a Pantalone or a Scapino, has plots contrived for it or tailored to it.

Nicoll raises this point regarding Falstaff in discussing this build up of characterisation:

> If the story is true that Queen Elizabeth asked Shakespeare to show her Falstaff in love and thus brought *The Merry Wives of Windsor* into being, she was seeking precisely what the *Commedia dell' arte* gave to its audiences.
>
> (Nicoll, *The World of Harlequin,* p.24.)

Falstaff had already appeared in two plays but in only one role, which Nicoll refers to as really being one long play of ten acts. His appearance in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is certainly a change of role for him and extends his lines and the range of his situations, but contrary to Nicoll's contention it does not really add any depth to the reality of Falstaff. The play may or may not have been completed in ten days, as legend suggests, but its Falstaff seems more like a Sir Toby Belch than the 'hill of flesh' from the 'long play' of Henry IV. Shakespeare had in those two plays already encapsulated all the reality and development that was needed to give Falstaff life: enough contrariness and surprise to convince us of an inner life and consciousness, and enough presumably for the Queen's legendary request to have had some credence. In this sense perhaps the reality of a Pantalone or a Harlequin comes only out of the haphazard variations of character that manifest when different writers present their versions behind a consistent name, mask and costume?

The nature of the physical mask is important in that it gives identity in terms of visual recognition and continuity to the role, not the actor; and one that is valuable in establishing immediate differentiation between the personæ. It is a 'type' or an impression that is being conveyed rapidly to the audience, with the recognition and valence of a being 'like' the ones in their world, but not a

unique individual, more of a local, intellectual, or emotional characterisation. Here it is distinctly a category to think with. The notoriety and 'stardom' is here residing with the mask and the costume; it becomes purely a signifier and allows the audience, and presumably the actor, to distinguish between the role and the actor playing it.

The four essential masks in the *Commedia*, the two old men, and the two *zanni* or servants were half masks and came down over the face covering the cheeks but leaving the chin and the mouth free. They were made of papier-mâché or sized leather, and there is a tradition of some of them having hollows and even brass strips behind the cheeks and around the mouth parts to amplify, or perhaps, just to alter the voice of the actor. This function links the use of the mask to the original meaning of *persona* - the sounding through of the classic theatre, and of course to the ritual use of masks to imitate the gods and to impress and to terrify with size and volume.[10] Here Nicoll quotes Jaques Copeau:

> The actor who performs under a mask receives from this papier-mâché object the reality of his part. He is controlled by it and has to obey it unreservedly [...] It is not only his face that has changed, it is all his personality, it is the very nature of his reactions, so that he experiences emotions he could neither have felt nor feigned without its aid. If he is a dancer, the whole style of his dance, if he is an actor, the very tones of his voice, will be dictated by this mask - the Lain 'persona' - a being, without life till he adopts it, which comes from without to seize upon him and proceeds to substitute itself for him. (Ibid., p. 41.)

The fabricated mask is amplifying and distorting human qualities to the level of caricature, triggering an exaggerated response, obviously not only in the actor, but also in the audience. The

instinctive recognition is not one of the order of Jung's 'archetypal figures', or of Freud's 'archaic remnants' (ch. 1, p. 16), or rather it need not be, although it may trigger such a response. What is important for the audience is, even if it is only a stereotype, that it is an obvious abstraction or symbolic representation to the audience, a visitor from another realm completely, a visitor treated by its colleagues, in the context of the play as an ordinary and commonplace being, engaged in the same processes as they. In seeing a 'Mask' we know, generally, how it will behave, as does the actor in the above quotation. Perhaps more telling, we know how it will not behave, what is outside its character. It is essentially an image, any words involved being secondary, accent and vocalisation being more evocative of the caricature to the extent that they build such super-real images for us.

The impact of the mask immediately suggests that the performance is unreal, that is not dealing with everyday people but with situations, generalities; it is the dramatic equivalent of the folktale's 'Once upon a time', that is completely outside of time, in the realm of the Universal. And if we are not actually dealing with the gods as we would in ritual, then we are dealing with similar images of instinctive, that is non-individual, influences and the knots that get woven around human nature at any stage of development involving its expression in a social setting.

The oldest known record of a human wearing a mask in ritual, to date, is probably that of the cave painting of *Les Trois Frères* discovered in 1914, on the French side of the Pyrenees. More specifically, within this group, it is the figure termed 'the

sorcerer', this figure is dancing and carrying no weapons, as opposed to the hunting posture of other masked figures. The anthropological function of such masking, whether to hunt or as hunting rite, is usually considered, and attested in studies of such use in primitive tribes today (He is taboo. He is a conduit of divine power [...] he is a *manifestation* of the god (*Primitive Mythology*, p.311)) to override taboos; the disguising and the imitation being to replicate the special divinity of the given species, terrain or function. The 'sorcerer' of *Les Trois Frères*, in that sense, represents several species, the bushy tail belonging to no known species of antlered stock but to a wild horse or wolf, and the position of the sexual organ probably that of a feline. It suggests that he is dressed for ritual, a dance about hunting rather than hunting; a carbon-dated ritual, 30,000 years old.

The masking of human beings, by reducing their individual features and facial expressions, makes them less than a real individual. They become an analogue or metaphor for an aspect of individual humanity; in this simple sense are they super-real and universal. The masked drama, rite or play, is in this manner dealing with much less than reality, it is focussing only on one aspect; it is, as most primitive artforms tend to be, highly abstract and stylised, often strongly repetitious and completely unrealistic; not meaning to imitate life but to symbolise it. The plot-forms, as with the folktale examined earlier via Propp and Lévi-Strauss, are blatantly symbolic, linear and therefore more readily analysed. Greater realism comes with greater complexity of representation, and is a much more advanced stage of development and involves much more

complex structures of relationships. Masked drama, as in India, Greece and Japan is mythological drama, a very symbolic and overtly analogous representation of life, displaced to an abstract zone of limited and restrained reference. These signifiers fragment into the opposed binary and mundane types of comedy and are the symbolic *masks* as forms, and patterns of citizenship; and although prescribed loosely, they are still prescribed.

Theatrically the *Commedia* is giving us immediately recognisable roles, *masks* that link us with citizenry's archaic functions and the deepest psychological aspects of our human nature. The plot is normative, it has to be as the characters are only defined by the gender, age and hierarchical status of their role, which conditions so very much of what will be presented, and what can be received by the audience.

When we come to Shakespeare, we can see he uses the same basic forms even to having a 'lean and slippered pantaloon', and as discussed earlier, his plots are of the same forms and contain the same archetypal moulds. The distinction comes in the vast extent of his reference and its elaboration and contradiction which give individual depth and choice to the roles. Generally the caricature nature of these types, whether crudely represented for humour, as in Jonson, or forcefully and inexorably for tragedy, as in Tourneur or Webster, put forward, as symbols, the ritualised categories embodying only the claims and expectations of a society, a *mask* in the guise of an individual. It is always in opposition to an individual's needs or failings, depending on the writer's viewpoint, but always this tension is present. Usually only one central character, a Vindice in Tourner,

or a Duchess in Webster, will contain tension within their character and situation, or demonstrate such depth, or *proairesis* in consideration and choosing. Rarely are there two who will show as much elaborate sarcasm as Philostrate (ch. 7, p. 148), or the droll pedantry of Starveling as 'Moonshine':

STARVELING	This lantern doth the hornéd moon present.
DEMETRIUS	He should have worn the horns on his head.
THESEUS	He is no crescent, and his horns are invisible within the circumference.
STARVELING	This lantern doth the hornéd moon present; Myself the man i'th'moon do seem to be.
THESEUS	This is the greatest error of all the rest; the man should be put into the lantern. How is it else the man i'th'moon?
DEMETRIUS	He dares not come there, for the candle. For you see it is already in snuff.
HIPPOLYTA	I am weary of this moon. Would he would change.
THESEUS	It appears by this small light of discretion that he is in the wane. But yet in courtesy, in all reason, we must stay the time.
LYSANDER	Proceed, Moon.
STARVELING	All that I have to say is to tell you that the lantern is the moon, I am the man i'th'moon, this thorn bush my thorn bush, and this dog my dog.'

[V. i. 233-253.]

The dramatic tension in the Elizabethan play comes of the clash between the unique personal response and the formal distinctions of that society, the categories it will allow (perhaps we should call these the rites of differentiation, rather than of passage). So the doubling or binary devices of the plot straddle the various distinctions to display them both in contrast and concord; youth versus age, male versus female, masters versus servants.

Shakespeare's plots and roles appear to be similar to the renaissance norm of rediscovered classical types and forms, as they deal with the same subject, but his plots have far more complex and reflective relations and his personæ far greater range of response and depth of reference.

T.S.Eliot wrote of William Blake regarding this same topic of depth of reference:

> The local divinities of Italy were not wholly exterminated by Christianity, and they were not reduced to the dwarfish fate that fell upon our trolls and pixies [...] What his genius required and what it sadly lacked, was a framework of accepted and traditional ideas which would have prevented him from indulging in a philosophy of his own, and concentrated his attention upon the problems of the poet [...] The fault is perhaps not with Blake himself, but with the environment which failed to provide what such a poet needed; perhaps the circumstances compelled him to fabricate, perhaps the poet required the philosopher and mythologist.
>
> (T.S.Eliot, 'The Sacred Wood', 1920.)[11]

Shakespeare, some two hundred years before Blake and still on the cusp of 'the divorce with Rome', as Eliot puts it, still having his roots in the Latin traditions of classical mythology, and of classical theatre, including some rumour at least of the Italian comedy, was to produce in *The Dream* a synthesis not only of those three Roman forms, but also of our own dwarfish trolls and pixies (that Eliot considered 'perhaps, no great loss in themselves').

In doing this, Shakespeare could assume a shared metaphorical language whether of folklore or classicism, as openly accessible to his audience, and between which he could move easily. By Blake's time, I think Eliot was right, both of these vocabularies and significant insights had been lost.

In terms of a possible universal culture Donald. E. Brown is

quoted in Steven Pinker's *The Language Instinct* (pp.412-4) as inspired by Chomsky's Universal Grammar into coming up with a ethnologists description of a 'Universal People'), noting patterns underlying the behaviour of all documented human cultures (*Human Universals*, New York 1991). Pinker quotes it in full but what is important in this discussion is its obvious embodiment in mythology. Here is one paragraph covering some of the traits involving human interactions rather than skills:

> Status and prestige, both assigned (by kinship, age, sex) and achieved. Some degree of economic inequality,. Division of labour by sex and age. More child care by women. More aggression and violence by men. Acknowledgement of differentiation of male and female natures. Domination by men in the public political sphere. Exchange of labor, goods and services. Reciprocity including retaliation. Gifts. Social reasoning. Government, in the sense of binding collective decisions about public affairs. Leaders, almost always non dictatorial, perhaps ephemeral. Laws, rights, and obligations, including laws against violence, rape and murder. Punishment. Conflict, which is deplored. Rape. Seeking of redress for wrongs. In group/out group conflicts. Property. Inheritance of property. Sense of right and wrong. Envy.

This is a small section from what is recorded as present in *all* cultures, the similarities to plot-forms of classical, biblical or folklore narratives are obvious. By polarising any of these topics we have a conflict, a drama or simply a discussion. The *Collected Works* must cover most of these topics including the ones not reproduced here.[12] It is startling how many are interwoven into *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

NOTES

1 Arnold Wesker, 'Note to actors', *The Wesker Trilogy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Plays, 1966), p. 7.

2 Allardyce Nicoll, *The World of Harlequin* (1963; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 40.

3 These processes are strikingly similar to the 'parallelisms, oppositions' and 'inversions' of Lévi-Strauss, structures 'rooted in the human brain' as Terry Eagleton describes them (p. 109); and in the same sense uses Saussure (p. 96) to underpin difference in the signifiers (*character* in this instance) in the elaborate sentence of the plot. (Eagleton, *Literary Theory: an Introduction.*)

4 The *Commedia dell' arte* company numbered about twelve, similar to the Lord Chamberlain's Men, but were much more limited in that this dictated a limit to the personae of their plays, in that, unlike Shakespeare's company, the players did not double their roles. The actors of the *Commedia* troupe would be fixed in a role or persona that they would play through many productions and often their entire professional careers; limiting the number of roles directly to the number of actors in the troupe. Such doubling up of roles meant that, for instance, in *The Dream* where Titania and Oberon need never be on stage together with Hippolyta and Theseus, this enables these roles to be so doubled and so linked. Similarly the six mechanicals are never in a scene with the fairies, with the exception of Puck, who serves Oberon as Philostrate (who never shares a scene with Puck) serves Theseus, enabling them to double and be linked, to quite humorous effect. So that if Egeus doubles with a mechanical also (Peter Quince for example, in deference to age), then it is possible to cover the

to cover the twenty one roles of *The Dream* with twelve actors.

