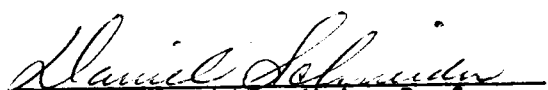
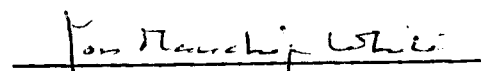


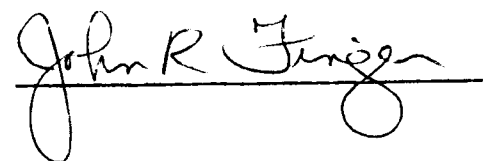
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Daryl Aleck Grider entitled "Rightness with the Land: Spirit of Place in the Novels of Frank Waters." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in English.

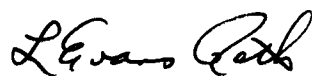

Daniel Schneider, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:





Accepted for the Council:


Vice Chancellor
Graduate Studies and Research

RIGHTNESS WITH THE LAND: SPIRIT OF PLACE IN
THE NOVELS OF FRANK WATERS

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Daryl Aleck Grider
December 1980

3046334

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A good many people share credit for whatever virtues this book possesses.

My dissertation director Dr. Daniel Schneider has offered not only reliable guidance but also consistent encouragement.

The other members of my committee, Professor Jon Manchip White, Dr. Richard A. Penner, and Dr. J. R. Finger, have helped to give the word "committee" a more favorable connotation: they were all willing to teach and eager to learn.

Dr. Charles Adams' aid and counsel both as friend and Waters' scholar has been invaluable to me.

Frank Waters himself has given so graciously of his time and his wisdom that it is difficult to do him justice without sounding obsequious.

Wilhelmina Simmons has said that she does not get to see her successes in print, but this book is a visible symbol of one such success.

And over the last thirty-one years, my folks have put up with a lot.

ABSTRACT

The novels of Frank Waters offer an optimistic alternative to the pessimism and despair that permeates much of the literature of the last half of the twentieth century. Waters' uniquely American brand of pragmatic mysticism offers a vision of reason and instinct, technological civilization and nature-oriented cultures merging to form a synthesis superior to any of its parts. Such a process is, in Waters' view, the logical next step in the evolutionary journey of man.

The five major Waters' novels examined in this study are People of the Valley, The Yogi of Cockroach Court, The Man Who Killed the Deer, Pike's Peak and The Woman at Otowi Crossing. Each offers a variation on how a reattunement to one's environment, to its spirit of place, can result in an individual's achieving the synthesis of reason and instinct, of conscious with unconscious which Waters projects. This attainment of a rightness with the land leads not to a Rousseauian return to innocence. Rather it will result in a new culture whose members, because they are no longer at war within themselves, can handle the responsibilities of being both rational and intuitive parts of nature.

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INTRODUCTION

Western historian C. L. Sonnichsen argues that much of the fiction about the American West is an attempt to satisfy "a natural hunger for a heroic past":

We want to have roots in ancient times, like other peoples, but we don't stay in one place long enough to grow them. We move about freely, and some of us live on wheels. Many of us know nothing about our own grandfathers. Pride of family is denied to all but a few of us. Pride of race has to be built. Any group with a thousand-year history had these things provided, but the American is a newcomer and not yet completely at home in his vast country. All he has is the mythical West, and he needs it desperately.¹

In striving to fulfill this need for "a national myth to help us understand the nature of the universe and our place in it" (Sonnichsen, p. 18), Western fiction falls, according to Sonnichsen, into two categories: the low and the high roads. The low road gives us the myth of The West That Wasn't.² This is the West of the noble gun-fighter, of Billy the Kid and Pat Garrett, of Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday. It is a stereotypical and largely bogus West which nevertheless has been enduringly popular with a large audience of readers throughout the twentieth century. Writers from Zane Grey to Louis L'Amour have sold books in the tens of millions by giving their myth-hungry readers what they wanted. Hence, whatever their value as literature, the popular novels of the low road can be studied as

¹C. L. Sonnichsen, From Hopalong to Hud: Thoughts on Western Fiction (College Station, Texas: Texas A & M Press, 1978), 16-17.

²Sonnichsen, 2.

historical evidence of what elements a large portion of the American public has wanted in its myth of the West.

The writers whom Sonnichsen sees as being on the high road are a different breed. It is not that high roaders like Harvey Fergusson, Oliver La Farge, A. B. Guthrie, Walter Van Tilburg Clark, Wallace Stegner or Frank Waters do not deal with the mythic West. It is rather that whereas the writer aiming for the mass audience tries his professional best to give his audience what they want to hear, the writers on the high road challenge their audiences, offering them not what they want to hear, but what they may need to know.

The subject of this study is the challenge of one of these authors, Frank Waters, to his readers. The novels of Frank Waters offer a myth of the West which seeks to supersede the myth of The West That Wasn't. From the concrete particulars of the people and places of the Southwest, Waters has created his version of "a national myth to help us understand the nature of the universe and our place in it." Waters would agree with Sonnichsen that many Americans are still uncomfortable newcomers in their vast country. The Waters myth of rightness with the land is an attempt to allow such Americans to feel at home with themselves.

This talent of being at home with one's self is one that few Americans have ever had. Hence, we wander about the face of our country more than any people in history, hoping that over the next hill, down the next stretch of highway will be the contentment that escapes us. Not only does such constant movement seldom bring us peace, but it often, as Crèvecoeur pointed out in "The Manners of the Americans," makes us worse. This is so because the isolation engendered by constant

movement can make us stronger without making us better. In Crèvecoeur's description of the American frontiersman we see the prototype of the rugged individualist who successfully exploits the wilderness. But his exploitation becomes a habit; he cannot stop. Once secure in the wilderness he must either pull up stakes and move on or see his more recently arrived neighbors as new objects of exploitation. Like the land and the Indians, the newcomers too become objects--things to be cowed, conquered, or destroyed as hindrances. The means become a bit more subtle--business and legal chicanery--but the end is the same: to subdue one's rivals as one earlier subdued the earth.³ Such an exploitative approach can never bring peace because what is missing is not something external that can be possessed but something within the restless frontiersman himself. He is doomed to an endless cycle of physical acquisition because we can never have enough of what we do not really want.

