FANTASY:
THE LITERATURE OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

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ABSTRACT

of

FANTASY: THE LITERATURE OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

Fantasy Literature has tended to be dismissed as a genre potent enough to make serious comment on the affairs of men. Reason, defined as a logical sequence of thought moving point to point, and dependent upon empirically observed data, appears to be the basic enemy of the statement made by the literature of fantasy. The argument of this thesis is intended to illustrate that reason alone is inadequate in presenting valid insights into the nature of things and that fantasy, in an act of creating a realm beyond the empirically provable, establishes new and meaningful comments directed toward our human situation.

In treating the analysis of such a subject, it is necessary to divide the paths of inquiry into two distinct parts: an inspection of the mental process responsible for the creation of the literature of fantasy and an inspection of the peculiarities of the expression resulting from the employment of the process.

If credulity and belief in the statements of the literature of fantasy are to be maintained in the audience, consistency in the manner of expression appears to be the basic criterion. The nature of literary consistency is Apollonian while the conceptual and imaginative sources of fantasy are Dionysian. The utility of fantasy, therefore, rests in the union of the Apollonian and the Dionysian creative impulses. From such a marriage comes a reconciliation of basic human antagonisms. As such, the statement made by fantasy is vital and potent, and must not be disregarded.

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INTRODUCTION

The literature of fantasy has tended to be dismissed as a genre capable of presenting serious insights. It is often considered to be "escapist" in a time when escapism is viewed negatively and fantasy generally has been relegated to the terrain of the unreal and the illusory. Yet, "escape" implies freedom and freedom is a prized condition. Strangely enough, the restrictions we escape through fantasy are the same restrictions that provide the source for fantasy's condemnation. If the restrictions are to maintain themselves in a situation where restrictions are the rule, the powers of fantasy must be minimized.

The restrictions against which fantasy operates as a combatant are those arising from a process of objectification caused by the elevation of reason as the governing factor in our way of thinking. Reason, as it is used at all times in this paper, is restricted to a logical sequence of thought, moving point to point, and dependent upon empirically observed data rather than first principles. Common sense, in its usage definition, is not synonomous with this mode of thinking insomuch as common sense results in practical judgements independent of specialized knowledge whereas reason, as it applies to my argument, may include a dependency on specialized knowledge.

My belief that empirically based reason leads to objectification and that man's use of the tool of reason now threatens his freedom, needs clarification.

> In the works of men their relationships freeze into material and factual contexts, into ordered systems and structures to which laws we are being subjected. These material and factual contexts confront us as an alien power, an external fatality, apparently condemning us to impotence.[1]

These objectified relationships constituting the systems within which we live condition us to remain passive. The human being, as subject, creates systems that come to be treated as objects and exert a control over the human being that created them. The subject becomes the object. We become subservient to the imposition of forms that we ourselves have created. The result is passivity and dehumanization.

> Conformism, adaptation, indifference, de-personalization are the characteristic forms of expression of this passivity, of this dominion of the object over the subject, of this amorphous existence which is only held together from the outside by the normalized form of order.[2]

But through the primordial call of fantasy, the automization of habit can be broken. The impossible is made believable; familiar contexts are destroyed; and form is complicated. New realities are created that do not reflect the mode of thought conditioned by reason. The new realities result from the process of transformation and the most important transformation that occurs is within the audience. It is an escape from the passivity resulting from objectification; a return to primordial freedom. Here lies fantasy's value and its utility.

The unquestioning acceptance of reason is reinforced by the dictates of the systems we live within for all systems are essentially rational. This is why reason is given a double security; we are taught to think by the systems we have created while the systems we have created deny anything beyond their limits. But fantasy has a singular truth value that cannot be judged from outside the confines of its own experience. Art remains the most radical opponent of reason's double subterfuge and it is my belief that fantasy is the most radical aspect of art.

In returning to a definition of fantasy, all definitions, accurate or inaccurate, concede that initially fantasy is a mental activity. But we speak of the body of literature, the objective corpse that the critic must either bury or resurrect. Therefore, it would seem that the best approach to a discussion of fantasy should treat it in two parts: an inspection of the mental process responsible for the creation of the literature of fantasy; an inspection of the peculiarities of expression resulting from the employment of the process.

It is important to stress that while fantasy as literary product is derived from fantasy as mental process, the two situations are distinct. Fantasy the product is not solely composed of fantasy the process. The peculiarities encountered in the form of literary fantasy's expression naturally stem from the process of their conception, but the literary product also involves reasonable deductions that are not commonly found in fantasy the process. That is, the literary product presents the impossible as believable through the aid of internal consistency dependent upon reason. On the other hand, the mental process conceives of the impossible without the use of reason. Here, the impossible may be defined as that which is not verifiable by the sensory mechanisms, and not supported by that mode of thinking which has been encouraged by, and is dependent upon, the empirical position. Empirically based reason cannot conceive of the empirically impossible as existing, but once the mental process of fantasy has conceived of the impossible, the consequences of such a situation can reasonably be extrapolated in the literary product. Particular care will be taken to distinguish between fantasy as product and as process.

Before proceeding, some limitation should be placed on the scope of this analysis. In terms of fantasy's artistic expression, "Children's Literature" appears to be a convenient limiting device. However, Children's Literature ranges from myth to faerie and even when the critic's scalpel removes the section called fantasy, the area remains too vast and unwieldy for detailed scrutiny. It has become necessary to limit the works of children's fantasy to those appearing in the bibliography. The choice is arbitrary although it is made with deliberation. I have selected works from Victorian to Modern beginning with

Ruskin's King of the Golden River and concluding with C.S. Lewis's Narnia series. The reason for the choice is threefold. Firstly, I admit to a bias - they are all stories I found to be personally entertaining. Secondly, they share a continued appeal and acceptance as fantasy by the reading audience. Thirdly, I hope to use them to dispel the belief that the values and attitudes expressed in works of fantasy help to illuminate specific social periods. On the contrary, fantasy creates a realm beyond the structure of our environment that is destroyed if it merely reflects a prevalent attitude of a given historical age.

PART ONE

THE LITERARY EXPRESSION OF FANTASY

CHAPTER ONE: CONSISTENCY

The peculiarities of expression in fantasy stem from its power to conceive of relationships beyond those derived from sense observation and reason. The expression creates a vital existence out of abstractions and relies on the imagination to do so. As such, the genius required is highly specialized and while a great deal of children's fantasy is produced, very little of it has enduring value. Sheila Egoff in her critical guide to Canadian Children's Literature, has this to say about Canadian fantasy:

> In view of these artistic and rigorous requirements, it is not surprising that there is no important body of Canadian fantasy. Apart from the fact that superior talent is scarce in any country at any time, Canada lacks most of the requisites that would provide a hospitable context for the production of fantasy. For one thing, there is no tradition of 'faerie' comparable to the oral tradition of older countries.[3]

The talent necessary is dependent upon the creative imagination and far exceeds mere invention. Fantastic events are not enough to produce excellent fantasy for they are usually highly contrived rather than highly imaginative. It is difficult to clearly distinguish between the merely fantastic and the genuine literature of fantasy, but when experienced, its occurrence is evident and its absence is obvious.

The themes of fantasy are elemental and deal with basic distinctions between the good and the bad, courageous behavior, and the quest for identity. The presentation of elemental values must be done subtly and obliquely if didacticism is to be avoided and if the ethereal nature of fantasy is to be maintained. When Frodo the hobbit undertakes his great quest, we are reminded of the nobility afforded by courage and resolution, but Tolkien's tale would be destroyed if he blatantly stated such a case. Fantasy remains fiction and as such, it is usually narrative. Our curiosity must be titillated and our feelings of suspense must be maintained. Where the nature of its expression differs from other works of fiction rests in the fact that fantasy must establish a belief in the rationally unbelievable, a credibility in the incredible, and a consistent sense of reality in the empirically unreal. As a consequence, the relationships brought into existence in fantasy, no matter how hypothetical they may be, must maintain a consistency and coherence within the confines of their expression.

Fantasy contains an element of universality rooted in the primordial consciousness and it is not the subject matter or its stylistic pattern that gives fantasy its peculiar quality; it is the creative imagination of the author and his ability to lend credibility to the consistent relationships he establishes. When the empirically unbelievable is accepted as valid, aesthetic fantasy is in evidence. As an escape from the limitations of rationally controlled experience, fantasy achieves a quality of the timeless and this quality rests in its universality. It must be stressed once again that the escape is not from an ultimate and unquestioned reality but from a reality established by reason. If anything, fantasy illuminates a primordial unity and while we move into the terrain of the empirically unbelievable, the truths we find there have general application to this world. Furthermore, the illumination that occurs may intensify an awareness in the same way that the imitation of the impossible often leads to the opening of a higher reality.[4] What ought to be in the everyday world, situations like the friendly domesticity of the river folk in The Wind in the Willows, applies to our human situation. The qualities of friendship so deeply inbred in the imagined character of Rat would be admirable if found in you or I. Consequently, the expression of fantasy is made believable through the internal consistency of its parts and while it treats the impossible as possible, it contains truths applicable to the everyday world.

Consistency and coherence, then, is the first law of fantasy. Also, fantasy must be total; either it does not exist at all or it is universal within a particular work. When we encounter Treebeard the Ent in The Two Towers, he would be completely unbelievable were it not for the fact that he is surrounded by the fantasy of middle-earth. If the fantasy were not complete, then I would first conclude that the interjection of a talking tree was the fraudulent result of the artist's attempt to produce a sense of mystification in the audience. If the tree continues to talk and I come to realize that it is not an artistic aberration, then I will begin to accept the fact but my credulity will only be maintained if the talking tree is consistent with his environment. In this particular instance, the imaginary hobbits are as surprised as the reader and at first they cannot accept what lies before their eyes. As Tolkien develops the genealogy and the personality of Treebeard to erode the incredulity of Merry and Pippin, the audience's acceptance is achieved at the same time. An object of fantasy such as Treebeard refers only to itself and is not engaged in portraying something external to the work. As such, Treebeard does not appear as a contrived illusion but becomes completely accepted as part of the greater illusion of middle-earth itself.

Through the internal consistency of the literary product, the incredible becomes credible. But in terms of empirical reality the entire cosmos of fantasy, apparently, should remain unreal and unbelievable. However, even a frugal reading within the genre shows that this is not the case at all. As a mode of expression, fantasy serves some unusual purposes and fulfils some basic human needs. For example, in an age where technology is rapidly dehumanizing man, fantasy's ability to liberate the audience from normal experience effects a return to the human through plumbing the depths of the imagination. The new realities explored in the literature of fantasy are eventually transcribed and re-applied to the human situation. The unity and coherence internal to a work of fantasy also reflects man's desire to achieve a unity in the reality of everyday experiences. We are able to accept the greater context of a world of literary fantasy as well as its parts and it does not appear illusory. Our acceptance is conditioned by our desire to take part in unity itself.

The unity is achieved through a transformation within the audience and the nature of the expression that leads to such a transformation is most important to a discussion of this genre. "Belief" has generally been viewed as a subjective experience and in the age of empirically founded reason, any emotional or transcendental feeling stemming from belief is held suspect until proven true by objective and external experience. But we no longer think of belief as something locked within the mind that can be projected to brighten up our surroundings. Belief itself becomes an experience and with the destruction of the empirical mirror, belief becomes capable of real perceptions. In fantasy, belief is the fundamental requirement if it is to be successful, and the acceptance of fantasy rises from this source. The devices employed in the expression that cause transformations in the audience conditioning their belief will be the subject of this next section.