5 These characters were also popular in Greek farces of the same time (third Century B.C.) performed in southern Italy. None of these plays, called Phylax plays, survive, but there are plenty of vase paintings showing Phylax actors in scenes from them.

(K. McLeish, *The Roman Comedy*, p. 14.)

6 Hamlet makes a similar point about the players responding, probably in mimicry, to the idiosyncrasies of the well known:

HAMLET Let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of our time. After your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.

Hamlet (II ii 536.)

7 The theory of early sixteenth-century humanists like Erasmus and John Colet (founder of St Paul's, the model grammar school) was that the dissemination of the wisdom of the classics would produce new generations of worthy public servants. By the end of the century, the practice looked more complicated. The rigorously rhetorical basis of the educational system made its products gifted in the writing and speaking of polished Latin and English, but a stylish man was not necessarily an embodiment of civic virtue.

(J. Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid*, p. 32.)

8 Dario Fo, *The Tricks of the Trade* (London: Methuen Drama, 1994), p. 9.

9 The effect is very similar to the *Commedia* in the generation of juvenile and character types:

After 1809, Kemble employed the equivalent of three troupes, one for serious drama, one for comedy, and one for music and dance. Thereafter, the trend in large companies was to hire actors who were outstanding in a limited range, whereas diversity was achieved because each troupe included so many specialized performers.

(O. G. Brocklett, *History of the Theatre*, p. 412.)

10 In antiquity it was usual for vast audiences of up to 80,000 to view performances, involving the large spaces and distances of open

air stadia. This is a completely different form of theatre to even the largest indoor auditoria, which rarely seat over 3,000, and usually well below 1000. The mask, covering the whole head and usually made of wood, may have been necessary to help the voice carry. It would also visually amplify and demonstrate the predominant, albeit fixed, expression on the features. In considering the shapes of the masks (large noses, whiskers, prominent brow ridges and lips), we are in the realm of the caricature of gender and age differentiation (see ch. 4). The mechanism of the mask, must, by its very substance and despite all refinements of gesture, distance us from its role. It must be crude and limited, if not actually incapable of response compared with a face (however generously made up). This restricts its human appeal and constantly challenges our ability to identify with its humanity, and thus designates the masks, particularly in their use by the *Commedia* essentially for stereotyping. The *Commedia* worked to small theatre audiences, rarely outdoors, amplification was not a necessity; but the alteration or super-real quality of the mask would have heightened the unreal and intense quality of its 'personality'.

11 T.S.Eliot, 'The Sacred Wood', 1920, *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, ed. M. Bottrall (London: Macmillan, 1970), p.9.

12 Such as:

> Poetry with repetition of linguistic elements and three second lines separated by pauses.
>
> (S.Pinker, *The Language Instinct*, p.413.)

SECTION III. THE ARCHETYPES AND THE DREAM

CHAPTER 9.

> To maintain as I have done, that the permutability of contents is not arbitrary amounts to saying that, if the analysis is carried to a sufficiently deep level, behind diversity we will discover constancy.
>
> (Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structure and Form; Reflections on a Work by Vladimir Propp.*)

> HIPPOLYTA But all the story of the night told over,
> And all their minds transfigured so together,
> More witnesseth than fancy's images,
> And grows to something of great constancy;
> But howsoever, strange and admirable.
>
> [V.1.23.]

THE PLOT OF THE DREAM

If we view the plot of *The Dream* in terms of Vladimir Propp's analysis of the archetypal plot form drawn from his work on folktales, then it can readily help us to see the nature of the complexities that Shakespeare brings to his play and helps us to discern the nature of this underlying constancy. This is not to suggest that *The Dream* is, or has, the same form as a folktale, although it does have many folktale elements that Shakespeare is deliberately drawing our attention to (particularly its choice and presentation of the subject matter of courtship and marriage). Rather it is to apply Propp's clear role and plot functions (ch. 6, pp. 124-5) as universals, and to

see how consistent and informative they are when applied to more complex narrative. For if Shakespeare is reflecting and mixing fairies, such as Oberon and Puck, with grand personages of classical mythology, such as Theseus and Hippolyta, then he is deliberately implying an identification of role and plot that displays and discusses universals. Then it is also by such complexity of reflection of these roles and plots that he gives depth of characterisation and meaning; thereby taking the subject and the play far beyond the realm of folktale.[1] The personæ of *The Dream* are such universals for his audience that Shakespeare can use them to explore the nature of courtship and marriage at several levels: instinctive, affective and intellectual. Propp's terms of analysis can then be applied to such usage to point out the layers and levels of this complexity.

Taking Propp's general conclusion first, that the tale 'develops from an act of injury or lack, through certain mediating functions, to an eventual wedding or other concluding (or extricating) functions', then this obviously applies to *The Dream* as well as to most of the summer folk plays recorded in Cawte, Helm and Peacock, (*English Ritual Drama*, quoted in ch.5, p.104). Marriage represents a very potent ritualistic image of order and fertility, or 'luck' as the authors considered this concept of renewal and regeneration descended into, as the rituals lost their meaning and societies became less agricultural. If we are to stretch the marriage concept to one of male and female conjoining, then not only in the Lévi-Strauss abstract and symbolic sense, but in a more general sense, there is a mass of narratives that state, or suggest, that the resolution to diverse ranges of plot

quandaries and quests is in mating of some form.

The psychologists Freud and Bettelheim (ch.6, pp.131-3) use the wedding as a goal, or reward, as a clear indication of the pre-adolescent level of the folktale. With the folk play, knowing the audience and reasoning backwards, then the complexity of the plot form (that is the circumlocutions that it conducts us through) is what raises the catchment age of its audience. For as we have said earlier, most stories, films, books and songs are directed to the same goal but what they have to a greater or lesser degree is complexity. The summer folk plays are simplistically direct, with only a few clearly stated impediments to matrimony; most of which are overcome not by personal effort, although fortitude is endorsed, but by magical means or companions. Luck is celebrated in these plots and trust rewarded, whether Christian or pagan, and, whether the gods are local or classical, it is by their intercedence and the mysteries that they have prepared for us that humans succeed or fail[2]. The drive of the folktale is that it is not by our own efforts alone that a good marriage can be effected. 'Marriage is made in heaven', would be a general Christian expression of this same attitude but it is expressed by St Paul as a 'mystery', presumably not openly or consciously understood by the Theseii, Demetrii or Lysandrerii of this world:

> That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.
>
> Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, not of the princes of this world, that come to nought:
>
> But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden

> wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:
>
> (1 Corinthians 2.7 King James Version.)

This passage, from the same epistle which contains St Paul's whole chapter of rather condescending views on marriage - 'to avoid fornication' (1 Corinthians 7.) - leads right onto the section Shakespeare will have Bottom allude to, when he misquotes it as he returns confused to his original human nature.

> The eye hath not seen and the ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for him that love him.
>
> (1 Corinthians 2.9)

> BOTTOM The eye of man has not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive nor his heart to report what my dream was.
>
> [IV.i.210.]

That Shakespeare could so recognise the force and ubiquity of this attitude and subject matter and re-join the distinct classical and folk strata so seamlessly is one of the major contributions of *The Dream* (mentioned by Kott, Frye and Wells and the cornerstone of David Young's argument in *Something of Great Constancy*). It is certainly the root of its harmony and the mysterious charm of its atmosphere symbolising a benign and structured fate or nature, shaping the lives of the players.

The complexity of the plot is seen very clearly if we consider the functional roles that Propp distinguished: *villain* (or antagonist), *father* (or despatcher), *donor* (giver of the magical gift), *helper*, *princess* (or sought after person or object of the quest), *hero*, *false hero* (or usurper, or anti-hero) etc. and try to

apply them to the drama. Here the limited form of the sample Propp analysed is revealed in the difficulty of simple application of roles to *dramatis personæ*. The celebrated roundness of Shakespeare's characters is expressed in the multiplicity of functions each persona takes. If we take for example the role of Egeus, one of the most simply presented of the characters; he is 'the father', certainly the natural father of Hermia, but also performs the function of that role, albeit cruelly, in protecting her from her own 'stubborn harshness'. Herewith he fulfills his secondary father function, according to Propp, that of the dispatcher, as it is he, who by his complaint to Theseus, triggers the play into action and literally sets her and Lysander, and hence Demetrius and then Helen, on their way into the wood.

He is by virtue of this cruelty also the villain of the piece, who, in his 'antagonism' to the lovers, Hermia and Lysander, generates the injury or lack that creates the initial line of action of the play.

So this *Pantalone* or ancient is wearing at least two masks, although his fatherliness seems distinctly subservient to his villainy; his concern for Hermia being scantily represented in his speech. He is in that way far more of a 'father', in both of Propp's functional senses to Demetrius - in that he is his patron and represents him to Theseus, but also despatches him on the quest for Hermia's love. His statements to the Duke in the early lines of the first act frame this simple contradiction and therefore the direct action of this stratum of the drama:

EGEUS Stand forth, Demetrius! My noble lord,

This man hath my consent to marry her.
Stand forth Lysander! - And my gracious Duke,
This man hath bewitched the bosom of my child.

[I.i.24.]

But this is only one line of action, and only his point of view. We can also place Theseus and Egeus as the two *magnificenti* in this drama of love's unsmooth path, for there is the hint of a certain age that has been mentioned earlier (see chapter 8 in the context of linking Theseus role with the late marriage of the Earl of Derby), extant in Theseus' passing concern for the balance of his virility:

THESEUS Now fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace. Four happy days bring in
Another moon - but O, methinks how slow
This old moon wanes! She lingers my desires,
Like to a stepdame or a dowager
Long withering out a young man's revenue.

[I.i.6.]

Seeing these two in that light would give us another layer of action in this narrative and one more level of its meaning. Propp's roles have indicated two functions that describe Egeus; Theseus in the same way fits several more. In terms of Propp's analysis, *The Dream* confronts us with many plots, and each of its characters is faceted with role functions of inter-relations. This does not make Propp's terms inapplicable; the complexity of the play does not defeat them, as long as we see that Shakespeare's plot is tiered, and each of his characters usually has several masks in relation to others' characters and masks. The thrust of the problem is in cataloguing the number of them.

Theseus, as well as pontificating on the desires of Hermia, is

himself a lover whose 'desires' are also measured, restrained and constrained by the social form, a proposed marriage again in his case, the celebration of which and the preparation for which acts as the framing cause of the whole play. So even the Duke, though head of the Athenian hierarchy and embodiment of the social order, still waits upon the law, and suffers the postponement and regulation of desire. Shakespeare is not only complicating the identity of everyone by multiplying the roles that each plays in relation to others, but in this way he is also deepening the significance and meaning of the form, by, to paraphrase Lévi-Strauss in the heading to this chapter, reflecting the meaning of the construction at every level and in every relation described.

This meaning we can qualify much further than the general consideration of Lévi-Strauss's 'movement from the awareness of oppositions to their resolution' for Shakespeare describes in the opening lines by Theseus, quoted above, the pole positions of the particular area of opposition for our consideration, being that between natural desires and their regulation within the social order. He will subsequently generalise the problem by reflecting it at different levels, and from differing angles, all of which elaborates each; ultimately he gently reverses this problem by showing us the supremacy of the natural order over all such statements of troth and then resolves all the threads in terms of the play. In the fifth act he will re-present in parody a further ludicrous tragedy of mating; the same binary opposition is put before the newly resolved but, with the exception of the more sensitive and appreciative Theseus, uncontrite and unaware Athenians. He thus involves us as witnesses in

a meta-drama, subsuming all, includes us as observers of their unknowing and unaltered observations and gathers us into a reflective form of universal summing up.