Of course, Thoreau also saw that white Europeans were headed down the wrong road in America. They were burdening themselves thoughtlessly with the very things--superfluous material possessions--that would deaden their ability to be at home with themselves. And so he argued that we all need to make our pilgrimage to Walden Pond: not to turn our backs on all the goods of material civilization but to find which things are really aids to our basic well being and which are actually more trouble than they are worth.

³See Waters' Pumpkin Seed Point (Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1969), p. 66, on the Biblical support for this attitude.

D. H. Lawrence was a wandering Englishman who makes even most Americans look like stay-at-homes. But who better to see our wanderlust for what it is than someone who has it worse than we do? And so his Studies in Classic American Literature remains a brilliant assessment of the American attempt to escape from ourselves:

Men are free when they are in a living homeland, not when they are straying and breaking away. Men are free when they are obeying some deep, inward voice of religious belief. Obeying from within. Men are free when they belong to a living, organic, believing community, active in fulfilling some unfulfilled, perhaps unrealized purpose. Not when they are escaping to some wild west. The most unfree souls go west, and shout of freedom. Men are freest when they are most unconscious of freedom. The shout is a rattling of chains, always was.

Men are not free when they are doing just what they like. The moment you can do just what you like, there is nothing you care about doing. Men are only free when they are doing what the deepest self likes.⁴

Then in a passage so close to the spirit of Waters' work that it might be used as the motto of several of his books, Lawrence goes on to say:

Liberty in America has meant so far the breaking away from all dominion. The true liberty will begin when Americans discover IT, and proceed possibly to fulfill IT. IT being the deepest whole self of man, the self in its wholeness, not idealistic halfness.

That's why the Pilgrim Fathers came to America, then, and that's why we come. Driven by IT. We cannot see that invisible winds carry us, as they carry swarms of locust, that invisible magnetism brings us as it brings the migrating birds to their unforeknown goal. But it is so. We are not the marvellous choosers and deciders we think we are. IT chooses for us, and decides for us. . . . We are free only so long as we obey. When we run counter, and think we will do as we like, we just flee around like Orestes pursued by the Eumenides.⁵

⁴D. H. Lawrence, Studies in Classic American Literature (1923; rpt. New York: Penguin, 1977), 12-13.

⁵Lawrence, 13.

Here perhaps one should make clear some of the implications of what Lawrence has said. "IT" is "the deepest whole self of man," not just American man or even English man but man. Therefore, in dealing with the American struggle to "fulfill IT," to become our true selves, we but give a local habitation and a form to a universal problem. The clash between reason and instinct, between a technological and religious/traditional existence is one going on everywhere in the world. But it had better come to resolution in America first because we have carried material development to its farthest extreme. We must be the first to strike a new balance or we will be the first to topple over.

Since Crevecoeur, since Thoreau, even since Lawrence only half a century ago, the problem has become more acute. Our interrelated cycles of wandering and material exploitation have reached the breaking points. We are running out of the gas that has kept us half a mile ahead of our discontent. When we coast to a stop, we may find we have so successfully subdued nature that pollution of one sort or another has left the land unliveable. And this scenario overlooks the more abrupt possibility that our efforts to escape from IT will lead us to press the buttons that start the rockets that blow up the world.

Linear time may be running out for us. Even such a basically optimistic thinker as science writer and astro-physicist Carl Sagan sees the present generation as a make or break point:

We are at a crossroads in human history. Never before has there been a moment so simultaneously perilous and promising. We are the first species to have taken our evolution into our own hands. For the first time we possess the means for intentional or inadvertent self-destruction. We also have, I believe, the means for passing through this stage of

technological adolescence into a long lived, rich and fulfilling maturity for all the members of our species. But there is not much time to determine to which fork of the road we are committing our children and our future.⁶

Arthur Koestler, the distinguished novelist and writer on science, also sees the present generation as crucial, but he is less optimistic than Sagan. He, like Sagan, views atomic weapons as big trouble:

The nuclear weapon has come to stay; it has become part of the human condition. Man will have to live with it permanently: not only through the next confrontation-crisis and the one after that; not only through the next decade or century, but forever--that is, as long as mankind survives. The indications are that it will not be for very long.⁷

However, the source of the trouble is not in the weapon but in the species that created it. Koestler fears a "paranoid streak" in homo sapiens may be its undoing:

The most persistent sound which reverberates through man's history is the beating of war drums. Tribal wars, religious wars, civil wars, dynastic wars, national wars, revolutionary wars, colonial wars, wars of conquest and of liberation, wars to prevent and to end all wars, follow each other in a chain of compulsive repetitiveness as far as man can remember his past, and there is every reason to believe that the chain will extend into the future.⁸

Koestler believes that the paranoid streak is the result of something gone wrong in the evolution of man's brain:

To put it crudely: evolution has left a few screws loose between the neocortex and the hypothalamus.⁹

⁶Carl Sagan, Broca's Brain (New York: Random House, 1979), 39-40.

⁷Arthur Koestler, Janus: The Summing Up (New York: Vintage-Random House, 1978), 2.

⁸Koestler, 2-3.

⁹Koestler, 11.

The older more primitive portions of the brain which are the seats of emotion are not properly coordinated with or controlled by the rational part of the brain, the neocortex. The result is a persistently destructive conflict between rational thought and irrational beliefs. Koestler thinks the only serious hope for reuniting man's reason and emotion is to discover a chemical means of integration: "a combination of benevolent enzymes which provide the neocortex with a veto against the follies of the archaic brain, correct evolution's glaring mistake, reconcile emotion with reason, and catalyse the breakthrough from maniac to man" (Koestler, Janus, p. 20).

While Sagan and Koestler present man's dilemma in a scientific and philosophical perspective, Loren Eiseley offers a more personal and painful view of the same problem in his autobiography, All the Strange Hours. The example of his life and thought gives concrete reality to the modern split-brain dilemma. Eiseley, a physical anthropologist and gifted personal essayist, examines much of the evolutionary evidence looked at by Koestler and Sagan. However, Eiseley examines this data for clues as to what has gone wrong with his life. He is one of those people who seems to function equally well in the worlds of science and literature. Despite living a life that allowed closer contacts with nature than most people in academia ever have, he still felt fatally cut off from what is probably best defined as Lawrence's IT, his "deepest whole self." He saw a brilliantly successful career (as the world counts success) in academia as small return for his saying "no" to a chance for genuine wholeness. While still in graduate school, he was offered an opportunity (seemingly by Fate herself) to go to sea.

