

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA  
ARCHETYPAL THEORY AND PRACTICE IN  
THE FIRST FOUR ROMANCES OF CHARLES WILLIAMS

by

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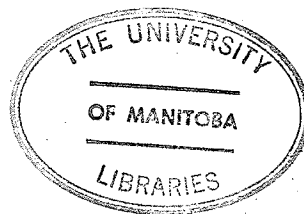
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## PREFATORY NOTE

For the sake of brevity, the following abbreviations will be used in the text with reference to the primary work:

<u>SE</u>	<u>Shadows of Ecstasy</u>
<u>WH</u>	<u>War in Heaven</u>
<u>MD</u>	<u>Many Dimensions</u>
<u>PL</u>	<u>The Place of the Lion</u>
<u>GT</u>	<u>The Greater Trumps</u>
<u>DH</u>	<u>Descent Into Hell</u>
<u>AHE</u>	<u>All Hallows' Eve</u>
<u>AT</u>	<u>Arthurian Torso</u>
<u>CP</u>	<u>Collected Plays</u>
<u>EPM</u>	<u>The English Poetic Mind</u>
<u>FB</u>	<u>The Figure of Beatrice</u>
<u>HCD</u>	<u>He Came Down From Heaven</u>
<u>IC</u>	<u>The Image of the City</u>
<u>RB</u>	<u>Reason and Beauty in the Poetic Mind</u>
<u>RSS</u>	<u>The Region of the Summer Stars</u>
<u>T</u>	<u>Taliessin Through Logres</u>
<u>W</u>	<u>Witchcraft</u>
<u>RL</u>	<u>Religion And Love In Dante</u>

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Charles Williams expressed one of his abiding concerns when in The Descent of the Dove he wrote: "In fact all the external world, as we know it, is always a result. Our causes are concealed, and mankind becomes to us a mass of contending effects. It is the effort to relate effects conveniently without touching, without (often) understanding, the causes that makes life difficult."<sup>1</sup> To relate causes to effects: this is the concern and therefore the determining factor in the creative purpose of Charles Williams. Williams believes basically in a relationship between the unseen (noumenal) and the seen (phenomenal) worlds---between the world of reality and the world of appearances. For him they are related as cause is to effect. His romances in varying degrees and ways illustrate that belief. Central to an understanding of his artistic practice is the theory of archetypes which he puts forward in The Place of the Lion and which provides the key to an understanding of his six other works of fiction. The purpose of this thesis in general, then, is to assert the centrality of The Place of the Lion not only in the canon of the works and in theory but also in practice.

A number of critics maintain that Williams' last two romances, All Hallows' Eve and Descent Into Hell, are not only his most successful, but that in them we find stated most clearly his artistic theory.<sup>2</sup> However, at least two other critics would maintain that The Place of the Lion is central not only in the canon but also in the development of Williams' artistic theory.

John Heath-Stubbs, for example, writes: "In The Greater Trumps (1932) the leading symbolism is the images of the tarot pack. These are

the archetypal images, which various events and characters in the book are seen as embodying. It is characteristic of Charles Williams to see the eternal in the common-place, that the Emperor card (signifying eternal law) is here represented by the figure of the policeman holding up traffic. The Place of the Lion (1931), the most brilliant, perhaps, of the novels, also deals with the theme of archetypal images."<sup>3</sup>

In identifying this distinctive character of the romances, Heath-Stubbs points out that Williams' main concern is to relate the temporal to the eternal, the phenomenal to the noumenal world. R.W. Peckham categorically asserts the centrality of The Place of the Lion: "The book, then, is a sort of an archetype of Williams' method, an interpreter of this and the other novels."<sup>4</sup> Peckham's use of the term "archetype" may be inaccurate but he is correct in his assertion that The Place of the Lion is central to Williams' theory and practice.

Having accepted Heath-Stubbs' and Peckham's points of view regarding the centrality of The Place of the Lion, it is then necessary to go on to demonstrate that a progressive development in theory and practice can be detected in the romances. The early romances progress toward the archetypal theory as expressed in The Place of the Lion; the later romances illustrate the successful employment of that technique. So to demonstrate, it will be necessary to discuss the romances not in the order of publication but in the order of their writing. As A.M. Hadfield tells us regarding the Williams canon: "Many people have been first drawn to C.W.'s [sic] work by his novels, and they are clearly a good introduction for a beginner. There are seven of them: War in Heaven, Many Dimensions, The Place of the Lion, The Greater Trumps, Shadows of Ecstasy, Descent Into Hell, and All Hallows' Eve, published in that order, though Shadows of

Ecstasy was written first and failed to find a publisher until the others received a public".<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of this thesis, then, it will be necessary to consider Shadows of Ecstasy first.

The thesis having been stated, it is necessary to do three things: first, to make reference to Williams criticism to show where and how approaches other than the archetypal have been inadequate; second, since Williams wrote in several genres, to relate his prose-romances to his poetry, drama, and criticism in order to seek some kind of unity; third, to establish the archetypal as the most useful approach to Williams' romances.

i

J'nan Sellery suggests that the criticism of Williams' romances has suffered from a lack of adequate identification of genre. She summarizes the various approaches that have been taken and finds all inadequate. As does R.W. Peckham, Sellery applies Northrop Frye's categories and concludes that the works fall somewhere between "the conflicting modes of the dream-like state of romance and the intellectual cerebration of the anatomy."<sup>6</sup> One could hardly agree more with her major concern but one must inevitably reject her method. It suffers from a too small sampling of his work; her focus is mainly upon All Hallows' Eve, Williams' last romance; and her method is deductive. I will later suggest that an inductive approach to Williams' work is the most useful one.

Indeed if one wants to take a "generic" and "deductive" approach to Williams' romances, the word "grimoire" is as good a term as any. Quite simply Williams is a writer of "ghost stories". But he is a writer of ghost stories as he defined them.

In Witchcraft, Williams presents the history of his subject as "deterioration"; witchcraft is the deterioration of the high art of magic. Magic, rightly understood, originates with the "Magi"—those "wise-men from the East" who came to visit the Christ-child in Bethlehem. Magic, according to Williams, continued more or less in acceptable form within the context of Christian ritual down to the seventeenth century: "The Grimoires may, indeed, have been but the ingenuities—the ghost-stories, the literary fancies, of their day. The novel, as a fashionable form of activity, had hardly come into existence, and the whole arrangement of the Constitutions of Pope Honorius disposes one to think that some leisured clerk took his intellectual recreation in this form. It can be traced through the centuries—consciously or unconsciously. . . . It is to be admitted, even so, that the literature is of the lowest kind."<sup>7</sup> Here, Williams identifies a genre—the ghost story—suggesting its affinity with the "novel" and placing it at the bottom in the hierarchy of literature. The other terms "magic" and "ritual" have to be translated and understood in their literary sense. As I will show later, Williams in fact does this. For the purposes of consistency I use the term "romance" in reference to Williams' "ghost stories" or "novels". But it just may be that Williams would have classified his romances as ghost stories although generically they are of the "lowest kind". Williams, after all, was among a group of authors, the Inklings, who chose just such unassuming forms for their works. Among them C.S. Lewis wrote "children's fantasy" and "science fiction"; Dorothy Sayers wrote "detective novels"; J.R.R. Tolkien wrote "fairy stories". But no one reading their works would say they wrote only that—their works are more than they seem to be. For example Dorothy Sayers' Gaudy Night, while being the



last and most popular of her "detective stories", has its basis in the refutation of Freud's theory of repression.

One of the most common mistakes made by the critics is related to the religious and theological dimensions of Williams' work, and which reduces it to a simple conflict between "good" and "evil". On this subject Williams had very definite ideas. When simply stated it was to suggest that the "contradiction in the nature of man" was found in mankind when "he knows good as evil".<sup>8</sup> Evil in this sense is illusory and Satan, traditionally the source of evil, is redefined.<sup>9</sup> In Williams' work "good" and "evil" are not mutually exclusive terms; they are rather "opposite sides" of the Divine Being: "William Law in England shaped, perhaps better than it has been put elsewhere, the idea that the darkness of hell is but the Divine Nature falsely invoked by the self and that the only dissipation of it is the Spirit of Love in his own blessed nature" (W, p. 302). Anne Ridler rightly sees in Longfellow "a foreshadowing of Williams' grand theme. First the romantic clash between the forces of good and evil; then the more mature insight which recognizes the Devil as being the agent of good. . . . But its resolution must not be in the defeat of evil by good, as in a new understanding where the old terms are no longer true" (p. xxxiii). The characters of Williams' romances are not simply "good" or "evil", as is so often said; rather they are to be seen as "adequate" or "inadequate" as they respond to the challenges of life.

Like Sellery and Peckham, D.T. Bolling<sup>10</sup> makes one of the most common errors about the romances when he establishes the criterion of Williams' "Anglican orthodoxy" as one of the three necessary assumptions to be made for an appreciation of his work. For it is difficult to apply that

label to Williams after one has read The Descent of the Dove. There, he sees Christian history as "deterioration" and he laments the "loss of tradition" (DD, p. 13). Bolling's criterion fails from a lack of clear definition. What is Anglican? What is orthodox? To see Williams' romances as handbooks for Anglican theology (although Williams might have hoped that they would become that), does an injustice to his aesthetics. If it is granted that ethics is one aspect of theology, Williams writes in the introduction to Reason and Beauty in the Poetic Mind, "We must not make poetry serve our morals, yet we must not consider it independent of our morals. It is not a spiritual guide, yet it possesses a reality which continually persuades us to repose upon it even in practical things of every day."<sup>11</sup> Or as he states in The Figure of Beatrice when speaking of Dante and Shakespeare: "We must not of course, confuse poetry with religion."<sup>12</sup> Neither should we make that mistake in relation to Williams' work. As he said, St. Paul was one who "used words as poets do [sic] he regenerated them" (DD, p. 8).

Williams approached religion and theology poetically and not the other way around, and his final stance, to be discussed later, is to say that in the apprehension and re-presentation of reality, poetry is superior to theology. There is nonetheless a relationship between art, poetry and religion, but that relationship must for our purposes be seen as Williams saw it. One final quotation should serve to expose the errors of what I have called the deductive approach to Williams:

This great achievement—in a literary sense—of the Grail is held to have been mainly concluded by 1230. And the important thing about it is that it was a literary achievement. It is occasionally forgotten, or seems to be, in great scholarly discussions, that anyone who is writing a poem or a romance is primarily writing a poem or a romance. He will, of course, be affected, as the Crusaders in their task were affected, by all sorts

of other things—his religious views, his political views, his need for money, the necessity for haste, the instructions of a patron, carelessness, forgetfulness, foolishness. But he is primarily concerned with making a satisfactory book. He may borrow anything from anywhere—if he thinks it makes a better book. And this (it can hardly be doubted), rather than anything else, was the first cause of the invention of the glorious figure of Galahad.<sup>13</sup> [emphasis mine]

Williams, as a writer of romance, is deliberately writing romance. He is primarily dedicated to poetry and art. Theology is secondary.

ii

R.W. Peckham, like Sellery, is one who stresses the need for a definite approach to Williams' work: "It is important to remember that Williams' ideas are based upon experience. He fell in love and was startled to find that Dante had written his love-story; he read the doctrines of the Church and felt them as statements of fact about the nature of things; he read Shakespeare's last plays and Julian of Norwich and verified their statements in his blood." (Peckham, p. 2). Peckham goes on to plead for a unity in approaching Williams' romances, and I want to assert at this point that Williams' concern generally in all of his works is primarily aesthetic. It is from the point of view of aesthetics that one is able to see the unity in his works, whether poetry, criticism, theology or prose fiction.

Laurence R. Dawson informs us that Williams "preferred to be commemorated simply as a 'Poet',"<sup>14</sup> and it is this title that is written on the "stone over his Oxford grave."<sup>15</sup> Anne Ridler says he wrote "creative criticism of a kind that has been somewhat out of fashion since the analytical critics were in the ascendant." She continues: "The method produced some valuable results: for example, in his study of Dante" (p. li).

Mary McDermot Shidler in comparing Williams and Dante as poets suggests that both are "imagists", which she defines as distinct from "allegorists". She writes: "He was an imagist like Dante whose actual Beatrice was a symbol of many things besides salvation, and could be made to symbolize an indefinite number of things, some of them inimical to salvation." (Shidler, pp. 21f). Mrs. Shidler points the way to the centre of Williams' thought in her equating the terms "image" and "symbol". It is in The Figure of Beatrice and in Reason and Beauty in the Poetic Mind as well as in his incomplete work Arthurian Torso that we find Williams' critical perceptions and perspectives most clearly defined. What we must discover first is what Williams understood by the term "image".

In this regard he writes in his study of Dante: "I have preferred the word image to the word symbol, because it seems to me doubtful if the word symbol nowadays sufficiently expresses the vivid individual existence of the lesser thing. Beatrice was, in her degree, an image of nobility, of virtue, of the Redeemed Life; and in some sense of Almighty God himself. But she also remained Beatrice right to the end. . . . Just as there is no point in Dante's thought at which the image of Beatrice in his mind was meant to exclude the actual objective Beatrice, so there is no point at which the objective Beatrice is to exclude the power which is expressed through her" (FB, p. 8). The words image and symbol are then interchangeable for Williams, and the word may be defined as that which remains not only itself but becomes something greater than itself. It is also an instance of "Power". Here we need to remind ourselves that Williams is discussing poetry despite the fact that his expressions have theological overtones or implications. That said, it is important to note, however, that the Divine can be known through and by means of the symbolic image.

In arguing for an aesthetic approach to Williams' work, I draw attention to another aspect of Williams' symbolic image: it attracts and subsumes all like images into itself. In Arthurian Torso, while discussing the advent and appearance of the image of the Grail in Europe, Williams asserts that it functioned in this way, drawing all other images into itself. He rejects the notion that the origin of the Grail is to be found in "vessels of plenty and cauldrons of magic". As he described the process: "It was therefore, in the very idea of it, greater than any vessel of less intention could possibly be. If it swallowed up its lesser rival it did so because it was greater. The poetic inventiveness of Europe found itself presented with an image of a vessel much more satisfying to it—merely as an image—than any other" (AT, p. 54). By definition the quality of the Grail image in a moral sense is not at stake; nor is the religious derivation, an aspect of the power of the Grail, important at this point. Its importance as an image lies in its symbolic function in which the greater attracts the lesser. Indeed it should be remembered that by implication the Grail now has within it aspects of "vessels of plenty and cauldrons of magic". In another place Williams insists upon the aesthetic rather than the religious or theological aspect when he writes: "There is no need to suppose the poets or romancers were particularly devout; it is only necessary to suppose they were good poets and real romancers. . . . But the Grail contained the very Act which was related to all existence. Of course, it absorbed and excluded all else; sui generis, it shone alone" (AT, p. 23, emphasis mine). Both here and earlier for Williams, an image is symbolic when it contains the numinous presence; it does not simply suggest or point to something beyond itself; indeed, it serves as the connection between the phenomenal and the noumenal

worlds. Williams' distinction will be better seen with reference to the notions of symbol as contained in the work of two other writers.

Williams' notion of symbol is not so limited as it is in the work of Northrop Frye, for example, who tends to limit symbol to the realm of "nature" and restrict its use to "literature".<sup>16</sup> Hence for Frye, "symbol" does not have the numinosity that it has for Williams. Paul Tillich, on the other hand, while he attributes a numinous quality to symbol, restricts that quality to the realm of the "religious" and identifies such as symbols of "transcendence".<sup>17</sup> For Tillich "natural" symbols lack the necessary quality and ability of connecting the "noumenal" and the "phenomenal" worlds. I suggest that Williams by doing away with the distinction, in a theological sense, between the "natural" and the "religious" makes the connection between the noumenal and phenomenal worlds, finds the transcendent in the immanent, and importantly highlights his own understanding of what a symbol "is" and "does". Further, his notion, which is essentially grounded in his aesthetics, brings him to repudiate theological distinctions; it further brings him to deny on the philosophical level the "law of contradiction". In Williams' theory it is the nature of symbol to defy logic. However, in his approach to symbol Williams stands in the Romantic tradition which derives its apprehension of the numinous from "common experience".

Williams' critical writings are sufficient to give us a clear idea of what he meant by "common experience". For example, he wrote of Troilus: "The crisis which Troilus endured is one common to all men; it is in a sense the only interior crisis worth talking about. It is that in which every nerve of the body, every consciousness of the mind, shrieks that something cannot be. Only it is."<sup>18</sup> It is to be noted here that "common

experience" is a psychological term, and as stated above, it contradicts "reason". Or, again, for Williams symbolic images derive from "common experience" and are necessarily from his point of view related to "diagram" and "myth": "It was, however high the phrases, the common thing from which Dante started, as it was certainly the greatest and most common to which he came. His images were the natural inevitable images—a girl in the street, the people he knew, the language he learned as a child. In them the great diagrams are perceived; from them the great myths open; by them he understands the final end" (FB, p. 44). Thus it is, that in the Romantic tradition—which Williams traces in his critical works from Virgil, to Dante, to Shakespeare, to Milton, to Wordsworth, to Patmore and himself—symbolic images come from "common experience" and, apprehended in a certain way, the symbolic image leads to a deeper perception of reality—even to a vision of its unity.