CHAPTER TWO: CREDULITY AND BELIEF

Credulity in literary fantasy's imaginary cosmos is achieved in several different ways. When the empirically impossible constitutes the stuff of expression, no relation between itself and external phenomena may be found. It is argued in Appendix Three[5] that the truth value of literary symbolism is always self-contained and hypothetical so long as the relationships that are operative maintain a consistency within their own verbal pattern. The concept of creativity removes a dependence upon what is commonly called external fact, reliant upon the first principle premise known as empiricism, as the object of mimesis. Through the severence of fantasy from this conception of external reality, comes the transformation that causes the liberation from objective experience. The transformation involved is achieved through a handling of the means of expression in a particular way and it is the devices employed to facilitate the transformation that should be inspected before an inspection of the transformation itself is undertaken.

In Tolkien's essay, Tree and Leaf, he discusses the concept of believability in the arbitrary realm of faerie:

> Children are capable, of course, of literary belief, when the story-maker's art is good enough to produce it. That state of mind has been called "willing suspension of disbelief", but this does not seem to me a good description of what happens. What really happens is that the story-maker proves a successful "sub-creator". He makes a secondary world that your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is "true": it accords with the laws of that world. You believe it while you are, as it were, inside. The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed. You are then out in the Primary World again, looking at the little abortive Secondary World from outside.[6]

That which is considered fantasy literature has been generally expressed in the literary mode known as narrative. If we are to analyze how the internal laws are made consistent, individual aspects of narrative form such as theme, setting, character, and plot, may be investigated separately.

The setting in a work of fantasy carries a good deal of the artistic burden. Firstly, the setting need not be possible in the conventional sense but must be desirable. One of the basic intentions of fantasy is to create another world, another reality, that may satisfy man's unfulfilled desires, such as the desire to return to a primal unity. The description of the environment composing the other world must appear natural and consistent if the events and personalities that appear there are to be accepted. The setting is always important to narrative tales but in no other literary form does it carry so much importance as in fantasy. If the setting fails to attain credibility, the arbitrary relationships established in the particular work of fantasy are doomed to failure. Because the setting is not necessarily a reflection of the empirical mirror, great licence can be taken in description. For example, a black snow could fall if it were given an adequate explanation within the context of the fantasy. However, the moment the black snow appeared as mere invention on the part of the author or as a fraudulent joke, not only would belief in the setting be destroyed, but, as a result, the entire work would fail.

The way in which the audience is introduced to the setting also calls for competent and careful artistic manipulation. It would appear that there are two standard forms of introduction: either the protagonist is injected into the other world of fantasy or he is already a resident of that world. Both methods of introduction have distinctive merits but the injection of an adventurer from our everyday world into the fantastic realm at first challenges credibility. Take for example the entrance of Lucy into Narnia in the first of C.S. Lewis's stories:

> "This must be a simply enormous wardrobe!" thought Lucy, going still further in and pushing the soft folds of the coats aside to make room for her. Then she noticed that there was something crunching under her feet. "I wonder is that more mothballs?" she thought, stooping down to feel it with her hand. But instead of feeling the hard smooth wood of the floor of the wardrobe, she felt something soft and powdery and extremely cold. "This is very queer," she said, and went on a step or two further.[7]

Lucy's movement from a rural English country house into the mysterious realm of Narnia first appears not only improbable but absurd. The same may be applied to Dorothy's cyclone or Alice's rabbit hole and looking glass. The benefit of such an introduction is derived from the fact that the characters encountered in the fantasy world necessarily must explain their environment to the visitor. For example, immediately following the passage quoted from the Narnia series above, Lucy is introduced to Mr. Tumnus, the faun. As he explains his identity to her, Lewis is given an opportunity to indulge in an exposition of the social situation and the geography of Narnia:

> "The White Witch? Who is she?"
> "Why, it is she that has got all of Narnia under her thumb. It's she that makes it always winter. Always winter and never Christmas; think of that!"
> "How awful!" said Lucy. "But what does she pay you for?"
> "That's the worst of it," said Mr. Tumnus with a deep groan. "I'm a kidnapper for her, that's what I am."[8]

The acceptance of the technique of character injection is largely dependent upon the degree to which the reader may identify with the injected character. I have a great amount of difficulty identifying with Dorothy of Kansas to the extent, unfortunately, where I even dislike her dog. If the audience's identification is limited to this extent, then the technique is fraught with problems;

unable to identify with the character, I will suspect the validity of her description of the other world's setting.

When the character with whom the audience is intended to identify is an inhabitant of the realm of fantasy, the question of credibility is subtly changed. We find such a situation in Tolkien's trilogy and in The Wind in the Willows. One advantage in this method is that upon entering the realm of fantasy, we do not find ourselves trailing clouds of conditioned experience. However, the author is left with the problem of making credible the unfamiliar. To overcome this problem, the protagonist is usually unacquainted with the unusual in his own environment. Tolkien, for example, creates the highly domesticated and naive hobbit who, through the course of the tale, is thrust outside his normal habitat of the Shire and is made to experience simultaneously with the reader the mysteries of middle-earth. In Kenneth Graham's book, a similar device is used but with some differences. We are first introduced to the not too brilliant but very likable Mole. His laziness causes him to forsake spring cleaning and undertake a stroll that results in his acquaintance with the Water Rat. Mole's unfamiliarity with the river requires that his new environment be explained to him. Therefore, as Mole experiences his first encounters with Badger, Toad, and the people of the Wild Wood, the reader simultaneously makes their acquaintance and, although Mole is a denizen of the same environment, his unfamiliarity with it acts as a catalyst for that environment's explanation.

Another common convention in the description of setting in literary fantasy is a detailed observation of the geography that is very often accompanied by an entertaining map. Furthermore, specific geographical locations are given symbolic importance. The dark land of Mordor, surrounded by the Mountains of Shadow, Ephel Duath, are as black and forboding as the Dark Lord that rules over them.

As such, the macrocosm of the setting in fantasy most often parallels the microcosm of action and personality. An example of this relationship may be taken from George Macdonald's The Light Princess. The Princess, cursed with the loss of gravitation, finds her only solace in water where the curse is not effective. The great drought, although caused by the evil witch, parallels her personal drought of real human emotions. When in the microcosm of her soul she acknowledges a human love, the tears of joy that are shed fill the lake and readjust the macrocosm to a state of harmony.

One geographical feature that persistently appears in the works of fantasy is the Wild Wood. In part this may be explained by investigating the literary origins of fantasy to discover that it arises out of the same oral traditions that produced folk and faerie tales. One dominant characteristic of folk tale is the element of prohibition. In Perrault's original Little Red Riding Hood, the maiden is devoured by the wolf without receiving assistance from the woodsmen who only make their appearance in the modern version of the tale. It can be assumed that the story was originally intended to dissuade young Bavarian children from straying too far into the hostile forest. The invention of Bogy Men serves a more common but related use. Thus the geographical setting of the Wild Wood is dark and ominous and is peopled by evil spirits and unknown horrors. The common rural origins of folk and fantasy also causes the setting to be described with a lyrical and pastoral emphasis. Take for example the beautiful description of the river in The Wind in the Willows:

> Never in his life had he seen a river before -- this sleek, sinuous, full-bodied animal, chasing and chuckling, gripping things with a gurgle and leaving them with a laugh, to fling itself on fresh playmates that shook themselves free, and were caught and held again. All was a-shake and a-shiver -- glints and gleams and sparkles, rustle and swirl, chatter and bubble. The Mole was bewitched, entranced, fascinated.[9]

But the setting in any work of fantasy must not be perpetually pastoral. It must be interesting and diversified in order to support the action. This is particularly true when the quest element serves as the theme because the terrain itself is often the antagonist and a purely sylvan setting does not provide an extensive variety of hazards and hardships.

Geography is only one aspect of setting and the location in time is equally as important. It shall be argued that fantasy deals with potentialities; that is, what can be. As a consequence, the temporal setting in fantasy need not be located in the present. Credulity is strengthened if we cannot specifically and directly relate the events occurring in the environment of fantasy with specific temporal events in the everyday world. If the setting of fantasy is described through the eyes of a character injected into it, then a problem with time occurs. For example, the children in the Narnia stories are taken out of modern England and transported magically into the enchanted land. But Lewis takes elaborate steps to disengage the Narnian time sequence pg 170? from our own. An illustration may be taken from a conversation between the children upon their return to Narnia in Prince Caspian:

> "You know what we were puzzling about last night, that it was only a year ago since we left Narnia but everything looks as if no one had lived in Cair Paravel for hundreds of years? Well, don't you see? You know that, however long we seemed to have lived in Narnia, when we got back through the wardrobe it seemed to have taken no time at all?" "Go on," said Susan. "I think I'm beginning to understand."
> "And that means," continued Edmund, "that, once you're out of Narnia, you have no idea of how Narnian time is going. Why shouldn't hundreds of years have gone past in Narnia while only one year has past for us in England?"[10]

On the other hand, often time is not referred to at all, at least in relation to this world. In cases such as the Tolkien trilogy, we know that the era of middle earth predates our own age but the exact chronology as well as its exact location remains unknown. The ability of fantasy to free-wheel through temporal settings is probably best illustrated by the traditional opening common to children's tales of all sorts, the very indefinite "Once upon a time...." Finally, because the realm of fantasy is foreign to the reality of this world, often a sense of timelessness is created. Such a situation occurs in Alice in Wonderland:

> True to the dreams through which Alice has her adventures, useful, conscious time has vanished, and simultaneous time has taken its place — which is our nearest approach to the sensation of timelessness.[11]

Characterization is distinctive not so much in the manner that it is revealed but in the variety of things that assume human characteristics. Golden tankards, trees, spiders, mice, creatures mythical, creatures vegetable, little girls and fish, all may be found as personalities in fantasy. To complicate matters (no pun intended), physical transformations occur within individual characters through the agency of magical intervention. For example, in Ruskin's tale, the kindly guardian appears as a strangely attired old man, the raging South-West Wind, an ale tankard, and finally as the King of the Golden River. Fantasy, like faerie, is a condition in which any animate or inanimate object may exhibit those qualities we attribute to man. While in physical appearance they share little resemblance to human beings, most exhibit the ability to speak. The protagonists are often men themselves but regardless of their origins or form, the heroes always display human passion and eccentricity. The river folk in The Wind in the Willows, while indisputably animal, exhibit such human qualities as Rat's hospitality, Badger's wisdom and courage, Toad's irresponsibility, and the weasels' viciousness and greed. Nor does it seem unusual for Rat to buckle on a very human brace of pistols, pick up his cudgel, and set out to save Mole from the Wild Wood. Similarly, Tolkien's hobbits, while bearing no physical resemblance to man, are very much like man in emotional terms. The hobbits exhibit love and fear, elation and despondency, in a manner that is much more easy for the reader to identify with than the manner of our human counterparts in the same tale, the men of Bree.

The question of speech emanating from things considered incapable of talking is an important one. Tolkien believes that the creation of talking animals represents "the desire of man to hold communion with other living things."[12] But he severely distinguishes between the allegorical nature of fable and the talking animals of faerie. Beast fable is always the mask for satire or the vehicle for moralizing. As such, it lacks the elements of pure literary fantasy because its credibility is suspect. When an author disguises his moral didacticism in the mask of a talking beast, the mask is always apparent. The illusion remains evident and credibility cannot be maintained. The enchanted object, to be believable, must operate in a context where enchantment seems quite reasonable. A talking tree will be reasonable only in relation to an environment in which it appears to be reasonable.

The variety of possible kinds of characters, then, is a distinctive quality of fantasy, and before they may be made believable they must be made consistent with their environment. While all the personalities of fantasy share at least one human quality, usually the ability to speak, many of the animate characters are distinctly inhuman in origin. Myth provides one fertile source for the inhabitants of the Perilous Realm. Many members of Prince Caspian's army, for example, could easily be found at a Dionysian festival and one actually takes place.