He chose the life of the mind at the expense of a satisfying life for the body. Regret for the road not taken ate at him for the rest of his life. What he came to see as the Indian in his nature, the instinctual, non-rational being, could find no sustenance in modern civilization. Like Thoreau's farmers, he was kept from captaining huckleberry parties and inspecting snowstorms by a wall of superfluous Things, the where-withall of material civilization. He ends the recounting of his life with the hope that death will recycle him to a simpler time and place, will return him to the western altiplano of the America of twenty or thirty thousand years ago: "I am anxious to press on. They wait for me, the dog Wolf [the companion of his earlier, freer days in Nebraska] and the Indian, muffled in snow upon the altiplano."¹⁰ The irony of the "press on"! It brings all too readily to mind, "I should have been a pair of ragged claws / Scuttling across the floors of silent seas."

What is so sad about All the Strange Hours is Eiseley's hunger for a permanent sabbatical from the pain of a consciousness whose main function seems to be to tell him what he has missed. Lawrence, who felt the temptation for such a return perhaps even more keenly than Eiseley, knew such a return was not just impossible but wrong:

We can't go back. We can't go back to the savages: not a stride. We can be in sympathy with them. We can take a great curve in their direction, onwards. But we cannot turn the current of our life backwards, back towards their soft warm twilight and uncreate [sic] mud. Not for a moment. If we do it for a moment, it makes us sick.¹¹

¹⁰Loren Eiseley, All the Strange Hours (New York: Scribner, 1975), 273.

¹¹Lawrence, 145.

And so I see a pattern, detected early in American history by people like Crèvecoeur and Thoreau, those whom Koestler calls the "best intuitive diagnosticians--the poets": the pattern of a war between reason and the deep emotions. Followers of scientific thought like Sagan and Koestler think that war is nearing a decisive battle that may well be won or lost in our lifetimes. Eiseley symbolizes those who have valiantly fought in, and ultimately become casualties of, the beginnings of that crucial battle.

Part white, part Indian, Frank Waters has also known personally what it means to have reason and instinct at war within oneself. And his luck has been better than Eiseley's. He has survived with his optimism intact and can offer us reasons for that tempered optimism. In his myth of rightness with the land he offers options for mankind in addition to Koestler's hope for chemical salvation. Thus his work is beginning to receive more attention. Like Eiseley and Lawrence, he has felt the pull of the people of the altiplano, the less rationally oriented cultures of the Indians and Spanish of the Southwest and Mexico. But he has practiced what Lawrence preached: he has spent a life in sympathy with them, walking a great curve in their direction but onwards also. Like Arne Saknussemm in Verne's Journey to the Center of the Earth, he has been there before us and the messages he has left can help us orient ourselves and find our way onward to home:

And this is where we find ourselves today, alienated by the tyranny of mind from instinct, the earthy substratum of our essential being--a society whose psychic wholeness is split between opposite poles. Our intellectual development and fantastic scientific achievements have become too powerful to permit us to return. But the way out of this impasse is already indicated by increasing signs of a new faculty that will dominate both instinct and reason during the coming cycle.

Through awareness of intuition we may find that the material and the ethereal are aspects of the same essence; that sensory and extrasensory perception combine in one focus on the whole; and that all life itself is but a series of stages of cosmic evolution.¹²

Waters is not the only person to sense the awakening of the new integrative faculty which he feels will transcend both reason and instinct. While he calls it "intuition," Colin Wilson speaks of "Faculty X": "a sixth sense--a sense of the purpose of life, quite direct and uninferred." Wilson believes it is the answer to the complaint registered over two centuries ago by Johnson's Rasselas:

I can discover within me no power of perception that is not glutted with its proper pleasure, yet I do not feel myself delighted. Man has surely some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification, or he has some desires distinct from sense which must be satisfied before he can be happy.¹³

The "latent sense," the "Faculty X" is, Wilson believes, "the key to all poetic and mystical experience; when it awakens, life suddenly takes on a new, poignant quality."¹⁴ It is his awareness of this new sense which makes Wilson, like Waters and unlike Koestler or Eiseley, profoundly optimistic about man's future:

Our trouble in the past has been poor communication between intelligence and instinct, which has meant that the intelligent people lacked power and vitality, while the instinctive people lacked vision and long-distance purpose. Intelligence and instinct can be united by the development of Faculty X. Once man understands this, nothing can hold him back.¹⁵

¹²Frank Waters, Mexico Mystique: The Coming Sixth World of Consciousness (Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1975), 282-83.

¹³Samuel Johnson quoted in Colin Wilson, The Occult (New York: Vintage-Random House, 1971), 58.

¹⁴Wilson, 58.

¹⁵Wilson, 574.

A theme, perhaps the theme running through all of Waters' major fiction and non-fiction is that what holds us back as a species is our tardiness in merging intelligence and instinct into a power greater than either. Waters is a mystic. He is also an engineer. Therefore, his is a peculiarly American pragmatic mysticism. In Waters' work a mystical experience proves itself only when the oceanic feeling is followed by an increased ability to overcome the humdrum of everyday existence, to infuse it with added meaning. His lifelong admiration for the most traditional of the Southwest Indian cultures is sparked by how much of the ordinary they could, by profound myth and effective ritual, trans-
pose into the oceanic, by how much of their daily life could be experienced with mystical intensity. Yet he is also aware of how sorely those same cultures lacked sufficient ability for skeptical, analytical thought to protect themselves from rapid changes such as the invasion of the white European. On the other hand, he consistently points out that over-reliance on intelligence alone is the bane as well as the boon of the mainstream American culture because it cuts off the individuals (even the Eiseley's) in it from a sense of meaning, of ultimate purpose. Thus, for the individual and for the culture, in Waters' view, rightness with the land implies not just a balancing of rationality and instinct, but a transcending of both in an intuitive mysticism which is as practical as it is meaningful, combining man's ability to question with his ability to have faith.