With this basic habit of approaching his subject matter from the point of view of "common experience", however, Williams ranged widely to find the "common" present in areas which we now—in an age when we have eradicated the most valuable part of common experience so as not to admit its existence—tend to view as "uncommon". In Witchcraft, for example, he points to two aspects of such experience which predispose us to believe in the reality of magic: "What is it, in experience, that habituates men's minds to the idea of magic? . . . The predisposition toward the idea of magic might be said to be a fairly common experience—the moment when it seems that anything might turn into anything else. We have grown used. . . to regarding this sensation as invalid. . . But the occasional sensation remains. A room, a street, a field, becomes unsure. The edge of a possibility of utter alteration intrudes. . . All this may be due to

racial memories or to any other cause; the point is it exists. It exists and can be communicated; it can be shared" (W, pp. 76f). It must be admitted that the common experience to which Williams here refers has been in fact relegated to childhood fantasy or simply to ghost stories. It should be pointed out in passing that in this statement Williams shows himself close to the art of Kafka but more importantly to the analytic psychology of Carl Jung.

"Racial memory" is a term which is generally understood as a popular equivalent for Jung's "collective unconscious" as opposed to, for example, Freud's "archaic remnant". Indeed, it is in the writings of Jung, particularly in Man and His Symbols, that we find Williams' own understanding of symbolic images most closely described.<sup>19</sup> Hence it is that the wider theory of archetypes and its application to the romances of Williams is a most appropriate one, and one which is long overdue.

There is yet another important aspect of "common experience", referred to above, when Williams writes: "Even now, when, as a general rule, the human body is not supposed to mean anything, there are moments when it seems, in spite of ourselves, packed with significance. . . . Here, one is aware that a phenomenon being wholly itself is laden with universal meaning. A hand lighting a cigarette is the explanation of everything: a foot stepping from a train is the rock of all existence" (W, p. 77). Both here and above, the sensations—perceptions—to which Williams refers derive from "common experience"; both relate to Williams' understanding of the symbolic function of images—Beatrice while remaining Beatrice is more than herself. The function of the symbolic image, in short, enables us to pass to the perception of the "great diagrams", and from them "the great myths open out"; "by them we understand the final



end." For Williams, images are necessary because they enable us to apprehend truths and reality as we may do in no other way.

iii

I have previously suggested that a "deductive" approach to Williams' art is inadequate. I must now show how an "inductive" approach is most proper—indeed the only one. The methodology of criticism as Williams saw it is important for an explication of his art.

Indeed, Williams defends inductive literary criticism when he writes with regard to biblical criticism: "Yet it is precisely good literary criticism which is needed, for those of us who are neither theologians, higher critics, nor fundamentalists; that is, for most of us. We are concerned, if we are concerned at all, to know what the book is at, as much as to know what King Lear or the Prelude is at, and that can only be done by the methods of literary criticism, by the contemplation of the states of being the book describes, by the relation of phrase to phrase, and the illumination of phrase by phrase, by the discovery (without ingenuity) of complexity within complexity and simplicity within simplicity. There is simply no other way to go about it, because it consists of words" (HCD, pp. 14-15). The implied need for a method of "discovery" on the part of the reader in an approach to literature is an appeal by Williams to a method of "induction". He further establishes a "law of literary criticism" which he describes as a process of "emptying words" when he comments: "Everyone who has studied great verse knows how necessary is the effort to clear the mind of our own second-hand attribution of meanings to words in order that the poet may fill them with his meanings" (HCD, p. 15).

It is imperative that Williams' own inductive methodology be kept in mind when reading him critically. It is important, furthermore, to draw attention to the similarities of approach observable in Williams' "law" of literary criticism to Carl Jung's methodology of dream interpretation.<sup>20</sup> Both Williams and Jung insist on respecting the integrity of their subjects under study—for Williams, art, for Jung, the dream; both adhere to the principle of allowing the art or the dream to interpret itself. I have shown previously how Williams and Jung are in agreement as to the nature, purpose and function of the symbolic image as it relates to the noumenal and phenomenal worlds, and it is not surprising, therefore, to find other points of contact in their works. Indeed, others have adequately shown the affinity which the Inklings generally had with Jung's analytic psychology.<sup>21</sup> This is not to say, however, that Williams' romances are demonstrations merely of Jungian psychology but rather to agree with Anne Ridler when she observes that: "Williams is much more interested in psychological states, and the more he drives inward, the greater his success" (*IC*, p. lv); and it is further the purpose of this thesis to demonstrate that as there is an increasing movement away from the philosophical toward the psychological in the romances it is at the same time a movement toward the Jungian school.

In The Descent of the Dove, Williams compares the methodologies of poetry and philosophy. His major concern here is with rationalism. Poetry by its use of images can define and express that which cannot be defined or expressed in any other way. As he explains it: "poetry can do something that philosophy can not, for poetry is arbitrary and has already turned the formulae of belief into the operation of faith. We have often been shown how Dante followed Aquinas; it would be of interest

to have an exhibition of their differences. For poetry, like faith, can look at the back as well as at the front of reason; it can survey reason all round" (DD, p. 123).

To restate the case, then, images which are symbolic allow the poet to look at reality from other or greater perspectives. The "imagistic" is related to the "ritualistic", however, insofar as they both partake of and make use of the symbolic. Ritual, like imagery, is a kind of poetry—poetry in action. It will not surprise us that Williams defines "ritual" in terms of the aesthetic: "But if the human body is capable of seeming so, so are the controlled movements of the human body—ritual movements or rather movements that seem like ritual. . . .Two light dancing steps by a girl (as one is in that state) appear to be what the schoolmen were trying to express, they are (only one cannot quite catch it) an intellectual statement in beatitude" (W, p. 78). Ritual, drama, poetry are kindred insofar as they partake of and make use of the symbolic image.

To sum up. There is a unity in Williams' work which derives from his aesthetic. His aesthetic is the common property of the Romantic tradition in that it is founded upon the perception of the universality of common experience. The experience as found in poetry manifests itself in symbolic images—images which have the "power" which is their authentication. And, finally, in psychological and aesthetic terms, these images in their numinosity are identical with the Jungian archetypes.

iv

I turn now to the last part of my discussion, the relation of Williams' aesthetics to his romances—the symbolic image to the archetype. I do so by making the assertion that in his romances Williams shows himself to be

not an "imagist", as Mary McDermot Shidler has said, but an "archetypalist". This can be demonstrated in The Place of the Lion.

Williams wrote The Place of the Lion in 1931. Toward the end of his career he wrote The Figure of Beatrice (1943). Throughout that career he maintained the notion that there is a distinction to be drawn between the phenomenal and the noumenal world, the world of appearance and the world of reality. Even in his later work, i.e. The Figure of Beatrice, when he sees Beatrice as an image capacious with "power", he asserts the relationship and the distinction between the "image" and the "Power". We can see, know, apprehend the symbolic image, and through the image which is symbolic we feel the "Power" which is beyond it, or behind it. His understanding of the relationship is summed up in his favorite phrase: "This also is thou: neither is this thou" (DD, p. xiv). The "Power" relates to the archetype which in Williams is causative; it stands behind the image. This relationship he touches upon in his discussion of Keats in Beauty and Reason in the English Poetic Mind. In the chapter, "The Evasion of Identity" (the title is noteworthy), Williams faults Keats for having heard the song of the archetypal Nightingale and retreated from the vision: "It had seemed to the poem rich to die, but because it stopped there and did not fully imagine that death it could only seem itself to be rich. The great experiences of death and possession (having nothing, yet possessing all things) were not for it. Can it be that, deserving them, it ought not so swiftly to have fled from the dull brain?" (RB, p. 74). In this section and throughout the book Williams uses the word poetic to denote intuition as distinct from reason. "Dull brain" implies an inability of the discursive faculty to apprehend the vision. Later in the same chapter when Williams comes to discuss "Lamia" and the

relationship between Appolonius and Plato, he writes: "Plato himself was the last philosopher to 'clip the angel's wings', and it is Platonism which has given Lycius his 'uneager' face. It is a question how far we are to take Platonism seriously; 'the calm'd twilight of Platonic shades' is hardly a sufficient description of the world from which the nightingales' song is a truer derivation" (RB, p. 78). Williams is here faulting Keats for not recognizing the "Power" and the place of power adequately. Keats is a poet, according to Williams, who works with "images" but who does not recognize the source of their power—the world of archetypes. This would then seem to be the point at which to enter into a full discussion of the romances where Williams shows himself to be an archetypalist in theory and practice.

NOTES

1. Charles Williams, The Descent of the Dove, (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), p. 1.
2. Mary McDermot Shidler, Charles Williams, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), p. 15; Patricia Meyer Spacks, "Charles Williams: A Novelist's Pilgrimage", in Religion in Life, 29(Spring 1960), pp. 277 - 288; Marjorie E. Wright, The Cosmic Kingdom of Myth: A Study in the Myth-Philosophy of Charles Williams, C.S. Lewis, and J.R.R. Tolkien, (Ann Arbor, DA, 1970), p. 185.
3. John Heath-Stubbs, Charles Williams, (London: Longmans Green & Co.), pp. 30f.
4. R.W. Peckham, The Novels of Charles Williams, (Notre Dame, DA, xxvi), pp. 99f.
5. A.M. Hadfield, An Introduction to Charles Williams, (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1959), p. 77.
6. J'nan Sellery, "Fictive Modes in Charles Williams' All Hallows' Eve," Genre, 1, No. 4 (Oct. 1968), pp. 316-331.
7. Charles Williams, Witchcraft, (Cleveland and New York: Meridian Books, 1959), p. 246.
8. He Came Down From Heaven, (London: Faber & Faber, 1940), p. 22.
9. Anne Ridler identifies Longfellow as one of the sources for Williams' view. She quotes Longfellow's poem Lucifer:  
  

The Son of Mystery  
 And since God suffers him to be  
 He, too, is God's minister  
 And labours for some good  
 By us not understood!

The Image of the City, (London: Oxford University Press, 1958). As Ridler points out these lines are paraphrased in Descent Into Hell, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1937), p. 66.
10. D.T. Bolling, Three Romances By Charles Williams, (Ann Arbor, DA, 1970), pp. 1ff.
11. Charles Williams, Reason and Beauty in the Poetic Mind, (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. vi.
12. The Figure of Beatrice, (London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1943), p. 11.
13. Arthurian Torso, ed. C.S. Lewis, (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 62.

14. Lawrence R. Dawson, Jr., "A Checklist of Reviews by Charles Williams" in Bibliographical Society of America, Vol. 55 (Second Quarter), 1961.
15. Dawson, "Reflections of Charles Williams on Fiction". Ball State Teachers College Forum 5, No. 1, (Winter 1964). pp. 23-29.
16. Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 365f, see especially Frye's definitions of "image", "symbol" and "archetype".
17. Paul Tillich, "The Religious Symbol" in Myth and Symbol, (London: S.P.C.K., 1966), ed. by F.W. Dillistone. See esp. Tillich's statement: "A real symbol points to an object which can never become an object. Religious symbols represent the transcendent but do not make the transcendent immanent. They do not make God a part of the empirical world." (p. 17).
18. Charles Williams, The English Poetic Mind, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), p. 59.
19. Carl G. Jung, Man and His Symbols, (New York: Dell Publishing Co. Inc., 1973). See Jung's discussion on "symbol" as related to "common experience" (p. 3), and his consequent suggestion that symbol by definition "implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning" (p. 4); and while agreeing with Freud that symbolic-images "are analogous to primitive ideas, myths and rites", Jung maintains they are not "archaic-remnants" but an integral part of the collective unconscious (p. 32). These symbolic-images are 'message' carriers from the instinctive to the rational parts of the human mind" (p. 37). And finally see Jung's discussion on Archetypes with its import for literary study (pp. 58ff).
20. Ibid., See Jung's statements regarding dream interpretation in reaction to Freud's free association method when he states: "I concluded that only the material that is clearly and visibly a part of a dream should be used in interpreting it. I work all around the dream picture and disregard every attempt the dreamer makes to break away from it. Time and time again, in my professional work, I have had to repeat the words: "Let's get back to your dream. What does the dream say?" (p. 14) Or again, the same principle is insisted upon when Jung cites the Talmudic phrase: "The dream is its own interpretation" (p. 80). Further, Williams' "law of literary criticism" finds its parallel in Jung's: "Thus, if you want to understand another person's dream you have to sacrifice your own predilections and suppress your prejudices. . . .I have insisted upon the importance of sticking to the context of the particular dream and excluding all theoretical assumptions about dreams in general- -except for the hypothesis that dreams in some way make sense" (p. 50).
21. Patrick Grant, "Tolkien: Archetype And Word", Cross Currents, 22, No. 4, (Winter, 1973), pp. 366-380.

## CHAPTER II

### TOWARD THE ARCHETYPAL: SHADOWS OF ECSTASY: WAR IN HEAVEN: MANY DIMENSIONS

#### i

Had Shadows of Ecstasy,<sup>1</sup> Williams' first romance, been published under its' original title, The Black Bastard, the focus of our attention would have been placed upon Inkamasi, the Zulu King. However insightful that would have been in the context of contemporary events in Africa, it would have led the reader to assume that here was a story of social comment merely, in which is demonstrated the tragedy of the Europeanization of the "noble savage". The title of the ultimate publication provides a wider focus—a more inclusive, a more generalized one, in terms of the romance as a whole.

It is generally agreed that in his "efforts to use different levels of experience: theological, supernatural and psychological", Williams was an "habitual syncretist", and that in this romance in particular "Williams states unambiguously what he himself decided to believe."<sup>2</sup> This last statement is of utmost importance, and while true in a certain sense, it is at least as accurate to say that in this romance Williams states ambiguously what he himself decided not to believe. It is true, however, that we find in Shadows of Ecstasy Williams' first statement of his theory of art. In brief that statement is: art, religion, mysticism, and kingship are but "shadows" of an identical experience which is "ecstasy".<sup>3</sup> Importantly, it is Isabel in the romance who suggests such a definition when she reflects: "By virtue of that reading which both she and her husband loved, she felt a shadow of it at times, in the superb lines of Marlowe or Shakespeare, in the rolling titles heard on ceremonial



occasions at church or in local celebrations: "'The King's Most Excellent Majesty', and 'His Majesty the King-Emperor', 'The Government of His Britannic Majesty'" (SE, p. 61). It is, then, the theory of art contained in this romance that is important for an understanding of the romance itself. It is necessary in this first part of this chapter to do three things: first, to delineate generally the important aspects of the book; second, to identify the critical theory of art thereby demonstrated; and third, to relate that theory to the archetypal and so mythical significance.

A preliminary plot summary of Shadows of Ecstasy is first in order. The romance begins with the appearance of an enigmatic figure in the person of Nigel Considine on the occasion of a dinner being held at the University of London to honour "a distinguished explorer just back from South America" (SE, p. 1). It is during this dinner that the main conflict of the romance is introduced: that between an over-intellectualized England (and Europe) and "those faculties of other experiences", which "other faculties", it is contended, offer "a more intense passion for discovery, a greater power of exploration, new raptures, unknown paths of glorious knowledge", and which are yet located among "the natives of the Amazon and the Zambesi", and are practiced still by the "fakirs, the herdsmen, the witch doctors" of those places (SE, p. 11). The advocate of the position, and so the protagonist of the romance, is the aforementioned Nigel Considine whose identity is immediately questioned: first by Isabel Ingram who asks, "Who's Mr. Nigel Considine?" (SE, p. 9); second, by Sir Bernard Travers who observes, ". . . I've seen your Mr. Considine before" (SE, p. 11); and third by Roger Ingram who, in speaking with him recognizes in him "darkness", "as if he were looking at the thing itself" (SE, p. 13). Following this introductory appearance of Considine, who is

later identified as the "High Executive", there is a suicide, a series of startling and challenging proclamations, riots, raids, ritual deaths—all of which are related to the person of Considine, and which are resolved with his murder and with which the chaos experienced in England as a result of these events subsides. One family in particular, that of Sir Bernard Travers, is most closely affected due to their varied interests and because they all, in one way or another, become or are associated with Considine. Parallel to the happenings in England there are the "reported" uprisings of native peoples in Africa during which communication between the two countries is cut off and suspense is heightened by a supposed threat of invasion of England by Africans. England is thus affected in its intellectual, economic, industrial, political and religious spheres of life.

It is a complex romance, necessarily so, because it is truly syncretic—that is, to show relationship it confronts the reader with views of life from various perspectives: the philosophical; the psychological; the physical; the erotic; the religious; and with all of this, it presents a critical theory of literature.