> One was a youth, dressed only in a fawn-skin, with vine-leaves wreathed in his curly hair. His face would have

> almost been too pretty for a boy's, if it had not looked so extremely wild. You felt, as Edmund said when he saw him a few days later, "There's a chap who might do anything — absolutely anything." He seemed to have a great many names — Bromios, Bassareus, and the Ram were three of them. There were a lot of girls with him, as wild as he. There was even, unexpectedly, someone on a donkey. And everyone was laughing: and everyone was shouting out, "Euan, euan, eu-oi-oi-oi."[13]

Other characters in fantasy receive their form out of the Apollonian desire to impose on the Dionysian spirit illustrated above. According to Nietszche, the Olympian dynasty was the product of anthropomorphic projection guided by the Apollonian impulse towards beauty. As a consequence, the Olympians became the mirror image of the Greeks through what Nietszche terms the Apollonian illusion:

> In the Greeks, the "will" wished to contemplate itself in the transfiguration of genius and the world of art; in order to glorify themselves, its creatures had to feel themselves worthy of glory; they had to behold themselves in a higher sphere, without this perfect world of contemplation acting as a command or reproach.[14]

A similar kind of projection may explain most transcendental figures and their appearance in works of fantasy. Aslan the Golden Lion is the divine force and the redeemer in Narnia. His Godhood is unquestionable and his Christianity not very skillfully disguised. Take for example the passage from the Voyage of the Dawn Treader:

> "There is a way into my country from all worlds," said the lamb; but as he spoke his snowy white flushed into tawny gold and his size changed and he was Aslan himself, towering above them and scattering light from his mane.[15]

A similar transformation occurs in The Lord of the Rings as Gandalf becomes Gandalf the White, and eventually passes majestically into the Western Sea. Thus, characters representative of the divine also operate in the realm of fantasy.

The denizens of fantasy, human or otherwise, often reflect the setting and are predominantly rural characters. Again the rural traits running through this literature may be traced to its association with folk and faerie tales. Although a story may begin in an urban setting as it does in the Water Babies, it soon moves into the sylvan countryside. It appears that fantasy and factories cannot co-exist and it may best be explained by fantasy's affinity with the desire to return to a primordial and Dionysian unity with the forces of nature. The rural sympathies of this literature account for the appearance of Trolls, elves, faeries, goblins and the like. But even with such traditionally accepted figures, their existence in fantasy must be made believable. George Macdonald's explanation of Goblins illustrates the artistic desire to establish credibility.

> There was a legend current in the country that at one time they lived above ground, and were very like other people. But for some reason or other, concerning which there were different legendary theories...they had all taken refuge in subterranean caverns, whence they never came out but at night, and then seldom showed themselves in any numbers, and never to many people at once...Those who had caught sight of any of them said that they had greatly altered in the course of generations; and no wonder, seeing they lived away from the sun, in cold and wet and dark places.[16]

The rural nature of the characters in fantasy often provides a source for humour when they are portrayed as naive bumpkins. This quality of portraiture appears as much in their colloquial dialogue as in the comic situations that befall them. Even such a sly and treacherous enemy as Gollum is tempered in his presentation by the language he uses. His cry for pity upon his capture by Frodo and Sam serves as an illustration.

> "Don't hurt us! Don't let them hurt us, precious! They won't hurt us will they, nice little hobbitses? We didn't mean no harm, but they jumps on us like cats on poor mices, they did, precious. And we're so lonely, 'gollum'. We'll be nice to them, very nice, if they'll be nice to us, won't we, yes, yess."[17]

In terms of situational comedy, Mole is the perfect bumpkin. Take for example, his disastrous first experience as an oarsman.

> The Mole flung his sculls back with a flourish, and made a great dig at the water. He missed the surface altogether, his legs flew up above his head, and he found himself lying on the top of the prostrate Rat. Greatly alarmed, he made a grab at the side of the boat, and the next moment — Sploosh![18]

Although any object may serve as a character in fantasy, certain devices are employed to foster audience belief in their existence. Consistency with their environment is essential and one way in which this may be achieved is to develop a code of law particular to their own setting. Any law is a formulation of desired conduct. Further, any social code is dependent upon prohibition. Although both the social codes and the kind of prohibitions found in fantasy may be different from those found in our world, their nature and the cause for their formation may be identified with. Therefore, social laws interior to a work of fantasy tend to serve a dual purpose. Firstly, through their ability to structure conduct, they provide a framework for consistency of action among the denizens of a given realm of fantasy. Secondly, through their prohibitive nature, the audience is able to identify them with the laws and social codes common in the everyday world, although the prohibitions themselves need not be identifiable with everyday human conduct.

The laws may be taken purely for granted like the animal code in The Wind in the Willows, or they may be totally arbitrary where their only consistency rests in their inconsistency as in Alice in Wonderland. In the first category, take Mole's thoughts on Otter's disappearance from the picnic:

> Not an Otter was to be seen, as far as the distant horizon.
> But again there was a streak of bubbles on the surface of the river.
> The Rat hummed a tune, and the Mole recollected that animal-etiquette forbade any sort of comment on the sudden disappearance of one's friends at any moment, for any reason or no reason whatever.[19]

In the second category, Alice's final acceptance of the unusual social order in Wonderland is essential to the theme. At first, Alice cannot accept the irrational and foreign behavior but gradually she comes to realize that the system works relative to the world of fantasy she has stumbled into.

The plot structures in fantasy contain all the variety that may be found in other narrative forms. The only obvious exception is that action may consist of highly improbable and fantastic events that would seem unbelievable in other narrative contexts. It has been repeatedly argued that the incredible must be set in a framework that promotes audience acceptance and belief. This applies as much to plot line as to setting and character. A further distinction from other narrative forms rests in the fact that the conflict between protagonist and antagonist is usually very clearly delineated and there is no difficulty in determining to what side a particular character belongs. The strict line of delineation exerts a strong effect upon characterization. For example, it would be difficult to mistake the Nazgul for a member of the Fellowship of the Ring.

> The great shadow descended like a falling cloud. And behold! it was a winged creature: if bird, then greater than all other birds, and it was naked, and neither quill nor feather did it bear, and its vast pinions were as webs of hide between horned fingers; and it stank. A creature of an older world maybe it was, whose kind, lingering in forgotten mountains cold beneath the moon, outstayed their day, and in hideous eyrie bred this last untimely brood, apt to evil.[20]

Even though the conflicts are elemental in the nature of their antagonisms, a final reconciliation must occur for tragic endings are not to be found in fantasy. A further complication may arise from the transformations possible in the appearance of a particular character. Such a situation has already been discussed in relation to the King of the Golden River.

The themes in fantasy are elemental but all have application to the general human situation in the everyday world. Often they are morally instructive but the instruction contained in them fails if it approaches moral didacticism. Essentially they consist of the fulfillment and pursuit of basic human desires. In the Light Princess, love, the need for it, and its attainment, provide the theme. In the King of the Golden River, the traditional tale of the three brothers whose origin may be traced to Scandinavian folklore, illustrates how industriousness and honesty win reward and may achieve freedom from oppression. Toad's dilemma shows the need for responsible actions and level headedness. Alice's adventures, apart from the more sophisticated adult content of the tale, are a metaphor for the process of growing up. The instruction contained in the Water Babies is comprised of a child's introduction to death without fear. But the most enduring thematic element found in fantasy is the quest for identity; an identity that is mature and self-sufficient and the structural framework within which the quest is worked out is the epic form.

The journey is the most obvious adaptation of epic machinery found in fantasy. The journey often works an effect upon the personalities of the characters undertaking it. Take for example the transformation that occurs in one of C.S. Lewis's characters in the Voyage of the Dawn Treader.

> There was a boy called Eustace Clarence Scrubb, and he almost deserved it. His parents called him Eustace Clarence and masters called him Scrubb. I can't tell you how his friends spoke to him, for he had none.[21]

After a short time in Narnia, Eustace becomes a changed individual.

> It would be nice, and fairly true, to say that "from that time forth Eustace was a different boy." To be strictly accurate, he began to be a different boy. He had relapses. There were still many days when he could be tiresome. But most of those I shall not notice. The cure had begun.[22]

The trials that befall a character in fantasy while on his quest sometimes reach Herculean proportions and much of the intended instruction deals with the ability to overcome the obstacles in life. Such is the case when the Water Baby sets out for the Peacepool and journeys to meet Mother Carey. But by far the most ingenious journey is undertaken by Tolkien's hobbits. Both Frodo and Bilbo Baggins begin their adventures as bumbling, domesticated residents of the Shire. Through the course of their journeys, their identities begin to change and they tap wells of courage they had not previously known to exist. Frodo, for example, rises from obscurity to become the saviour of middle earth. But the journey is not the only aspect of epic machinery that may be found in fantasy.

Battles assume epic proportions and often present Homeric allusions. Take by way of example the chapter in The Wind in the Willows aptly entitled "The Return of Ulysses". When Toad, the rightful heir to Toad Hall, returns to oust the weasels and stoats, the scene is reminiscent of Odysseus's return to Ithica and the battle of the banquet hall.

> The mighty Badger, his whiskers bristling, his great cudgel whistling through the air; Mole, black and grim, brandishing his stick and shouting his awful war-cry, "A Mole! A Mole!" Rat, desperate and determined, his belt bulging with weapons of every age and every variety; Toad, frenzied with excitement and injured pride, swollen to twice his size, leaping into the air and emitting Toadwhoops that chilled them to the marrow![23]

The Homeric concern with a hero's genealogy also is copied. This is particularly true when there are elements of medievalism contained in the tale and Tolkien is certainly the master while C.S. Lewis is also to be praised. Action in Homeric epics is often manipulated by the intervention of the gods. Time and time again, Odysseus is saved by the benevolence of Athena. In fantasy, the role of divine deliverer rests with the magician, the sorcerer. Because the framework in fantasy is designed to make magic credible, the sorcerer's role is as believable as the intervention of the gods in the Homeric epic.

Another way in which credibility is structurally supported is through the use of diction and it is worth commenting upon the function and choice of diction as it applies to children. Although the learning process begins in the cradle, a child's experience remains partially free from the imposed controls of reason. As a consequence, the child readily accepts the rationally unbelievable in fantasy. Mystification is integral to enchantment and diction is often employed to induce mystification. If we cast our memory back to our own childhoods it is easy to recall the difficulties presented to our understanding by our possession of a limited vocabulary. To the average ten year old, an intelligent news broadcast on the radio is largely unintelligible. It appears that intellectual conceptions, to be understandable, must be placed in some kind of discursive symbolic pattern. When the child encounters vocabulary that he does not understand, he is mystified and a break from his known environment occurs. Authors of fantasy achieve this in three ways. Firstly, words may be purposely chosen solely because they are beyond the comprehension of the child. While not purely fantasy, Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit provides an excellent illustration.

> Peter gave himself up for lost, and shed big tears; but his sobs were overheard by some friendly sparrows, who flew to him in great excitement, and implored him to exert himself.[24]

The words "implored" and "exert" most certainly do not exist in the vocabulary of the majority of children. The appearance of such words breaks the child's contact with the familiar and facilitates an easy entry into the realm of the unknown. Secondly, nonsense passages often appear. This occurs most often when verse is incorporated into the story. Nonsense, by its very nature, defies comprehension. The famous verse from Through the looking Glass serves by way of illustration.