Drawing from Lévi-Strauss's proposition 'step by step, we define a universe of the tale', analysable in pairs of oppositions interlocked within each character, which, far from constituting a single entity, forms a bundle of distinctive features. Then we can see the function that the doubling pattern of roles can play in the defining of the distinctive bundle of masks in each character. This is a device mentioned earlier in relation to its elaborate use in *Commedia dell' arte*, and by Shakespeare for straddling distinctions and for describing similarities within variation and even contradiction. If we look at these two *magnificenti* we can see that the writer is giving us two views of authority; and it is the skill of Shakespeare that we can see the reasoning behind Egeus' demands, that Hermia is letting her chemistry overrule her judgement, while we can still identify with the frustration of Hermia at not being able to choose her own husband.

Shakespeare immediately gives us a reflection point for both these views by presenting a double, Theseus, as a moderated mirror image. So we are not carried by the 'vexation' with which Egeus expresses his demands, or the extent to which he is prepared to push them, for the playwright quickly shows that he represents an extreme position. For him the 'ancient privilege of Athens' offers only two possibilities, death or compliance, to his truculent daughter Hermia. Theseus enters the area with a much more moderate language, that outlines, on her request, three prospective outcomes of her courses of

action; compliance, death *or* the single life. He is still allowing her a choice, although he stresses his ruling out of any extenuation. Theseus is directing Hermia, apparently reasonable, we feel he is not driving or pushing her and his language is a considered presentation of outcomes, as they stand in Athens.

This, is then reflected further a few moments later as Lysander enters the discussion and describes this right, and reason, from another angle, comparing himself with his double Demetrius:

> You have her father's love, Demetrius -
> Let me have Hermia's. [1.1.93-4.]

for it is in this sense only preference that drives both suits. One has the law on its side the other does not, but essentially since both lads are as 'well derived, as well possessed' as each other it is a question of individual choice; creating the disparity and hence the despair in Hermia's view:

> O hell - to choose love by another's eyes. [I.i.140.]

The lovers, of course, choose a fourth alternative not outlined by the Athenian worthies and, voting with their feet, remove themselves beyond the realm of Athens, and Theseus' and Egeus', definitions. As the *villain* Egeus is very satisfying, in that he embodies and endorses the force of the law, which we see through Hermia's eyes as acting as an extension of his power. Theseus, distanced from the actions he has outlined, is less complete a 'villain' although still fulfilling Propp's category, his reasoning tone fulfilling Shakespeare's device to make the law appear initially to be the lovers' real antagonist and concealing its endorsement, and enforcement, of Egeus' whim.

In terms of other doubling and mirroring of roles, *The Dream* presents us with eight examples of couples as sexual partners: Oberon - Titania, Theseus - Hippolyta, Hermia - Lysander, Hermia - Demetrius, Helen - Demetrius, Helen - Lysander, Titania - Bottom and of course Pyramus/Bottom - Thisbe/Flute. Coupling then, and all its possibilities, is the very essence of the play. All of these characters we have been introduced to by the end of the first act, including, via the proposed production, Pyramus and Thisbe, with the exception of the only already established marriage-like relationship of the play, that of Oberon and Titania. With regard to Propp's marriage theme, *the Dream*, is about courtship, its protagonists are engaged in making a relation, there are in that sense no established relations that can be taken for granted. Even Oberon and Titania whom we know as King and Queen of Fairy have been estranged and will be re-establishing their liaison before us:

TITANIA What, jealous Oberon? Fairy skip hence.
I have forsworn his bed and company.
OBERON Tarry rash wanton! Am not I thy lord?
TITANIA Then I must be thy lady. [II.i.61.]

These couples are mirrored and reflected to express the many nuances of the general theme of the play, the archetypal theme of comedy, the opposition and reconciliation of love and law. This is expressed magically in the play by the contrasting effect of the flowers of Cupid 'love in idleness', the mystifying potion of infatuation dispensed in the woods, and chaste Diana's flower, symbolising Theseus' regulated and rationalised realm, where love is reconciled to civic duty. These are contrasted as in the opposite forces of love and duty, *kama* and *dharma* (ch.6, p.137), typical of

comedy form. Shakespeare will go beyond this archetypical form with subtle statements that the law is itself made up of only a superior's choice or desire, and he shows us distinctly by the harmonious outcome in Act IV that the 'sharp' law and edict of Athens', unmediated by mercy, would have been woefully mistaken.

Theseus' reasoned and consistent order will be continually parodied in the Athenian mechanicals' meticulous listings and prescriptions, usually confused and convoluted; then later having shown us how inconsistent and mutable, though infinitely justifiable, personal judgement is with the lovers ready explications, it will be resolved in the saving Aristotelian 'poetic' or universal justice and order of nature that guides and weaves the natural wills and desires of beings. Hermia's statement, similar to the one already quoted, dramatically reverses the value of Theseus' reasoning and resounds its hollowness:

THESEUS (*speaking of Lysander as Demetrius' equal*) In himself he is;
But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
The other must be held the worthier.

HERMIA I would my father looked but with my eyes.

[I.i.57.]

And again Egeus states the axiom of his judgement as he parries Lysander:

EGEUS Scornful Lysander - true he has my love;
And what is mine my love shall render him;
And she is mine, and all my right of her
I do estate unto Demetrius.

[I.i.98.]

From the contentiousness of Athens, Shakespeare moves us to the

wood, at night, where he presents a very Jungian atmosphere of benign though mischievous nature shaping the designs of beings, despite themselves. It is important to notice that it is only by the change of Theseus' mind (and by Demetrius' transformation), and therefore by 'nature' in the action of Oberon and Puck, that Hermia is released from his previous edict. She has not altered her troth, and Egeus certainly has not altered his suit, but this law of Athens is overborne by an unexplained, though obviously right, act of mercy. In Aristotelian terms this is a 'poetically' just act, from the anti-poetical Duke.

In contrast to these couples there are several non-protagonists or non-suitors in the mating dance: Egeus, the 'mechanicals', the fairies, Philostrate and Puck. The fairies and the mechanicals are clearly also doubled, or mirrored, in that they contrast the mundane and practical with the aetherial and impractical. Although both groups are presented as asexual, not suffering the mating urge or making any reference to their own marriages or courtships themselves throughout the play, they do work for concupiscence, or rather they are worked by it, in the service of their masters' and mistresses' desires. They are also presented in comically contradictory modes in that the 'mechanicals,' though described in the most manual and prosaic of occupations: 'joiner', 'weaver', 'bellows mender', are shown in the most poetic and aesthetic of activities, namely the generation and performance of a romantic play; whereas the most ephemerally named Mustardseed, Peaseblossom, Moth and Cobweb engage themselves continuously at mundane chores.[3]

Both groups are the workers in their respective realms and with

their persistent obedience and reverence to their superiors, give order and everyday permanence to whims and desires. All the labours that we see either group perform are in the celebration and the service of the lovelife of their respective superiors; love here being shown to us as definitely making this world go round. With the mechanicals it is the festival play:

> QUINCE Here is the scroll of everyman's name which is thought fit through all Athens to play in our interlude before the Duke and the Duchess on his wedding day at night.
>
> [I.ii.7.]

With the fairies we see them continually at the beck and call of their monarchs, tediously facilitating the whims of the King or Queen of the Fairies, either: the tiffs of Oberon in Puck's case, or pandering to the comforts of Titania and Bottom in the case of Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed.

> TITANIA Be kind and courteous to this gentleman.
> Hop in his walks and gambol in his eyes;
> Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
> With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries.
> The honey bags steal from the humble bees,
> And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs
> And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes
> To have my love to bed and to arise;
> And pluck the wings from painted butterflies
> To fan the moonbeams from his eyes.
> Nod to him, elves, and do him curtesies.
>
> [III.i.169.]

They also reflect and double the separate courts of Athens and the wood. Shakespeare gives us a masterful Theseus, taking his consort by force as a spoil of war, wooing her with his sword, then proclaiming

and celebrating his triumph and issuing edicts and ordering his kingdom before us. Oberon, weak in contrast, has a retinue of only one 'shrewd and Knavish sprite', and is shown to us as being unable to command his Queen, resorting to subterfuge to regain her and with his realm, that of the natural world, disordered and malfunctioning in their discord.

Similarly the two masters of revels, Philostrate and Puck reflect further the light and dark kingdoms and the distinct methods of their monarchs. David Young (*Something of Great Constancy*, pp. 99-100) picks up the mirroring of these two realms, emphasising the success of Theseus 'as representative of daylight and right reason [...] and masculine will', and the failure of Oberon 'as king of darkness and fantasy', but he fails to recognise the primacy of Titania as the spirit of the whole instinct and by whose manipulation, by Oberon and via Puck, of desire or infatuation, all are transformed. If Theseus and Egeus are the daylight masculine laws of Athens, then Oberon is the manipulator of the dark wood wherein all the metamorphoses take place and by this influence we are shown whose is the greater power. The power itself, nature as phasic moon, dark wood and the pull of desire, is personified in Titania; she is the force of seasons and fertility itself.

The actions of the night hold sway in Theseus, and despite him bringing Egeus, the dawn sun and all the pomp and horns of Athens with him, he abandons his unsuitable ruling and endorses the midsummer night's work. As Hippolyta intimates it is the night, the unconscious not the conscious which sorts the lovers into couples; it is Oberon who, by his manipulation or transforming of desire, changes Demetrius'

heart and so surely ultimately brings about the happy outcome. It is the hearing of this change of heart that turns Theseus' against Egeus' suit and reverses the Athenian edict, that had initiated all the subsequent action of the lovers plots:

DEMETRIUS And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
The object and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is only Helena. To her my lord,
Was I betrothed ere I saw Hermia;
But like a sickness I did loath this food.
But as in health come to my natural taste,
Now I do wish it, love it, long for it,
and will for evermore be true to it.

THESEUS Fair lovers you are fortunately met.
Of this discourse we more will her anon.
Egeus I will overbear your will;
For in the temple by and by with us
These couples shall eternally be knit.

[V.i.180.]

An edict, its worth remembering:

THESEUS Which by no means we may extenuate. [I.i.120.]

Puck is used by Oberon to change the very way that beings apprehend each other and consequently the judgements that they then make. He is an English country cupid, synonymous with desire, master of Innate Response Mechanisms and as his folklore origins reveal his puckery being very close to fuckery with all the metamorphosis and misapprehension that that passion can bring. His most obvious double is Philostrate, who as Master of the Revels is also a changer of minds in his heraldic function of describer and proclaimer:

THESEUS Go Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments,

Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth.
[I.i.14.]

And so his action is also the transformation or metamorphosis of beings - the populace, his listeners - albeit only their affections, and only with the magic cultural artifact of words. Shakespeare uses this same powerful analogy in *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*, applying it to the compelling magic of the play of Hamlet, and the spellbinding words of Prospero. It is the very magic that the play itself works on its listeners, the language of the play transforming the audience, reflecting further on the magic of a playwright's art. Even so such hermeneutics can not persuade the self-aware Theseus against his will, as we are clearly shown, when he decides he is going to hear Peter Quince's play despite Philostrate's scathing preview. The importance of simple and direct feelings, perceptible despite the sarcastic herald, are still valued and preferred by Theseus.

THESEUS I will hear that play,
For never anything can be amiss
When simpleness and duty tender it. [V.i.91.]

Whereupon, we as audience then watch a restatement of the matter of the play, in the company of protagonists who refuse to grant any significance, or relevance to themselves, of any of its action. This mirroring of mirroring, or meta-drama, is the ultimate doubling device, involving us as viewer in the metaphor the playwright describes. The proximity of the plot of *Pyramus and Thisbe* to *Romeo and Juliet* adds a further dimension to this meta-drama, raising queries as to which was written first and hence which reflects on which.