As a preliminary to a full understanding of what Williams is "at" in this romance, it is important first to observe that Williams' technique is recurrently to employ certain key words such as: "irony", "centre", "shadows", "will", "ecstasy" and "universal", as well as to refer to certain key images of an anatomical nature (which have symbolic significance) like "eyes", "mouth", "hand", "arm" and "body", doing so in a recurrent and paralleling pattern both in relation to various characters and occasions. For example, the University dinner in the opening chapter parallels Isabel's tea in the chapter, "The Majesty of the King" and the

meal in Considine's house in the chapter, "The Mass at Lambeth"—all of which are occasions of experience which tend toward a presentation of the numinous. As his characters experience these events and respond, Williams is able to effect a syncretic relationship between the poetic, the erotic, the philosophic and the religious elements of the romance.

This syncreticism is perhaps best illustrated as it relates to Philip, who after hearing the "Proclamation" is aware that "never anywhere, had any words, printed or spoken, come nearer to telling him what he felt about Rosamond" (SE, p. 47); he has an experience charged with mingled romantic and poetic significance as he reflects: "But he never understood it as now, he understood Rosamond's arm when she leant forward to pass a plate to her sister; somehow that arm always made him think of Downs against the sky. There was a line of curved beauty, a thing spoken both to mind and heart, a thing forever. . . .He had seen the verge of a great conclusion of mortal things and then it had vanished. Over that white curve he had looked into incredible space; abysses of intelligence lay beyond it" (SE, p. 56). The experience returns, is extended in Considine's house while he listens to music: "he began to lose touch with it, and to think more of Rosamond" (SE, p. 76), until

the music that so created her form in his imagination at the same time swept his imagination round and round her form. . . .More clearly than ever before in his waking thoughts he saw the naked physical beauty that was Rosamond. . . .His blood flowed, his breath came heavily, in growing intoxication of love, but the harmony that caused it summoned him back from its image to its power. He felt himself flowing away from Rosamond, with no less but with greater passion than he seemed to flow toward it. His passion had reached a point of trembling stillness before, and had closed then, perhaps in a kiss or an uncertain caress, perhaps in separation and departure. But now it found no such sweet conclusion and still the sources of his strength were opened up, and the currents of masculinity

released, still he, or whatever in the music was he, seemed to control and compel them into subterranean torrents toward hidden necessities within him. (SE, p. 77)

In descriptions like these of recurring image and experience Williams makes plain the relationship of the erotic to the aesthetic. Art arises from passion experienced in its totality as indicated by Rosamond's "naked physical beauty". But Williams also demonstrates the relationship between the aesthetic and the ritualistic or liturgical, for it is in the "Mass at Lambeth" that the image of Rosamond returns when during the ritual of the Mass "Philip felt himself looking into a different world, a world he had glimpsed once before over the outstretched arm that had been more significant to him than any other experience in his life" (SE, p. 102). In effect what Williams shows in Philip is not simply the relationship of the common experience of erotic love to art and the religious emotions, but to assert, as it is said in the "Proclamation", that we find in the imagination a way "to make known to mankind" that "which the rites and dogmas of the Christian religion dimly proclaim" (SE, p. 42). Concomitantly Williams insists, however, that imagination must be grounded in physical experience.

This romance is rendered even more complex because in it Williams employs what he refers to, here and in other places, as a technique of "irony",<sup>4</sup> and because, as he employs the ironic, he does so by rejecting it in a philosophic sense while defining it in the aesthetic.

Williams makes the reader aware of the ironic element of the book in its philosophic sense simply by the use of the term in relation to Sir Bernard Travers, whom Williams describes as possessing "ironic humor" and who demonstrates on occasion "equally serious irony" (SE, p. 10). Again, as Philip reflects upon this aspect of his father's character he observes:

"The placid irony of Sir Bernard's contemplation of life distilled itself over the wisdom of the world equally with every other" (SE, p. 36). In short, Sir Bernard's kind of irony illustrates and leads to a position of complete scepticism. Further, the ironic stance is common to all other characters in the book. Roger, for example, at the end of the romance comes to reject the irony of Sir Bernard as a sufficient means to meet the events of life when he concludes: "Irony might sustain the swimmer in the sea; it could not master the sea" (SE, p. 224). Yet Roger too is associated with Sir Bernard at the beginning of the romance as a practitioner of irony. This is made obvious by implication, when following the University dinner and during the speeches Sir Bernard enquires: "Roger why are the English no good at oratory?" (SE, p. 9) to which Roger explains it is because they prefer to "explore", and further states that poetry and oratory need "a different kind of consciousness."<sup>5</sup> Sir Bernard then revises his question: "Roger, why are the English so good at oratory?" and Roger responds with an appeal to "reason". In effect what Williams achieves in this passage is to define Roger's position in relation to that of Sir Bernard, and in so doing to demonstrate in fact their mutual reliance on irony as a Socratic technique in debate.<sup>6</sup> The dialogue is thus ironic as far as Roger is concerned because he has just proved himself a master of oratory: "I was good wasn't I Isabel?" He thus has condemned himself by denigrating oratory. But as importantly, what Williams achieves in this opening passage is to establish the necessity for his readers paying attention to "tone"—the reader is led to question the tonal quality of the various voices as they appear, for as they appear it becomes apparent there is a division between what is "said" and what is "done" or implied.<sup>7</sup>

There are, however, two other notable examples which highlight the ironic element of the work. There is first Nigel Considine, who, while asserting through the proclamations that "the Socratic methodology is done for" (SE, p. 38), employs that very methodology in "teaching London to feel" (SE, p. 149). Questioned about the invading armies he admits laughingly, "O I know I caused that tale to be spread", and again when "it was afterward discovered, even to justify the announcements of the burning villages and destroyed troops which he caused to be broadcast. A few bombs had been dropped but more for noise and mental horror than to destroy" (SE, p. 158). In other words, Considine, while proclaiming its end, also employs irony (as propaganda).

The other notable example of one who defines, and more importantly, who deals adequately with the irony implicit in life is Isabel Ingram, who, moreover, defines it in Williams' aesthetic sense and in terms of "love". In response to Sir Bernard's query as to why she allowed Roger to go with Nigel Considine, she explains: "Its the way things happen, if you love anyone" (SE, p. 163). Further, as he presses her for explanation: "'Does it make you happy?' 'Utterly', Isabel said. 'Of course its dreadfully painful but—yes utterly'." Sir Bernard then observes accurately: "Irony, even loving irony, could say no more. The mind accepted a fact which was a contradiction in terms, and knew itself defeated by that triumphant contradiction" (SE, p. 163). This is why Sir Bernard sees Isabel as "exactly opposite to Considine", and sees that "It was no wonder Isabel didn't want to go to Africa." This point I will discuss later in dealing with the archetypal in this romance. For now, in short, Isabel "affirms and negates" while Considine attempts to "negate and affirm"—theirs are opposite ways. It is also Isabel who alone in the romance

challenges Considine to point out his error when she says: "But those who die may be lordlier than you: they are obedient to defeat. Can you live truly till you have been quite defeated? You talk of living by your hurts, but perhaps you avoid the utter hurt that's destruction" (SE, p. 131). Irony, then, is everywhere an element in this romance, especially as a clash between irony in its Socratic and philosophic sense and irony as an essential in Williams' aesthetic dialectic.

It is at this point that a discussion of Williams' implied critical theory of art is in order. Williams' vehicles here are Roger Ingram, a professional critic of literature and Isabel, his wife, who has shared in his career.

From the first page of this romance Williams makes us aware that a critical theory of art is to be found in the book. He does this in two ways: first in the description of Roger's Chair as a "new chair" which is founded to "benefit the Mother Country and to recall her from the by-ways of pure art to the highroad of art as related to action" (SE, p. 7). (Here Williams evokes the Aristotelian principle in the Poetics, that "art is an imitation of an action"). Second, in Roger's role as a critic of "pure art"—the stated theme of Roger's book, Persuasive Serpents: studies in English Criticism, is "that most English critics had at all times been wholly and entirely wrong in their methods and aims" (SE, p. 8). Thus Williams prepares the way for a presentation of his own critical method. Roger's outlook, and so his critical approach, nonetheless change in the book: as does his outlook from one of "despair" (SE, p. 13) at the beginning of the romance to a feeling of "sad incompetence" (SE, p. 223) by the end. So too his critical perspective changes from "pure art" at the beginning to the "Neo-Classical" at the end. This is

suggested again in the title of his address, "on The Antithetical Couplet from Dryden to Johnson" (SE, p. 222). Further, as Sir Bernard writes to Ian Caithness, the change in Philip can be explained on the basis of "This dreadful tendency to personify and (therefore) mythologize I attribute to you and to the late Mr. Considine, who was [sic] an entire mythology about himself. From Considine to you (excuse me), from you to Philip, from Philip to Rosamond—behold the history of religion" (SE, p. 222). Roger, however, at the end of the romance admits that there are other approaches to criticism and art, when he says: "Other people had their ways; that was his" (SE, p. 223). One other way of course is that which is demonstrated in the person of Isabel Ingram, and as I have suggested above, her approach is Williams' own; so too is the approach of the "Romantic" as he saw it.

I come now to a consideration of the archetypal and so the mythic significance of the romance, and let me admit at the outset that one is first tempted to assert that the book betrays a Platonic schema, for example, over against a psychological one. But if one is a careful reader as Williams demands, it becomes apparent that this is precisely "not" what Williams presents—the romance is much more related to "this world" than to any "ideal world". However there is much of Plato in it.

It is, for example, in the opening chapter that Williams evokes Plato's Symposium when he describes the aspects of the University dinner and states: "At this point every dinner contends with destiny, and if fortunate it concludes in a rapid climax; if it is unfortunate it drags to a lingering death, and enters afterwards a shuddering oblivion" (SE, p. 12). Williams makes this statement in the chapter after Considine has made his speech. The situation parallels the Symposium when Socrates



finishes speaking and the drunken Alcibiades enters to make his speech challenging what has gone before and to suggest that Socrates is not what he appears---the Symposium becomes a disaster. The evocation of the Symposium is further strengthened when Roger sees Considine as the "Python-destroyer" (SE, p. 133); and again when Considine says: "I beheld in a trance the making of sex, I went down to where in history and in the individual being---which are one, as all the mysteries know: inward and backward, it is the same way---to where those high laboratories lie. And there, in a trance or in waking I do not know, I myself carried out the great experiment, and I laid my imagination upon all the powers and influences of sex and love and desire" (SE, p. 154). It is here that Williams evokes Aristophanes' speech in the Symposium, where Apollo is said to be instrumental in the making of the sexes. Plato's Dialogues are part of the substructure of the romance. Moreover, in Shadows of Ecstasy as in the Symposium, love, in all its aspects, is the subject.

There are elements in the romance, however, which deliberately lead away from the Platonic schema. This can be seen first in the use of the term "universal". There is an allusion to a "universal corner" (SE, p. 16), which in context is Platonic enough, but other references---such as in the chapter "The Neophyte of Death" when Roger sees "the immense and universal sapphire of the draperies", one begins to question the Platonism. It is impossible in a Platonic schema to have the universal in particular---it is an Aristotelian point of view rather than a Platonic one. Similarly Williams' descriptions in other places lead away from Plato, as for example when Philip is aware that in comparison to Considine and Inkamasi, the others (himself, Roger and Sir Bernard)

"suddenly seem so small" (SE, p. 66); again, Roger looking at Considine sees that "It was Man that stood there" (SE, p. 81); till finally Roger asks at another point, "What do you know about 'huge and mighty forms that do not live like living men'?" (SE, p. 115). Williams is positing a reality which is poetic and psychological rather than philosophic. And when Sir Bernard, in the chapter "The Opening of Schism", wonders, "Was Africa then within? was all war, were the armies and munitions and transports but the shadow of repression by which man held down their [sic] natural energies? . . . But old things forgotten could rise, the old did not always die" (SE, p. 114) the conclusion is enough to suggest what Williams is doing in the romance. As he has rejected the answer of Socrates and Plato, so he is negating the influential thinkers who so obsessed his day. He does this by presenting a composite of European thought in the person of Nigil Considine. Considine is Marx, Freud, Darwin and Nietzsche, presented as one. Williams achieves this by invoking in the romance their respective theses.<sup>8</sup> As important, however, is the necessity to see Isabel as "opposite" Considine. It is also essential to see that they as "centres" are opposites.

It is King Inkamasi who asserts this of Considine when he says: "For the greatest energy is in him, he alone is the centre of all the schools" (SE, p. 111). And it is Considine himself who sees Isabel as "centre" when he says to her: "You are perhaps a wise woman. . . .but if you are you shall be the centre of our wisdom in London, and all women of England shall learn from you what it is they do" (SE, p. 148). Further, after the chapter "The Opening of the Schism" Williams presents Isabel and Sir Bernard over against Considine and Roger. It is becoming apparent that Williams' critical theory in the romance, simply stated, while

at its base is psychological, places in opposition eros and logos over against imagination and will.

In the chapter "London after the Raid" the relationship between eros and logos is seen when Isabel in company with Sir Bernard looks "from an attic window" at the scene below: "'That man is very tired', Isabel said, watching a party of five; 'a woman carrying one child, a man with two. . . .He oughtn't to go on. . . .nor ought she. Sir Bernard, don't you think . . . .'" To which he responds: "'Yes. . . .I suppose you want to rest too. Good God, you do! And feed'?" (SE, p. 164). At this point Philip is despatched to open the door and a discussion follows on the subject of "ecstasy". It is here that Isabel identifies eros as the centre of her being. "'I'm no good at words', she said, 'and I'm a fool at knowing things, but when there's something in you that has its way, and when Roger's doing what he must do, and I too—every fibre of me's aching for him and I could sing for joy all through me. Isn't that all the ecstasy that I could bear? Come let's do something before it breaks my heart to be alive'" (SE, p. 165). Similarly in the first chapter, Sir Bernard identifies the logos when he, wondering about the identity of Considine, asserts: "The intellect hardly ever failed one eventually, if one fulfilled the conditions it imposed. But it did perhaps rather ignore the immediate necessities of ordinary life; in its own pure life it overlooked the 'Now and here' of one's daily wishes" (SE, p. 15).

On the other hand "will" and "imagination" in the romance are placed in opposition to "eros" and "logos". This is seen in Considine, who asserts, as in the first proclamation, directed as it is to those who "acting by the will" (SE, p. 39) know "of the exalted imagination" (SE, p. 41). It further calls them to the "transmuting Way", where ecstasy is

defined by Considine as one of two possibilities: It is either "living forever or dying and living again" (SE, p. 71). Nielsen, "The Neophyte of Death", exemplifies the Considinian position when he states: "I will go down to death and come again living" (SE, p. 83), and this he sees as possible because "the sensual desires. . . have been transmuted into the strength of imagination". It is obvious that eros as defined by Isabel leads to acts of charity in this life, while its repression in Nielsen leads away from this life—even to delusion and death. Similarly, later in the romance it is when Roger, in a vision, comes to know "ecstasy" as arising from "man's natural life" (SE, p. 205)—as does Isabel—he yet ironically espouses the Considinian position which in essence is a negation of the principle and which calls all adherents to "a sacrifice of death" that is a "shadow" of "true ecstasy" and which sees "Love and poetry and royalty as channels" of "passion and imagination" (SE, p. 207) that the opposition is clearly seen.

At this point it becomes obvious that one of the complexities of this romance results precisely from Williams' working with two definitions of the term "shadow": one which comes from the Republic (7:511e) where "shadow" indicates "picture thinking" or "conjecture",<sup>9</sup> and which suits the Considinian thesis; the other which comes from the work of Carl Jung where "eros" and "will to power" are seen as "shadows" of one another and as necessarily "opposite".<sup>10</sup> Sir Bernard's observation that Isabel and Considine as "centres" are "opposite" is accurate.

All said, however, Williams fails in this his first attempt to evoke the "archetypal" simply because he historicizes the person of Considine. He does this purposefully, as I indicated earlier, to embody evolutionary thought in its historic process, but in so doing he not only departs from

Jungian definition, but more importantly, he is working with an "unnatural" and therefore "uncommon" person and experience. He thus ignores his own requirement of romantic art that it must arise from common and so natural experiences.

Having pointed out the archetypal aspects of the romance, I come now naturally to discuss its mythological significance. At the outset it should be said that difficulty lies in Williams' internal definition of the word "myth". As I have already noted, Roger himself equivocates between the words "mythical" and "legend" with reference to "Pandemonium" (SE, p. 173). There is too Sir Bernard's concluding remark, "This dreadful tendency to personify and (therefore) to mythologize I attribute to you and the late Mr. Considine who was an entire mythology about himself" (SE, p. 222). Again here, Williams equivocates. Finally, there is also Considine's remark, "It's better that they should serve a myth than a man" (SE, p. 194). In all of this there seems to be implicit the belief that "myth" is based upon Platonic conjecture, or at best it has a certain amount of unreality about it. Nevertheless the romance lacks a clear definition of the word "myth".