The starting places for Waters criticism are three. Martin Bucco has written a good brief introduction to Waters' work in his Frank Waters, a pamphlet in the Southwest Writers Series. John Milton's Conversations with Frank Waters is a transcription of seven

television conversations between Waters and Milton in 1964. Milton is much attracted to the mysticism in Waters, and the conversations are steered in that direction a good part of the time, but the format of a time-limited, televised talk, useful as that is as a record for Waters scholarship, does not allow great enough depth in the questions or answers. The most extensive work on Waters remains Thomas J. Lyon's Frank Waters. And it is this work that is most relevant to my own study. It is a well written book from which I have learned much. In fact each time I return to it, I find myself more impressed with the depth of Lyon's understanding of Waters' work. My approach, however, differs from Lyon's in what I hope are several significant respects. The scope of his book is comprehensive, covering everything Waters had written up to 1972 and including biographical material. My view is thematic and selective: I am interested primarily in those works which most fully convey Waters' pragmatic mysticism, the striving for the Self through rightness with the land.

Mr. Lyon presents Frank Waters as "primarily a writer of ideas" (Lyon, p. viii) and therefore begins his study by examining those ideas as they appear in the non-fiction. Then he moves on to an analysis of the "artistic rendering" (Lyon, p. viii) of those ideas. Yet Waters best writing speaks to something deeper than our ideas about reality. It seems to me that he is artist first, philosopher second, and mystic before either. To read his major works is to have one's perception of life challenged. It is not that Mr. Lyon's examination of Waters ideas is wrong. But it can be misleading to someone who does not come to the Lyon book already possessing a strong feel for spirit of place and for Mr. Waters' profoundly religious

experience of life. Therefore, as with that other basically religious Taos writer, D. H. Lawrence, Waters' non-fiction is best interpreted in the light of his fiction, not the other way around.

Hence, the present study focuses on the five novels which seem to me to best present Waters' challenge to what he might call our apperception of the American myth. These novels are People of the Valley, The Yogi of Cockroach Court, The Man Who Killed the Deer, Pike's Peak, and The Woman at Otowi Crossing. As Thomas Lyon has pointed out, in Waters' vocabulary "apperception" means something more than perception, which is identification by means of the senses; apperception involves as well both intellectual understanding and a mystical or intuitive insight.¹⁶ The rightness with the land attained or at least striven for by Waters' main characters requires significant changes in their apperceptions of reality. Through a process of attunement to a specific locale and its people, the protagonist can achieve not just a clearer understanding but a clearer control of his or her own total possibilities as a human being. This can be done whether one's cultural origin or personality biases one to the rational or the instinctual extremes of the modern mind/body polarity. Waters' vision is a myth of convergence; man's evolutionary progress requires full use of both his head and his heart. Nevertheless various Waters novels examine the path to convergence from different starting points on the continuum from the totally instinctual to the overly rational.

¹⁶Thomas J. Lyon, Frank Waters (New York: Twayne, 1973), 24. Subsequent references to this book will appear in the text.

Waters' Southwest Trilogy includes People of the Valley (1941), The Yogi of Cockroach Court (1947), and The Man Who Killed the Deer (1942). Each deals with a different ethnic group found in the Southwest. But each also illustrates how individuals from backgrounds that stress instinct or intuition over ego consciousness can win their way to a balance of their inner and outer worlds, a balance which I have called rightness with the land. The other two books, Pike's Peak (1971) and The Woman at Otowi Crossing (1966), illustrate the journey to convergence from the other end; each focuses on main characters who have been raised in the white, mainstream American culture. As the protagonists of the Southwest Trilogy must learn a greater appreciation of the strengths and limitations of the conscious mind's power to manipulate the external world, so characters in the latter two works must explore the inner world of the unconscious mind, a world their rational culture undervalues.

Chapter I on People of the Valley argues the importance of spirit of place to an understanding of the kind of mythic, nature-oriented novels which Waters writes; People of the Valley is then analyzed as a prime example of such a novel.

Chapter II on The Yogi of Cockroach Court explores Waters' interpretation of Eastern religious thought and the effect of a negative spirit of place on searchers for the universal Self. The two topics are related not only by the Chinese yogi, Tai Ling, the title character, but also by the concept of duality which Waters sees as crucial to an understanding of the parallels between Eastern religions and Southwestern Indian ceremonialism, which in turn is built on a sensitivity to spirit of place in the Southwest. The tensions of such a cosmic

bipolarity are particularly and violently evident in the ethnic group which Waters focuses on in Yogi: the mestizos, the halfbreeds who Southwesterners call "coyotes." Barby, Guadalupe, and most of the other inhabitants of the bordertown between Mexico and the United States are alternately attracted to and repulsed by the cultures both above and below the border.

Chapter III attempts to make clear the depth and originality of Waters' vision of how the conflict between reason and instinct, conscious and unconscious, can resolve itself. A comparison and contrast is made between Waters' The Man Who Killed the Deer (1942) and two other profound explorations of modern man's need to face his primordial self: Lawrence's Plumed Serpent and Conrad's Heart of Darkness. Like the other two writers, Waters recognizes both the need and the danger in contemporary man's confrontation with the non-rational parts of himself. But Deer offers more promising insights into how that confrontation can be successfully resolved than either of the other works.

Chapter IV examines Pike's Peak (1971). More than just a revision of his early Colorado mining trilogy, this 743 page novel is a profound account of the effect of spirit of place on the soul of an archetypal American, Joseph Rogier. In Rogier's tragic struggle for self-understanding, we see that rationality and strength of will are not enough. One needs also the access to one's unconscious that can be accomplished by arriving at a rightness with the land.

In Chapter V, The Woman at Otowi Crossing is viewed as Waters' attempt to bring together in one novel what he has learned in his many explorations of rightness with the land. Its theme is not only the

forming of a bridge between reason and instinct within the individual, but also the forming of bridges between the white culture and the red. It offers the prospect not of one culture merging into the other, but of each sharing a common future by transcending itself, by making the most of the dual birthright of reason and instinct which is not only the birthright hidden within every individual but which can be found within every cultural group also.

Like D. H. Lawrence, Waters believes we cannot go back to simpler levels of consciousness or culture. But Waters also argues that only a culture which adds ecological soundness, an abiding respect for the land, to an equal respect for the world within the self can long survive. This is a warning that has been sounding at least since Crevecoeur and Thoreau, but in our generation it has reached the status of a final notice. To ignore it is to face termination.