The doubling and mirrorings of the plot are the means whereby we

can move from Propp's direct and simple analysis of folktales to the complexity of a drama like *The Dream*, each persona having a plot in terms of a motivation or *treasure*, an objective for which they strive in relation to each other. This is so true of *The Dream* that it is often described as having no central character, or group of characters, with whom we identify. Its mirrorings do not limit, or direct our attention, to any one focus, and reflect as well in all directions and thus we cannot readily distinguish between plot and sub-plot, main or subsidiary characters. It is hard for example to distinguish only one central character: Titania personifies desire and is one main contender as she does undergo dramatic change, but but then so does Theseus, he is much less strident in the last act and it is his marriage and his choices that frame the whole of the play. Bottom too undergoes his dramatic translation but it is not his play either. That the play has no one central character feels to be an accomplishment that is achieved out of abundance rather than any dearth of characterisation, unifying the action rather than diffusing it. All the characters are composed, then recomposed by doubling, to reflect aspects of the 'universe of the tale'.

To return to Egeus, whom we have already linked with Theseus as a *magnificento*, we can also see that he stands significantly alone as the unremitting villain of the piece. He is also notably the only parent amongst the *dramatis personæ*. Parenthood is strangely unrepresented in the play; the mother of the changeling boy does not survive his birth, Hermia's mother goes unmentioned, which leaves Egeus to present a lonely image of half a couple at the winter of life; in contrast to the lusty summer of love and marriage in the

rest of the play. If he is seen in this way to mirror all the other couples, as some form of future reference point of relation or lack of it, then he adds a further mask as qualification to all others and acts as a *memento mori* to the relationships engendered before us. He hardly speaks but out of bitterness towards the lovers and to invoke the letter of the law to enforce his will, and neither does he progress or mellow, even in his last speech:

EGEUS Enough, enough - my lord, you have enough!
I beg the law, the law upon his head.
[IV. i. 153.]

And since it is marriage and its blessings that is the overt subject of the play, then it is mating, and reproduction, or parenthood, that is the tacit mainspring of the plot. If so, it seems strange that Shakespeare should present so singular and negative a representative of it. The reference point of Egeus as parent, and as half a relation, or as the end of a relation, suggests that we are being presented in his repressive opposition, with the dialectical position of spent parenthood, and a bitter residue of coupling. If this is reflected back on the couples it highlights other interesting aspects such as, what kind of parents will the other Athenians make? What types of old couples would they become? Which is not quite to ask 'How Many Children had Lady Macbeth' in this context, for Shakespeare implies the patterns of future partnership, and parenting, amongst the couples: it is indicated in Theseus' gentler patronage of Hermia, and in Lysander's of Helena (before Puck's ministrations); it is demonstrated in Hippolyta's equivalence, as in her several consciously understated contradictions, and corrections, of her intended's pronouncements:

THESEUS Go bring them in; and take your places ladies.
Exit Philostrate.
HIPPOLYTA I love not to see wretchedness o'charged,
And duty in his service perishing.
THESEUS Why gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.
HIPPOLYTA He says they can do nothing in this kind.
THESEUS The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
[V.i.89.]

Theirs is a mature and deliberate involvement, there is no unconscious falling in love here, or need of infatuating eyedrops, no 'love in idleness' for this is a working and purposeful relation already forged, and presumably tested, in adversity before the play began:

THESEUS Hippolyta, I wooed thee with my sword,
And won thy love doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key: [I.i.18.]

By coupling and comparing the two sets of young lovers and how each responds to the adversity they encounter, we can see several distinctions being made by the playwright - within their similarities. Often these distinctions are overlooked in that Shakespeare wants us to see the obvious similarities that the 'love juice' and its mistakings and the lovers constant descriptions deny. Young stresses the echoes in their speeches that give the 'liknesses' to all the couples, and Renè Girard[4] similarly highlights the 'crisis of identity' that the night in the wood creates:

HERMIA Am I not Hermia? Are you not Lysander?
[III.ii.273.]

Similarity, or interchangeability, in these adolescents, is a general and obvious statement that the playwright is making, but he is also illuminating the differences, differences that are directly

important in understanding the ultimate outcomes of the night and its 'great constancy'. The couples will be sorted out before us and the incongruency of certain matches is the source of much of the humour in the play, and it is the commanding image of the play in the conjunction of the donkey and the fairy queen. The two Athenian girls are examples of different meanings of 'love'. Both remain true in their attachments, but respond very differently to rejection. Helena, we are told, dotes on Demetrius, and we see her fawn at his feet:

HELENA I am your spaniel; and Demetrius
The more you beat me I will fawn on you.
Use me but as your spaniel: spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me,; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love -
And yet a place of high respect with me -
Than to be used as you use your dog?

[II.i.210.]

There is stronger mettle in Hermia, and we could never imagine her speaking in that way, she responds much more firmly and directly to her rejection by Lysander, with an anger mostly directed towards her supposed rival Helena than at him. Hermia and Lysander are fallers in love in the sense of being swept into their relation, in that it is unchosen; it is very unlike the deliberate relation between Theseus and Hippolyta. We are given no reason for their love, or shown any signs that they control and direct it, but we do see them considering the nature of it and love in general; and expecting to be tested and to be found constant:

HERMIA If then true lovers have been ever crossed
It stands as an edict in destiny.
Then let us teach our trial patience,

> Because it is a customary cross,
> And due to love as thoughts, and dreams, and
> sighs,
> Wishes and tears - poor fancy's followers.
> [I.i.156.]

Which is as intelligent and complete a nutshell description of the whole play as we are given, and the advocation of 'patience' certainly as good a moral as I can think of for *Pyramus and Thisbe*. So theirs is a reasoned and conscious involvement; we watch them engage each other in this way, and although less so than the Duke and Duchess, we are shown them in considered relation, which is a view we never see of Helena and Demetrius.

Both Lysander and Demetrius suffer redirection, via Puck, and both spend many lines insulting the ladies whom they will end up married to. But even here, Shakespeare makes distinctions between them, we are told that Demetrius has already altered his affections (from Helena and towards Hermia) before the action of the play has started. We are not told why; perhaps it was his preferment by Egeus, the inference is there, although Shakespeare gives no indication that there is any monetary gain involved. Both he and Helena, and their relationship, are curtly, but aptly, introduced to us by Lysander:

> Demetrius I'll vouch it to his head -
> Made love to Nadar's daughter, Helena,
> And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,
> Devotedly dotes, dotes in idolatry
> Upon this spotted and inconstant man. [I.i.110.]

All of which goes to suggest that they are the greatest fallers in love, theirs being the less deliberate and more compelled relation.

The echoing closeness of 'dotes in idolatry' acting on Helena and 'love in idleness' acting on Demetrius places infatuation, desire or Puckery as the only bond between them.

Marilyn French describes 'The inconstancy of Demetrius and the enchanted Lysander as an expression of the ambivalence of love'[5] while stressing their similar mutability, but Lysander is presented as constant and loving - until Puck distracts him; but even then, in the throes of infatuation with Helena, he extends a chivalry towards Hermia implying a real affection, an affection that Demetrius had failed to demonstrate towards Helena, in his rejection of her, earlier. Compare:

> LYSANDER What? Should I hurt her, strike her, kill her
> dead? Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.
> [III.ii.270.]

to

> DEMETRIUS I will not stay thy questions. Let me go;
> Or if you follow me, do not believe
> But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.
> [II.i.137.]

This disdain prompts Oberon to include Helena's problems in his machinations. Demetrius emerges from this woodland as a much less constant suitor, left at the end of the play permanently bewitched, his marriage ultimately held together not by any reason we have been shown, but by fairy magic, only by the intercedence of Puck.

The rhetorical questioning of partnership and parenthood in the various reflections and coupled characters and situations also adds dimension to the quarrel that sunders the King and Queen of Fairies. Far from being arbitrary, or a mere plot device, their dispute can

then be seen as a question of surregacy, with Oberon and Titania fostering their changeling as vicarious aetherial parents,[6] eternally wooing but to no purpose. They are the embodiment of, for them, an irresolvable urge, they are archetypes, and being mere personifications of instincts their resolution lies in a state beyond them. Shakespeare has given us, in this fantasy level, the ephemeral enactment of pure desire; being incorporeal, it never tires, nor can it ever achieve resolution and hence is always, and only, wooing and flirting, quarrelling and making up:

TITANIA But I know
When thou hast stolen away from Fairyland
And in the shape of Corin sat all day
Playing on pipes of corn. And versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here
Come from the farthest step of India
But that forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskined mistress and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded? - and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity. [II.i.73.]

As all the world of nature is at midsummer. They are playing at parenthood, with her fascination over the pregnancy, and his desire for a young follower, quarrelling as the child crosses the threshold of adolescence, and moves necessarily, from the mother's world to the father's. Their argument and discord is then the same as that of the human instigators of the dramatic action, Hermia and Egeus; and which it echoes ominously, that of the right of authority over a child.

Within this mirroring and doubling, and part and parcel of it, the tale of each character is a dramatic metaphor; conveying, by the outcomes provided, as close as we can ever get to Shakespeare's

opinion of them.

If we take Egeus as central to his own plot and for example try to disentangle his tale from the weave of the play, then he stands as 'Hero' in his tale, where Hermia is the 'Villain', Demetrius is the 'Princess' or sought after person, object of the quest, Theseus the 'Donor' or 'Helper' and also the 'Father' in his action as dispatcher. Lysander is 'False hero' or usurper. Such a layout could be made for each character's tale, Egeus' being one of the easier to describe. This presents a character's motivation, as his 'Princess' or 'Treasure', and then requires the codification of the responses to that motive, limiting it to one of the seven. That each of the personæ are different *masks* to each other, aiding or opposing each other, allows for the semblance of a unique characterisation and the illusion that each has a life beyond the play as they are presented, pursuing their goals within some form of Thespic-space.

Having many more facets to each persona also allows for the projection of an interiority. The persona will present a self distinct from each of the *masks* it is involved in, by expressing reflections upon them, and by reconsidering their motives and representing the very mechanisms of making choices before us. Such a presentation describes the action of the plot as it feels, and is perceived by that persona, involving us in the same way as we ourselves consider our reality and hence stimulating an intimate identification with the existential processes of that persona. *The Dream* does not have this quality crafted to the degree of a 'Brutus' or a 'Hamlet'; there are no soliloquies to frame and structure such interiority, and no one central character for the action of the play

to reverberate inside. Nevertheless the whole of the fairy plot can be seen as being allegorical, describing the confusing exterior behaviour of the lovers; transcending their waffling rationality with the irresistible and fantastic interior certainty of Oberon and Titania, who as voiced universal motives, are shown acting within them and all nature.

So that when we see Demetrius and Lysander reject their 'Princess' - Hermia, for Helena, and Titania reject Oberon for Bottom, we are watching the operation of the woods' unconscious forces at work and the conscious turmoil that its immediacy produces in us 'human mortals'. Out of the lover's turmoil, what emerges is the benign aptness of unconscious or instinctive female 'Nature' where clarity of motive establishes appropriate levels of partner: the political deliberateness of Theseus and Hippolyta, the struggling self-possession of Hermia and Lysander, and the impulsive idolatry of Helena and Demetrius. This congruency between the couples is the direct meaning of the 'constancy' that Hippolyta speaks of. It resembles the initial superficial sameness and arbitrary matching that the Athenian males perceive and which denies sensitivity, but it is not the same. It is the same as Puck's rural husbandry 'two of both kinds make up four' as he re-directs Lysander's love back to Hermia.

And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown.
Jack shall have Jill;
Naught shall go ill.
The man shall have his mare again and all shall be well.
[III.ii.458.]

NOTES

1 Marina Warner writes of Perault that his defending and producing fairytales was a promotion of the 'native modern literature against the *Anciens*, who proclaimed the complete superiority of Greek and Latin over all things local, vernacular and of comparatively recent date' (*From the Beast to the Blonde*, p.169), Shakespeare is in contrast presenting a far more sophisticated and less partisan conception, directly relating the two, classical/local, and stratifying them as levels of apprehension of the same processes.

2 Antti Aarne's index of varieties of tales in the Grimm collection lists sixteen where supernatural helpers are involved, eleven where magic objects are involved, and nine where supernatural power or knowledge is available to the hero (from Campbell *The Flight of the Wild Gander*, appendix, p.41).