There is however, a mythic aspect to the romance: the one invoked; the other evoked. The former relates to Roger's concluding statement "If—ah beyond, beyond belief!—but if he returned. . . ." (SE, p. 224): there is first the obvious Christian myth which Williams is continually invoking in the person of Considine; there is second the Platonic "Allegory of the Cave" from the Republic where Plato expresses just such a possibility; there is too the Arthurian myth which foretells Arthur's return. For example, the chapter "The Neophyte of Death" evokes the Arthurian myth when it begins: "The five of them were sitting at a round

table" (SE, p. 68) and there is the whole aspect of knightly significance in the calling of Considine "sir", as well as in the action of Nielsen, upon entering the room "genuflecting a little at the same time as if he were in a royal or sacerdotal presence" (SE, p. 83). The expected returns, and so "myths", Williams seems to suggest, are the product of conjecture.

The more important mythic structure of the romance centers, of course, upon the person of Isabel. It is not, however, as clearly defined as is Considine's myth. She seems at times to be one of the assisting deities. Roger's two visions which come at the end of the romance seem to be connected with each other and with Isabel: first, in the chapter "The House by the Sea" Roger sees Wordsworth carrying "a curiously tinted and involuted shell" (SE, p. 169), which in itself is taken as a symbol of music and poetry; the second vision is that given to him while speaking with Considine when he finds himself "as if he were swimming" (SE, p. 203) and then sees "Rosamond, her arm in Philip's bending him away from the foam, and drawing him safely toward the highroad beyond" (SE, p. 204). It is at this point that he sees "Isabel, and her dress drenched with spray, her dress and her hair, and she had stretched one prim arm toward the sea, and stood on the extreme edge of the land". Isabel's pose, together with the word "foam" is calculated to remind one of the Botticelli painting, "The Birth of Venus". Isabel resembles the figure on the extreme right of the painting who reaches out to welcome Venus. This evocation is strengthened in Inkamasi's statement when after he has equated "lordship" and "love", he says that Considine's purpose "is to restore its strength to the royal imagination from which in the beginning it came" (SE, p. 108). Thus the myth of Venus is evoked. In short the

mythic element seems to strengthen the Jungian reading that Roger's need is to re-find or replace the "anima figure".

To conclude this part of the chapter it should be noted that while Williams shows himself leaning toward the archetypal position, he fails because his "symbols" (images) do not relate at a profound enough level to his "diagrams", and he seems still to lack a coherent definition of myth and so is unable to evoke a viable mythic pattern.

ii

War In Heaven<sup>11</sup>, originally titled The Corpse<sup>12</sup>, Williams' first published romance, while a far less complex book than its predecessor, Shadows of Ecstasy, is nevertheless equally syncretic---if less tortuously so. This is due to the fact that here Williams is definite in his philosophy, theology and psychology and in his assertion of the romantic aesthetic. The book is comparatively successful because the "diagrams" are related to one "centre"---which is not so in Shadows of Ecstasy---and that one centre is of course his re-creation of the symbol of the Graal. Philosophically the book is Neo-Platonic<sup>13</sup>; theologically it is typological<sup>14</sup>; while psychologically it is more clearly Jungian and hence archetypal. Before proceeding to a discussion of its archetypal and mythological aspects, however, preliminary remarks are in order.

As in Shadows of Ecstasy, so in War In Heaven, words, phrases, gestures and diagrams recur until Williams' meanings become clear.<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, it is important to notice that the unstated is as important as the stated for a full understanding of the book. For example, nowhere in the romance does its full title occur. Hence the title, which obviously comes from Revelation (12:7), though unstated, is being presented in

another way. As above, this aspect of the book is made clear at the end, and it is obvious that Williams is re-interpreting "heaven" in the "here and now"<sup>16</sup>—and as importantly, in a psychological sense.<sup>17</sup> Further, while the romance has aspects of the "detective story" or the "murder mystery"—in fact it is neither. Rather, detection is the technique which Williams employs to relate the phenomenal to the noumenal; to assert the importance of the non-rational to the rational; and by which he leads his readers to that mystery which is the "last mystery" (WH, p. 188). In so doing, however, Williams relates the word "mystery" to the word "comedy" in a Dantean sense.<sup>18</sup> With those preliminary remarks out of the way it is possible to show how Williams presents the psychological reality alongside the religious and the philosophic and to show how the archetypal unifies the romance so as to expose its mythic structure.

The "numinous" quality of the romance is pervasive from its first chapter and is related to three elements: first, to the chalice—thought to be the Graal—and to the cultic and occultic acts performed with it;<sup>19</sup> second—which is related to the first since Williams rejects the notion that the Graal is the chalice and so rejects the thesis of Jessie Weston's "From Romance to Reality, or whatever she called it" (WH, p. 121)—it is seen in the figure of Prester John, especially in the various reactions which he elicits from the other characters in the book;<sup>20</sup> third, and most importantly, it is seen in Lionel Rackstraw, in his relationship both to his wife Barbara and his young son Adrian, and ultimately of course, with reference to his own psyche. The archetypal is thus most clearly illustrated in this third element of the romance, that is, in Lionel.



From its outset, and throughout the romance, Lionel Rackstraw (his very name is allusive) is a person in a serious state of dissociation because, as he admits in the end to Prester John, "I fear all things" (WH, p. 250). Basically, his "fear" is related to the two most important persons in his life—Barbara and Adrian: His fear for Barbara is associated with the "fantastic possibility" that "his wife might be involved in some street accident" (WH, p. 8)—he fears her loss; his fear for Adrian stems from the idea that things might not be as they appear, as he, Adrian, "had joined the mad dance of possible deceptions", who might be, "a child whose brain was that of a normal man while all his appearance was that of four" (WH, p. 17). It is from such a state of mind that Lionel looks out at a "terrifying and obscene universe" (WH, p. 19). And it is after the fantastic thing happens, as Barbara appears to go mad, that in conversation with Giles Tumulty Lionel shows himself to be the only character in the romance lacking any "religious" outlook. He rejects all religion when he says of "magic" that "it is ordinary religion disguised, it is the church-going clerk's religion. Satanism is the clerk at the brothel" (WH, p. 168), and he concludes "all is horrible in the end".

Lionel's outlook changes, and he recovers (or gains) psychic equilibrium with the recovery of Barbara, and it is consequently while attending a Service of the Holy Communion (though still unconverted) that he feels the "joy of fantasy rise in his mind" (WH, p. 256). The "fantastic possibility" becomes "the joy of fantasy", for he, with the others, is presented with a vision of the numinous as they observe the priest-King celebrate the "holy mysteries". Williams writes: "To Barbara and the Duke accustomed to liturgical vestments, the priest-King seemed to be

clothed in the chasuble of tradition; to Lionel he seemed to stand, pure and naked, in the high sunlight of the morning; what he seemed to the child none then or ever knew" (WH, p. 252). Thus it is mainly through Lionel that Williams presents the psychological dimension of his book.

It is in the chapter, "The Evening in Three Houses", for example, that Williams provides the evidence by which he indicates, and deepens our understanding of, Lionel's basic "fears". Lionel clearly is struggling with the negative manifestations of the "collective unconscious". As Lionel looks at Barbara he speculates: "mightn't she be lying there dead? and this that seemed to sit there opposite him merely a projection of his own memories of a thousand evenings when she had sat so" (WH, p. 19, emphasis mine); similarly, in the same passage with reference to Adrian, Lionel admits: "The fantastic child of his dream, evil and cruel and vigilant, couldn't at the same time have Adrian's temper and Adrian's indefatigable interest in things" (emphasis mine). In this way Lionel's condition is presented as one available to analytic psychology.

In relation to Barbara it is evident that Lionel is experiencing both the positive and negative aspects of his anima figure; "At similar, if less terrifying, moments, in other days, he had found that a concentration upon his wife had helped steady and free him, but when this evening he made this attempt he found even in her only a flying figure with a face turned from him, whom he dreaded though he hastened to overtake" (WH, p. 17). With regard to Adrian, however, it is only after Barbara has appeared to go mad and then has recovered that Lionel is led through the process of Williams' own dialectic—that is after the image is affirmed, negated and reaffirmed—that he is able to deal with the second

manifestation of the archetypal of which Adrian is but the projection. In brief Lionel is led through the "process of individuation" by the transformation of the child archetype.<sup>21</sup> It is here, however, that Williams does not adequately relate his diagrams of the "divided quaternity" and the "chalice"<sup>22</sup> to Lionel; they are only incidentally related to him although they are representative of his psychic state. Ultimately that state, as is suggested by the words "corpse", "ghost" and the letter "K", is one which separates "body and soul".<sup>23</sup> Here we have another aspect of Lionel's "fear". But when he is presented with the vision of the "naked" figure of Prester John, the figure is a projection of the unifying symbol which indicates the integration of the personality,<sup>24</sup> and one which unites "body and soul".

There is left the "romantic" theory, and it is almost sufficient to say that in Lionel Rackstraw we find Williams' assertion that the numinous apprehension arises from "common" experience as much as it does from its occultic and cultic manifestations.

The common and romantic element, of course, is further strengthened in that it is to Inspector Colquhoun that the solution to the murder comes in the common experience: "as he lay half asleep and half awake" (WH, p. 126); similarly it is in the scribblings in "The Bible of Mrs. Hippy" that "actual events and his own meditations—had flowed together as if not he, but Life were solving the problem in the natural process of the world" (WH, p. 205); so it is too that the Archdeacon, as he apprehends the figure of the priest-King, feels that "it seemed as if the form had shaped itself from the sky and the fields about it" (WH, p. 203). This all points to an aesthetic which is clearly romantic.

The mythic structure evoked therefore in the book is found in Lionel's assessment that the truth of the legend of Caesar and the British children is that "Caesar restored the children to their mothers" (WH, p. 252). The happening evokes all the other myths of child restoration.<sup>25</sup> Williams of course accurately couples this motif with the act of creation in the words: "Let us make man" (WH, p. 253). However, as Jung expresses it, the experience of transformation is: "In the psychological framework the motifs of abandonment, invincibility, hermaphroditism, beginning and end take their place as distinct categories of experience and understanding".<sup>26</sup> In such an experience Lionel is born anew, (or perhaps born), and the title of the romance "War in Heaven", although never explicit, is implicit of the "war" which is going on in Lionel Rackstraw's soul. It is here that Williams fails clearly to distinguish these categories of experience, i.e. the replacement of the "anima" and the rebirth of the "child". As his change in title of the book suggests he is working with two distinct aspects of psychic experience and fails to delineate them sufficiently. The book, however, is more clearly psychological than Shadows of Ecstasy and therefore represents a movement toward the archetypal.

Finally, as far as Williams' theory of Affirmation is concerned, only Lionel and Barbara are led through the full cycle of the dialectic: the Archdeacon as representative of the Church espouses the Negative way, looking at the chalice he murmurs "Neither is this Thou" (WH, p. 51); similarly Manasseh and the Greek as examples of the way of "magic" are equally intent on "Negation"; Giles Tumulty, the Duke, and Kenneth Mornington would all possess, or Affirm merely, and as the Greek explains: "for possession and destruction are both evil and are one" (WH, p. 146).

## iii

Many Dimensions,<sup>27</sup> Williams' third romance, opens at the point at which Sir Giles Tumulty has purchased and brought to England what is reputed to be the crown of Suleiman ben Daood (Solomon, Son of David). He, together with his nephew Reginald Montague and Prince Ali, a Mohammedan from the Persian Embassy, are examining it. As they discuss it, the reader is introduced to its properties. The focus of their attention is the centre stone—Williams is precise in his description of its "dimensions" etc.—which is "cubical" in shape, "measuring a half inch each way" and upon which are visible the letters of the "Tetragrammaton" (the Hebrew letters which stand for the Divine Name), although "they are not engraved" upon it but, in fact, are both "in the centre" and are "the Stone" (MD, p. 7).

Thus it is from the beginning of the romance that Williams makes his readers aware that one important aspect of the story is the relationship between the outward and physical (phenomenal) and the inward and psychological (noumenal) elements of experience. His purpose in so doing is to make visible (or more apparent) the numinous. This is suggested by Prince Ali as he expounds that aspect of the "Stone" when he says: "So much of its virtue has entered into its outward form that whatever happens to it there is no change" (MD, p. 7). Hajji Ibrahim, another member of the Embassy and an uncle of Prince Ali, makes Williams' purpose even more plain when he claims that the Stone can act "in time or place or thought" (MD, p. 45). Of the three dimensions Hajji maintains the latter is "a perilous thing to undertake; for you must sink into the life of thought and you may not easily return" (MD, p. 59). Similarly, later in the romance when Lord Christopher Arglay (another uncle of Reginald Montague and Chief

Justice of England), with Chloe Burnett his secretary, are discussing this aspect of the Stone, Arglay says: "we know it moves in time and space and thought. And in what else?" To which Chloe replies, "But what else is there?" Arglay responds, "the transcendence" (MD, p. 101), i.e. the eternal. Thus Williams means to investigate these many dimensions of human experience in his romance. Whether he is successful is at this point not being debated, nevertheless it is the first time he has stated so clearly his creative purpose.

Another preliminary observation that should be mentioned is that Many Dimensions is related to Williams' previous two romances, Shadows of Ecstasy and War in Heaven, by his use of "irony". In Shadows of Ecstasy he makes a distinction between irony in its philosophic and aesthetic senses (he chooses the latter). In War in Heaven he demonstrates the relationship between "irony" and "comedy". In Many Dimensions he explores the relationship between "irony" and "tragedy".

By now Williams' readers are familiar with the technique by which in order to define or redefine meanings he employs recurring words, phrases or actions. So it is that in the beginning of his romance Williams uses the word "was" as it is related to time and existence. For example, after a telephone conversation with his nephew Reginald Montague, Lord Arglay asks his secretary Chloe Burnett: "What is the best thing that ever was?" (MD, p. 18), and he goes on to ponder: "And anyhow when you say 'that ever was', do you mean that it's stopped being?" Chloe Burnett accurately replies: "I suppose it depends on what you mean by 'was'". For later Reginald uses the word to imply the past in describing his experience: "There I was" (MD, p. 20); while Arglay uses it to imply continuing possibility: "If Giles thought it was authentic" (MD, p. 23); and Williams



uses the word to imply a present reality: "She was frightened" (MD, p. 29); and again Chloe uses it as a future intention: "I was going to the theatre" (MD, p. 49). All of these phrases purposely carry forward into the third chapter of the romance where Arglay, questioning the meaning of words, observes: "'though certainly the way to any end is in the end itself. For as you cannot know any study but by learning it, or gain any virtue but by practising it, so you cannot be anything but by becoming it. And that sounds obvious enough, doesn't it? And yet,' he went on as if to himself, 'by becoming one thing a man ceases to be that which he was, and no one can tell how tragic that change may be. What do you want to be, Chloe?'" (MD, p. 49). Arglay's words, while citing the "law of contradiction" as contained in the Republic (7:518d,e), are prophetic as they apply to Chloe in terms of the action of the romance. In the same way the tragic as an element in irony is an important dimension of Williams' story.

The story then, in Many Dimensions, tells what happens when the Stone of the Crown of Solomon is brought to England. When it becomes known that the Stone possesses certain surprising qualities all the characters in the romance demonstrate an interest in it for various reasons. Sir Giles, together with his psychologist colleague, Professor Palliser, are interested in it for purposes of scientific investigation; Reginald Montague hopes to derive financial gain from the sale of chips from the Stone; Prince Ali and other members of the Persian Embassy (most notably his uncle Hajji Ibrahim) would reclaim it and thus remove it from such aspirations because of the religious significance it has for them. When Reginald, however, accidentally discovers that it is possible to divide the Stone and produce other and identical "types", other persons become possessors

of the Stone. In the unfolding story the sometimes counter and personal desires which the characters hope to realize by means of the Stone become intertwined so as to provide the main action and thus the interest grows.

Just so, too, as interest grows, conflict likewise develops. When Lord Arglay and later Chloe Burnett find themselves in possession of it their interest at first is due to the Stone's relationship to "Organic Law"—the subject of a book Arglay is writing. Similarly, when Reginald sells a "type" to a Mr. and Mrs. Sheldrake, the owners of the "Atlantic Airways", they become interested in it not only for their personal satisfaction but also because of its possible significance for transportation. It is however when they lose their type by a roadside that Oliver Doncaster, an artist, comes in possession of it. Later Doncaster casually gives it to Mrs. Ferguson, a bedridden paralytic and mother of his landlady, and since by merely holding it she is amazingly enabled to walk, others become interested in it for its healing properties. For example, Mr. Eustace Clerishaw, the Lord Mayor of Rich, wishes to have the Stone used in this way—his son is dying of cancer. Likewise, when Frank Lindsay, a friend of Chloe, realizes the possibility of its enabling him to pass an examination (it aids memory), he steals it from her. Lindsay, having previously recounted the Stone's amazing properties to an Albert Carnegie, under Carnegie's prodding, sells it to Mr. Theophilus Merridew (General Secretary of the National Transport). Their concern is that it should not be used as a general means of transportation because that would cause unemployment. By means of conflicting interest Williams is able to bring into relationship a variety of fields; i.e. religious, business and finance, medical, scientific, political and, of course, psychological.