"The time has come," the Walrus said,

> "To talk of many things:
> Of shoes - and ships - and sealing wax
> Of cabbages - and kings -
> Of why the sea is boiling hot -
> And whether pigs have wings."[25]

Grammatical errors, often very esoteric ones, may provide the source of confusion. Again, Alice provides us with an example. Here it is the linguistic situation termed "internal analogy,"

> "Curiouser and curiouser!" cried Alice (she was so much surprised, that for the moment she quite forgot how to speak good English).[26]

Consequently, the use of obscure, incorrect, or nonsense vocabulary, helps to instill a spirit of mystification in the youthful audience that tends to force a break from the realm that they understand thereby facilitating their entry into the realm of fantasy.

CHAPTER THREE: THE DESTRUCTION OF CREDIBILITY

I have been discussing how credibility may be maintained in works of fantasy but equally as important is the manner in which it may be destroyed. The first of L. Frank Baum's Oz books provides an excellent illustration. Dorothy is injected into the realm of Oz but unfortunately brings a large part of Kansas with her. Reference to the everyday world continually draws the reader's attention to the fact that the fantasy realm is fictitious. Take for example the following passage from the Wizard of Oz:

> "Really," said the Scarecrow, "you ought to be ashamed of yourself for being such a humbug."
> "I am — I certainly am," answered the little man, sorrowfully.
> So they sat down and listened while he told the following tale:
> "I was born in Omaha —"
> "Why, that isn't very far from Kansas!" cried Dorothy.
> "No; but it's farther from here," he said, shaking his head at her, sadly.[27]

Further, Baum breaks a second elemental rule of fantasy in his treatment of magic.

> Faerie itself may perhaps most nearly be translated by Magic -- but it is a magic of a peculiar mood and power, at the furthest pole from the vulgar devices of the laborious, scientific magician. There is one proviso: if there is any satire present in the tale, one thing must not be made fun of, the magic itself.[28]

When the wizard is revealed to be a fraud, belief in the magical agencies is destroyed. The magic in Oz is related to the laws of science identified with the growing American technology. Thus in Oz, magic is not only fraudulent, but, in Tolkien's terms, it is also vulgar and laborious. C.S. Lewis's Narnia stories can be accused of the same failing as the Oz books but to a lesser degree. In The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, the decidedly British nature of the school children is not lost even when they have become kings and queens in the magical realm. Furthermore, the opening chapters dwell on the impossibility of Narnia's existence. Lucy's tale of her experiences in the wardrobe are not believed by her brothers and sisters, and the reader also comes to mistrust her report.

Any comment made on specific affairs of the everyday world precludes the inclusion of the work in the fantasy category. Also, if an author is to reveal himself directly in the work, and particularly if such a revelation includes a conditioned bias, the ethereal nature of the fantastic realm is endangered. Both such situations occur in Kingsley's The Water Babies. Topical national eccentricities and racial commentary often penetrate the tale and because the nature of fantasy is universal and elemental, it cannot withstand the burden of specific social commentary. Fantasy is therefore one form of literature that does not provide a good reflection of the social temperament of a given age because if social comment is made, direct reference to the everyday world is necessary. Social commentary, then, like moral didacticism, must be obliquely presented in the personae of the denizens of fantasy, and done so without topical references.

CHAPTER FOUR: TALKING TREES AND THE NATURE OF THE SPIRIT FIGURE IN FANTASY

Man's desire to re-enter a direct union with nature is Dionysian and finds its expression through at least two recurrent images in literary fantasy. One has already been discussed under the topic of characterization in relation to the investiture of animals with the capacity for human speech. A second category of image is even more unique and resembles an extended pathetic fallacy. It often occurs in fantasy that vegetable matter is anthropomorphized. Not only is it given the ability to speak, but it is also credited with mobility, emotion, and other human characteristics. The most remarkable production of fantasy dependent upon this image is Carlo Collodi's Pinnochio. Master Antonio gives his old friend Geppetto the puppet-maker a fine piece of wood. As Geppetto sets out to carve a new puppet, the dead wood he works with, through a fantastic transformation, suddenly takes on a life and a personality of its own.

> The legs and feet remained to be done. When Geppetto had finished the feet he received a kick on the point of his nose.
> "I deserve it!" he said to himself. "I should have thought of it sooner! Now it is too late!"
> He then took the puppet under the arms and placed him on the floor to teach him to walk. When his legs became more flexible Pinnochio began to walk by himself and to run about the room; until, having gone out of the house door, he jumped into the street and escaped.[29]

Like Alice in Wonderland, Pinnochio traces the quest for a happy and natural childhood. In the course of his development, many transitions occur. A notable example is the episode when Pinnochio becomes a donkey. Finally, through good behavior and the development of a good heart, the fairy rewards Pinnochio with a final transition into human boyhood.

> He then went and looked at himself in the glass, and he thought he was someone else. For he no longer saw the usual reflection of a wooden puppet; he was greeted instead by the image of a bright, intelligent boy with

> chestnut hair, blue eyes, and looking as happy and joyful as if it were the Easter holidays.[30]

The investiture of human qualities in vegetable matter also occurs in Tolkien's trilogy. Treebeard, although described as a male, is similar in some respects to the classical Naiads. Treebeard explains to the hobbits the characteristics and mannerisms of Ents and is strangely pleasing and convincing.

> "We are tree-herds, we old Ents. Few enough of us are left now. Sheep get like shepherds, and shepherds like sheep, it is said; but slowly, and neither have long in the world. It is quicker and closer with trees and Ents, and they walk down the ages together. For Ents are more like elves: less interested in themselves than Men are, and better at getting inside other things. And yet again Ents are more like Men, more changeable than elves are, and quicker at taking the colour of the outside, you might say. Or better than both: for they are steadier and keep their minds on things longer."[31]

The naiad image also appears in C.S. Lewis's stories. They lend invaluable assistance in the ousting of the Telmarines and the re-establishment of the old order, the primal order, of Narnia. Take for example the conversation between old Badger and Prince Caspian:

> "Now," said the Badger, "if only we could wake the spirits of these trees and this well, we should have done a good day's work."
> "Can't we?" said Caspian.
> "No," said Trufflehunter, "we have no power over them. Since the Humans came into the land, felling forests and defiling streams, the Dryads and Naiads have sunk into a deep sleep. Who knows if ever they will stir again?"[32]

Besides the recurring images of human characteristics embodied in vegetable matter, the most unique archetype to appear in fantasy is the spirit figure: an objective symbol of god and unity. Jung argues that any psychic manifestation of the spirit is archetypal; this spiritual phenomenon depends upon an autonomous primordial image that is universal.[33] Before concentrating on the literature of fairy, Jung talks about the dream image of the Wise Old Man and associates this image with a kind of father figure from which good counsel and decisive beliefs may emanate. The Wise Old Man figure often occurs in literary productions of fantasy. Such a spirit figure appears when the hero finds himself in a quandary that he cannot personally resolve. The Wise Old Man generally serves the purpose of inducing self-reflection and mobilizing forces in the hero that he had previously not been conscious of possessing.

> Indeed the old man is himself this purposeful reflection and concentration of moral and physical forces that comes about spontaneously in the psychic space when conscious thought is not yet — or is no longer — possible. The concentration and tension of psychic forces have something about them that always looks like magic: they develop an unexpected power of endurance which is often superior to the conscious effort of the will.[34]

The role of the sorcerer and the witch in fantasy is similarly dependent upon magical agencies and enchantment; thus a relation can be drawn between the psychological archetype and the literary creation. When the hero finds himself in a situation where only an extraordinary power can save him from his antagonists, the archetypal objectification of the spirit figure appears in the form of his magical protector.

The character of Aslan has already been treated as a symbol of godhead. Like Gandalf, the perfect image of the Wise Old Man, Aslan can be counted on to appear in times of needs. Furthermore, Aslan has given the Pevensie children each a token of his favour. According to Jung, such talismen are directly related to the powers of the Wise Old Man.[35] Susan's silver horn has magical properties that can be used at a time of need to call for assistance. The talisman, then, is symbolic of the magical powers of the spirit figure and gives courage to its owner in fantasy by its ability to call forth the spirit figure himself.

The magical powers possessed by the spirit figure must conform to the law of consistency. Also, the spirit figure does not always reflect by way of external appearance the fantastic powers he contains. The first introduction to Merlyn given us by T.H. White in The Once and Future King certainly does not reveal the sorcerer's magical prowess.

> Merlyn had a long white beard and long white moustaches which hung down on either side of it. Close inspection showed that he was far from clean. It was not that he had dirty fingernails, or anything like that, but some large bird seemed to have been nesting in his hair.[36]

Another way in which the power of the spirit figure is disguised is through an inversion of the traditional symbols — white for purity and black for evil. This occurs in George Macdonald's The Light Princess. Here the symbol of purity contained in whiteness is linked with the Christian symbol of evil, the snake, when he presents the reader with the White Snake of Darkness. In The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, we are immediately introduced to the White Witch. The reader assumes that this is more fortuitous than meeting an obviously evil Black Witch, but, as the story evolves, we find that the White Witch, disguised in her veil of purity, is actually the evil force in Narnia and her whiteness comes to represent the sterility of eternal winter.

In literary fantasy, animals, as well as acting in their own right and displaying quasi-human characteristics, often serve as the intermediary that communicates between the spirit figure and the protagonist. Merlyn's faithful owl, Archimedes, is a case in point. However, this phenomenon finds its origins in a deeper Dionysian conceptual source — that of animistic cult worship and totemism, the precursors of the Dionysian spirit itself. Not only does this aspect of fantasy establish a link with the Dionysian energies but also it indicates the reason for the regular appearance of witches as personalities in this type of literature. To fully illustrate such a claim, it is necessary to look at the anthropological origins of witchcraft. This will be investigated in a later chapter.

PART TWO

FANTASY: THE PROCESS OF CONCEPTION

CHAPTER ONE: SYMBOLIZATION AND BELIEF

We have now seen some of the peculiarities of the literary expression of fantasy and it is time to investigate their conceptual origins. In a famous telegram from Ezra Pound to Henry Miller, Pound asks the question "Have you ever thought about money and how it got that way?" In the same vein, we have now thought about the literary product and must draw our attention to the mental process responsible for its creation. Because the material of literary art is the word rather than marble or paint, and because the word is nothing other than a symbol, we should begin with an analysis of the conceptual source and the nature of the symbol in fantasy the process.

Symbols are the material with which we structure our thinking and they are essential to the attainment of belief. Unlike other animals, man has long had a love for magic, ritual, religion, and art, all of which are not biomorphic needs and all of which are highly symbolical.

> Man unlike other animals uses signs not only to indicate things but also to represent them. Signs that refer to things in absentia are not symptoms of things but symbols.[37]

Generic psychology is based on the adaptivity of an organism to its environment, and, as a consequence to organic needs. In the same way that Aristotle said mimesis separated man from animal[38] it may now be asserted that it is man's ability to symbolize that defines the separation. It would appear, then, that one of man's central needs is the need of symbolization and that this need is not zoological. Fantasy is constructed primarily of imaginative symbolism and, as such, it may serve as a basic vehicle for the fulfillment of the need to symbolize.

Symbolization, then, is basic to any process of thought. The forms of knowledge and the nature of the expression of knowledge appear to be dependent upon a symbolic transformation occurring during the course of their conception. In turn the symbols may be manipulated in a variety of different ways, such as reasonably or imaginatively. Ideas that are manipulated in ways other than that which is reasonable stem from the same transformational source and should be considered equally as valid. Fantasy, when considered as a process of the imagination rather than as an artistic form, operates out of the irrational manipulation of transformational symbol. It must be emphasized that the irrational aspects of fantasy apply to its conception rather than to the nature of its expression. However, it is interesting that the expression of fantasy consistently incorporates magic and devices intended to engender mystical belief; products of a similar mental condition and a similar irrational manipulation of transformational symbolism.