In this context of 'unearned' success I would draw attention to the biblical story of Balaam's ass (Numbers 22, King James version) which several commentators (Kott, Warner and French) present as a source of Bottom's transmutation into an ass, and which is also considered as a source for the asinine mass (see ch.3, note 6, p.69). Balaam is successful through the intercedence of his ass and despite his own, thrice repeated, unheeding stubbornness and cruelty to the beast. His undeserved 'luck' in this tale demonstrates Moab's initial statement concerning Balaam and the givenness of this quality (Numbers 22. 6) 'he whom thou blessest is blessed, and whom thou cursest is cursed'.

3 Interestingly although Cobwebs and Moth's wings are thought to have a medicinal function, and Peaseblossom and Mustardseed sound herbal,

Nicholas Culpepper's (1616-1654) *Complete Herbal* (London: Foulsham, 1970), p.346, mentions only Mustardseed:

> The seed is a remedy against poison and venom, and worms in children. It is good for the sciatica, and in joint aches, ulcers and cankers in the mouth, throat, or behind the ears, and for the hardness and swelling of the testicles, or of women's breasts.

No mention is made of any aphrodisiac qualities as suggested by Jan Kott, (*Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, p.182).

4 René Girard, 'Myth and Ritual in Shakespeare' from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*,, ed. H.Bloom, p.28.

5 Marilyn French, *Shakespeare's Division of Experience*, p.97.

6 The homosexual aspect of Oberon's want for the changeling boy, is not really presented in the text, although it is obviously present, perhaps it enjoys the untrammelled licence of being insubstantial:

> Titania's passion for Bottom is grotesque; Oberon's desire for the changeling boy has a tinge of the perverse, of Jove's love for Ganymede. And as in *Love's Labours Lost*, there are intimations of considerable sexual freedom in the fairy folk without any concomitant suggestion of evil or pollution. (Ibid., p.98.)

CHAPTER 10.

> For at the dawn of history Europe was covered with immense primaeval forests, in which the scattered clearings must have appeared like islets in an ocean of green [...] Germans whom Caesar questioned had travelled for two months through it without reaching the end. Four centuries later it was visited by the Emperor Julian, and the solitude, the gloom, and the silence of the forest appear to have made a deep impression on his sensitive nature [...] In our own country the wealds of Kent, Surrey, and Sussex are the remnants of the great forest of Anderida, which once clothed the whole of the south-eastern portion of the island. Westward it seemed to have stretched till it joined another forest that extended from Hampshire to Devon [...] Even under the later Plantagenets the royal forests were sixty-eight in number. In the forest of Arden it was said that down to modern times a squirrel might leap from tree to tree for nearly the whole length of Warwickshire.
>
> (Frazer, *The Golden Bough,* p. 110.)

> I'll be a park, and thou shalt be my deer.
> Feed where thou wilt, on mountains or in dale;
> Graze on my lips, and if those hills be dry,
> Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains be
>
> (*Venus and Adonis,* 231-4.)

THE ARCHETYPES OF THE DREAM

The principal leitmotives or archetypal images of *The Dream* are the direct oppositions of the city and the wood. Already these have been described in chapter 9 in their comedy presentation, with 'marriage' as both representation and resolution of the opposition of law and love. These are the metaphors that carry all the other symbols within the play, and which provide for all of its complexities. They are distinguished clearly in the daylight reason and definite decrees of Theseus and Athens, and the night time misrule and contradictions of Oberon and the moonlit wood. They are reflected

throughout the play in male/female, aristocrat/mechanical, age/youth and human/fairy. This theme and its correlates are extensively widespread throughout the world and extremely old, and they carry with them images that Shakespeare deliberately chose, and used, to manipulate and to extend the understanding of his audience. Such manipulation and re-application is very important here, for it demonstrates the playwright's insight into the universality of the images he was drawing on, from wherever their various sources, and his creative re-application of them in newly meaningful contexts.

An obvious example of such deft handling of already potent and disruptive forms is in the impact made by the intensely memorable image of Titania and Bottom's courting. It is inspired, in compounding the unnatural clash of cultural, sexual, social and political opposites; and yet its presentation is handled so gently, particularly in the quiet good humour of Bottom as ass, that its force slips past our relaxed guard and audiences smile good-naturedly as they watch it. The emphasis on the bestiality of Bottom's ass, as shockingly displayed in Peter Brook's production by Titania's fascination with his erect phallus (which was mimicked by the forearm and fist of one of the fairies being thrust between his legs), reinstated for modern audiences the full force of the animal's allegorical, and anatomical, significance.[1] But this opposes the gentility of Shakespeare's text, in which as Jan Kott points out there is not even a hint of romance, let alone desire, from the self-satisfied jackass, who:

> Appreciates being treated as a very important person, but is more interested in food than in the bodily charms of Titania. (Jan Kott, *The Bottom Translation*, p.80.)

That the Queen may have been amongst the first audience for the scene would underline the subtlety of this presentation. Moreover, several generations of playgoers, very sensitive to hierarchical precedent, and, presumably several Masters of Revels and Lords Chamberlain, have similarly smiled, or at least nodded to its performance, for gentle control and order seem always uppermost, despite the completeness of its underlying political perversity.

We start the play hearing an obvious statement of Theseus' control and an exposition of power in his ability to order, first his desires:

> THESEUS Now fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
> Draws on apace. [I.i.1.]

then his city:

> Go Philostrate,
> Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments.
> [I.i.12.]

and then his lady:

> I wooed thee with my sword,
> and won thy love doing thee injuries; [I.i.17.]

and finally even this very success is curbed:

> But I will wed thee in another key;
> With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.
> [I.i.18.]

What we are hearing is the preening of the established order and orderer, the benign but pompous pinnacle of the hierarchy of Athens. What is not heard so distinctly is how Hippolyta delicately breaks up his pronouncements with mention of how the daytime of glory slips into nights of slumber, and then she makes a peculiarly apt, and subtle, reference:

> HIPPOLYTA the moon - like to a silver bow

New bent in heaven. [I.i.10.]

Which as well as calling up the feminine, and arcane, in a general way, specifically with its use of *heaven, new bent*, and *silver bow* surely alludes to her status also as a warrior (the Amazons fought with bows) but directly to Artemis, and her new bow. Artemis' new bow was made for the huntress by Hephaistos and it was for claiming the bow himself and usurping her right to authority (according to Ovid, *Callimachus*, hymn iii) that Orion was subsequently killed and then resurrected after the return of the divine weapon. This myth is itself very interesting in this context for its roots begin, according to Theodore Gaster, in the much older seasonal Caananite myth of Aqhat. The ritual presentation of this myth has been considered (ch.5, p.107) as an ancient root, or paradigm form of all seasonal myths, and subsequently of much of European agricultural ritual and all myth associated with it; including specifically the English Mummers Plays:

> Accordingly, Aqhat's possession of the divine weapon would have made him virtually her equal and thus have threatened her status and supremacy. Moreover, it is noteworthy that when, later in the story El characterises the offence of Aqhat, he describes him expressly as the would be 'supplanter' (*m'qb* of Anat): while it should also be borne in mind that the offence for which the huntsman Orion was punished by Artemis in the analogous classical myth was - according to Ovid and other writers - that of boasting that he was her equal in the chase.
>
> (T.Gaster, *Thespis*, p.345.)

Not that the playwright would have known of this paradigm tale, his direct access to the ritual would be through the myth in Ovid, or Golding, as outlined previously, but this same ancient ritual may also have been experienced in a burlesque or parody, much as we see Peter Quince's classical *Pyramus and Thisbe* through the presentation of a

mummers play or masque; the parallels of subject and form, and variations of tone, presented in the play, had perhaps made themselves obvious to Shakespeare in this manner.[2] There is one other aspect important here in relation to the seasonal myth, that of the great symbolic calendar, for in the northern hemisphere:

> The constellation of Orion sets late at the end of April and rises early at the beginning of July (p. 322).
>
> In Job 38:31 there is a specific allusion to the 'binding' of Orion 'Can'st thou bind the Pleiades with chains or loosen the bonds of Orion' (*K'sil*), consistent with the classical myth, that, after his resuscitation, Orion was chained to the heavens in the form of a constellation.
>
> (Ibid., p. 323.)

In his astral manifestation Orion is a representation of the dying and resurrecting god, who dies late in April and who resurrects in early July, which is covers the 'midsummer madness' season, and the two holidays referred to by the play: May 1st and Midsummer on June 23rd. So that the ritual of the dying god and the great heavenly roll of the seasons that are recounted in Ovid's *Callimachus* and lampooned in seasonal mummery, indicate a fertility goddess and her consort who argue as much in Arden as they do in Attica. The seasonal round of the year reflected in the individual life is also evoked in the Arden of *As You Like It:*

> ROSALIND Men are April when they woo,
> December when they wed:
> Maids are May when they are maids,
> But the sky soon changes when they are wives.
>
> (AYLI IV. i. 141.)

The astronomical calendar connection also links the confusing coincident May and Midsummer allusions of *The Dream*,[3] and underline, as does the play, a lengthy period of misrule and 'Midsummer Madness'

(as Olivia describes the lusty and inappropriate condition of the cross gartered Malvolio). For in Christianity as in ancient Caanan, and with all the echoes represented in Ovid, the absence of the sacrificed god is mourned for almost the exact same short, midsummer season. Hippolyta has already made allusion to Orion's deposition as the usurped hunting god, then within a few pages we will hear Titania list her more profound influence over the natural world and the seasons of human life. Titania is in amplifying Hippolyta's reference to the moon as a bow, re-emphasising the supremacy of the ancient huntress, and of Orion's comeuppance.

Shakespeare's play concludes with this same Theseus, and his bride, benighted beneath this 'silver bow' of a moon, as predicted by Hippolyta, as merely another couple, following their bent and his own directive of 'Lovers, to bed', slumbering or otherwise. Their issue to be 'blessed' by fairy, primarily by Oberon, as the re-established or renewed ruler of this unruly darkness. Then ultimately Puck is to lull us with a rustic sonnet, the contrived essence of which is that to avoid offence we should categorise the whole thing, all we have seen and heard, merely as a dream. Now there's the rub; Shakespeare often placing great significance on the unconscious dream state, and in this play it is the very agent of change and reconciliation..

Puck's lullaby, in sixteen lines nullifies 'offended' with its rhyme 'mended', then 'reprehend' with 'mend', and goes on in its second octave to echo its two 'amends' in 'your hands' and 'friends'.

The suggestion is that benign instincts, or a cohesive unconscious have circumscribed the whole of the action. We have only 'slumbered here', our unravelled cares being knitted by this poetic

and universal force, personified as a King and Queen of fairy. It is in the roots of this character, Puck, that the play displays its range, for this is no gentrified fairy; here is a sprite of the type of a pagan, green, wild or natural man of the heaths, the heathen and uncivilised who does not follow the city's mores. And compared to these globetrotting spirits the cities jurisdiction is very local:

> LYSANDER From Athens is her house remote seven leagues;
> [...] There gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
> And to that place the sharp Athenian law
> Cannot pursue us. [I.i.163.]

Within the wood there are the three prime representations of the pagan: Puck, Oberon, and Titania.

Puck is the very 'natural' and uncultured, hairy, wild man and randy hobgoblin of celtic myth and pageant, the fool and trickster, whose lineage is from the Satyr play through Cupid and Pseudalus, to the Green Man and Harlequin, a sylvan tree spirit who is the embodiment of the sacred grove, like an innate wood and its impulses manipulating us from beneath our civilisation.[4]

Oberon is here a deliberate, sophisticated and cultured force of nature who lacks only the horns of Pan to be easily recognised from his lineage in Mystery Plays as the sporting tempter, Satan. He is a much developed Satan with a meaningfully extended reference, noble and wily but presented as equal and distinctive a ruler as Theseus; a natural force whose way is compelling by his government of our very desires. Shakespeare by placing the action before Christianity (but still allowing Bottom to misquote St. Paul), is placing it in a classical, Arcadian space, beyond repentance and repression, and by disguising Oberon (leaving out his horns) the old man of the forest

and *King of the Fairies* is allowed and enabled to transcend the church's prescriptive and damning view of him. At one and the same time this fixes him as an instinct, a whispered voice, conniving and crafty in defeat, and also universalises him as a vocalisation of that same hideous and disruptive strength that pushes the daisies up. The spirits of shame and repression are here being definitely sidestepped, and therefore subtly placed, as Blake would place them 200 years later,[5] firmly in the confines of the church's lych gate:

PUCK And yonder stands Aurora's harbinger,
At whose approach ghosts wandering here and there
Troop home to churchyards. Damned spirits all
That in crossways and floods have burial
Already to their wormy beds are gone.
For fear lest day should look their shames upon
They wilfully themselves exile from light,
And must for aye consort with black browed night.