CHAPTER I

PEOPLE OF THE VALLEY

I. The Western Spirit of Place Novel

Frank Waters writes Western spirit of place novels. Not all Western novelists write spirit of place novels and not all spirit of place novelists are from the American West. Therefore, the first half of this opening chapter will begin my examination of Waters' novels by establishing definitions for the Western novel, the spirit of place novel and Frank Waters' unique blend of both. For help in determining what a Western novel is I will turn to John R. Milton's book, The Novel of the American West. To make clear what I mean by calling Waters a spirit of place novelist, I will look at two other such writers, William Faulkner and Walter Van Tilburg Clark. Finally, the latter half of the chapter will analyze Waters' People of the Valley as a Western spirit of place novel which develops the theme of rightness with the land.

John Milton begins his study of the Western novel by setting up a contrast, similar to the one drawn by C. L. Sonnichsen, between Westerns with and without a capital "w." Formula writers, the Zane Greys, Max Brands, and Louis L'Amours, are writers of westerns with a small "w." In the camp of the Western novel as literature, Milton places three writers closest to the fire: Harvey Fergusson, Walter Van Tilburg Clark, and Frank Waters. Milton sees authorial intent as one criteria for separating the two groups:

We need . . . first, to identify a novel of the West which can be called simply, a western, and which differs somewhat from another kind of novel, also of the West, which is more literary and which deserves a separate name such as the Western (capitalized) novel, or the Western regional novel.

One way of making the distinction is by saying that the (inferior) western is set in the West deliberately in order to exploit a romantic and adventurous situation which becomes a commodity for sale in the mass market. In this case the West as a place (and it is almost always the nineteenth-century West) is chosen for its built-in appeal to the public. On the other hand, the genuine, serious Western novel is set in the West because its author lives there, because it is a result of his own experience, because it represents the regional environment he knows best. Or to put it somewhat differently, the writer of the Western novel takes the West seriously, while the writer of the western does not.¹

However, the writer of a good Western novel needs more than just seriousness of intent. He needs also vision and competence. The former is the ability to handle experiences with insight, freshness, and originality (Milton, p. 48); the latter is the ability to get a particular vision down on paper (Milton, p. 2).

Since seriousness and competence are prerequisites for any writer of first-rate literature, it must be the Western writer's vision which sets him apart from non-Western writers of equal ability. In a list that runs several pages (Milton, pp. 57-60), Milton offers what he believes to be some general differences in the vision of the Western novelist and his Eastern American counterpart. The list is too long to reproduce here, but among its highlights are the following three contrasts:

Eastern Fiction	Western Fiction
Usually Freudian, with man's behaviour explained	Usually Jungian, tapping the unconscious, aware of racial

¹John R. Milton, The Novel of the American West (Lincoln, Nebraska: U. of Nebraska Press, 1980), 2.

in terms of sex, childhood training within a social context, and the frustrations and guilts which can be blamed on man's condition and environment rather than on the man himself as moral being.

Character seeks to identify within his immediate group and social environment.

Mostly dramatic in form.

patterns which connect the past with the present, taking interest in primitivism, and embodying archetypes and natural symbols which reveal or support the collective unconscious.

Character seeks to identify with nature, within the entire scheme of life, as representative Man.

Epic, romantic, or mythic. Often lyrical.²

By Milton's definition Waters is a Western novelist. The analysis in the latter half of this chapter will show that People of the Valley is Jungian, that Maria, its protagonist, strives for an identification with nature, and that the novel's form is mythic and contains lyric passages. But the same could be said about James Dickey's Deliverance. Milton's list is actually a comparison of city-oriented and land-oriented fiction. Only when, as in the case of Waters, the land-oriented writer deals with the spirit of place of a particular part of the West does he become a Western writer. To capture the spirit of a particular locale is to convey the relationship between it and the people who are psychologically sensitive to it, whether those people have lived there a lifetime or are just passing through.

When a writer like Waters or Faulkner or D. H. Lawrence is supremely sensitive to such relationships between land and people, it is misleading to label him as a regional novelist, however brilliantly

²Milton, 58-59.

he may capture a specific region. The term "regional novelist" is unfortunate for two reasons. First, it is imbued by city-oriented critics with negative connotations and hence has come to mean not merely "local" but "second rate." Second, good regional writing is good exactly because it transcends a merely regional significance to say something about man's lot in any time and place. For example, Homer might be considered a "regional writer" of the Aegean.

In an article written shortly after the publication of People of the Valley (1941) and The Man Who Killed the Deer (1942), Waters offered some thoughts on "Relationships and the Novel." He speaks about what makes any novel good, but his comments are especially valuable for an understanding of the kind of land-oriented, trans-regional novel he himself writes. He begins by pointing out that identifying the form or genre of a novel does little to tell us whether a particular specimen will be good or bad. Whether the category is novel of manners, detective story, western, or psychological novel, most specimens are inferior. "[N]either [a novel's] faults not its virtues result from its degree of adherence to an orthodox form. We must look at its substance if we would see how it must justify itself. To see what goes in rather than what it goes into."³

The key to substance is a novel's ability to render believable relationships. By relationships Waters means not only those between

³Frank Waters, "Relationships and the Novel," The Writer, LVI (April 1943), 105. Subsequent references to this article will appear in the text.

man and woman or man and man, but also, perhaps even most importantly, of man to the world around him:

[C]haracters may be separately distinct, sharply drawn. They may be clothed precise to every detail of dress and manner. They may be moved adroitly through all the ramifications of an intricate plot. They may be hurtled at breakneck speed from page to page. And yet without a true relationship among them, between them and in their environment, the novel fails of its essential purpose and goes dead in our hands ("Relationships," 105).

Novels that work establish "true relationships"; novels that fail achieve at best only a tour de force of connections. What then is the difference between relationships and connections? "It is the difference between being connected with a dead fact, and being related by an emotional tie. True relationships are emotional, living values. And because a relationship is emotional it is easy to feel but difficult to define. It requires an artist. Yet once achieved, it endures" ("Relationships," 107).

Thus, Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor are greater writers than Erskine Caldwell, not just because they consciously sought to be but because their artistry forces us to participate in their visions of the South while most readers remain merely observers of Caldwell's fictions.

The awareness of living values. A response to the living quick. These make for true relations. And on this depends the ultimate truth and vitality of the novel. The form doesn't matter. Not the preconceived form anyway. Establish a true relationship between a few simple characters, or between a whole people and the conditions of their place and time, and this relation builds up its own inherent, proper form, be it a short and simple Flower of Life, a novel of three page incidents, or a mammoth War and Peace" ("Relationships," 107).