Only discursive language is capable of presenting understandable thought verbally. Discursive language and its linear pattern gives form to the projection of ideas even when the conception of those ideas does not stem from the rational capabilities of mind. This is the essential difference between the role of reason in the conception and in the expression of fantasy. An analogy may be taken from the similar kind of organization affecting the operation of our sensory organs. All data is the result of the process of formulation. For example, the eye, as a sensory organ, is selective in imposing form upon the impulses which it receives. The predominant characteristics of any given scene are immediately and selectively chosen while irrelevant data are rejected. If this were not the case, the simple glimpse of a city street would overwhelm the mind with chaotic sensa.

> Out of this bedlam of our sense-organs we must select certain predominant forms, if they are to make report of things and not mere dissolving sensa. The eye and ear must have their own logic — their "categories of understanding", if you like the Kantian idiom, or their "primary imagination", in Coleridge's version of the same concept. An object is not a datum, but a form construed by the sensitive and intelligent organ, a

> form that is at once experienced as an individual thing and as a symbol of it, for this sort of thing.[39]

It follows that there is no consistent and enduring form of the 'real' world other than the particular pattern we choose to impose upon it. We deal with appearance and formulate the pattern of appearance in accordance with arbitrary conditions. Thus the pattern imposed by reason is only one of a variety of possible choices of organizing data and should not be considered as universal or ultimate. Fantasy, with its reliance upon patterns produced by the imagination, is equally as valid a formulation and must not be dismissed merely because its pattern is not based on reason during the process of its conception. However, the presentation of fantasy and all other forms of imaginative thinking in literature must resort to a kind of rational consistency in their expression if the expression is to remain discursive.

CHAPTER TWO: TRANSFORMATIONS BEYOND SYMBOLISM

Symbolism is not the only aspect of fantasy involved with transformation. Firstly, the act of creation brings into existence something that did not previously exist. As such, a new existence is made through the process of imaginative formulation. Again, the laws governing the imaginative formulation are distinct from those governing the literary product. Secondly, in fantasy the transformation often confused with escape is actually a deliverance from the form of cognition based on the restrictions of reason. It effects a return to a primordial consciousness: a consciousness predating the creation of ordered systems and structures to whose laws our thinking processes are now subjected. External fact need not provide the source for literary imitation. Furthermore, the hypothetical relationships internal to a work of literature contain and circumscribe their own existence.[40] Creation in these terms is not a reflection of what has become but it is a transformation of what has become into a new state of becoming. It follows that only one more aesthetic plateau remains — the change from becoming to being. This achievement necessitates the participation of an audience. When the identification of the audience with a work of art is complete, a fusion occurs. Art and life become inseparable and the audience exists on the terms of the work of art. An example of such a final plateau may be taken from the haiku tradition when the phenomenon of 'sainvegha' occurs in the audience. 'Sainvegha' may be roughly translated as 'poetic shock', a shock that enlightens the reader and makes him one with the creation. The pleasure afforded by the literary product of fantasy stems from a similar phenomenon — the transformation of the experience of a human being through a work of art. While the transformation that occurs is common to other forms of literature such as haiku poetry and Attic tragedy, its occurrence in literary fantasy bears deeper investigation.

If it can be accepted that the ultimate ambition of art is to create a fusion with life rather than merely to copy it, then criticism must extend its horizons beyond literature to gain the correct perspective. Frye's insistence upon polysemous interpretation, the principle of manifold meaning, seems a valuable criterion.[41] Therefore, in my argument, Freud's proposition that life may be divided into two basic principles — the reality and the pleasure principle — is generally accepted and reference to them should not be taken as an indication of a dedicated Freudian approach to criticism. The pleasure principle refers to man's drive to gratify elemental needs and to enjoy the pleasures afforded by such a gratification. The drives are animalistic and instinctual and although they are now largely restricted to the unconscious, they constitute the older primary process of mind that existed prior to the advent of reason and the reality principle. However, the rampant eros of the pleasure principle is destructive in civilized environments. Instinctual aims must be guided by a criterion that has utility, and immediate pleasure must give way to delayed but assured pleasure.

> With the establishment of the reality principle, the human being which, under the pleasure principle, has been hardly more than a bundle of animal drives, has become an organized ego. It strives for "what is useful" and what can be obtained without damage to itself and to its vital environment. Under the reality principle, the human being develops the function of reason: it learns to 'test' the reality, to distinguish between good and bad, true and false, useful and harmful. Man acquires the faculties of attention, memory, and judgement. He becomes a conscious, thinking subject, geared to a rationality that is imposed upon him from the outside. Only one mode of thought activity remains free from the rule of the reality principle: phantasy...[42]

Socially useful activities based on the reality principle and governed by the agency of reason naturally suppress the immediate and uncontrolled gratification of elemental needs. Through the reality principle our environment may be manipulated to accomplish 'progress', particularly as it is demonstrated by current advances in technology. The promise offered is that progress will afford man greater freedom, but real freedom lies as much in the gratification of elemental pleasures and such a gratification is in opposition to the reality principle. However, although the basic pleasures have been sublimated by the rational agency, they have not been destroyed.

> The fact that the reality principle has to be re-established continually in the development of man indicates that its triumph over the pleasure principle is never complete and never secure.[43]

The sublimation of the pleasure principle is a product of the human situation and its organization,rather than a product of nature. We are taught to experience according to the dictates of the social organization we live within. In turn, the social organization is always a product of the reality principle and is naturally hostile to the immediate gratification of pleasures. It has already been argued that the transformation of life into art acts as a liberation from experience. In aesthetic fantasy, the liberation consists of a return to the pleasure principle; the repressed individual returns to the primordial desires and impulses when he becomes one with the reality, existent before the elevation of reason, that is inherent in fantasy. While these impulses guide the artist during the act of conceiving fantasy, they are also imparted to the audience through certain keys contained in the literary product. Some such keys have already been discussed but their conceptual origins require deeper scrutiny.

The mental process responsible for the creation of literary fantasy may be directly equated with the imagination and is completely independent of rational laws. As such, the reality principle automatically rejects the idea that the product of such a mental process has a truth value cognitive of existence. The separation between the reality principle and the process of coneiving of fantasy may be related to the separation between the reality principle and the pleasure principle. By remaining free of the criterion established by reason, the mental process that conceives fantasy is deemed inconsequential because it rejects the norms and values implicit in organized systems. Through the esemplastic power of the imagination, fantasy reaffirms the unity between the universal and the particular while the powers of objectification stemming from reason consistently attempt to destroy original unity through classification and stratification. Arising from the power of such objectifications is the 'principium individuationis' and the fear of isolation becomes part of the human predicament. But the mental activity resulting in literary fantasy wields the power to attack the 'principium individuationis' and "sustains the claim of the whole individual, in union with the genus and with the archaic past."[44] Fantasy effects a return to the fulfillment of pleasure without repression and is the champion of the pleasure principle in an era of subjugation to the objectified social systems produced by rationality.

> As a fundamental, independent mental process, phantasy has a truth value of its own, which corresponds to an experience of its own — namely, the surmounting of the antagonistic human reality. Imagination envisions the reconciliation of the individual with the whole, of desire with realization, of happiness with reason. While this harmony has been removed into utopia by the established reality principle, phantasy insists that it must and can become real, that behind the illusion lies _knowledge_. The truths of the imagination are first realized when fantasy itself takes form, when it creates a universe of perception and comprehension — a subjective and at the same time objective universe. This occurs in _art_.[45]

In Tolkien's discussion of faerie tales, appearing in his essay _Tree and Leaf_, he makes an interesting comment:

> The magic of faerie is not an end in itself, its virtue is in its operations: among these are the satisfaction of

> certain primordial human desires. One of these desires is to survey the depths of space and time.[46]

Time in fantasy, both in the process of its conception and in the manner of its expression, exhibits many peculiarities because the stuff of fantasy very often deals with potentialities — what can be. One such potentiality would be the regaining of the lost unity between the universal and the particular. Another consists of the potential gratification of elemental instincts through the reconciliation of the pleasure and the reality principles. Freud recognized such a reconciliation as one of man's basic ambitions, but to Freud such a reconciliation is conjured up out of our subhistorical past prior to the advent of civilization and the ascendency of the reality principle. For Marcuse, the images of fantasy can refer to the unconquered future of mankind as well as to its past.

> The simultaneously retrospective and expectant nature of the imagination is thus clearly stated: it looks not only back to an aboriginal golden past, but also forward to still all unrealized but realizable possibilities.[47]

I have been arguing for an aesthetic that demands the fusion of life and art. In fantasy such a situation occurs and is rooted in the human desire for a reconciliation between the reality and the pleasure principles, a reconciliation that cannot occur through the agency of reason. According to Ernst Fischer in his essay Chaos and Form, both life and art are a suspension between nothingness and being, chaos and form, the unconscious and the conceptual. Such a statement echoes the the classical aesthetic split between the Dionysian and the Apollonian energies. In general terms, the Dionysian is represented by ecstasy, sexuality, passionate action, the multitude versus the individual and common property. It contains forces of destruction and is elemental, instinctive, and original, containing a plea to return to a state of chaos and revolt. It argues for a freedom from the imposed order and is reached through a state of anarchy and chaos. The

Apollonian energies call for moderation, reunion, reconciliation, and the beauty of form. Nietszche argues in the Birth of Tragedy that the Apollonian and Dionysian forces were in perpetual antagonism and it was that antagonism which led to continuing artistic births, culminating in their final coupling in Attic tragedy. What now must be investigated is the acquaintanceship between the Dionysian energies involved in the conception of fantasy and the Apollonian structure of fantasy's expression.

The Dionysian energies resemble the drives of the pleasure principle and are particularly hostile to the 'principium individuationis'. On the other hand, the concept of the individual is essentially rational and is Apollonian in sympathy. With it comes the desire to draw boundaries and to establish particulars out of the universals. As such, Apollo's disciples were concerned with limitation and moderation while the members of the Dionysian cult pursued the destruction of limitation and sought after excess.

> The Dionysian as the elemental, the instinctive, and the original, contains the transfiguring memories of an earlier form of community, free from law and authority. It makes a passionate plea for a return to such a state through ecstasy, revolt, and triumph of the multitude over the individual.[48]

As the Dionysian spirit breaks through the Apollonian restraints, "everything subjective vanishes into complete self-forgetfulness."[49] Not only is man and man reconciled but so also is man and nature. Barriers and rules are broken; the system is destroyed; the primordial unity is restored. Self moulds with collective self. Individuality ceases to exist. Man is no longer an artist. He becomes a work of art.

Nietszche's discussion of the Dionysian satyr illustrates this condition.[50] He believes that the satyr is a product of man's longing for the primitive and the natural and, as such,it is the embodiment of sexual superiority and wisdom.

In the exuberance of the Dionysian festival, the votaries are swept into a chaotic revelry in which their conception of self is lost to the hysteria of the multitude. This situation causes a transformation in the Dionysian reveller and he sees himself as a satyr, thereby penetrating into the heart of nature. The reveller as subject and the satyr as object become fused in one unity. Individual man becomes one with the elemental powers and forces of nature.

Fantasy, through its use of the esemplastic powers of the imagination to create new relationships, strives towards unity but the unity is a primoridal one and not the synthesis of objectified particularities. Apollonian form and its accompanying objectification is an imposition upon original organic unity. Because the mental process responsible for the conception of fantasy finds its origins in a primordial mode of thought that existed before the conception of particularities, fantasy is essentially Dionysian.