As the romance progresses, therefore, the Stone is demonstrated to possess certain peculiar properties, having significance in the variety of disciplines, some of which as listed by Sir Giles are: "1. It is of no known substance. 2. It answers to no known reagents. 3. It can be multiplied without diminution of the original. 4. It can move or cause to move from point to point, without leaving any consciousness of passage through intervening space. 5. It can cause disappearance—possibly in time" (MD, p. 87). To which list can be added that "it doesn't weigh anything" (MD, p. 35); it enables "vision" both to read others' thoughts and to feel their emotions (or lack of them)—for example as Arglay looks through Sir Giles' eyes (MD, p. 60); it has the power to restore health as when Mrs. Ferguson says she "felt its strength pouring into her" (MD, p. 104) or when it cures her sister Annie's asthma (MD, p. 108); and it "protects" its adherents, specifically Chloe Burnett when Prince Ali attempts to steal the Stone from her and is later found "burnt" and "broken" (MD, p. 220).

The Stone and its properties therefore dominate the romance. However, Williams does not leave his readers with only one explanation for the surprising happenings. He provides a possible alternate theory. This he does mainly through Arglay, and latterly through Chloe.

When Arglay observes the effect which the Stone has upon the other characters in the romance it leads him to reflect that he and "his secretary were becoming the only single minded adherents it possessed", and all others were prompted by "greed" (MD, p. 194). Here it should be pointed out that in Williams' dialectic all the characters, with the exception of course of Doncaster and Mrs. Partridge, exemplify the "Negative" way as Williams understood it. For, as he pointed out in War in Heaven, "to

possess" is "to negate". On the other hand, Lord Arglay exemplifies the "ironic" element in the romance as does Sir Bernard in Shadows of Ecstasy. Williams writes: "But Lord Arglay, at once in contact and detached, at once faithless and believing, beheld all these things in the light of that fastidious and ironical good will which, outside the mystical experience, is the finest and noblest capacity man has developed in and against the universe" (MD, p. 194, emphasis mine). In Williams' terms this means Arglay "affirms and negates" the power of the Stone, and thus becomes the antagonist in the romance.

Hence from Arglay's first use of the Stone Williams makes his readers aware that the experience of travel through space is not simply due to one's concentration upon the Stone. Rather it is when Arglay concentrates on Chloe herself that he is granted the experience: "Lord Arglay, as he sat down wearing the crown directed his eyes and mind towards Chloe". And he "allowed the image of Chloe Burnett and the thought of her home to enter, and he shut his mind down on them. . . .he involuntarily united the physical consciousness and the mental; either received the other" (MD, p. 30). Similarly, his "return" is achieved in the same way. Later in the romance Arglay combats Sir Giles without the Stone when the latter is exercising influence upon Chloe. As he explains to Hajji: "Between her and me I will not have any of these things" (MD, p. 201). Thus Williams achieves two things: in Arglay he demonstrates the "ironic"; and he successfully points to another explanation for his reality, namely a psychological one.

Chloe Burnett is led through an identical process of experience: at first Chloe is confused as to whom or to what her primary loyalty lies: "She only wanted to serve the Stone—and Lord Arglay—as much as Lord

Arglay—and the Stone—wanted. There was a slight doubt in her mind which of them, if it came to a crisis, was the most important" (MD, p. 195). At this point, however, she makes the choice when she says: "I don't think perhaps I shall care about it so much." She has negated the Stone. Later, notably in the chapter "The Second Refusal of Chloe Burnett", Williams demonstrates her active negation when he writes: "Then she would use it; after all she was using it to save it. She was doing for it what it could not do for itself. She was protecting it. . . .But in her despair she rejected what churches and Kings and prelates have not rejected; she refused to be deceived, she refused to be helpful to the God. . . .lucidity entered her" (MD, p. 217). Finally, in the chapter "The Judgement of Lord Arglay", Chloe arrives at Arglay's ironic position. The position is clearly demonstrated when Arglay asks: "Are you to be the Path for the Stone?" and Chloe replies: "That is as you will have me" (MD, p. 257), and she goes on to give her reason to Arglay: "Because you said the Stone was between us." At this point the Stone is incidental.

While Williams employs the "ironic" to present his meaning, he does not, however, leave his readers without an example of the "Affirmative Way". But in Many Dimensions it is presented only as a possibility and it is therefore unfulfilled. It is, nevertheless, presented in a passage in which Williams raises the "erotic" to the equivalent of the "sacramental". When Frank Lindsay, having stolen the stone from Chloe, thus negates not only their relationship but the Stone as well, she comes to him and offers him opportunity to "return" it, i.e. to reaffirm their relationship. But Frank refuses:

"They had had good times together, she had mocked and teased him and liked him; their hands and their mouths, their voices and their glances, were familiar.

All but the sovereign union had been theirs. . . . And since assuredly that full and sovereign union permits no exclusion of any beauty, since the august virtue of its nature is to receive into itself all which partakes of its own divine benignity, since there—and there alone—is neither one nor many, neither lesser or greater, but all is perfect and free, since even its reflections upon the marvelous liberty of the children of God is to be experienced by all who devoutly and passionately desire. . . . he stood and looked away" (MD, p. 250).

Consequently while there is the suggestion of the "Affirmative Way" the book lacks an illustration of it. This absence of the concrete serves to point up the tragic element which we have said is one aspect of Williams' creative purpose. I turn now, however, to another of Williams' purposes, which is to explore the psychological and hence the archetypal and mythical.

There are many instances which demonstrate the psychological dimension of the romance. But Williams suggests that dimension most clearly in passages related to Chloe Burnett and which lend themselves most easily to analysis. As he describes her condition she is one who "lying awake at night" is bothered by "physical excitement and mental concentration", and to whom "Nothing justified her existence" (MD, p. 50). Like Lionel Rackstraw in War in Heaven, for Chloe "There was nothing, she thought, that could be trusted; the dearest delight might betray, the gayest friendship open upon a treachery and martyrdom." So she questions if "there was any devotion beyond the overwhelming madness of sex? And in that hot airless tunnel of emotion what pleasure was there and what joy?" Thus Chloe admits "she hated Montague, she hated Sir Giles, she hated Frank Lindsay—poor dear!—she hated—no she did not hate Lord Arglay, but she hated the old man who had come to her and talked of Kings and prophets and heroes till she was dizzy with happiness and dread. Most of

all she hated herself. The dark mystery of being that possessed her held no promise of light, but she turned to it and sank into it, content to avoid the world" (MD, p. 51). Like Lionel, Chloe is in a serious state of dissociation. In her hatreds she is rejecting aspects of her animus figure. And in her regard for Lord Arglay, she is still in the youthful attachment to her father figure.

Again, in the chapter entitled "The First Refusal of Lord Arglay", after Chloe has undergone the experience of Sir Giles' attempting to look through her eyes, and as she is discussing the experience with Lord Arglay, he questions her: "it seemed like some other self of yours? Did you know yourself in it?" To which Chloe replies "' In a way, . . . all the things that I have sometimes hated most in myself. But not altogether. Never—no, in all my life, I never wanted so utterly to grab without giving anything at all, never before." 'I'm not like that,' she said, 'O indeed I'm not'" (MD, p. 206). In this passage is suggested one of the problems in the romance. For Chloe could be experiencing what she has previously categorized as something "magical" (MD, p. 38), or it could be that in psychological terms she could be simply refusing to admit her "shadow". Williams has not clearly distinguished his psychological and his magical elements. Similarly, the consistent animosity that exists between Sir Giles and Lord Arglay in the romance can be explained in psychological terms, i.e. that the one is the "shadow" of the other. Williams does, however, in Chloe, deepen his psychological probing so as to reach the archetypal.

The presence of the archetypal content is most clearly seen in two passages: first, in the passage where Chloe and Lord Arglay are attempting to rescue Pondon from the past. In the process Chloe finds herself "in

her increasing age. . . .beyond any memory of hurt and lonely youth, beyond any imagination of an unwanted and miserable age, this pain fed on itself and abolished time. She lay stupified in anguish" (MD, p. 139). In this experience of "abolished time" Chloe experiences an aspect of the archetypal. However, the relationship of her experience to the temporal scheme is not made plain. Is Chloe experiencing future or past time? Here while Williams shows himself to be aware of "the Problem of Time" as it relates to the archetypal he fails to demonstrate it adequately in the romance. For, earlier in the book, and precisely when Chloe and Arglay are effecting the rescue of Pondon, Arglay becomes aware of his apprehensions "to deepen downwards and outwards" as "an entirely new plane of things" (MD, p. 141). This is the authentication of his earlier conclusion: "I think in a line—but there is the potentiality of the plane. . . . [which] was what great art was—a momentary apprehension of the plane at a point in the line" (MD, p. 54). Internally then, in the process of the romance we are made aware that "time" is in fact not linear and, although Birlesmere posits the possibility of the "cyclic" (MD, p. 241), Arglay sees such "recurrence" as "hell" (MD, p. 35). It is nevertheless these aspects of time (the "linear", the "cyclic", and the "plane") that Williams does not sufficiently explore. His terms in any case are spatial rather than temporal. And since he does not explore the archetypal as related to the temporal sufficiently, Williams is unable to provide a consistent mythic pattern. So it is while Williams approaches "the problem of time" he fails to explore fully its implication.

The second passage which is clearly archetypal is in the chapter "The First Refusal of Chloe Burnett". Williams writes: "Asleep or awake or after a long time—it seemed both in the dream that possessed her—she

seemed to see before her a great depth of space that changed itself while she looked into it and became a hall with carved pillars and a vast crowd surging through it" (MD, p. 167). In the vision Chloe sees into the court of Solomon and, as she watches, she sees the King raise his hand but does not see what is on his hand. She however experiences a "blinding light" and "a devastating pain and then a satisfaction entire and exquisite" (MD, p. 169). It is in terms of phenomena such as Chloe experiences here which Carl Jung describes as "the first approach of the unconscious".<sup>28</sup>

Nonetheless, Williams makes definite progress toward the mythic in this romance, for there is in Many Dimensions a noticeable redefinition of the word "myth". It is Prince Ali "whose mind moves with most ease in the romantic regions of myth" (MD, p. 101); and similarly it is he who sees the problem as one of distinguishing between the "mess of myths", "the tangle of tradition", and "the febrifuge of Fables" (MD, p. 128); it is Arglay too, who associates "myth" with "terrible opposites" of "religion" when he speaks of "judgement": "as it is said in one of the myths of our race that a god was content to submit to the word of Roman Law" (MD, p. 257, emphasis mine). It is Arglay too who gives an inadequate demonstration of the mythologizing process when he rephrases Milton's sonnet "On His Blindness" to say: "They also serve who only sit about and chat", and as Chloe asserts the validity of the activity, Arglay goes on to say: "It is giving a new name to old things. . . .or perhaps an old name, to new things" (MD, p. 234). Through Arglay then, Williams presents a theory of "myth"; while in Chloe he demonstrates or presents the "mythic". Williams, however, as is shown in Chloe's experience above, believes the mythic to be "giving a new name to old things".

It should be noted, too, that in this romance Williams makes a distinction between the words "invoked" and "evoked": as he explains it, "In the papers", when discussing the healing properties of the Stone, the reporters mention "Lourdes, the King's Evil, the Early Christians, Mrs. Eddy, Mesmer". These are "introduced and, almost, invoked" (MD, p. 108); while in Chloe's vision it is "as if desires beyond her knowledge had been evoked and contented at once, a perfect apprehension, a longing and a fulfillment" (MD, p. 169). Evocation belongs to present experience while invocation does not. Hence Williams here relates the "archetypal" to the "mythic".

It should be noted that, while Williams makes obvious progress in this romance in his redefinition of the word "myth", at the same time he fails to achieve a clear definition of a related term, "symbol". As Arglay equivocates between the words "symbol" and "omen", (MD, p. 134), so toward the end of the romance as Chloe enters the room to see "her typewriter, her notebooks," etc., the narrator explains: "Her gaze took in, it seemed, the symbols and instruments of her life, but they were real things and she felt with increasing happiness that what was there had, however hidden, run through her life", she muses "that her life had been resolved itself into four things in that room—the manuscript, and Oliver Doncaster, and Lord Arglay, and the Stone" (MD, p. 254). She concludes: "Whatever was coming, it was good". Here too, while Williams affords to the word "symbol" the numinosity that the word demands, he relates it only to the future as Chloe uses it, and as the word "omen" suggests. It is because of the foregoing that Williams fails to present an adequate demonstration of his meaning at this point. A symbol has present significance.



The mythic structure of the romance is that which is both "invoked" and "evoked". The myth invoked is first, the myth as contained in Hajji's "tale" (MD, p. 44 ff and p. 227 f); and then the Christian myth as detailed by the narrator: "there was growing the intense secret of Chloe's devotion to the Mystery. As if a Joseph with a more agnostic irony than tradition usually allows him sheltered and sustained a Mary of a more tempestuous past than the Virgin-Mother is believed to have either endured or enjoyed. . . ." (MD, p. 194). The myths invoked are those of Creation, the Fall and of Redemption.

The myths "evoked" are myths of creation. For example, Arglay, reflecting upon the relationship between the Stone and his Secretary's hand, sees that both are "softly translucent", and "He remembered the Hand thrust out from a cloud in many an early painting to image the Power behind creation. . . ." (MD, p. 230). The passage alludes to Michelangelo's painting the "Creation of Adam". At the end of the romance as Williams describes Chloe receiving the Stone from Arglay: "holding out her joined hand below his. He lowered his own gently till it lay in the cup of hers. . . ." (MD, p. 258). Here Williams evokes another of Michelangelo's paintings "The Creation of Eve". Williams' description of his two main figures with his focus on the positioning of the hands is reminiscent of the painting. Williams' technique, therefore, is to invoke in order to evoke. But, the romance, it should be noted, is an inversion of Michelangelo's theme. The action leads Chloe not to "creation" but "destruction". It is here however that Williams' three main symbols, the Stone, the Hand and the Light come together to make obvious his own creative purpose in the romance.

Williams' symbols come from several sources: religious and alchemical,<sup>29</sup> magical,<sup>30</sup> and most importantly from the archetypal. The Stone is in shape a symbol of "quaternity", and suggests "earthbound matter". The first association of the Stone (the square) is with the Crown as it is set in a "circlet of gold" (MD, p. 7). Later Williams brings together the Stone in relationship to another "circle" image, namely a "Ring" (MD, p. 227). But as this association seems to be casual the symbols therefore do not function as a "Mandala".<sup>31</sup> They do not signify psychic wholeness or unification of body and soul. Since, therefore, there is little association of the Stone with the "circle" symbol, the Stone by itself implies "dissociation".<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, since the property of the symbol is "stone", progress toward "individuation" and realization of the "Self" are implied. Thus we have in the symbol two contradictory statements. Williams does, however, attempt to unify them with his other two symbols, that of the "Light" and of the "Hands". For light is "psychologically speaking to become aware of the source", and of "Spiritual Strength".<sup>33</sup> Similarly "hands" joined indicate "the union of the rational, the conscious, the logical and virile", with "the converse", depending whether right or left hands are used.<sup>34</sup> Williams is explicit at least in one instance of suggesting such a union in this way. It is found in the passage already mentioned in which Chloe and Arglay attempt to rescue Pondon: "Chloe. . . .laid her right hand over his that held the Stone" (MD, p. 137). The union about which Williams writes in the romance, however, is signified by his use of "Light". That union, as I have said, is with the Source of Light, i.e. with the Divine. When Williams writes with reference to Chloe that "the union had now been made in other worlds" (MD, p. 250), and when Arglay says of the Stone that it is "tragic still

to loose upon earth that which does not belong to earth" (MD, p. 257), he points both to the "ironic" and the "tragic". For at the moment Chloe achieves "individuation" she dies—an event which is both "tragic" and "ironic" in terms of the romance.

In Williams' concluding icon, therefore, of Chloe receiving the Stone from Arglay, there is evoked, as I have said, the picture of the "Creation of Eve"; but it evokes all other instances when the feminine (the soul), is united with Divinity, be it the Annunciation, or then the Assumption of the Virgin Mother, or of Psyche or even in the simple act of Communion, which the positioning of the hands evokes.

iv

As an interim conclusion, it need only be said that in his first three romances Williams shows himself aware of, and progressing towards, archetypal theory and becoming a mythic writer. In his next and central romance, The Place of the Lion, he begins the mature practice of his evolved theory.