The identifying virtue of the land-oriented novel then, is the degree to which it has captured the relationship between people and a place. Calling such a work a "spirit of place novel" has the advantage

of focusing on what makes the novel a distinctive type without implying the negative connotation that adheres to "regional novel." By clearly classifying evocation of place in such novels as a positive rather than a negative or at best a neutral quality, we can, as Waters suggests, get a clearer idea of the value coming from such novels, of their content rather than their form or point of origin.

Another difficulty that lies in the way of an objective discussion of "spirit of place novels" is the inadequacy of the term "setting" when applied to such works. In a city-oriented novel of manners like Emma or Middlemarch, character holds the center stage; in the novel of incident, Robinson Crusoe or King Solomon's Mines, action dominates. Is it not therefore possible that in some novels what is called the setting is actually as important as character and action are in other types? This is what Waters has in mind when he says that the mountain itself is the protagonist and Joseph Rogier merely the antagonist of Pike's Peak. However, the terminology of city-oriented criticism again makes visualizing such a possibility more difficult than it need be. C. Hugh Holman, for instance, gives the definition of setting as "The physical, and sometimes spiritual, background against which the action of a narrative . . . takes place."⁴ In the spirit of place novel the environment is not a background consideration, and "setting" is too passive a word to describe the active role nature plays in a land-oriented work. The stronger the spirit of place in a novel, the more the measure of moral value is geomorphic

⁴Hugh C. Holman, A Handbook to Literature (New York: Odyssey Press, 1960), 453, emphasis added.

rather than anthropomorphic: nature, not man, is the measure of man. The rain forest in W. H. Hudson's Green Mansions, the Mexico of D. H. Lawrence's Plumed Serpent, the vanishing wilderness in Faulkner's "The Bear," the land on either side of the road in Robert Pirsig's Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, the wild river in Dickey's Deliverance, all provide the scale of value, the standard for a proper life which the various protagonists must learn to recognize and follow. Unfortunately for the protagonists, learning nature's standards is not easy because nature in the spirit of place novel may play something like the role of the chorus in Greek drama, but it is a silent chorus: meaning is there but the individual must learn how to read it from the expressive face of nature. And that can be done only by one who returns to the awareness that nature exists within man as well as outside of him. When men forget how to listen to the silent chorus, they lose also the ability to read the moral needs of the nature within them. Thus, in Hardy's Return of the Native the brooding presence of an at best indifferent, possibly malignant, universe as symbolized by Egdon Heath, reflects the state of nature within the characters.

If the silent chorus is not just ignored but actually opposed, worse things happen. In Faulkner, the more characters isolate themselves from a healthy and respectful physical relationship with the outward nature, the more they, like Miss Emily of "A Rose for Emily," are condemned to spend the years with the rotting corpse of their own decaying, because immoral, social order. To make such a point Faulkner added the rambling fourth section to "The Bear"; it is the taint of slavery which has cast the white South out of the Eden of a simpler, land based, hunting culture in which all the stations of

society have a relationship to one another, rather than being merely connected by the dead hand of custom or the perverting hand of money. To see novels like The Sound and the Fury or Absalom, Absalom! as spirit-of-place works helps the reader understand why Faulkner manipulates time and point of view until time past merges into time present and the facts of the narrative have become the center of a circle around which we are rotated until we have seen those facts from every crucial angle. The mystery we are set to solve in such works is not what happened to the characters, but why did it happen? In The Sound and the Fury while individuals are not unimportant, the characterization we must ultimately comprehend is not Caddie's or Quentin's or Jason's or Benjy's, but the spirit of place which has made the doom of the generation of Caddie, Quentin, and Jason IV irrevocable. In Absalom we hunt not for what happened to Sutpen and his family but for the "why." Why was Sutpen's dream of achieving aristocratic respectability really a nightmare from its inception? And again the answer is slavery: Sutpen could not transcend the injustice he helped to perpetrate in Southern society. He merely wanted to be on the giving rather than the receiving end of injustice. And he is undone by a Civil War fought to end slavery and by the black blood within his own family which brings about its self-destruction.

In each of these novels the mystery of the story Faulkner tells is summed up by a Frost poem: "We dance round in a ring and suppose, / But the Secret sits in the middle and knows." In speaking of forms of conflict possible in fiction, Holman mentions that an opposing force may be an animate or an inanimate object treated as a person.⁵

⁵Holman, 105.

In The Sound and the Fury and Absalom, Absalom!, Faulkner seeks to dance round, ultimately to capture, the secret which has murdered the central families in each story. It is against this secret that the individuals actually struggle even if they, because of their limited points of view, think they struggle against other men. Thus, one learns from Faulkner that when the spiritual background dominates a story, we are no longer dealing with setting but with spirit of place. We also learn that spirit of place is much more than just the initial influence of the land on those who settle on it. That is why the novel of the soil, such as Giants in the Earth, can be only a sub-category of the spirit of place novel. Spirit of place is modified by the history of people's relationship to the land. Hence it is that in Faulkner's South, the spirit of place has become poisoned by the white man's inhumanity to the red and black man. So poisoned has spirit of place become that it is the antagonist in most of Faulkner's work. It strikes the transgressing whites with madness, fear, and inertia, but worst of all it inflicts the best among them (the Quentin's and Caddie's) with hopelessness, with the sure knowledge that they have been convicted without possibility of pardon for the sins of their fathers. The rightness with the land which Ike McCaslin and the other hunters achieved in "The Bear" has been lost. Meanwhile, Faulkner's admiration goes out to Dilsey and other blacks ("They endured.") rather than to most of the white characters because Faulkner saw some Southern blacks as maintainers of a healthier, because more basic, relationship with the surrounding universe.

Thus, even a well-known novelist like Faulkner becomes more comprehensible when viewed as a spirit-of-place writer. In the case

of some writers less well-known, spirit of place is the key to showing why they are worth comprehending at all. One of the reasons Frank Waters and other Western writers like Walter Van Tilburg Clark have not received their critical due is that city-oriented criticism lacks the terminology for dealing with them. Works like People of the Valley and Track of the Cat are misread by such critics (when they are read at all) because terms like "regional novel" and "setting" cannot adequately describe the geomorphic center of moral value which such novels contain.

Each of these writers has found a following among readers who share their awareness of the challenge of spirit of place. And a few critics like Alan Swallow, Thomas Lyons, John R. Milton, and Max Westbrook have written perceptively of their accomplishments. But since what such writers do best has no name in the literary dictionaries of city-oriented criticism, their works reach mainly those who are already land-oriented.