It is argued in the Appendix dealing with mimesis and the impossible, that the projection of ideas in language must be discursive. Furthermore, there is an inherent logic in discursive symbolism that is operative in ordering any sensical expression and it follows that form is essential to the presentation of any idea if communication is to be achieved. Such a commitment to form is Apollonian. In areas internal to a work of aesthetic fantasy, reason and order, consistency and coherence, are necessary if a meaningful expression is to be made. The fact that Dionysian energies are at work in the conception of fantasy does not necessitate a Dionysian kind of expression — a completely Dionysian kind of expression could not discursively present sense. Furthermore, man's desire to reconcile the pleasure and the reality principles occurs when the Dionysian mode of conception is given Apollonian form in the manner of its expression. It is in the achievement of such a reconciliation that the ultimate value of fantasy lies.

CHAPTER THREE: THE WITCH AND DIONYSUS

The witch is a prominent figure in literary fantasy and an investigation of her origins reveals her Dionysian heritage. Attitudes towards witchcraft have ranged from the original Orthodox Diabolical Belief, a naive acceptance of the authentic and valid tradition of witch rites and ritual, to the Disneyesque treatment of malicious old crones.[51] The most popular contemporary attitude may be termed Rationalistic-Scientific Disbelief. Such an approach faces witchcraft with a gauntlet of empirical tests and generally treats the witch as an archaic quack. But the studies of Professor Margaret Murray and Sir James Fraser re-opened the investigation of witchcraft from the point of view of the anthropologist. Although their hypotheses are speculative, the anthropological researchers begin their studies with proto-paleolithic man, and more particularly, with the first organization of social groups. They begin by observing the phenomena apparent in primate communities surrounding the development of a group emotional nexus. Primitive zoological needs such as sex, self preservation, or food gathering, constitute the original drive to form communities and it is around the emotional nexus produced by these common drives that the group finds its centerpoint. In turn, members of the group display a sympathetic response to situations connected with the emotional nexus. Such a sympathetic response is apparent in all primate communities. Arising out of such responses came the first ritual ceremony, the dance.

> These sympathetic movements some anthropologists see as the beginnings of the dance. At all events, the dance is an extremely early expression of the emotional and rhythmic unity of the group. In it, the full force of the nervous identification is released, and later, when individuality has appeared, it provides the means, again, of losing that painful acquisition, and becoming once

> more part of the general group release. Religion — the relation of the individual to the cosmos, at first only seen as the group — grows with the dance. As religion devlops historically into the long struggle between the rationalizing ascetic and the emotional erotic, the dance becomes almost a dividing line.[52]

While such a comment is premature in the argument, it is interesting to note that the dance is very much a part of the Dionysian bachannal and that it is also a consistent trait of elves and fairies — the fairy ring, for example. More important in terms of the Dionysian spirit of the dance, as Nietszche illustrated with reference to the satyr, is the defeat of the 'principium individuationis'. In the ecstasy of the dance and through its common emotional nexus, the paleolithic dancer could lose the fear of his own individuality and of his isolation in a hostile environment. Furthermore, according to the anthropological view of witchcraft, the dance was first established as a ritual based on food gathering. As such, the woman and her domestic symbols, the fire and the cauldron, were incorporated in the ceremony. An organizer was needed not only to determine the dance steps but to decide when and where it would take place. The individual who became responsible for such decisions was probably the prototype priest, the original magician and the original spirit figure.

It may be assumed that paleolithic man was still conscious of his immediate identification with the forces of nature, and what is known of early totemic and animistic cults shows that,through the vehicle of the dance, such an identification was strengthened. But animal identification went beyond the dance. This may be evidenced by the reindeermen paintings in early caves and the wearing of totem signs such as the lion skin and the wolf hide. As man became more sophisticated, the 'principium individuationis' strengthened its grasp upon him. As a consequence there was a renewed attempt to return to a common sub-human consciousness and this could be achieved through religio-magical formulas. These formulas found their eventual culmination in the Dionysian cult.

As the rites and rituals of the old cults gave way to the more transcendental affinities of religion, mankind witnessed the rise of monotheism. It must be remembered that the monotheism of the Eygptians was still primarily animistic insomuch as the gods were not anthropomorphic projections but assumed animal appearances. In turn, Olympian polytheism incorporated the Dionysian cult and gave it form and name. It remained for the rise of Christian monotheism to successfully cause the destruction of the old religion. By old religion it is meant the old magic; a magic that can be directly related to witchcraft. The edict of Milan in 313 A.D. established Christianity as the religion of Rome, but for many it was viewed as a minority Jewish heresy. As a consequence, the church defenders, in a spirit of classical Greek rationality, set out to systematically attack the opponents they found in the old cult worshippers. Fertility cults, animism, and totemism all found a point of identification with the Dionysian festival and the Dionysian cult became the prime target of the Christian Church. Take for example the medieval image of the devil. His appearance is a direct copy of the satyr and incorporates the visage of the Dionysian goat. Spiked horns, a sharp beard, and cloven hooves became objectified as a demonic symbol and became directly equated with evil. What had once been a sign of festivity, motherhood, and natural unity, was relegated to the area of sinful conduct. In much the same way, the old matriarchal symbols of the witch-mother and her cauldron and fire became equated with evil. The old religion and the old magic were outlawed by the new Christian monotheism and the power of Pauline doctrines of sin and the resulting suppression of witches has never been overcome.

In literary fantasy, the witch resembles the Dionysian maenad's dual character. On the one hand, the women devotees of Dionysus reflect an endearing sympathy with nature, making their homes in mountains and forests. The god himself is unique in his identification with the forces of nature insomuch as he is the only immortal on Olympus born of mortal mother. His identity, then, is a mixture of the human and the divine, and his energies retain the primordial spirit of the pleasure principle and man's desire for the reunion with Eros. But like witches in fantasy, the maenads also exhibit a black side to their personality. Crazed with wine and run mad with the ecstasy of the bachannal, Dionysus's female devotees often fell upon any living creature that crossed their path, ripping it limb from limb. Thus the witch represents both a positive force in a return to Dionysian unity as well as a negative power that is destructive and vicious. For example, of the four witches in Oz, two are good, two are evil. In the literature of fantasy, the witch demonstrates the dual nature of her Dionysian counterpart, and it is her Dionysian origins that account for her recurrent appearance in this form of literature.

CONCLUSION

We have seen that internal unity is the basic law of the literature of fantasy. The credibility arising from it is directly related to the mode of thought commonly termed 'belief' and it has already been argued that belief is an experience capable of real perceptions. It is belief that causes transformations in the audience that in turn cause a sense of fulfillment. Religious belief is a case in point and the parallel between religious belief and the mental process responsible for the creation of fantasy literature is direct.

> The material furnished by the senses is constantly wrought into symbols, which are our elementary ideas. Some of these ideas can be combined and manipulated in the manner we call "reasoning." Others do not lend themselves to this use, but are naturally telescoped into dreams, or vapour off in conscious fantasy; and a vast number of them build the most typical edifice of the human mind — religion.[54]

Empirically founded reason is wedded to external nature and is based on sensory 'fact' rather than transcendental credulity. Traditionally, matter, the stuff of sensory 'fact', has been contrasted with spirit. In Jung's essay, The Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairy Tales, he reaches the following conclusion:

> Concerning the definition of the spirit: The hallmarks of spirit are, firstly, the principle of spontaneous movement and activity; secondly, the spontaneous capacity to produce images independently of the sense perception; and thirdly, the autonomous and sovereign manipulation of the images. The spiritual entity approaches primitive man from the outside; but with increasing development it gets lodged in man's consciousness and becomes a subordinate function, thus apparently forfeiting its original character of autonomy.[55]

Such a description of the nature of spirit closely parallels the development of my argument. The first aspect of the definition stresses spontaneity and action. Here a parallel may be found both with the Dionysian energies and with the active capacities of the Coleridgean imagination.[56] The production of images independently of sense perception corresponds to the imagination's operation in fantasy and its ability to produce images of things not reflected in the empirical mirror. The autonomous and sovereign manipulation of the images relates directly to the power of aesthetic creativity. A similar reference to autonomy may be found in Frye's statement that the only intention in a work of literature is to abolish intention itself[57] while the sovereignty inherent in the creative experience is a reminder of the relationship Coleridge draws between creativity and the divine.[58] Further, it has been argued that the forces responsible for the conception of fantasy are primordial and Dionysian. Their imaginative conception arises within the artist from a memory that is primitive and sublimated. As the conception is translated into coherent expression, discursive presentation is employed. Therefore, the original Dionysian and primordial autonomy is forfeit to the Apollonian drive toward order. The unity of the Dionysian chaos is transformed into the imposed unity of Apollonian form. As a consequence, although a transformation in the kind of unity has occurred, symbols reaching back to the primordial conceptual origins are integrated in the expression and when the audience encounters them, it meets a catalyst for its own transformation. We have observed in the treatment of the expression, several separate areas where these kinds of images are operative. Firstly, fantasy is filled with recurring Jungian archetypes that relate to the Dionysian unity. Secondly, there is the embodiment of a primordial spirit figure, a figure surrounded by magical capabilities, recurrent in the literature of fantasy. Thirdly, there is a distinct relationship between the Dionysian element and the appearance of witches.

It has been the argument of this paper that a commitment to consistency is essential if credibility and belief are to be established. We have seen some examples of how this is achieved in the expression and it has been argued that its sympathy is Apollonian. But in terms of its conception, fantasy springs from primordial sources of memory and is the result of a basic desire to return to a natural and unstructured unity with our environment. Reason, the dominant force in contemporary thought, is representative of the reality principle, and it is the reality principle that aggressivly attacks the primordial and spontaneous unities recognizable in the Dionysian energies. A commitment to the imagination that fails to incorporate rational form in the manner of its expression is non-discursive and non-sensical. Similarly, a commitment to reason that fails to acknowledge the truth value inherent in imaginative conceptions is ultimately sterile and incapable of viewing the human situation in its entirety. Fantasy,as a mode of imaginative creation, can only be presented when it is given rational form. Consequently, fantasy forces a reconciliation between the two basic and hostile forces conditioning experience.

Man's use of reason, an Apollonian tool, has led to the imposition of form on the primoridal Dionysian unities. The relationships, systems and structure constituting the imposition have become objectified and frozen into factual contexts that we have come to view as objects. Such a process of objectification places a barrier between the individual and his direct experience of existence and leads him into a state of passivity, frustration, and subservience to the very structures that his reason has created. The Dionysian call, the ecstasy inherent in the acknowledgement of the primal unities, and the desire to break passivity and indulge in Eros, remains in the human psyche. Reason and technology have made the promise of progress but while man may reach the moon, the productions of the technocrats have not assuaged his elemental fears. A basic human desire, when viewed nakedly, is the desire to experience the ecstasy of experience itself, full-blown and bellowing like the ancient satyr.

Such an argument does not call for anarchy and chaos, nor for the dismissal of reason and form. Instead, it asks for an awareness of both their capabilities and their defects. Such an awareness comes through a conscious reconciliation of the basic antagonisms causing man's fears. In fantasy, the Dionysian and the Apollonian drives find their marriage and their progeny yields pleasure and a sense of wonderment and gratification in the audience. The lessons of fantasy are real and valuable and the reconciliations inherent in its literature may well serve to usher man into new states of awareness and optimism.

FOOTNOTES

1 Ernst Fischer, "Chaos and Form," Mosaic, ed. Kenneth McRobbie (Winnipeg, 1969), II, p. 47.

2 Ibid., p. 44.

3 Sheila Egoff, The Republic of Childhood (Toronto, 1967), p. 136.

4 Aristotle, Poetics, trans. Leon Golden (New Jersey, 1950), XXV.

5 Appendix Three.

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8 Ibid., p. 23.