OBERON But we are spirits of another sort.
I with the morning's love have oft made sport;
And like the forester the groves may tread.

[III.ii.390.]

This is the Elizabethan who has read the pagan authors, perhaps Ovid's *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria* and whose gentle play presupposes there being an 'art of love'.

Oberon should also have horns for another reason, for this Satan is not Milton's despot but a universal chancer, who is the engineer and voyeur of his own cuckoldry, by a jackass, in pursuit of a petty supremacy:

TITANIA So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently entwist; the female ivy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.
O, how I love thee! How I dote on thee!

They sleep. Enter Puck,

OBERON (*comes forward*) Welcome, good Robin. Seest thou this pretty sight? [IV.i.45.]

His aim, to cancel his thwarted mastery of the changeling boy, brings into focus the nature of Titania, the third pagan of the wood. It also brings into sharp focus the relation of these 'Masks' as I have called them, to the psychological archetypes as necessary categories of thought, as outlined in earlier chapters. I hope it will also go some way towards justifying the emphasis placed earlier on the 'rites of passage' of this Indian boy, for certainly his ownership is the heart of this feud in fairyland; as the ownership of Hermia is of the feud in Athens.

In that we use the term *archetype* loosely, often to hallow the use of a stereotype, by giving the weight of this title of 'mask' to these images is to necessarily tie them to the psychological forms of Freud and Jung, sketched earlier. The images of the city and the wood are those of light and dark or rather light and half light, as in sunlight and moonlight, and hence of clarity and obfuscation, polarisation and compromise, law and love. These modes of operation are not specific archetypes, but they relate directly to the 'rites of passage theme' and to the archetypal judgemental *Father* (Rites of Passage, p.63, and Electra and Oedipus, p.60), and the all accepting *Mother* (p.40 and p.95) complexes of images respectively.

These psychological archetypes are very wide references, but Shakespeare uses imagery of a similarly wide reference to make many meaningful associations, especially in this play; and although Jung is more sympathetic to the possible function of a 'universal' imagery,

Freud's analysis of the area is very similar. The archetypes of 'Mother' and 'Father' can, I hope, already be seen loosely drawn in this chapter so far in the oppositions outlined. Both 'City' and 'Wood' are contained in the reference that Jung makes to the 'Mother' archetype as 'things arousing devotion or feelings of awe, as for instance the church, university, city or country, heaven, earth, the woods [...] the underworld, the moon, can be mother symbols'. But there are few things that do not come into that symbolism; and as pointed out in that chapter, it is the line of reason carries those mother associations. Several of those symbols can, by change of emphasis or function, be equally described as masculine. It is applicable here to separate them with reference to Jung's archetype of the 'Spirit' and Freud's contentious 'Father' image. Both of these stress the developmental and judgemental quality of the 'Father' love as opposed to the unconditional 'Mother' love.

To read 'City' as 'Father' and as therefore masculine, and 'Wood' as 'Mother' and as the feminine to that, in this context is also to involve from that same psychological analysis the 'conscious' as opposed to the 'unconscious', and the individual to the collective. These are very mutable constructs. For example, a city is obviously a collective, and most are named or thought of as female, but in this relative context, if we accept their stresses in terms of definite to indefinite, then the metaphorical imagery of the play unfolds further.

The archetypes are the opposing states of the 'Rites of Passage'.[6] The city then stands as the definable and clearly conscious masculine world of order and distinct duty, the wood in contrast stands for the indefinable and indistinct, unconscious,

feminine world of nature, feelings and instinct. Athens is the distinct present and time-bound mortal realm and its Athenians make constant reference to the precision of time to be contrasted to the fairies timeless durative and archaic pagan forest. Theseus' day world is a men's club with rules and hierarchies as constant and regular, and as harsh, as the Sun:

PUCK And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecate's team,
From the presence of the sun
Following darkness like a dream. [V.i.206.]

The female moonlit sisterhood has the phasic attraction and rejection of moods and lunacy; and the Roman name for the moon queen was Diana:

> But Diana was not merely a patroness of wild beasts, a mistress of woods and hills, of lonely glades and sounding rivers; conceived of as the moon, and especially, it would seem, as the yellow harvest moon, she filled the farmer's grange with harvest fruits, and heard the prayers of women in travail.

(Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, p. 141.)

In *The Dream* we are given virtually this same catalogue as Titania's qualities presented as the petulantly withheld attributes of her realm. 'Titania' is itself a generic name:

> The name 'Titania' is derived from Ovid, where it refers to a range of goddesses of the night - Diana, Latona, Circe, Pyrrha (in Golding, these are always 'Titan's daughter[s]', never 'Titania', so this is another small piece of evidence that Shakespeare remembered Ovid's original).

(J. Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid*, p. 13.)

The grove at Nemi mentioned earlier (ch. 1., p. 3 in connection with Oedipus and the ritual replacement of kings) was sacred to Diana. Her consort 'the King of the Wood' *(Rex Nemorensis)* who awaited his brutal usurpation was Hippolytus,[7] son of Theseus and Hippolyta, whom

Diana resurrects for his loyalty and renames Virbius, hiding him in the glade. Hippolytus earns the wrath of his father, and his first death, for spurning the love of women, and preferring to run hunting through the forest with Diana and their, no doubt, mellifluously tuned hounds. Like Orion, he dies and is resurrected, suffers this same seasonal usurpation and is raised again.

What this seems to suggest is that the playwright is giving us an analogue of the civilisation/wildness image, and the masculine/feminine image, as interpenetrating. The name Hippolyta, although probably taken from Seneca's *Hippolytus* via perhaps Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* is also a feminisation from the more famous name of her son[8], Diana's beau and Theseus' son. To those classicists in his audience it is surely the feminine, wild and unconscious shadow side of Theseus, his Diana side, or 'anima' to use Jung's word, personified in his bride. She is the complimentary aspect to him that he has to conjoin with, or marry, to be complete and sensitive to his own feelings; less of an Egeus we could say.

To have written this way, Shakespeare would have had to see that the various names of the gods are local aspects of a generality, a generality that is looking more and more, from Frazer's analysis to Campbell's, like a vast and prolific and ancient, certainly Indo-European if not global rite:

> From the preceding examination of the spring and summer festivals of Europe we may infer that our rude forefathers personified the powers of vegetation as male and female and attempted, on the principle of homoeopathic and imitative magic, to quicken the growth of trees and the plants by representing the marriage of the sylvan deities in the persons of a King and Queen of May, a Whitsun Bridegroom and Bride and so forth. Such representations were accordingly no mere symbolic or allegoric dramas, pastoral plays designed to amuse or instruct a rustic audience. They were

> charms intended to make the woods to grow green, the fresh grass to sprout, the corn to shoot and the flowers to blow. And it was natural to suppose that the more closely the mock marriage of the leaf clad or flower decked mummers aped the real marriage of the woodland sprites, the more effective would be the charm.
>
> Frazer, *The Golden Bough,* p. 134.)

Titania and Hippolyta both have names that readily evoke their masculine forms and thus carry their binary, polar and balancing aspect inherent in their nomenclature. Similarly Hermia suggests a feminine aspect of Hermes; and even Helena, evocative of Helen of Troy, matriarchal Trojan, and lusty inspirer of the Trojan War; and Thisbe, are all presented as aspects of mythological womanhood in relation to men. Equally, Theseus (whom Jonathan Bate describes as having a track record as 'a notorious rapist', *Shakespeare and Ovid,* p. 136) is the all male slayer of the minotaur (moon-bull), as all-male as Titania is all-female, the facts of which Shakespeare makes us aware of in Oberon and Titania's initial quarrel. Similarly Oberon, the romance and masque 'king of the woods' in that sense is directly related to Hippolytus the classical king of the wood, is in Jung's terms an animus figure or male shadow side of Titania, whom she must relate to by relinquishing her overweening claim to motherhood represented in the changeling boy to be herself again balanced and complete. It is not that Shakespeare is anticipating Jung, in anything other than recognizing a half-lit *sinister* or 'poetic' and feminine 'universal' aspect of classical symbolism, which is equally represented, if not embedded, in every *dexterous* and clearly defined statement it apparently contradicts.

If by the whole realm of 'Fairy' we take it that Shakespeare may

be alluding to all the fertility and sex magic of seasonal ritual, dedicated to a goddess of multifarious names, and her consort, usurped and reinstated, and again of many names and varying whether it was wheat, grapes, or barley that was being charmed (and whether in Greek, Roman, Celtic or of English Elizabethan folklore tradition) then we see that the benign frisson that was always present in even very traditional performances of the play, is, as it was with Masque and Mummery, a disguised invocation and evocation of the 'old religion'. By such an evocation sexuality can be discussed publicly, albeit in a disguised and decorous form, and yet with almost the candour of an Ovid or a Martial.

This is assuming that Shakespeare, familiar with the classics in some way had seen the celebrated and sophisticated mirrored in the mundane and ridiculous as well as the chastised and indeed often the damned. Take for example Hermia's three courses of action, as outlined by Theseus: to remain a virgin, to marry, or to die; these are classically the triple aspects of the goddess Artemis/Diana, the virgin, the mother and the crone (Greek - Hebe, Hera, Hecate. Roman - Juventas, Juno, Minerva); and as with *Macbeth's* three witches, mentioned earlier as aspects of the moon cycle, they are the fates who weave our destiny out of our very own desires. But these three forms of the Queen of Heaven are the same archetypal female images traced into benign and malign domestic and psychological terms in chapters 3 and 4. Here also is represented the loved and hated good woman/bad woman, madonna/witch polarity, one moment nobly cleaving to the fostered Indian boy, despite the subsequent arguments and turmoil and

wreckage of the harvest, and in the next showing her mating instincts can be stimulated readily to occlude her maternal:

> THESEUS When I had at my pleasure taunted her
> And she in mild terms begged my patience,
> I then did ask her her changeling child,
> Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent
> To bear him to my bower in Fairyland.
>
> [IV.i.60.]

'She' has many masks within this play, each is a developed aspect or facet of her responding; these are not stereotypical because in none is she acting predictably, although *she* is still within the parameters of herself and of the situation.

'He' too is the domestic and psychological father as Oberon/Theseus/Egeus, where Theseus is the fair balance point between love and law, as he is also between youthful reason and lust (Lysander and Demetrius). In Oberon 'He' is also surely Saturn, old king of the Golden Age and master of the solstice at the other end of the year; at whose Saturnalia Jan Kott points out as continuing even in 'Christian' Twelfth Night celebrations and at Carnival, that it was common to elevate asses and fools to kingly office, as it was for nobles to serve them. This is according to Frazer a vestige of the ritual sacrifice of the king's surrogate, as the scapegoat, to re-stimulate fertility; and is a correlate of the sacrifice of the male goat -*tragos* - on the altar of Dionysius at the cradle of theatre in Athens.

If the ass is the benign but carnal 'Bottom' of this scale, the flesh (Brother Ass as St Francis referred to his own body) then Theseus, as the slayer of the slayer of virgins in the labyrinth, is

'Top', supremely reasoned and controlled, as high as man gets. 'She', in her various forms, mates with all of them. When she is valued and honoured, we are shown how she serves and rules, harmonises and humanises them all. In her absence or when her feelings are deprived of due consideration as with the incorrigible Egeus, and Demetrius and Lysander when bewitched, there is strife and harsh rivalry. There is even rivalry between the two girls when Hermia's modesty causes Puck to bewitch Lysander. But if this instinctive, unconscious and poetic 'She' is honoured and recognised, as Theseus does with Hippolyta, then the great hunt, the hunter, huntress and even the hunting hounds are harmonious:

THESEUS My love shall hear the music of my hounds.
Uncouple in the western valley; let them go [...]
We will, fair Queen, Up to the mountain's top,
And mark the musical confusion
Of hounds and echo in conjunction. [IV.i.120.]