Although he produced few books, Walter Clark was one of the most gifted of the Western spirit of place writers. Max Westbrook's study of Clark is not only a brilliant introduction to Clark himself but also can serve to deepen our understanding of what Waters is doing in his novels. A reading of the spirit of place theme in Clark's Track of the Cat can be a helpful introduction to Waters' less rational, more mystical novel, People of the Valley.

Westbrook believes Clark, Waters, Manfred, Fisher, and the others share a belief in a peculiarly American sacrality. He means by "sacrality" the concept Mircea Eliade explores in The Sacred and the Profane and which Westbrook himself defines as "the belief that

concrete acts, here and now, can recreate the primordial energy and meaning of the relevant cosmic or original act."⁶ The home can be used as an example. To profane man a home is a financial investment and a matter of social status. To sacred man "the founding of the home is comparable to God's original act of bringing order out of chaos" (Westbrook, p. 12). For the profane man, the world is a collection of objects to be rationally exploited, while for the sacred man it is a realm permeated with religious significance. The added complication of an American sacrality is a pragmatic refusal to abandon rationality, to jettison the mind in order to keep the soul alive. Instead, the two ways of viewing the world must be brought into stereoscopic focus, a focus which results in a single picture with the appearance of greater depth than either vision can provide separately. Hence, "sacrality" signifies "that the authoritative and archetypal voice of the unconscious has ontological status" while "American" denotes an understanding "that man has a paradoxical obligation to recognize his ethical role in American democracy. Man's duty is to unify his sacred self and his historical self" (Westbrook, p. 13).

Novelists of sacrality may have arisen in the West, Westbrook suggests, because their peace with the land is not easy: "The American West is not--in the vision of its major contemporary artists--a land one grows up in. It is a land one goes to. The land, after all, belonged to the Indian before the white man came to exploit

⁶Max Westbrook, Walter Van Tilberg Clark (New York: Twayne, 1969), 12. Subsequent references to this book will appear in the text.

the West" (Westbrook, p. 49). Thus, Westerners, writers and readers alike, are forced to be more consciously aware of their relationship to the land than most other Americans. It is not a gift. One must serve an apprenticeship to it, make a peace with it.

Westbrook considers The Track of the Cat to be not only Clark's finest novel but also the best Western yet written (Westbrook, p. 93). Like the Faulkner novels discussed earlier in this chapter, this work deals with a family of whites (the Bridges) who have cut themselves off from a healthy relationship with the land. And nature itself in the form of a mountain cat, "the black painter," is the antagonist. Each of the three Bridges brothers hunts the cat which is killing their cattle. Arthur, the eldest son, is sensitive to the value of the sacred in nature but has neglected his responsibility to his pragmatic, historical self. He has allowed his brother Curt to run the ranch autocratically and he has slipped from the sacred world into a romantic passivity which leaves him unable to act decisively. He is killed by the cat. Curt, the second son, believes only in the profane world. For most of his thirty-seven years he has forced (he thinks successfully) his one-dimensional patterns on a multidimensional nature. Thus, he underestimates the power of nature both in the environment and within himself. Trapped in a snowstorm while hunting the cat, he is killed by fear, by the sudden awareness of how little his rational patterns can affect the patterns of nature. He runs off a cliff fleeing a cat which is the product of his imagination. Hal, the youngest brother, survives the cat in his mind and kills the physical "black painter." But it would be a mistake to see him as simply a compromise between his elder brothers. Rather,

as Westbrook points out,

Curt's practicality and Arthur's spirituality could be combined only in a world run on linear time. Clark's point is that Curt is fatally impractical. The archetypal meaning of Curt's experience is not separate from everyday life; rather, archetypal meaning is present in everyday life in eminently practical ways (Westbrook, p. 97).

Hal succeeds because he is beginning to transcend the fragmentation of both of his brothers: "Clark's emphasis . . . is on Hal's growing ability to see the sacred as a presence--a real presence and not a symbolized or intellectualized representation--and yet not separate himself from the mundane, not fall into the sacred doom of ecstasy" (Westbrook, p. 110).

One can see that Clark, like Waters, senses both the need for and the emergence of the new integrative faculty that will combine and surpass both reason and instinct. Like March Cable at the end of Pike's Peak, Hal Bridges has made a journey to a beginning. Each has learned--Hal from the Indian Sam Joe, March from his excursion to Indian Mexico--that the mundane details of everyday life can be infused with mystic intensity. Yet each has also learned that a proper respect for profane rationality is also necessary if one is to avoid being crushed by a nature which destroys those who take her too lightly (like Curt Bridges) but also destroys those who give her more than her due (like Arthur Bridges).

Thus, the work of Waters and Clark has much in common. Novels like Clark's Track of the Cat and Waters' People of the Valley are not just spirit of place but spirit of place in a special Western American sense. That is, nature plays a dominant role in each book; each protagonist finds that the ultimate scale of moral value is

geomorphic, not anthropomorphic. Yet these Westerners see this scale as both purposeful and evolutionary: when peace is made with the land and man has found a place in the scheme of nature which is neither too boastful nor too modest, he has also found a deeply satisfying sense of purpose for his existence.

What I have said so far about the spirit of place novel and about Hardy, Faulkner, Lawrence, and Clark as practitioners of that genre is, I think, necessary in order to show how remarkable is the book Frank Waters calls People of the Valley. It is the first of his four magic books. The other three are The Man Who Killed the Deer (1942), The Yogi of Cockroach Court (1947), and The Woman at Otowi Crossing (1966). Together with Pike's Peak, the mature revision of his apprenticeship novels, they express much that Frank Waters has learned about man's fate and the world's purpose. And he has learned a great deal.

I call four of his novels books of magic because these books use words to accomplish what many people believe words cannot do: they convey a mystical vision. As Alan Watts once said of all successful writing on mystical experiences, they "effe" the ineffable. But the task Waters set himself is more formidable than that faced by a mystic who seeks to catch in words his moment of enlightenment, the seconds during which he saw the patterns that shoot through all the universe. Waters treats such moments in his fiction also, but he does not stop there because what such extraordinary states of consciousness have taught him is that there are no ordinary moments. There are only people not able to experience the mystical intensity of everyday life. His magic books are attempts to show not only how

people become cut off from the mystical, which is an intuitive understanding of the purposefulness of all existence, but also what must be done by individuals if they are to reopen the doors of perception to a sure sense of the meaning and grandeur of existence.