9 Kenneth Graham, The Wind in the Willows (London, 1932), p. 4.

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20 J.R.R. Tolkien, The Return of the King (New York, 1965), p. 140.

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30 Ibid., p. 156.

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40 Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (New York, 1968), p. 84.

41 Ibid., p. 72.

42 Herbert Marcuse, Eros and Civilization (Boston, 1955), p. 14.

43 Ibid., p. 15.

44 Ibid., p. 143.

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47 Herbert Marcuse, Eros and Civilization (Boston, 1955), p. 148.

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APPENDIX ONE:

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE SEPARATION BETWEEN FANCY, FANTASY AND THE IMAGINATION

It is intriguing that the crack forced in the empirical mirror by the imagination was only made possible by the rise to dominance in epistemology of empiricism itself. Prior to Bacon and Newton, science and philosophy functioned as integrated disciplines. The battle that forced their separation ended with empirical observation dethroning the Cartesian theory of innate ideas. Science and philosophy continued to influence each other and empirical methodology was incorporated into the philosophical thought that led to eighteenth-century scepticism. Scientific empiricism became, in Susan K. Langer's term, the "generative idea" of a new philosophical epoch, and it helped to establish the germinal psychological theories of Locke and Hartley. Associative psychology, in turn, led indirectly to the triumph of the imagination. In Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, the section dealing with the "association of ideas" asserts that a kind of "madness" is operating in associative situations.[59] Although the psychology of association does not refer directly to imagination, the "madness" may be interpreted as a form of imaginative enthusiasm. The idea is not a new one. Plato had discussed the power of the creative process with a similar reference to madness:

> For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him.[60]

The imagination was generally related to the inventive power of creativity, to the ability to produce novelty and pleasure, and equated with madness. It was not considered a child of reason. The definition of the process of mind called fantasy that relegates it to delusion and hallucination may stem from the original link between imagination and insanity. However, we are rushing the question without first investigating the traditional relationship between fancy, fantasy, and the imagination.

Joseph Addison's essays On the Pleasures of the Imagination provide a convenient starting point. At first, he limits his analysis to visible images and objects. He next analyzes the pleasures stemming from the secondary qualities of the imagination, revealing the influence of associative psychology. The secondary qualities are those that arise from the interaction of the mental processes and the memory upon the results of primary observation. The secondary qualities afford pleasure through the ability to form new combinations of the original sensory data.

His argument concerning the three distinct pleasures of "greatness," the "uncommon," and "beauty" do not warrant investigation here. What is important is the distinction concerning "poetic fancy."

> There is a kind of Writing, wherein the Poet quite loses sight of Nature, and entertains his Reader and Imagination with the Characters and Actions of such Persons as have many of them no Existence, but what he bestows upon them...which is, indeed, more difficult than any other that depends upon the Poet's Fancy, because it has no Pattern to follow it, and must work altogether out of its own Invention.[61]

For Addison, literary fancy is a product of the subsection of the imagination that draws upon poetic genius rather than nature as a source for its imitation. However, it is not Addison's treatment of the subject but his limitations that bear inspection. Apart from the immediate questions of interpretation such as Addison's meaning of "Nature," a chameleon term in neo-classical criticism,[62] the most important limitation comes from his lack of precision. Fancy seems to refer to the inventive or creative power elsewhere ascribed to the imagination, yet it is said to have the ability to "entertain" the imagination. It is at once both separate from the imagination and united to it. Further, the possibility of imitating the non-existent, a question central to an analysis of fantasy, is not discussed.

While Wordworth is more precise in his treatment of the relationship between the two agencies, his approach is similarly limited. The imagination-fancy distinction appears in the Preface to the second edition of the Lyrical Ballads. In his pantheism, there is no place for the analytical and for reason. If a reality complete with moral value is to be perceived in man's direct relation with nature, then the imposition of abstractions founded on empirically based reason can do nothing other than impede the motion of the spirit

> that impells
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things.[63]

The application of reason to the analysis of reality, for Wordsworth, results in quantitative deductions while the nature of poetry is qualitative — insomuch as it is capable of passionately communicating the totality of those truths found in nature. It follows that a mind dedicated solely to reason is a mind equally dedicated to dissection and classification. Therefore, reason operates as a disruptive element in man's relation to nature, and, as a consequence, to the moral and spiritual values inherent in it. How, then, are the "permanent forms of nature"[64] and the instruction they contain to be communicated through the poetic vehicle? Wordsworth answers that the imagination is equal to the task and the Preface to the collected poems of 1815 concentrates its attention on the imaginative process.

The manner in which Wordworth grouped the poems in this edition has drawn such sharp criticism as Charles Lamb's frank statement that it is "the very worst that could be followed."[65] One fortunate result for the student of literature is that Wordsworth had to define the terms of his classification in the preface. Imagination is considered as an operation of mind and as the exercise of "that faculty of which the poet is 'all compact'."[66] To further extend his definition, he gives a series of examples and proceeds to comment on the aspect of the imagination incorporated in each. Wordsworth here sees the imagination capable of abstracting, modifying, shaping and creating objects in such a way that they are liberated from the constraints of their original form. The process is at once synthetic and penetrative. Consequently, an experience may be captured, interpreted, and presented in its essential totality rather than merely in a quantitative aspect of that totality.

More important to our discussion is that in the Preface of 1815, Wordsworth treats the relationship between fancy and the imagination. Although, like Addison's, his definition is not exact, the difference between the two terms rests in their varying ability to effect change in the materials they work with. For Wordsworth, fancy need not change the material upon which it acts. No original existence is created and any changes that do occur operate by chance or accident external to the thing affected.

> The law under which the processes of fancy are carried on is as capricious as the accidents of things, and the effects are surprising, playful, amusing, tender, or pathetic, as the objects happen to be oppositely produced or fortunately combined...[67]

As with Addison, our concern is with the limitations inherent in Wordsworth's theory. He greatly reduced fancy's creative importance while its power "to aggregate and to associate, to evoke and combine, belong as well to the imagination as to fancy."[68] Fancy is no longer an active subsection of the imagination but a capricious and entertaining accident that holds only the power to reorder objects of perception. If no original existence is created out of the materials acted upon by fancy, then the question of imitating the impossible is dismissed.

The imagination-fancy distinction was not left simmering in Wordsworth's critical stew and was soon brought to boil by Coleridge. His remarks on the imagination have troubled the academic community from the time of their composition to the present day, and it would be presumptuous to attempt to define them briefly and strictly here. One thing of importance, however, is his absolute belief that the two agencies are different and that contention is a giant step from Addison and Wordsworth.

> Repeated meditations led me first to suspect...that fancy and imagination were two distinct and widely different faculties, instead of being, according to the general belief, either two names with one meaning, or at furthest the lower and higher degree of one and the same power.[69]

It is odd that immediately following the declaration of their difference, Coleridge remarks on the parallel between the translation of the Greek 'phantasia' and the Latin 'imagiato'. He argues that a "certain unconscious good sense"[70] is at work to desynonymize words of the same meaning. As will be seen, his attitude presents a stumbling block while at the same time it serves as a point of departure for my investigation. But first, to move toward the heart of his distinction, it is necessary to turn attention to his wonderfully abstract consideration of fancy and the imagination:

> THE IMAGINATION then I consider as either primary, or secondary. The primary Imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the infinite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The secondary Imagination I consider as the echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency, and differing only in degree, and in the mode of its operation.

> FANCY, on the contrary, has no other counters to play with, but fixities and definites. The fancy is indeed no other than a mode of memory emancipated from the order of time and space; while it is blended with, and modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we express by the word Choice. But equally with the ordinary memory the fancy must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association.[71]

In the Biographia Literaria, the connection between the concrete world and the world of its artistic representation is based on the view that the universality of nature cannot be separated from its particularity. That is, the reality of nature lies in the vital ability of the universal to give form to the particular. Coleridge calls the imagination an "esemplastic" power, a word of his own origination that is meant to convey the idea of "moulding into unity." Process, as the prime characteristic of nature, becomes the imitable object. The form of a concrete object is viewed as an event in the process of nature and as such, it acts in accordance with the universal and natural ideal forms. In art, the essence of the process must be captured and allowed to 'realize' itself. It follows that the great poet is one who can select those objects or qualities from nature that have the intrinsic ability to organically reveal their essence. Art, as imitative of process, displays the action of the universal within particular objects or qualities, and, by doing so, tends to act as the intermediary between the universal and the particular.

The dilemma that necessitated Coleridge's elevation of the "esemplastic" power of the imagination rests in the conclusions drawn from his investigation of psychological theory. However, his theory of art and his theory of mind are inseparable and it is his realization of the intimate connection between art and life that may serve as the point of departure in a definition of fantasy.

> Thus, in order to explain the means by which the mind

> conceives of both the ultimate universal forms and at the same time the concrete, particular world, Coleridge postulated two different aspects of mind directed to each: reason, on the one hand, and the senses and understanding on the other. But thus to divide the mind into two separate capacities violated his organic conception of nature. For nature is neither the universal nor the particular, but a process in which each declares and sustains the other.[72]

The imagination becomes the completing power that unifies the two separate aspects of the mind — reason and understanding. Understanding is applied to classification and association within the concrete world of sense while reason is directed toward the comprehension of abstract universals. Following out of the neo-Platonism of Plotinus and the teachings of Kant,[73] Coleridge evolved his belief in the imagination as a power of mind that is capable of enforcing a synthetic unity on perception.

> Perception intuitively organizes the whole, the confused corrugation of mountains, into ideal concepts (like Platonic ideas) of mass, majesty, eternity, beauty, infinity, and the like. The mind, in other words, intuits the real forms of the ideas beyond the sensuous forms and establishes, in this way, direct contact with the divine. The mind of the poet is creative in perception and, in its lesser degree, participates in the creative power which formed the mountains in the first place, as cloudy symbols of concrete objectifications of itself.[74]

It can be seen, therefore, that the imagination is active in perception. Fancy, on the other hand, is restricted to the mechanics of associative theory and deals with the "fixities and definites" of particularities. Fancy deals with the elementary particles that are derived from the senses and "is no more than a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space."[75] However, fancy's manipulation of the particles of sensory observation are subject to choice and the choice is passive.

Coleridge's treatment of the imagination-fancy distinction clearly elevates the imagination at fancy's expense. But fancy is a contraction of fantasy[76] and it would appear that his belief in a "certain unconscious good sense" operating to desynonymize words has occurred. As a contraction of fantasy, fancy is no longer interchangeable with its parent word. An illustration of the divorce that has changed their originally common meaning may be seen in Coleridge's statement that "Milton had a highly imaginative, Cowley a very fanciful, mind."[77] In Dr. Johnson's Life of Cowley, the description of metaphysical poetry closely resembles Coleridge's views, especially in terms of the mechanical manipulation of the "fixities and definites."

> Their attempts were always analytic: they broke every image into fragments, and could no more have represented by their slender conceits and laboured particularities the prospects of nature or the scenes of life, than he who dissects a sunbeam with a prism can exhibit the wide effulgence of a summer noon.[78]

But what has the 'discordia concors' of the metaphysical poets to do with Tolkien's description of the Shire in Spring or Toad's new motor car? Clearly, the Coleridgean definition of fancy cannot apply to such situations. When the impossible is made probable and the probable made coherent and believable, literary fantasy is at work. It was not the mechanical workings of an analytical mind that produced the realm of Narnia nor is a fire-breathing dragon the product of "slender conceits." Synthesis rather than fragmentation is at the heart of imaginative creativity and the creations of literary fantasy are products of the imaginative mind.