# NOTES

1. Charles Williams, Shadows of Ecstasy, (London: Faber & Faber, 1931).
2. Mary McDermot Shideler, Charles Williams, (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1966) p. 14; Patricia Meyer Spacks, "The Fusion of Fiction" in Shadows of Imagination, (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969) ed. M.R. Hillegas, p. 151.
3. For a like definition of "ecstasy" as it relates to the mystical, poetical and religious experiences see Mircea Eliade, Shamanism, (Princeton: Bollingen Foundation, 1972): "For, of course, the shaman is also a magician and medicine man; he is believed to cure, like all doctors, and to perform miracles of the fakir type, like all magicians, whether primitive or modern. But beyond this he is a psychopomp, and he may be a priest, mystic, and poet." (p. 4).
4. For a full discussion of the technique and place of irony as Williams understood it, see FB pp. 100ff where "irony" is seen as that state of being after an image has been negated and before its reaffirmation. In the Shadows of Ecstasy Isabel is the only character who demonstrates the full dialectic of the Affirmative way.
5. It should be noted that Williams' own critical position, unlike Roger's, is that the purpose of poetry is indeed to "explore" (FB, p. 100), for here Williams applauds Dante for his exploration of experience in the Commedia.
6. Plato, The Collected Dialogues, ed. Edith Hamilton & Huntington Cairns, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973). For a description of Socratic irony see Alcibiades' speech in The Symposium 216, d., p. 568.
7. Other significant examples can be found on pp. 22 and 128.
8. Marxist political theory is invoked in the phrase, "the manifesto, or proclamation as it might be called" (SE, p. 39); Freudian repression is suggested as an aspect of Considine when he explains, "I have never kissed a woman; all that have lived with me have had what lovers desired. For a kiss is but a shadow of ecstasy" (SE, p. 153); the Nietzschean thesis is invoked simply in the term, "this year of the First of the Second Evolution" (SE, p. 153) which of course has overtones of the "overman" or "superman"; and Darwin is associated with the word "evolution".
9. That Williams is using the term "shadow" in its Platonic sense is apparent where Rosamond evokes the "myth of the cave" from the Republic (7.514, a.), see (SE, p. 136).
10. Carl Jung, Two Essays on Analytic Psychology, (New York: Meridian Books, 1956) p. 63. Jung is helpful in interpretation of the romance in the second of his two essays, especially in the chapter on "The

Mana-Personality", where he describes the condition in the male psyche where the "anima loses her mana". In such a condition says Jung, the "ego is inflated" and has become "adulterated with an archetype, another unconscious figure". He goes on to state: "Historically, the mana personality evolves into the hero and the godlike being, whose earthly form is the priest, . . . .The danger lies not only in oneself becoming a Father mask; but in being over-powered by this mask when worn by another". The foregoing is sufficient to indicate that Jung describes accurately the condition and process in the romance especially as it relates to Roger and his relationship to Considine.

11. Charles Williams, War in Heaven, (London: Faber & Faber, 1930).
12. Alice Mary Hadfield, An Introduction to Charles Williams, (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1959), p. 77.
13. Neo-Platonism is rejected by Williams in SE when Sir Bernard describes it as a condition "like most neos, one takes the advantages without the disadvantages. As Neo-Platonist, neo-Thomist, and neo-lithic too" (SE, p. 17). It is however affirmed by Lionel Rackstraw when early in the romance as he reflects upon the "dangerous possibilities of life", Williams writes "this sense now escaped from his keeping, and, instead of being too hidden, became too universal to be seized" (WH, p. 17),—The statement is clearly anti-Aristotelian (the universal is not in the particular); again it is Lionel who defines his situation in Platonic terms when he sees it as "the place of shadows which was this world" (WH, p. 34).
14. In two passages the Archdeacon asserts the typological: first, with reference to the chalice when he is aware that, "Carrying it as he had so often lifted its types and companions, he became again as in all those other liturgies a part of that he sustained; he radiated from that centre and was but the last means of its progress in mortality" (WH, p. 50); second, the Neo-Platonic and typological are related as the Archdeacon, in concentrated reflection, becomes aware that: "in accord with the desire of the Church expressed in the ritual of the Church, the Sacred Elements seemed to him to open upon the Divine Nature, upon Bethlehem and Calvary and Olivet, as that itself opened upon the centre of all. . . .all things return to God" (WH, p. 137). For a definition of the typological see G.W.H. Lampe and K.J. Woollcombe Essays on Typology, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1957), p. 29.
15. The use of the word "dance" is an example of the recurrence where it is first used by Lionel to suggest "the mad dance of possible deceptions" (WH, p. 17); it is referred to in the magical and mystical experience of Gregory as a "bridal dance" (WH, p. 75); it is used again as the Archdeacon looks at the chalice and feels his spirit "dance" (WH, p. 117); of course it is used with regard to Barbara as she performs "unconsciously. . . .the wild dance" (WH, p. 161) till finally it is skeptically used by Sir Giles with reference to Gregory's interest in the "May dance" (WH, p. 170).

16. In explanation of the derivation of the word "heaven" Williams writes that "as early as Chaucer, it came to mean a state of spiritual being equivalent to the habitation of divine things, a state of bliss consonant with union with God. Its common meaning today, as a religious term, sways between the spiritual and the spatial, with the stress. . . more upon the second than the first" (HCD, p. 9). In WH Williams is concentrating on the first, i.e., heaven as a spiritual state of being.
  
17. Lionel Rackstraw speaking to Gregory Persimmons in WH suggests this when he quotes Milton, "Which way fly I is hell, myself am hell/ And in the lowest deep a lower deep/ Still gaping to devour me opens wide/ To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven" (WH, p. 169), from Paradise Lost Bk. 3, ll. 56 ff.
  
18. The aspect of the "comic" in its various levels is most important in the chapter "The Search For the House". Indeed, we have in this chapter Sir Bernard's "universal corner. . . around which we are always turning. . . into a street where there are all the numbers except the house we're looking for" (SE, p. 16). In WH the chapter is more than "comic relief", for in it Williams presents that aspect of his writing which is nothing short of humorous and "good fun"—an aspect too often missed by the critics and which makes identification of the tonal quality of his work of utmost importance. He is not above, for example, making a pun on the name "Pewitt" (WH, p. 229) to categorize the inefficiency of the purely rational mind.
  
19. The "numenous" is experienced by the Archdeacon as he reflects on the chalice, as when he enters his "inner room" and "A note of gay and happy music seemed to ring for a moment in his ears as he paused at the entrance" (WH, p. 50). Similarly it is described again as he looks at the chalice as it sits on the shelf in Gregory Persimmons' house, when: "Faintly again he heard the sound of music, but now not from without, or indeed from within, for some non-spatial, non personal existence. It was music, but not yet music, or if music, then music of movement itself—sound produced not by things, but in the nature of things. He looked, and looked again and felt himself part of a moving river flowing toward some narrow channel on a ripple of which the Graal was a gleam of supernatural light" (WH, p. 17). In this respect one ought to keep in mind that while the Archdeacon is a Platonist, which is certainly suggested in this passage, but, as he is constantly humming portions of Psalm 136, the music is also, psychologically speaking, an indication of his own inner state.
  
20. In the figure of Prester John, aspects of psychological reality (and implication) are demonstrated as Williams describes the varied reactions of his characters to the priest-King: "As Ludding had increased in brutality, and Gregory in hatred, so in conversation with the stranger, Mr. Batesby's superior protectiveness seemed to increase" (WH, p. 191). Carl Jung is helpful in explicating this phenomenon where he writes: "If you feel an overwhelming rage coming up in you when a friend reproaches you about a fault, you can be

fairly sure that at this point you will find part of your shadow, of which you are unconscious. . . .therefore the shadow appears as a person of the same sex" (Symbols, pp. 174-75). Thus in psychological terms Prester John functions here as a "shadow" figure.

21. Carl Jung, Psyche & Symbol, (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1958). As Jung explains, "This archetype is the manifestation of the personality induced by the analysis of the unconscious. . . .termed the process of individuation" (p. 122). He goes on to list some of the different manifestations of this archetype: "the child motif is extremely protean and assumes all manner of shapes, such as the jewel, the pearl, the flower, the chalice, the golden egg, the quaternity, the golden ball, and so on" (pp. 233-34). He has said earlier that it may sometimes appear as "the dreamer's son or daughter".
22. "In the individuation process, it anticipates the figure that comes from the synthesis of the conscious and unconscious elements in the personality. It is therefore a unifying symbol which unites the opposites, a mediator, bringer of healing, that is, one who makes whole". Jung, Psyche & Symbol, pp. 127, 128.
23. Regarding the division between body and soul, Williams writes in his essay "The Index of the Body", while quoting William Ellis, that Socrates "invented the concept of the twofold nature of man as a union of the active, or spiritual, with the inactive, or corporeal; the concept, in short, of the organism as a dead carcass activated by a living ghost. Even as we repudiate this idea we are still half dominated by it" (IC, p. 86).
24. "The 'child' is all that is abandoned and exposed and at the same time divinely powerful; the insignificant, dubious beginning, and the triumphal end. The 'eternal child' in man is an indescribable experience, an incongruity, a disadvantage, and a divine prerogative an imponderable that determines the ultimate worth or worthlessness of a personality". Jung, Psyche & Symbol, pp. 144-45. In Lionel Rackstraw it is the positive aspect that Williams presents—the totality of the self or the unification of body and soul. In the course of the romance we are given no indication of Lionel's background (although we have something of Barbara's). Lionel admits only as he contemplates how to manage a sick wife and young son that, "He himself had no available relations" (WH, p. 166).
25. As Adrian walks out of the sanctuary to join Barbara, so the action symbolizes what has transpired in Lionel's soul. It evokes all those other myths—i.e. from the lost Jesus being restored to Mary (Luke 2:41-52); to the myth of the raising of the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-15); to the myth of Elisha restoring the Shunammite's son (2Kings 4:32-37); to the myth of Elijah performing a like act (1 Kings 17: 17-24); to the myth of Moses being returned to his mother (Exodus 2:5-10); the Babylonian myth of Ishtar and Tammuz; and the Egyptian myth of Isis and Osiris.
26. Jung, Psyche & Symbol, p. 147.

27. Charles Williams, Many Dimensions, (London: Faber & Faber, 1965).
28. Jung, Symbols, p. 169.
29. See Hajji's reference to the Stone as "Prime Matter" (MD, p. 56). It has both religious and alchemical implications.
30. A.E. Waite, The Book of Ceremonial Magic, (New York: Bell Publishing Co., 1969), p. 123. See especially the description of talisman no. 11 which is almost a plot summary for Williams' romance. And see p. 319 where the diagram of the "Mirror of Solomon" bears the names, "Agla", "Chloe", and "Tetragrammaton", all of which have parallels in Many Dimensions.
31. Jung, Symbols, p. 284. Although Williams attempts such symbolic relationship in that the Stone is set in a "circlet" of a crown and further, that both in Chloe's vision and Hajji's story it once was associated with a "ring", yet the symbol and the narrative imply dissociation.
32. Symbols, pp. 221 and 224.
33. J.E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, (New York: Philosophical Library, 1974), p. 188.
34. A Dictionary of Symbols, p. 137.



### CHAPTER III

#### THE THEORY OF ARCHETYPES; THE PLACE OF THE LION

Prior to a full discussion of The Place of the Lion,<sup>1</sup> Williams' fourth and central romance, let me first observe that the reader is quickly aware of an obvious qualitative difference in Williams' writing at this point: the writing is more controlled than it is in his former romances. I would suggest that this difference is possibly due to two factors: one, that while Williams is still syncretic in his approach, the syncretism is less obvious; second, it is in this romance that he for the first time successfully unites his archetypal theory and practice. In this chapter, then, it is necessary not only to identify the theory, implicit and explicit, but to show how the theory informs the material and becomes available through an analysis of the material. Indeed, there is no other way in which to proceed, for as it should be obvious by now, Williams demands an inductive and progressive analysis.

Generally speaking the critics agree<sup>2</sup> that what The Place of the Lion is "about" is what happens when the Platonic archetypes from the noumenal world—the world of Ideas—invade the phenomenal world and threaten its destruction. Too, they generally agree that the means by which the archetypes gain entry into this world is the work of Mr. Berringer, the leader of a small group of occultists. The story involves the responses of the various characters in the book to that happening, and things are restored to normality when Anthony Durrant, in the last chapter "names the beasts", so repeating the act of Adam in the myth. The problem here, however, is that such a statement of plot is an over-simplification, and second, it is misleading. It is for example impossible in a Platonic sense for an archetype to enter this sphere of existence, and further, as

I shall later prove, Williams himself repudiates such an interpretation in the romance itself. Rather the romance contains an alternate theory, which is a theory of art as important for an understanding of this romance as it is for the succeeding romances: The Greater Trumps (1932); Descent Into Hell (1937); and All Hallows' Eve (1945).

Something must also be said about the style and technique employed in this romance—as I have suggested above—for, while Peckham complains about the "frequent and long meditations which occur throughout the book",<sup>3</sup> and while the reader may occasionally feel that the story is being interrupted, he needs to understand that this is integral to Williams' narrative. Further, in addition to the frequent meditations there are "visions", "dreams" and "puzzling events" all of which are necessary elements to the narrative. A close reading of the first chapters of Place of the Lion is useful in elucidating the organic nature of the technique.

From the opening paragraph in his first chapter, Williams presents his readers with a series of events, phrases, and places which on the surface do not seem to be at home with each other. The technique points to that dimension of reality with which Williams is dealing and which will open out into total meaning, eventually working into his conclusion. For example, there is really no reason to regard "the lioness" which stares at the "Hertfordshire road" as a potential danger to the two figures of Quentin Sabot and Anthony Durrant who are "a mile away" (PL, p. 9). Nevertheless, the reader is left wondering what the connection may or will be.

In the next lines Quentin Sabot (first to be introduced) jumps down "from the gate on which he had been sitting" and consults his watch. That action places Sabot below the level—at the mercy—of the beast, and as

importantly, it establishes him as one dependent upon time, i.e. a creature of the phenomenal world. His friend Anthony Durrant, next introduces himself as a "questioner" when he enquires: "Shall we wander along and meet it?" They had been waiting for a "bus". Anthony, the "questioner", addresses at least ten questions to Sabot in the next five pages and it is when Quentin answers with contrary and reasonable certainty as to which way they should walk, "After all, that's our direction" (PL, p. 9), that the "questioner" challenges the assumption with a general statement: "'The chief use of the material world', Anthony said, still sitting on the gate, 'is that one can, just occasionally say that with truth. Yes let's'". This identifies Anthony as at least mentally aware of the noumenal world. The scene closes with Quentin's information that they have just walked some twenty-three miles, and it is in this way that not only differences of character and attitude are established but also their varying methods of problem solving have been sketched out. Anthony's and Quentin's characters are forming in the reader's mind not from a description of outward appearances but from a presentation of their philosophic differences; Quentin proceeds from a rational and materialistic (phenomenal) basis while Anthony as "questioner" and "challenger" proceeds from a basis which looks beyond the phenomenal.

Similarly in the next section Williams through a casual conversation relates the phenomenal to the psychological and poetic when Anthony suggests: "Mightn't it be a good thing if everyone had to draw a map of his own mind—say once every five years?" (PL, p. 9) The total quotation is an oblique reference to Wordsworth's Prelude, in fact the situation in the romance evokes the Prelude.<sup>4</sup> In this way Williams, through Anthony, points to the aesthetic, internal, and psychological concerns of his plot.

It is at this point, however, that the reader is confronted with another of Anthony's assertions, for the two men observe a number of "bobbing" lights ahead, and they discuss the phenomena, i.e. the kinds of lights, and the numbers of them, whether they are fixed or in motion. It is difficult for the two to ascertain the full reality from the appearance; Anthony quips, "Mortality, as usual, carries its own star", and the reader is not quite sure if this is a positive or negative statement. Similarly, it is at this point that the reader is confronted with another statement by Anthony which seems out of place, when he anticipates the "lanterns" and says: "Have I at last found someone who needs me?" (PL, p. 10) There is then building up between the two men further differences of character. For, as the two are met by some "dozen men" who are "armed", they learn that a lioness is loose and that men have been sent to "all the cross-roads" to warn of the danger. They respond in characteristic ways: Anthony wants to "help", saying, "It seems such a pity to miss the nearest thing to a lion hunt we're ever likely to find" (PL, p. 11). While Quentin looks at him with "anxiety and amusement", Anthony views the situation as "enormous fun". He asks, "What do we do if we see it?" (PL, p. 12), to which Quentin replies "Bolt". It is in this way that character differences are reinforced and expanded, for, the word "bolt" can mean either to "dart off" or to "investigate". Thus the word describes the responses of the two men. Quentin reacts with "anxiety" to what Anthony views as "fun". The source of Quentin's "amusement" is apparent in the next section where we are led not only to the basic difference between the two, but to see that this basic difference between them is as well the central conflict of the book.

The conflict is seen when Quentin says: "I hope you still think that ideas are more dangerous than material things, . . . that is what you were arguing at lunch" (PL, p. 12); to which Anthony replies: "Yes, I do. All material danger is limited, whereas interior danger is unlimited. It is more dangerous to hate than to kill, isn't it?" In this developmental way we become aware at this point of the reason for Quentin's aforementioned "amusement" and we are made aware of the central conflict of the book, that is, a conflict between the noumenal world—the world of reality—versus the phenomenal world—the world of appearances.