If these hounds resound the myth of Actæon and his hounds then we can take the words of *Twelfth Night's* Orsino, referring to the same myth, and surely using a constant metaphor:

ORSINO That instant was I turned into a hart,
And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
E'er since pursue me.
(*Twelfth Night,* I.i.22.)

If Diana/Artemis is here synonymous with instinctive desire, then it is 'Her' season; 'He' has been usurped and has to be resurrected and renewed. Theseus/Hippolyta have these desires 'uncoupled', not repressed, but balanced and mirrored 'of hounds and echo' in each other. The acknowledgement of the supremacy of Diana's night grove by Theseus has woven all the ravelled threads of

Athenians into a set of functioning pairs: 'Jack shall have Jill, nought will go ill'. Similarly in the archetype herself the primacy of desire has been re-established. Titania has been 'Oberoned' and Theseus Hippolyta'd in true Jungian style, all the couples individuated not stereotyped; and Hermia and the changeling boy released from 'Father' and 'Mother' domination respectively. The battle has been won, the categories of sex and status re-vivified, and the fertility of this little world seasonally renewed.

NOTES

1 See illustration p. 112 in David Selbourne's, *The Making of A Midsummer Night's Dream* (London: Methuen, 1982).

2 It is also important that Theseus, in choosing the mechanicals play to while the time before the bedding, rejects: *The Battle with the Centaurs*, a revenge action for the rape of a bride, sung by a eunuch to the harp; *The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals, Tearing the Thracian singer in their Rage*, a similarly violent tale, dealing with the rending of Orpheus by the female Bacchae; and *The Thrice Three Muses mourning for the death of learning, late deceased in beggary.* Rapacious tales of males and females are rejected as are a treatise on the sad state of scholarship, for the oxymoronic play of opposites *'tragical mirth', 'Tedius and brief'* that gives *concord to this discord*, its burlesque humour more conducive to nuptials than any seriously partisan sexuality or intellectual moralising.

3 The confusion surrounds the two holidays Midsummer's Day (June 23) and May Day (May 1). Midsummer for all its allusions to marriage is

only mentioned in the title of the play. Within the text May is indirectly evoked with the references to 'hawthorn buds' [I.i.185.], otherwise known as May blossom, and the hawthorn brake as tiring house for the mechanicals and for Bottom's transformation; and directly:

LYSANDER Where I did meet thee once with Helena
To do observance to a morn of May. [I.i.167.]

THESEUS No doubt they rose up early to observe
The rite of May; and, hearing our intent,
Came here in grace of our solemnity. [IV.i.137.]

David Young suggests that Shakespeare wanted the associations of both holidays (*Something of Great Constancy*, p.24) blurring calendar time in favour of 'festival time'. This also goes some way to explaining the odd time scale: 'Four happy days bring in another moon' when the action only seems to cover one night; perhaps Hippolyta's prediction is meant literally 'Four nights will quickly dream away the time'. There are similarly many references to the moon in this one night in the wood: the mechanicals are to rehearse by moonlight, Oberon meets Titania (however ill) by moonlight, and this same moon illuminates her scenes with Bottom:

TITANIA Come, wait upon him. Lead him to my bower.
The moon methinks looks with a watery eye;
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity. [III.i.195.]

When if there is a new moon in four days time, there must be some moonless nights to intervene.

4 I have included the fullness of this quote because of the many echoes it has with the images of Puck and marriage in *The Dream*, particularly through the eyes of Robert Bly:

An example is Pieter Brueghel, the elder, who painted a scene from a Flemish pageant, which was then copied in 1566 as a woodcut by an anonymous artist. That woodcut has survived. We see the village square at the moment the Wild Man enters from the forest. The village players have earlier gone out into the forest, dressed a young man in a sort of fish scale costume, and given him vine tendrils entangled in hair and beard. Other tendrils are tied around his waist, and he carries a club that resembles the club belonging to the Cerne Abbas giant [...] An actor representing the Holy Roman Church and the Emperor shows him the globe surmounted by a cross in order to remind the Wild Man that his time is over. The military man carries an armed crossbow, which he aims at the forest man. The third personage, a woman, wears, in several depictions of this pageant, the same curiously conical hat. In her dress she resembles a nun, and holds out to him a golden ring [...] The Metropolitan Museum of Art a few years ago published a book called *The Wild Man in Medieval Myth and Symbolism*, which reproduces this woodcut. The editor, Timothy Husband, sums up the priestess's offer this way: 'Symbolising union with a woman, the ring tempts the Wild Man into the holy and legal bond of matrimony from which he is barred. The soldier and the Emperor, with his sword drawn in the painting Brueghel did, stalk the Wild Man, ready to strike him down for his transgression against man's civilized order'.

(Robert Bly, *Iron John*, p. 245)

5 All Bibles or sacred codes have been the causes of the following Errors:

1. That man has two real existing principles: Viz: a Body and a soul.

2. That energy, call'd Evil, is alone from the body; & that Reason, call'd Good, is alone from the soul.

3. That God will torment Man in Eternity for following his energies.

Prisons are built with stones of Law, Brothels with bricks of Religion.

Blake. 'The Marriage of Heaven and Hell' (1793), *William Blake*, ed. J. Bronowski (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1958), p. 96.

6 The masculine principle is linear, temporal, and transcendent, for it aims to construct something in the world and within time that will enable the individual to transcend nature (which is cyclic), time, and mortality [...] Nature has two aspects (although they are not always distinguishable): a benevolent (nutritive, regenerating, supportive) and a malevolent (destructive, subversive of human constructions, and more powerful than human constructions - up until the atomic age anyway). Because we

> die, nature always, inevitably vanquishes us...As far as I can deduce, the two aspects of nature were taken as a whole in pre-christian thought. Identified then as now with the female, nature was a powerful lover and a powerful hater.
>
> (Marilyn French, *Shakespeare's Division of Experience*,

p. 22)

7 (Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, pp. 4-5.) who implies it is from

Plutarch, his reference is unclear.

8 Frazer says of St Hippolytus:

> We can hardly doubt that the Saint Hippolytus of the Roman Calendar, who was dragged by horses to death on the thirteenth of August, Diana's own day, is no other than the Greek hero of the same name, who after dying twice over as a heathen sinner, has been happily resuscitated as a Christian saint. (*The Golden Bough*, p. 5.)

Given also the variations of the name of Theseus wife:

> North was unsure whether the Amazon Theseus married was named Hippolyta or, as most evidence suggested, Antiopa. Shakespeare makes Antiopa one of the long list of women Theseus seduced and abandoned.
>
> (Peter Holland, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, , p. 49.)

She was probably named backwards from her son Hippolytus.

Shakespeare in following this nomenclature is indicating the

feminisation, or feminine equivalence of this character.

CHAPTER 11.

eeridreme [...] From Topphole to Bottom.

> (James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake* cited in V.J.Cheng, *Shakespeare and Joyce* (University Park PA: Pennsylvania University Press, 1984) p.342.)

> Seasonal *rituals* are functional in character. Their purpose is periodically to revive the *topocosm*, that is, the entire complex of any given locality conceived as a living organism. But this topocosm possesses both a punctual and a durative aspect, representing, not only the actual and present community, but also that ideal and continuous entity of which the latter is but a current manifestation. Accordingly, seasonal rituals are accompanied by *myths* which are designed to present the purely functional acts in terms of ideal and durative situations. The interpenetration of myth and ritual creates *drama*.
>
> (T.Gaster, *Thespis*, p.17.)

CONCLUSION.

In looking at personality structures that appear theatrically in the forms of plots and characters, this study has attempted to examine the roots of these structures, both historically and psychologically, as well as their function in the narrative itself. Plots and characters are mutually defining; plots define character in terms of the motivation, and subsequent triumphs and failures, that they describe; equally, the revelation of character defines what motivations, triumphs and failures the plot must contain. They are opposite sides of one coin and both are described in the same mode of dramatic action, by what is done on stage. In the terms of Aristotle, *proairesis* and *mythos* are communicated to us via *praxis*.

Two approaches to characterisation are examined in this thesis: the psychological, which is drawn from the works of Jung particularly, and also of Freud; and the social and anthropological, which were

drawn from the work of Lévi-Strauss and Propp. The first approach defined a structure which can truthfully be called an 'archetype', which takes its meaning from the universal history of the individual human organism itself and involves the primary responses of the pre-conscious individual and its immediate and instinctive family environment. These are visualisations of the enactments of its needs, portraits of its instincts. The second approach, which is not an archetype at all although often basks in the title, taking its meaning from the political, that is hierarchical, fragmentation of the functions of individuals within a society.

This second type, which is a social function, again draws its force from the psychological needs of the individual, but as resolved by that society. I have called this type *mask*, enjoying the hollow, constructed and ritual associations that the word draws to it, and to avoid any mixed connotations of the term *persona*. It also avoids the more obviously sociological and demographic word 'stereotypes' with its associations of norms and statistics; for although it is the very predictive statistical value and recognition that we have of the *mask* that is its revealed function, it is not the repetition which gives it its valence. Such words as stereotype and caricature, carry none of the social endorsement, involvement and psychological closeness of identification and personality that we give to this image, which is so bound up with notions of individuality.[1]

It is these notions that are the butt of the comedy of *The Dream*. Both Jan Kott and Marilyn French point out that there is some heavy ridicule within the play,[2] but it is a 'dream', it is not in any way meant to damage or fixedly damn an offender. It serves to highlight

how far from where we think ourselves to be, we actually are. This study then parallels David Young's in *Something of Great Constancy*[3] that in this play, Shakespeare is as much defending his art as a symbolic language as describing it, at least as much as Aristotle is in *Poetics* and Ovid in *Metamorphoses*; and that all three are doing so by reference to the nature of this universal level of metaphoric order, expressed by Hippolyta. Since an instinct has no form of its own, it can not be clarified as such, it is always a valency of the process and structure of the plot, designing the developments constantly in terms of the relations 'typed' in whatever social environment it is presented. The 'Dream' of the title refers to the unconscious knitting and re-weaving of the ravell'd fabric of conscious conceiving and apprehension.[4]

Understated by the Queen [V.i.26.] just as the lovers enter, and unregistered by Theseus, such a description of this 'something' is itself an astonishing reversal; as it must be whenever this universal poetic order is revealed. It is of the very essence of a dramatic 'discovery', hidden blatantly, or *planted* to speak theatrically, like the order in the chaos, the huntress in Athens, and the wood amongst the trees.

That the resolution of this dream world has meaning, and is as real, and significant as any 'factual' or rational Athenian account, will always be a reversal of common sense, that is of the consensus view, and so will always be subversive and disturbing. It has to be so, and remains so even when most prosaically and scientifically described, as, for example, in the eclectic studies of Joseph Campbell:

> The one psyche is operative in both the figments of the vision-world and the deeds of human life. In some manner,

> then, the latter must be prefigured in the former. History is the promise of *Märchen*, realised through and against the obstacles of space and time.
>
> (J. Campbell, *The Flight of the Wild Gander*, p. 36.)

The rational view of reality is here presented as contrived as any art; it is as prescribed and prefigured in its experience by human beings as any story, as it springs from the self-same sources. These archetypal presences are these engrossing levels of drama, the levels of, according to Campbell, 'desires, fears, ideals, potentialities,' that prefigure all thought and that have 'glowed in the nerves, hummed in the blood and baffled the senses since the beginning'. Presenting this depth of universal experience is what compels the empathic participation of the audience.

Of the several general types of codification that have been outlined in this study, to give at least bones, if not flesh, to what a narrative archetype might be, and subsequently what *mask* as a sub-division of such, might be, Campbell's analysis drawn from the Vedas (ch. 6, p. 129) seems to be the most apt and applicable, involving both psychology and anthropology. This is particularly so for the analysis of literary plots as these are essentially literary categories. The Vedic categories are also more general than the clinical work of the psychiatrists Freud and Jung, and yet more descriptive than Propp's or Lévi-Strauss'. This generality subsumes both psychologist's analyses with more experiential categories; describing in the often contradictory opposition of *kama* (love and pleasure) and *artha* (power and success) the internal biological drives of the individual, and outlining in their confrontation with and rationalisation in relation to *dharma* (lawful order and moral virtue) the primary dramatic

relation between the individual and the tribe. He stresses the intensity of the problem of socialisation in terms of an order that could contain 600,000 years of wild man and hunter gatherer tribes, and transmute them into 'sedentary, caste differentiated, and very much larger social units', with all the inequality that that must engender, and has to reconcile.