APPENDIX TWO:
IMITATING THE IMPOSSIBLE

If some of the questions raised by Coleridge are extended, they will facilitate a discovery of the meaning of fantasy. The esemplastic power consists of the ability of the universal to give form to the particular. Here lies the Coleridgean connection between the imagination and the divine — the creation of new existence through the giving of new form. But the universal may be nothing other than the relationship between particularities and not a thing in itself. The problem that arises is the question of imitating the impossible. That is, the giving of existence via imitation and the imagination to something that does not exist in concrete nature. If fancy is *passive* and cannot rise above the imitation of "fixities and definites," it remains tied to the empirical mirror. But in aesthetic fantasy the mimetic relationship to concrete nature is clearly broken. In fantasy, the empirically impossible often is the source of imitation.

In using the word *mimesis*, Aristotle should be consulted. For Aristotle, imitation in words is particularly suited to the copying of human action and its primaries — thought and character. It is this belief that accounts for the emphasis of inquiry tragedy receives in the *Poetics*. However, a problem arises when his definition of imitation is wedded to the concept of probability in represented human action: what is the ideal model upon which the representation of human action can be based? He argues that mimesis is capable of revealing an ideal or "higher reality" (βελτιον). Through a complicated dialectical progression, he concludes that an imitation of a character that is invented is of greater merit than the imitation of a character that is or has been an actuality. The reason behind this conclusion is that "the impossible is the higher thing (βελτιον); for the ideal type must surpass the reality."[79] As a hero in tragedy, the fictional exemplar of ideal virtue best represents those qualities worthy of attainment and emulation.

Aristotle further believes that imitation is a quality that distinguishes man from animal, and if we may push the syllogism, art plays an important role in determining man's humanity.

> For the process of imitation is natural to mankind from childhood on: Man is differentiated from other animals because he is the most imitative of them, and he learns his first lessons through imitation, and we observe that all men find pleasure in imitations.[80]

Imitation of the impossible is justified if it supports the "goal of imitation."[81] One goal of imitation is the improvement of nature — what ought to be. The impossible, therefore, often leads us into the realm of the "higher reality." If the impossible may be defined as that which does not occur in nature, then mimetic art is potentially free from its marriage to the empirical mirror.

It is on the subject of experience that we may continue the discussion of the impossible. The objects of our experience appear to be external to ourselves but the act of experiencing resides in the relationship between the experential subject and the experential object. Furthermore, "in the creative experience, we experience the source of creativity within ourselves."[82] The creative experience is best described in contrast to its opposite — work. Like magic, work spends its energies upon the mechanical manipulation of our environment. Work is capable of producing new combinations of materials and ideas but these combinations are merely a reordering of what already exists. While creativity has the same power to reorder and to recombine, it has the added ability of bringing new things into existence. Henry Miller neatly sets the distinction in his essay on the Creative Life.

> Work, it seemed to me even at the threshold of life, is an activity reserved for the dullard. It is the very opposite of creation, which is play, and which

> just because it has no 'raison d'etre' other than itself is the supreme motivating power in life. Has anyone ever said that God created the universe in order to provide work for himself?[83]

In the argument for creativity, ex nihilo, experential relationships and the condition of their possibility fuse together. That is, no thing may have being, existence, other than in relation to what it is not. Before any process of individuation may occur, distinctions based upon judgements of either quality or quantity must be made.

> The ground of the being of all beings is the relation between them. The relation is itself no-thing other than a relation.[84]

The verb 'to be' carries the meaning of the relationships uniting things. As a result, being is in itself no-thing other than the relationships between those objects our judgements have distinguished as individual things.

> None of the things that are united by 'is' can themselves qualify 'is'. 'Is' is the condition of the possibility of all things.[85]

Consequently, when we say that the tree is green, we are speaking of two separate distinctions — tree and green. There is a thing 'tree' and a thing 'green'. The verb acts as the uniting force but is neither thing 'green' nor thing 'tree' nor thing at all. The experience of creating lies in the action of bringing the condition of possibility of a thing's existence out of nothing. The question of being and non-being is central to all philosophical systems and, as R.D. Laing says, the ability to cause the emergence of being from nothing lies with the artist and creativity is dependent upon the imagination.

The question of the empirically impossible as imitable object has not yet been solved. First, let us review the discussion of the creative experience. To begin with, experience is composed of relationships. Secondly, the existence of a thing may only be defined by what it is not. Next, the uniting relation, as expressed by the verb 'to be', is a condition of the possibility of all things existing but is in itself no-thing. Finally, the creative experience causes the emergence of the possibility of being out of nothing and in the wasteland between existence and non-existence, the imagination operates as the overcoming force.

If it may be accepted that being is no-thing other than a relationship that determines the condition of possibility, then the impossible must be that condition beyond the realm of conceivable relationships. But any proposition, be it an aesthetic statement or otherwise, must make use of symbol in its presentation.

> All languages have a form that requires us to string out our ideas even though their objects rest one within the other. This property of verbal symbolism is known as discursiveness. By reason of it, only thoughts that are arranged in this peculiar order can be spoken at all; any idea that does not lend itself to this projection is ineffable, incommunicable by way of words.[86]

It follows that anything beyond the realm of conceivable relationships cannot be expressed discursively. Therefore, in Susan K. Langer's terms, "it is not true or false, but unthinkable, for it falls outside the border of symbolism."[87] It may be argued then, that, although empirically impossible propositions are often presented in fantasy, they are still capable of being presented through discursive symbolism and therefore do not lie beyond the realm of conceivable relationships. As a result, such propositions are possible and the definition of impossibility must be reappraised. The term can no longer be restricted to occurrences not observable through the senses. However, we must inquire further into the character of symbolism in an attempt to finally crack the empirical mirror itself.

APPENDIX THREE:
SYMBOLIZATION: THE EQUALIZER

Because our topic is the literature of fantasy, a primary task should be to investigate the nature of literary sumbols. Northrope Frye feels that the word 'symbol' in relation to literature may apply to "any unit of any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention."[88] Images, words, and even single letters therefore can become the subject of critical analysis. Further, the entire object of Frye's criticism appears to be the attempt to systematize and classify the uses of different types of literary symbols. He argues that the approach must be polysemous, that it must adhere to the principle of manifold meaning, if pedantry is to be avoided and that individual schools based on psychological or political theories are not relevant to literary analysis.

Frye also believes that symbols are operative in the two directions he awkwardly labels as "centrifugal" and "centripetal". As a result of this dichotomy, he says that classification of all verbal structures falls into one of the "inward" or "outward" categories.

> In descriptive writing the final direction is outward. Here the verbal structure is intended to represent things external to it, and it is valued in terms of the accuracy in which it does represent them. Correspondence between phenomenon and verbal sign is truth; lack of it falsehood; failure to connect is tautology....[89]

The distinction between purely assertive writing and literary writing is that the meaning of verbal structures in literature is centripetal or inward. The words themselves, the symbols, are nothing other than verbal elements of a verbal structure,[90] and their meaning resides in their relationship to their larger verbal pattern. As such, literary meaning derived from the verbal symbols is hypothetical and the relation to the external world is only assumed. Therefore, the truth value of literary symbolism must be viewed as contained within the verbal pattern in which it is found.

Descriptive accuracy in terms of the relation between the symbol and the represented phenomenon found in areas external to the literary work is not a controlling factor in literature. Frye cites the case of historical drama. Take for example Shakespeare's portrayal of Richard III. Historical fact shows that Richard was a wise and industrious king defeated by a treacherous insurrection, while Shakespeare colours him a black and deformed monster. The reasons behind the dramatic treatment of Richard rest with the need of the playwright to accomodate the Tudor monarchy. Be this as it may, the play loses nothing from its inaccuracte portrayal of history.

The hypothetical nature of literary meaning may be further illustrated by referring to the concept of mimesis.

> In formal imitation, or Aristotelean mimesis, the work of art does not reflect external events and ideas, but exists between the example and the precept.[91]

The meaning of the word 'fiction' should indicate that the verbal formulations in literature are not in themselves real propositions but rather, imitations of real propositions. As a consequence the relationship between art and empirical fact becomes weakened. When Henry Miller said that creativity is the supreme motivating power in life because it has no 'raison d'etre' other than itself, he parallels Frye's statement that "creation seems to be an activity whose only intention is to abolish intention, to eliminate final dependence on or relation to something else...."[92] If literature is a collection of hypothetical creations independent of external fact for their validity, then it should follow that external fact need not always provide the source for artistic imitation and nothing could be more hypothetical than the impossible. The impossible, as a recurring imitable object in fantasy, therefore constitutes an inherent and important part of the act of artistic creation. If the transformation resulting from the employment of the mimetic process is no longer consistent with empirical reality, its artistic validity and its truth value remain untarnished. Furthermore, the transformation of life into art acts as a source of liberation from experience conditioned and circumscribed by the boundaries of a kind of reason founded on the empirical. However, emerging theories of the process of symbolization call the 'facts' of empirical reality into question and show that they are made of much the same stuff as the 'facts' of the imagination.

Current attitudes in epistemology contend that all human thought is a process of symbolization, and man, as a thinking organism, is perpetually furnishing his experiences with symbols. Symbolism is necessary before any thinking can proceed and it has already been stated that, in its conceptual stage, fantasy is a process of thought. Mathematics may be considered an entirely rational discipline but, like fantasy, it is not based on any tangible data and consists of the manipulation of arbitrary symbols. Mathematics and fantasy would seem highly disparate ways of thinking but both are based on the process of symbolization and both deal with concepts and their relationships rather than empirical entities.

> ...a mathematician does not profess to say anything about the existence, reality, or efficacy of things at all. His concern is the possibility of symbolizing things, and of symbolizing the relations into which they might enter with each other. His "entities" are not "data", but "concepts".[93]

With the rise of empiricism, the arbitrary nature of mathematical symbolization, rather than being threatened, was incorporated as a justification of empirical observation. At the same time, fantasy, as an equally arbitrary form of symbolizing relationships, was generally dismissed as an invalid conceptual force.

A startling conclusion has been reached in the study of physics, particularly through the investigation of quantum mechanics: the facts that are accepted by experimentation are no longer directly observed. The sophisticated forms of technological testing devices restrict observation to the recording of readings. These readings are in themselves only signs of physical data. We now must calculate and translate as well as directly observe, and the problem of observation becomes eclipsed by the problem of meaning. Therefore, scientific empiricism and the mode of thinking attendant upon it are challenged by the fact that our sense data is primarily symbol. In quantum mechanics, the translation of data to arrive at meaning has led to the condition that the observer has become the observed. As a consequence, the age of science has given birth to a new philosophical issue.

> ..all at once, the edifice of human knowledge stands before us, not as a vast collection of sense reports, but as a structure of facts that are symbols and laws that are their meanings. A new philosophical theme has been set forth to a coming age: an epistemological theme, the comprehension of science. The power of symbolism is its cue, as the finality of sense-data was the cue of a former epoch.[94]

Generative ideas in philosophy result from a new formulation of existing problems and it is not so much that the questions are new but that the principles of analysis have changed. Man's attitude of mind, his Weltanschauung, has been constrained by an addiction to reason that depends for its starting point upon the empirical. As a consequence, any philosophical questions that were asked constituted propositions that, to be answered validly, had a limited number of possible answers. For example, if I am to ask you who created the mountain, the presentation of my question limits the possible number of your answers. I am assuming that the mountain was created and if you answer that nothing created the mountain, you have not answered my question in a valid way. If symbolization and its meaning constitute the new generative idea, then the mental processes responsible for the creation of fantasy, in their wide remove from empirically based reason, may provide a key for new insights into reality.