Williams has in a brief four pages outlined the main personality traits of the two men, he has introduced us to the central conflict and at this point we come to the section in the chapter toward which the narrative has been purposely leading. As the two men walk along they suddenly catch a glimpse of the lioness as she "slithered down the right hand bank" (PL, p. 13), and as she comes "leaping in their direction", the two men hastily enter a "gate" and run up a "garden path" to the "dark shelter" of a house, at which point strange things begin to happen. At this point too, Williams' style changes.

Descriptions of place, of exterior things, become more sharply defined. The house is located in the centre of the property in which a "straight path. . . divided a broad lawn; and around which a row of trees shut it off from the neighbouring fields" (PL, p. 13). The description continues: "But the moonlight lay faintly on the lawn, the gate, and the road beyond, and it was at the road the two young men gazed". The stage is thus set for the interchange which is to happen before their eyes, and at which they can only stare.

In this section we meet Williams' "as if" descriptions. The lioness pauses "as if she heard or felt some attraction"; the figure of a man is seen "pacing as if in slow abstraction" (PL, p. 13); the lioness "as if startled made one leap" (PL, p. 14); "a tearing and human cry began as if choked into silence"; "and as if in answer. . . there came the roar of a lion". Then, "with that roar the shadows settled, the garden became clear" (PL, p. 14), which before was disturbed by "violent movement" with the leap of the lioness; at which point these "as if" descriptions disappear and Williams becomes more precise. Here Williams develops his theme that sensory perception has a limit as an adequate guide. Violent sensation is its limiting demarcation; or perhaps Williams is here showing himself in line with the thought of Carl Jung who points out that faced with what he calls certain unconscious manifestations we can do no more than couch our language in "the hypothetical 'as if'."<sup>5</sup>

The result of the collision between the lioness and the walking figure of the man is that the lioness disappears, the man lies prostrate and in the place of the lioness a majestic male lion appears: "it was a lion such as the young men had never seen in any zoo or menagerie, it was gigantic and seemed to their dazed senses to be growing larger every moment. . . .Then, majestically, it moved; it took up the slow forward pacing in the direction which the man had been following" (PL, p. 15). Moreover, it is here precisely that Quentin verbalizes the central question of the book: "What in God's name has happened?"—the rational mind cannot go beyond the "as if".

Here, too, as Williams' style has changed, so there is a recognizable change in the responses of the two men. Where before it was Quentin who acted first and applied rational judgments to experience, it is now

Anthony who is the one paying attention to detail. "'Better not make a row perhaps', he said. 'Besides, all the windows were dark, did you notice? If there's no one home, hadn't we better keep quiet?'" (PL, p. 13)

Similarly, while Quentin is frozen in fear and can only "clasp" his friend's arm, in Anthony there is a different response. He thinks: "I ought to warn him" (PL, p. 14), and he reacts by saying: "We'd better have a look at him" (PL, p. 15). Williams is precise to mention that this is a statement, not an enquiry. Anthony, indeed, has found someone to "help" and thus Anthony's former incongruous statement is fulfilled. In effect, as Williams describes the internal and personal characteristics of Quentin and Anthony, together with their responses to their experience, there is a noticeable role-change in the approximate terms of opposition which Jung has described as the "two types" which he denominates as the "introvert" and "extrovert".<sup>6</sup>

It is in this section too that Williams' technique of providing parallel actions and reactions is seen, as for example in his description of Mr. Berringer : "From their right side came a man's form, pacing as if in slow abstraction. His hands clasped behind him, his heavy bearded face showed no emotion"; ( PL, p. 14, emphasis mine), for Williams carefully parallels the movements and description of the man with those of the lion. In this section too Williams continues to heighten the internal—noumenous—by heightening the external—phenomenal—description. We find that this is a house without a handle on the front door; Anthony has to discover "a way in" through another or "back" door; the prostrate figure has not "a wound or bruise", and it is extremely "heavy". All of which evidence points to other than phenomenal explanations. The evidence is corroborated with the arrival of the searchers for the

lioness whom Anthony and Quentin have met earlier: and we learn that the man's name is "Berringer"; he has a housekeeper, otherwise he lives alone; and it is in the process of their trying to get Berringer into the house that we are confronted by other and similar strange phenomena.

Despite the combined efforts of the men they find Berringer now not so much "heavy" as "unmoveable"; they finally "raise him" only to find they cannot "turn the corner of the house"; despite their motion they find themselves "to be where they were before"; and it is only when Anthony speaks "commandingly"—"O come on"—that they finally achieve their purpose. Thus Anthony, the "questioner" and "challenger" is shown as well to possess "authority" and through and by him "progress" is made.

It is in the foregoing ways that Williams' style and technique are determinative; all gradually arises from the material and in a progressive manner. In this way the reader is led gradually to moments of insight and suddenly startled by the impact of vision. The incident in Berringer's garden is a case in point: up to then the external world was unclear, the focus was upon the internal, psychological and philosophical; in the garden into which the men flee, however, outward description becomes precise in outline—what was before indistinct becomes clarified, and the apparent heightening of clarity of the outward at this point implies a clarification of the inward.

Williams carries his progressive and paralleling technique into the second chapter. Here Damaris Tighe (her name is important, and I will return to this point later) is first introduced to us but again there is no outward or physical description given. There are nonetheless distinct (and we presume purposeful) parallels between the first two chapters of the book.



Consequently, it is to Damaris' mind that we are first introduced as it wanders while in the midst of entertaining and conversing with Mrs. Rockbotham and Miss Dora Wilmot. She is working on her doctoral thesis: "Pythagorean Influences on Abelard" (PL, p. 19), in which she finds the difficulty that Abelard seems to be "remote". Similarly, she is busy tracing the thought between the two humanists, and for this she needs a particularly clear head. (We recall that in the first chapter Anthony thought it would be an interesting exercise to "draw a map of one's own mind"). She has, however, been kept awake all night by "that crack of thunder" (We will learn later that the peculiar thunder without the accompanying lightning and rain, is related to the roar of the lion which Anthony saw and heard in the first chapter). Other aspects of her personality are suggested in conversation and action as well as by reflection: "Damaris said coldly" (PL, p. 20); She "moved the sugar tongs irritably"; and she considers that her two visitors embrace a "fantastic religion". So it is from her level of superiority that she consents to a proposition that "religion and butterflies were necessary hobbies", and we find that she is interested in people only for their "use to Damaris Tighe" (PL, p. 21). (Anthony on the other hand is looking for someone "who needs" him). In such ways Williams parallels and contrasts the differing points of view between Anthony and Damaris.

It is Damaris herself, however, who in reflection provides us with the main conflict and contrast between Anthony and herself. As she considers providing a paper for the group of "occultists" of which her two visitors are members, she consents to do so because Mrs. Rockbotham has "influential relations, among whom was the owner" of a weekly journal called The Two Camps, and of which Anthony is a sub-editor. As she has

previously contributed to the said weekly, it occurs to her in order to "keep the gate open" that she could find "a suitable paper" both to present to Berringer's group that evening and so later to publish in The Two Camps. It is at this point that Damaris reflects that the title of the "weekly" was "meant to be symbolical of the paper's effort to maintain tradition in art, politics and philosophy", and further that as "Anthony insisted it signified the division in the contributors between those who liked it living and intelligent and those who preferred it dying and scholarly, represented by himself and Damaris" (PL, p. 22). Similarly, by allowing Mrs. Rockbotham later in the chapter to misquote Shakespeare's Anthony and Cleopatra, when she says to Damaris, "Egypt you are dying" (PL, p. 27), Williams reinforces the idea that the tradition which Damaris espouses is indeed of a "dying and scholarly" kind.

There are other contrasts and comparisons which could be made between Anthony and Damaris, but Williams identifies further aspects of Damaris' position in relation to other characters as well. He thereby clarifies for us his own position toward her: for example, after Damaris in the same chapter in preparing herself and her paper for the evening's meeting "took the opportunity to modify it here and there in case she hurt Mrs. Rockbotham's feelings [for]. . . .even in pure scholarship it was never worthwhile taking risks. . . ." (PL, p. 24); as she talks with her father at supper: "she didn't know that she hated [him] because he was her father: Nor did she realize that it was only when she was talking with him that the divine Plato's remarks on beauty were used by her as if they meant anything more than entries in an index-card" (PL, p. 26). Thus Damaris espouses a nominalistic philosophic position in contrast both to her father and Anthony, who believe ideas are real. Thus too, the contrast

between the two positions has been identified; the similarity in theme between the two chapters has been established, and by an identical and developmental technique Williams leads his readers to the psychological and philosophical base of his characters. One further similarity between the two chapters needs to be mentioned—each ends in a similar way.

As in the first chapter the "majestic lion" appears, so in the second, the "crowned snake" manifests itself; in the first chapter Anthony's hand reaches for the door knocker and stops—the door has no handle: here, Mr. Foster "felt for the door handle"; in the first chapter the two young men flee "into" the garden: in the second the assembly flees "from the place in panic", "fear" and "terror". The appearance of both beasts causes confused movement. In the first chapter, "forms and shadows twisted and mingled"; here, while only Dora Wilmot sees the serpent in a lighted room, "everyone suddenly sprang into movement". In the second chapter, at first Damaris is "startled and galvanized" and then she too "moved hastily forward"; finally, the first chapter ends with the assertion, "it was a lion": the second ends with the author more doubtfully suggesting, "the room lay empty and still in the electric light, unless indeed there passed across it a dim form, which, heavy, long, and coiling, issued through the open window into a silent world. . ." (PL, p. 33). In effect Williams has returned his readers to the puzzling problem as expressed in Quentin's central question, "What in God's name has happened?" He devotes the remainder of the romance to answering and demonstrating the answers to that central question.

Generally speaking, it is observable throughout the romance that each of the characters offers explanations to this central and problematic question, and further it can be said that their answers are either "inadequate" or "partial", with the exception, of course, of Anthony's, who alone in the romance responds adequately to the challenge and so offers the solution and explanation to the mysterious events. For example, in the first chapter, after the manifestation of the Lion, the hunters of the lioness suggest that Mr. Berringer has simply "fainted" (PL, p. 16), while in the second chapter in discussing Mr. Berringer's condition, Mrs. Rockbotham offers her husband's diagnosis that Berringer is "unconscious", while she and Miss Wilmot think that "the unconsciousness was of the nature of a trance" (PL, p. 23). As the romance progresses other explanations for the various phenomena are given, and I will deal briefly with each of these as they occur.

Mr. Tighe, in the third chapter, after he and Anthony see the Butterfly, (a well-known Christian symbol of the Resurrection),<sup>7</sup> expresses himself in terms which have overtones of religious praise, such as "O glory, glory, . . . O glory everlasting!", and "O blessed sight. . . . O what have I done to deserve it," (PL, p. 43). His responses suggest that the manifestation is of the nature of the "beatific vision". This explanation is reinforced later by Mr. Foster, who reports that the effect of the "vision" was to leave Mr. Tighe "on his knees apparently praying" (PL, p. 50) to his butterfly collection. Williams has, however, earlier prepared his readers for a possible Platonic reading of the incident: Damaris asserts while she and her father are discussing Plato's dictum that, "one should rise from the phenomenal to the abstract beauty,

and thence to the absolute" (PL, p. 26), to which Mr. Tighe counters with a question, "Isn't the absolute something like everything?"; or, as he told Anthony after they have seen the Butterfly, he was going "to look at my butterflies and recollect everything" (PL, p. 45); or when we later learn that Mr. Tighe is led to "utter detachment", so that he rejects Damaris in her need and pushes her aside and is "lost in contemplation" (PL, p. 131). Here Williams in effect demonstrates the inadequacies of such explanations of, and responses to, the experience. As I mentioned earlier, Williams rejects such a simplistic approach to Plato.

It becomes more apparent however, with Mr. Foster's explanation, exactly what Williams is rejecting, which is not so much Plato as Neo-Platonism. For, in the chapter "The Two Camps", Mr. Foster comes to Anthony and Quentin and offers his explanation both of Mr. Berringer's state and of what is happening. According to Foster the explanation is that "by intense concentration. . . .the matter of the beast might be changed into the image of the idea, and this world, following that one, might all be drawn into that other world" (PL, p. 54). Foster asserts that Berringer is "the focus of the movement" and "It's through him that this world is passing into that" (PL, p. 55). Foster's explanation is repudiated by Anthony as "pure bunk" (PL, p. 56) on the grounds that he has seen the beasts without having consecrated "himself to this end" (PL, p. 53), as Foster maintains Berringer has done. While Williams, through Anthony, repudiates Foster's explanation he demonstrates, in Quentin, who accepts it, that such reactions as Question's lead to "madness" (PL, p. 64). It becomes apparent at this point that the various explanations and responses are inadequate because they simply "affirm" the images and are dominated by them. It is both in Mr. Richardson and

Damaris Tighe that Williams presents the opposite or "negative" approaches to experience.

Mr. Richardson, who introduces Anthony to the works of "Marcellus Victorinus of Bologna" upon whom Richardson bases his approach and who in the romance becomes identified with the Unicorn, rejects even the vision of the Divine Beast: "Images, images, he caught his mind back, abolishing them; beyond images, beyond [sic] any created shape or invented fable lay the union of the end" (PL, p. 146). But further, this negation leads him to the ultimate negation, i.e. that of negating himself as he is reported to have done by one of the firemen who "had seen a young man slip past his comrades towards the pyre, but since he had seen no more of him he concluded it could not have been so " (PL, p. 205).

Damaris on the other hand, would reduce all thought to "a graph" where she could show that "personification" was "the mind's habit of consoling itself with ideographs", and her study would further show that "As education developed so a sense of abstraction grew up, and it became more possible to believe that the North Wind was a passage of air, and not an individual" (PL, p. 127). She therefore is exemplary as well, of the "negative" way.

It is necessary at this point to observe that as Williams presents the various explanations and responses of his characters to their experience, he sets all of them in opposition to that mirrored in Anthony Durrant. But, as I have suggested above, the primary opposition is to be viewed as that between Damaris and Anthony—which as Anthony described it, is an opposition between a tradition which is "scholarly and dying" and one which is "living and intelligent". Briefly, Damaris' tradition is discernible if we view her scholarship as essentially philosophical and

theological, beginning with Pythagoras, as her thesis title Pythagorean Influences On Abelard, suggests. Hers is a position of rational nominalism; she rejects Plato: "nor am I prepared to call Plato der grosse Pfaffe, the great priest, as was once done" (PL, p. 31). She espouses Aristotle instead as is suggested when she considers the addition of an appendix to her thesis, to include the work of Aquinas, "God's Idea of the World from Plato to Aquinas": but "something was wrong with the title, she thought vaguely, but she could alter it presently" (PL, p. 98).

Damaris, however, is unable to do so, for at this point she is shocked first by the appearance of Quentin Sabot, and later she is assaulted by her vision of the "pterodactyl", and in Williams' terms she is "converted" from her rationalism to Anthony's idealism.

The tradition maintained by Anthony operates in a different way—it is "living and intelligent" and it is the "poetic" way, the way of the romantic and the visionary. Williams defines it for us at several points in Anthony's responses. For example, as Anthony in casual conversation with Quentin states it, "I will believe anything of my past opinions" (PL, p. 48). That is, he asserts that he will not be tied down by past definitions, nor will he accept readily other people's explanations. For as Anthony "meditates" upon the situation, while rejecting Foster's explanation, he is described as reflecting "All this was beyond him: he could not tell. But, right or wrong, there seemed to him at present no other hypothesis than that of powers loosed into the world: without finally believing it, he accepted it until he should discover more" (PL, p. 71). The word "discover" in this discussion is important in that it identifies the basic philosophic differences of approach between Anthony and Damaris: Damaris' approach works from past to present

and is reductive in that it would chart all human thought on a "graph" and further relegate it to the insignificance of an "appendix" (PL, p. 127) of her thesis; Anthony's methodology works in an opposite "direction" in that it begins with present personal experience and defines or redefines the past in those terms. For example, in the chapter "Investigations into a Religion", (the subtitle itself signifies methodology), Anthony, after his encounter with Foster and Miss Wilmot alludes to the incident as "But Ephesus, you know. . . ." (PL, p. 86). He thereby suggests that the connection between the biblical account and his own experience is that his makes concrete and present what the biblical account testifies occurred in the past. Thus Williams, through Anthony, demonstrates that the beginning point for an understanding of "what happened" is present personal experience, and consequently, the methodology is "inductive". Similarly we are not surprised to find that Williams in Anthony is voicing the Romantic approach which Williams himself espoused. Finally the tradition which Anthony embraces is that of art, poetics and religion as distinct from the tradition of philosophy and theology held by Damaris. In short he is an aesthetician rather than a systematic theologian. This of course, as I said earlier, is the proper approach to our appreciation of Williams as well.