That all cultures responded by taking their model from the harmony of the universe and the astronomical cycle of the year, is, despite the width of its claim, maintained and echoed in the ritual evidence viewed, specifically in Frazer and Gaster.[5] For the absolute and essential reckoning of seasons, on which life depended, the stars were the only immutable authority, and the mysteries and rituals of priesthoods everywhere seem to embody this; the stars being the 'durative', directing the 'punctual'.[6]

Similarly Campbell's reasoning in accepting this Vedic view is that the value of a story is both biological and cultural, eternal and functional, as they too are the opposite sides of one coin, and both therefore endorse the various forms and functions of narrative, as plot does for character, and as a metaphorical language can for the rites of various passages, in that possession of such a vocabulary facilitates maturation and individuality.

Freud and Jung do of course, make this same point with varying degrees of prescription, and Bettelhiem[7] quite distinctly so, whereas Campbell constantly restates his faith in the value and supremacy of the narrative. In using this Vedic analysis he is applying cultural categories of striving from a very ancient oral civilisation, relying heavily on intuitive and unconscious sifting and input, and the

subsequent refinement over generations for the pertinence of its analysis. The states *kama*, *artha* and *dharma*, which he abbreviates to 'enjoy', 'win', and 'be correct' respectively, are described as they would be in story, that is from a protagonists point of view, and seem to readily accommodate the findings of the psychiatrists, and then go much further. Adding to these *trivarga* or three categories, a fourth level of *Moksha* (release) and *Marga* (disinterested delight or awe) is further applied, to add concepts which go beyond any psychological 'meaning' in terms of mental health, or rehabilitation. It is with this inclusion that Campbell unites mythology and ritual with religion (of all levels of sophistication) and puts all such, as a 'narrative' within the range of Aristotle 'poetic' and 'universal' categories. For it is in order to relate all these types of discourse as aspects of some ubiquitous constants that seem to direct and shape us as the very warp and weft of our lives.

To put the flesh on the bones of these drives, or strivings, is the nature of narrative. Narrative includes the process of time and applies it to them in terms of sequential action, first one drive acting and then another, vying for supremacy; the drives confronting and resolving in various areas and manners. In this way does the biology of expression and repression of needs (whether to enjoy or to control) become associated with the seasonal round of plenty and dearth, represented in the solar cycle; and thus, from the engrammed patterns of granted and withheld gratification from infancy, they also become stamped as female and male, god and goddess.

The need of civilisation, to regulate the desires and hence the actions of its denizens, is the necessity of the city and the

agriculturist, not of the forest nor the hunter. The rules of civilisation are thus an imposed facade and relatively superficial, general masks rather than universal archetypes.

More specifically they are epitomised by the characters of the *Commedia dell' arte* who seem to exemplify the force of the masks of city life so well, and hence were so strongly influential, in all manner of performance. They are organs in the body politic, products of the cities system whom Hobbes was to describe their unreflective compliance:

> Potent men digest hardly anything that setteth up a power to bridle their affections; and learned men anything that discovereth their errors, and thereby lesseneth their authority: whereas the common people's minds, unless they be tainted with dependence on the potent, or scribbled over with the opinions of their doctors, are like clean paper.
>
> (Thomas Hobbes, ***Leviathan***, 1651)[8]

They are functionally necessary, but whatever their place in the hierarchy, high or low, they are definitely not required to be individuals, not individuated in Jung's terminology, or with the conscious choice of the self responsible.

In relating these ideas to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and following the contention that the play is Shakespeare's statement of his art and a defence of the 'poetic' for clarity I would substitute the term 'metaphorical' for 'poetic'; as it is this usage that I feel Shakespeare, with Aristotle and Ovid, is saying is the most potent and dynamic description of reality. It is metaphorical description that best reflects the 'constancy' of the archetypal order, the dream whose meaning is prior even to logic.

To this end within the play he defines and incarnates many pole positions, separates them distinctly with the action of the play, and

then relates them together, matching them but without resolving them. Distinctions are re-vivified not nullified, and their sequences and due processes in time are acted out before us, without loss of identity.

Within *The Dream* Shakespeare presents this whole urban hierarchical range, through the pole positions from the highly reasoned to the barely articulate (in Theseus and Bottom, and the other hard-handed men) and various intermediaries (Egeus, Philostrate and the lovers), and in the constant interaction and inter-regulation, both 'merry and tragical' of these mechanicals and nobility:

> THESEUS This fellow does not stand upon points.
> LYSANDER He hath rid his prologue like a rough colt; he knows not the stop. A good moral, my lord: it is not enough to speak, but to speak true.
> HIPPOLYTA Indeed he hath played on his prologue like a child on a recorder a sound, but not in government. [V. i. 123.]

> SNUG You ladies - you whose gentle hearts do fear
> The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor
> May now, perchance, both quake and tremble here,
> When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.
> Then know that I as Snug the joiner am
> A lion fell, nor else no lion's dam,
> For if I should as lion come in strife
> Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.
> [V. i. 222.]

And notice these mechanicals (who so often double as fairies in performance)[9] in their half-conscious confusion, illiteracy and innumeracy display a childlike unworldly and most fairylike nature in relation to the other Athenians. The reasoned state of Athens rests

on these bottoms as surely as its laws rest on the desires of men like Egeus. We are given these common men as superstitious pagans, stung and goaded by the nobles, coaxed and chivvied more tenderly by Theseus, instinctives on which this noble city is built and is maintained.

These urban themes are then set amongst the wider and deeper context of the archaic and the pagan as the action moves to the wood; here such motivations and strivings of the species as part of the natural order are represented half-classically half-locally in Oberon and Titania as *artha*, and *kama*. Gaster's durative and timeless archetypes being of the nature of the instinctive as the given, are as unexplainable and as primal as cupid and *kama's* arrow, as Shakespeare transparently shows us with his drops of 'love in idleness'. The untrammelled and timeless fairies are of that moving nature in mortals that rules struggle to contain, and by which even the gods, most certainly the classical gods, are constantly undone.

By maintaining oppositions and by multiplying motivations, Shakespeare's play far extends the categories of plot laid down by both Lévi-Strauss and Propp. The complexity that Shakespeare gives to even the most minor of his personæ describes a high level of individuality in an expression of conscious choice, confused as ever in comedy by unruly desire. This conscious choice *proairesis* is represented in the variant motivations and plot functions; the actions of each personæ, even minor ones, reflect and double on each other, with all the commentary and qualification this generates. Propp's analysis does describe the ramifications of the multiple motives and hence the many action levels of the play. It also serves

to establish the necessity of certain role functions to the expression of the plot. For example that of the villain as the generator of the 'calamity' whereby the whole plot gets underway. The villain is the plot necessary frustrator, or separator of the hero or heroine from achieving their desires by the normal course of action. Egeus is in this sense the only real and deliberate villain in the piece.

In comedy, as in tragedy, duty opposes the hero or heroine's desire or ambition; it is the problem that generates the drama, and involves the empathy of the audience and demands its ultimate resolution before us on stage. And here Shakespeare gives in the guise of the trickster Puck, acting out Oberon's will, a benign view of how the most divine and eternal of plans can go awry, and with little evil deliberation, for Puck's most mischievous acts arise from a case of mistaken identity with Lysander, and an overemphasis of characterisation with Bottom. As comedy, the punishment must be reversible, as it is the behaviour and the role that is being criticised, not the being; and all masks are shown as less than perfect.

So these eternal, instinctive plans must go awry in the time world by mistake, as a vindication of the old satanic forest god Oberon, and to explain the existence of natural and yet contentious pagan instincts that Shakespeare is here, in comedy, and within a larger Christian context, re-assessing and re-emphasising.

The *mask* is then the urban face of status and function by which the instinctive life adapts to the forces of civility. It is the function of drama to explore the structure of this '*mask*, usually to endorse it, or by conflict, to reveal the archetypal depths within the

civil description of human drives, from the mundane in comedy, to the sublime and monstrous in tragedy. And because the theatre is still the urban temple dedicated to the wild hunter Dionysius, it still presents his form, divided and rent into as many roles as are required.

NOTES

1 Dramatically there is a tension in the principal protagonists of plays, between the mask of conventional action, described as much by image and association as by word and deed, and their deeper ethical choices, described ultimately by the action or inaction of that character in the act of making a decision or choice. So that the style of the *mask* (its age, sex, manners, wealth or even intelligence, and which can be readily described by dress, diction and the order of habitude and formal social relation) is, once having been established, broken for us in some striking way, thereby revealing a deeper, more meaningful moral or ethical fibre; the outcome of which is revealed in the chaos that ensues. These incidents have psychological significance as the direct shock value of reversal:

> In *Oedipus*, for example, the Messenger who came to cheer Oedipus and relieve him of his fear about his mother, did the very opposite by revealing to him who he was.
>
> (Aristotle, *Poetics*, Dorsch, p. 46.)

2

> It has been shown that the imagery, which gives at first impression of beauty and harmony and fruitfulness and great delicacy, includes many elements that are grotesque, threatening, ludicrous and ugly.
>
> (M. French, *Shakespeare's Division of Experience*, p. 97.)

3

> If this is Shakespeare's *ars poetica*, embodied in a perfected example of the art, then it must be regarded as

> one of his most important plays and a touchstone for the understanding and interpretation of others.
>
> (D. Young, *Something of Great Constancy*, p. 179.)

4 Eagleton's opinion of the metaphoric significance of dreams is in opposition to this re-weaving:

> At any rate, dreams are enough to demonstrate that the unconscious has the admirable resourcefulness of a lazy, ill supplied chef, who slings together the most diverse stew, substituting one spice for another which he is out of, making do with whatever has arrived in the market that morning as a dream will draw opportunistically on the 'days residues', mixing in events which took place during the day or sensations felt during sleep with images drawn deep from our childhood.
>
> (Eagleton, *Literary Theory: an Introduction*, p. 158.)

but surely this very return of imagery from our past and our today, forms a unity by enmeshing and relating an emotional coherence from disparate experience.

5 David Wiles in *Shakespeare's Almanac* is of the opinion:

> It would seem that critics close their eyes to an aspect of renaissance thinking that they are unwilling to palate because of their own distaste for astrology in the twentieth century [...] They have not wanted to confront the possibility that Shakespeare accepted or used the popular astrological beliefs of his period.
>
> (D. Wiles, *Shakespeare's Almanac*, pp. 129-30.)

6 In researching the fairies Mustardseed and Peaseblossom in the 'Herbal' of Shakespeare's near contemporary Thomas Culpepper (1616-1654), I was made very aware of the close observation of what we would call astrological horology, and its medical and diagnostic significance to the pre-industrial, agricultural order of life.

7

> Applying the psychoanalytic model of the human personality, fairy tales carry important messages to the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious mind, on whatever level each is functioning at the time. By dealing with universal human problems, particularly those which preoccupy the child's mind, these stories speak to his budding ego and encourage its development, while at the same time relieving preconscious and unconscious pressures. As the stories

> unfold they give conscious credence and body to id pressures and show ways to satisfy these that are in line with ego and superego requirements.
>
> (Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, p.6.)

8 Hobbes (ch. xxx), is here describing the obstacles to the adoption of his ideas 'not so much from the difficulty of the matter, as from the interest of them that are to learn'. He characterises this lack of individuality or the herd mentality as the venality of these components of the political machine. In doing so he necessarily describes some of the castes of the *Commedia* (and indeed implies most of their scenarios). (T.Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C.B.Macpherson (1651; London: Penguin, 1968) p.379.

9 Several recent productions have been performed with mechanicals, excepting Bottom, doubling as fairies: Chris Horner's Manchester Library Theatre Production, November 1963; Adrian Noble's Royal Shakespeare production at Stratford, August 1994; and Barry Rutter's Northern Broadside Production at the Everyman, November 1995. No doubt this was mainly for economic reasons but it was also to great comic and metaphoric effect.

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