At this point it might be helpful to pause in order to make plain another aspect of Williams' technique which is determinative. We are familiar, from the earlier romances, with Williams' habit of highlighting certain names, usually for the purpose of humor. So it is in Place of the Lion that we should pay attention to Williams' onomastics. For, as Mr. Foster's thesis is considered pure "bunk", and as Mr. Richardson espouses the "negative" way as it is set forth in the writings of "Marcellus



Victorinus of Bologna" (and knowing Williams' viewpoint on the "negative way"), there may be more than a "sly suggestion" regarding Williams' attitude in the emphasis on the name Bologna. But certainly the name given to Damaris Tighe not only denominates her function in the romance, it also alludes to her prototype in literature. Damaris, companion of Dionysius, was St. Paul's first woman "convert" in Acts. It was supposed that this was the same Dionysius whose writings were so influential on monastic life throughout the Medieval period. The name Anthony is worthy of investigation as well. When in the romance Anthony asks Damaris, "Am I a saint or an Alexandrian gnostic?" (PL, p. 34)—similarly as the name "Alexandria" (PL, p. 31), when used by Damaris, sets off in Dora Wilmot the appearance of the "crowned snake"—Williams invites his readers to investigate this aspect of Anthony and of the romance. Indeed it is the life of Anthony, the saint, that is evoked.

Very briefly, the Life of Anthony became a pattern for Christian life which continued well into the later Middle Ages. He was celebrated in art as well as in practice, and one of the last to celebrate him in art was Hieronymus Bosch in a triptych called the "Temptation of St. Anthony". Critics have said the painting expresses closely the legend.<sup>8</sup> Further, as the total painting celebrates the "negative" way, and recommends the "monastic ideals" of "poverty and chastity and obedience" over against "the world, the flesh and the devil", so it heartily recommends abstinence as a counter to the bestial configurations which fill the painting and are visible manifestations of Anthony's "temptations". The Anthony of the romance on the other hand, as I have already indicated, exemplifies another and counter way which the critics have called the "affirmative way", and which for reasons that I have already stated ought to be called

the way of "reaffirmation". Anthony in a progressive manner is led back to reaffirm the image of Adam within himself, and in so doing Williams identifies the role of artist and the place of man by means "of the symbolism of the cosmic myths" (PL, p. 76). The method by which Williams does this is to cite Anthony of the Desert and the legend of this first monastic as a prototype for his own story. Indeed, if we wish to perceive the evocation of Saint Anthony in the romance, we need but view the figure of the flying beast in the top left part of the Bosch triptych and consider how Williams strengthens his evocativeness by having Anthony reflect: "The lion they had seen 'if they had' wasn't winged, or hadn't seemed to be. Somewhere Anthony vaguely remembered to have seen a picture of people riding on winged lions—some Bible illustration, he thought, Daniel or Apocalypse. He had forgotten what they were doing, but he had a general vague memory of swords and terrible faces, and a general vague idea that it all had to do with wasting the earth" (PL, p. 46).

However, Williams brings the tradition up to date by bringing to bear as well upon his work the modern science of psychology. It is to this aspect that I must now turn as I discuss the archetypal content of the romance.

### iii

Williams' romance is not "archetypal" simply because he mentions the word in the book; rather, it is archetypal because Williams believes the archetypal to be the basis of art. It has been argued that for a work to be "archetypal" it must not merely contain a mythic pattern, but that the

writer must demonstrate an awareness of the implication of the pattern.<sup>9</sup>  
This Williams does most clearly in The Place of the Lion.

Anthony is first to identify the "beasts" as "archetypes". And he does so in reflections upon the appearance of the Lion which he describes as: "A mythical, an archetypal lion" (PL, p. 39). Anthony uses the term again as he proceeds to make some "Investigations into Religion", and as he is giving an excuse for his call upon Dr. and Mrs. Rockbotham he reflects even as he enquires about Mr. Berringer that he does so by means of "the Archetypal Lie" (PL, p. 76). Hence both "beasts" and the "lie" are archetypal. Williams, however, distinguishes between the "archetypal" and the "mythical", for, as Anthony recounts to Foster "the story of Tuesday evening and of how on the lawn of that house they had seen, as it seemed, the gigantic form of the lion. He did it as lightly as possible, but at best, in that excited atmosphere of the room, the tale took on the sound of some dark myth made visible to mortal and contemporary eyes" (PL, p. 52). Thus the lion is "archetype"; the talking about it is "myth". Williams seems to be using the term of the Greek word "mythos" as meaning simply "story", but here, a story with archetypal content.

As Williams proceeds in the romance, however, he makes a further important distinction this time between the words "myth" and "fable". Early in the romance Anthony refers to the Genesis accounts of creation as "antique fables" (PL, p. 75). Toward the end of the romance Anthony, prior to a "vision", thinks of how "Adam, long since—so the fable ran—standing in Eden had named the Celestials", and Anthony goes by "desire . . . inwards, through a universe of Peace" (PL, p. 190). (Earlier he had felt "a trifle microcosmic"). So he concludes, "the great affair was

present within him, eternal, now as much as then, and at any future hour as much as now" (PL, p. 191). Thus Williams distinguishes between "myth" and "fable". "Fable" relates to past or "old story"; myth signifies the continuing recurrence or the present reality of experience behind which is the "archetypal".

Williams uses another important and related word, namely "symbol". For example, in his "Meditation", as Anthony considers the "Why of the happening, he begins to reflect upon Foster's explanation: "that between a world of living principles, existing in its own state of being, and this present world, a breach had been made" (PL, p. 70). He continues, "the lioness from without, the lion from within, say within. . . .had approached each other through the channel of man's consciousness and had come together by the natural kinship between the material image and the immaterial object. And after that first impact others had followed: other principles had found their symbols and possessed them drawing back into themselves as many of those particular symbols as came immediately within the zone influenced". It is to be noted here that Williams uses in this section "image" and "symbol" as equivalents: "Might it not be then that these powers [which he has earlier designated archetypes] were not visible till they found their images?" (PL, p. 71) Earlier as Anthony and Mr. Tighe experience "The Coming of the Butterflies", as they look at the "colossal butterfly", Anthony sees Mr. Tighe "concentrated upon the perfect symbol of his daily concerns" (PL, p. 41). Thus a symbol is that which is not only itself but which derives its power from the archetypal. Further, as they observe the Butterfly receiving into itself all the ordinary butterflies, they see how symbolization takes place. In this way Williams demonstrates how symbols appear, while at the same time

he insists that for a symbol to be a symbol it must be energized by the archetypal. So it is later in the romance as Anthony and Damaris watch Dr. Rockbotham in the act of his profession that Anthony queries, "If the pattern's arranged in me, what can I do but let my self be the pattern?" (PL, p. 196) Since it is at this point that Anthony sees Dr. Rockbotham as the antitype of "Aesculapius", Williams points to the Greek sources of his romance and concludes that "progress" is possible in the method Anthony demonstrates. Thus too, Williams himself leads his readers to the Jungian psychological dimension and reality of his plot.

At this point let me say that Williams nowhere in this romance mentions the name of Carl Jung, yet everywhere his writing betrays that influence. Quite briefly it is in this romance, especially in his use of certain key words that we become aware of that influence. For example, as Anthony in one reflection is described as musing: "according to the new rules of perspective, Anthony remembered himself thinking. It had seemed extremely important to know the rules in that very muddled dream" (PL, p. 47). Dream for Anthony (as for Williams) opens out to include "vision", as when he and Quentin Sabot return to Berringer's garden, and as Quentin subsequently runs away, Anthony feels "as if he were riding against some terrific wind" (PL, p. 67), and at which point "a memory—of all insane things—awoke him". He finds himself "plunging toward a prehistoric world" (PL, p. 68) in his effort to reach "beyond it", i.e., the experience of the force of archetypal animals—The Lion and The Snake. Similarly, before Damaris is assaulted by the "pterodactyl", her vision of Abelard is accounted for by the fact that "her remote memory woke" (PL, p. 132) and she too finds herself in a prehistoric world. It is to be noted that in Anthony's vision "the sea" is present while in

Damaris', "water" is mixed as "mire" and a "swampy pool". The terms suggest the psychology of Carl Jung rather than that of Freud. For Williams clearly rejects the notion of "madness" or "a swampy pool" as explanation of or conclusion for his material. He does this in the person and figure of Anthony as opposed to Quentin or Damaris. Hence it is not with surprise that the reader overhears Anthony in "Meditation" suggest that Damaris' problem was one in which "she would go on thoughtfully playing with the dead pictures of ideas. . . .not knowing that the living existences to which seers and saints had looked were already in movement to avenge themselves on her" (PL, p. 73). The suggestion that the archetypes can "avenge" themselves is certainly a Jungian point of view.<sup>10</sup>

It is further important to note that in the passage just cited Williams suggests that Damaris' condition is one common to "everybody. . . .in this lost and imbecile century". Similarly it is when Richardson observes that Mr. Foster and Miss Wilmot are "opposite types" (PL, p. 88), that Williams reveals his use of Jung rather than either Freud or Adler,<sup>11</sup> for Williams in the romance asserts the primacy of "the will"; only for him it is that "the willing of the good meant restoration" (PL, p. 189).

Here, as elsewhere, the diagrams which Williams provides help to interpret his work. The diagram in The Place of the Lion, which Williams provides from the first chapter, is Berringer's garden and it is essentially the symbol of the square with the house in the middle. However, as the romance progresses the symbol changes; notably, after the chapters of "The Conversion of Damaris Tighe" and "The Triumph of the Angelicals" Williams presents "The Burning House", in which he is concerned to tell us that "occasionally the base of the fiery pillar expanded, and by midnight the perplexed firemen found that its extreme circle had reached on

one side to the middle of the garden" (PL, p. 165). Essentially what we have in diagram form is the "mandala", the symbol of the "self".<sup>12</sup> Previous to this, however, the circular movement was presented in two instances. First, when Anthony and Quentin revisit the house—in daylight, this time—to find that "The house by which they stood was indeed almost directly in the middle of a circular dip in the countryside" (PL, p. 62); second, when Anthony "Meditates" on that which he saw, he clarifies this aspect of the "diagram", for as he thinks "he sat up in some excitement. They had seemed to see the shape of the lion moving slowly—and the queer wave in the road had passed almost in the same path but in the opposite direction", and as they moved he reflected that they were "pacing round in widening circles" (PL, p. 72). Williams' two diagrams come together then as above in "The Burning House". Williams, however, repeats the diagram in the next chapter, "The Hunting of Quentin". Damaris finds Quentin pursued by Foster: they are running "along the further edge of the meadow" (PL, p. 173) and as the description goes on Damaris observes "the chase was now going down the north side" (PL, p. 175); and as Quentin continues to run "along the meadow side" (PL, p. 176) it is apparent that Quentin and Foster are tracing out the square. At this point Damaris first sees a "sheep or a lamb or something in the middle [of the field]" (PL, p. 174), and she is led by "the shadow of the flying eagle. . . towards the lamb" (PL, p. 175). She calls Quentin who comes running toward her and falls, and she throws herself upon him to protect him, at which point the other "continued his uneasy perambulation. As it went circling round them" (PL, p. 177). Again the square and the circle are brought together in this active and dynamic way and, as far as Quentin is concerned, it represents both psychic wholeness and salvation. Here too,

as Williams writes in relation to Quentin, the sequence represents the return of a situation where it is found that "the place of the lamb[is] in the place of the lion" (PL, p. 177).



# NOTES

1. Charles Williams, The Place of the Lion, (London: Faber & Faber, 1931).
2. Heath-Stubbs, p. 30; Wright, p. 61; Peckham, p. 74.
3. Peckham, p. 99.
4. William Wordsworth, The Prelude, ed. with introduction by Carlos Barker, (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1966), p. 292, l. 182; and p. 306.
5. Carl Jung, Two Essays, p. 186.
6. Jung, Two Essays, pp. 51-73. (See esp. pp. 66-67).
7. J.E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, (New York: Philosophical Library, 1974), p. 35.
8. Walter S. Gibson, Hieronymus Bosch, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), p. 173f.
9. Evelyn Hinz, "Rider Haggard's She: An Archetypal History of Adventure" in Studies in the Novel, Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 420.
10. Jung, Two Essays, p. 247, "The unconscious reacts automatically like my stomach which, in a manner of speaking, wreaks its revenge upon me."
11. Jung, Two Essays, p. 44.
12. Jung, Two Essays, pp. 234-236; and Symbols, p. 169.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

The purpose of this conclusion is twofold; first, it is to reiterate the main points of the thesis as demonstrated by the material; second, it is to suggest the direction for further work.

In the first chapter I indicated that from Williams' own critical writing an archetypal approach was suggested, though not detailed. It is when we read his creative works, particularly his romances, that we become aware of that theory both detailed and demonstrated. Further, a progressive development is observable.

To see how Williams progresses in his theory (and practice) one need only examine Williams' use, for example, of the word "myth". In Shadows of Ecstasy, Considine the arch-negator of things, even of life itself, says at one point: "for it's better that they should serve a myth than a man. . . ." (SE, p. 94); similarly Sir Bernard, the ironist, writes of Considine: "This dreadful tendency to personify and (therefore) mythologize I attribute to you and the late Mr. Considine, who was an entire mythology about himself" (SE, p. 222). Here Williams equivocates between the words "personification" and "mythologize". In Considine's statement Williams further dissociates myth from reality. Williams does not use the word myth at all in War in Heaven but chooses rather the word "folklore", as for example, in the title of Sir Giles Tumulty's book "Historical Vestiges of Sacred Vessels in Folklore" (WH, p. 13).

In Many Dimensions Williams uses the word several times, for example when he writes that Prince Ali's "mind moved with most ease in the romantic regions of myth. . . ." (MD, p. 13). Yet in his continued use, the term

is not delineated sufficiently. For as Arglay explains it, "that amid all this mess of myths and tangle of traditions and. . . ,and. . . . febrifuge of fables, there is something extreme and terrible" (MD, p. 128). Further, as Williams fails to examine the "extreme and terrible" aspect of "myth" and "fable" which is probably the "archetypal", he thereby fails to relate the two, i.e. the mythological and the archetypal. This he does however, in The Place of the Lion.

In The Place of the Lion, Williams uses three words "tale", "myth" and "fable", and demonstrates their relationship. The word "tale" is an active story having "mythological" content. Twice Williams uses the word in this way: in Anthony's relating his experience to Quentin and Berringer: "the tale took on the sound of some dark myth made visible to mortal and contemporary eyes" (PL, p. 52). Similarly as Anthony speaks to Damaris, Williams writes, "and he began, going over the tale as it had been known to him. . . .and the authority that was in it directed and encouraged even while it awed and warned her. He neither doubted nor permitted her to doubt; the whole gospel—mòrals and mythology at once—entered into and possessed her" (PL, p. 137). On the other hand Williams uses the word "fable" to denominate the old story or prototype. These he calls "antique fables" (PL, p. 75). In this way Williams progresses in his definitions of the word "myth".

It is sufficient to say at this point that as Williams prescribes "tale" to have "mythological" content, so he shows "myth" to arise from the "archetypal"—that is it depends on or arises from the collective unconscious. This is clearly seen in the passage: "Adam, long since—so the fable ran—standing in Eden had named the Celestials. . . .Yet even in Anthony Durrant the nature of Adam lived. . . .He was lying back, very

still, in his chair. His desire went inwards, through a universe of peace, and hovered, as if on aquiline pinions, over the moment when man knew and named the powers of which he was made" (PL, p. 190).

Similarly Williams' progress in theory and practice can be observed quite simply from his use of his symbols. The obvious example is his use of the symbol of the "quaternity". The symbol of quaternity is used first in War in Heaven. There it appears, as I have said, in the form of a "Chalice" and thus is a divided quaternity; in Many Dimensions the Stone is a definite symbol of quaternity. In these two romances, however, in which Williams uses it he does not relate them accurately to his characters in the romances. In The Place of the Lion, however, he not only uses the "quaternity" but relates it to the symbol of the "Mandala" where he uses it to symbolize psychic wholeness. This is especially seen in reference to Quentin Sabot.

The net result is to say that a progressive development toward archetypal theory can be detected in Williams' romances. In The Place of the Lion Williams shows himself not only an archetypal theorist, but a full-fledged practitioner of mythic art. I would suggest that such an approach to Williams' remaining three romances, The Greater Trumps, Descent Into Hell and All Hallows' Eve, would provide new understandings in Williams' criticism. Indeed, work has already begun in this direction with respect to The Greater Trumps.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, I have approached the subject from the point of view of Jung's analytic psychology, and have suggested the archetypal theory of Jung as the most appropriate to an understanding of Williams' work. This is not to overlook the fact that the theory of archetypes defined in the work of Mircea Eliade<sup>2</sup> would be similarly helpful in an approach to Williams' work

as it applies to the occult or to archaic religion.

NOTES

1. Evelyn Hinz, "An Introduction to The Greater Trumps", English Studies in Canada, Vol. 1, No. 2, Summer 1975, pp. 217 - 229.
2. Mircea Eliade, The Myth of the Eternal Return: Or, Cosmos and History, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. xiv.

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