When they are working well, when the words will come to flesh out the patterns in their minds, all artists tend to be mystics. To paraphrase what Waters said in the "Relationships" article at such moments, the writer is an artist and an artist is one who can define, capture in words, those feelings of true relationship which all of us have at times but which most of us lack the word-magic to be able to capture, to bring back alive. We are left with only dead connections to remind us of something which was alive when we first experienced it.

Spirit of place writers are those artists who place a major emphasis on capturing the relationships between people and the non-personal universe surrounding them. But there are many nuances in such relationships. Hardy's treatment of them differs from Faulkner's. Hardy sees that we are burning our bridges to nature, cutting ourselves off from a necessary understanding of how powerful and mysterious is the non-personal universe. Faulkner takes this same thought but gives it several more turns of the screw; he shows us that the more we close our eyes to the importance of our relationship with nature, the more that relationship festers until finally we die from an infection we ourselves have caused. Both writers' feel for true relationships keeps them from total pessimism. Hardy said he believed man's lot could be ameliorated. Faulkner believed man would not just endure but triumph. But both in their spirit of place writings concentrated on what went wrong. Neither often, if ever,

described how the wrong relationships can be set right.

Clark agrees with the others in seeing that modern man is out of harmony with the non-personal universe, that such a situation must inevitably be fatal if it is not reversed, and that such a reversal, while difficult, is not impossible. His writing concentrates on those acute moments when individuals either begin reversing the disharmony or die. His are the moments when either the fever from our infected relationships with nature breaks or the patient perishes.

Frank Waters is the most thoroughly mystical of all these fine spirit of place writers. His writing carries farthest the mystic's sense of the interrelatedness not only of all things and people, but also of all times. The other writers have concentrated most on the way in which our critical disharmony from nature has developed. To a lesser degree, and particularly in the case of Clark, they have dwelt on the moment at which such disharmony is cauterized and modern man's road back to a healthy relationship with the non-personal universe is begun. None has done much more than express fervent hope that this road back will be followed to the end. Waters, however, divides his fictional attention equally among all three situations. Seeing all time as one, his vision of how man overcomes and progresses beyond the moment of crisis is as clear as the events leading up to that crisis.

II. The Time of the Land

One would think that the writings of a man who knows where we are going would attract a great deal of attention; even if the attention attracted was spent ridiculing those writings as hoaxes.

But this prophetic aspect of Waters work has gone almost entirely unnoticed, possibly because "regionalists" are not expected to prophesy. Unlike Lawrence, Waters is not tempted to play Messiah. Nevertheless, considering the sales of the Castaneda books, it is surprising that some enterprising publisher has not tried to sell him as such. However, that may be, for a functioning mystic, it is the vision, not the viewer, that is important. The more a supposed visionary proselytizes, the more suspicious we should be. If the vision is true, our concurrence cannot make it truer. If it is false, twisting our arms or our minds until we say "uncle" will not make it less false.

So it is as a prophecy, but a quiet, unproselytizing, prophecy of our evolutionary future that I want to discuss People of the Valley. Because all time is one and because Maria is Everyman, Maria's life holds the pattern not just of her development but of the inevitable development of all mankind. In this sense any individual's successes belong to everyone, only his failures are his own. Maria is Everyman when she accepts the challenge to grow in consciousness. And Maria's people worship her success, not as they think they do--out of fear or respect--but, as she herself comes to know, they worship in her the dormant strength to develop what lies within themselves.

The book opens and closes with the problem of a dam. Demora, "the beautiful blue valley," a backwater in northern New Mexico inhabited largely by unsophisticated, uneducated Spanish-American subsistence farmers, is to have a dam to control its alternating floods and droughts. Maria, the elderly spokeswoman for the valley people, opposes the dam. The heart of the book is a flashback tracing

Maria's life so that we can understand the reasons for her opposition and savor both the fitness of her solution to the problem of the dam and the implications that solution has not just for her simple valley people but for all mankind. For we too are people of the valley.

The history of the relationship between the valley and its people begins in the early nineteenth century. French trappers coming from the north find three skeletons left by the Comanches near the stream running through the valley, so they name it "L'Eau du Mort," the Waters of the Dead. Not much later, Mexican settlers come up the Chihuahua trail from the south. Their Spanish pronunciation of the name and their different vision of nature in the valley changes the name to "Demora," a place of berries. Both names reflect single aspects of a multi-dimensional nature, as does a third name which is used in the book more often than either of the others: "the beautiful blue valley." Like the valley itself, the color is both literal and symbolic. The valley does appear blue for large parts of the year, but blue is also the sacred color of fertility and in one of its aspects the valley symbolizes nature's fertility.⁷

A third wave of visitors soon reaches the valley from the east--the Anglo-Americans. But they are like the French, who came and left in search of beaver; few stay; the valley is for them but a resting place on the way farther west.

⁷Edith Rode, "Traveling Notes on the Road to Apotheosis: The Patterning of the Synthesis of Myth, Archetype, and the Setting in Frank Waters' People of the Valley," a paper read in the Frank Waters Seminar at the RMMLA Convention, Albuquerque, October, 1979, p. 5.

Maria, the valley's most noteworthy citizen, is born in obscurity only twenty years after the arrival of the French trappers. The father, probably a Mexican, has abandoned the mother to join one of the gringo wagon trains headed west. The mother, a Picuris Indian lured away from the pueblo by the new Mexican settlers, dies in childbirth. She lives only long enough to gasp a final frightened, "Maria," which the two old goatherders, who have found her and the child, assume is the child's name.

The Mexican settlers, the people of the valley, thrive in a subdued way in their backwater and so does Maria. Raised by the two old shepherds, she is given as much attention as their goats, but not so much as their more valuable sheep. At ten Maria is tending the goat herd, herself "a she-goat," wild and wary and attuned to the rocky mountainsides. Later, when the old shepherds and their sheep are drowned in a sudden flood, Maria moves with her goats into the old hut in which (unbeknownst to her) she was born and in which she will ultimately die.

A fort is built in the valley to protect the Anglo-American settlers moving west. Many of the valley's people make a living, for a while, supplying the fort. But the western migration ebbs and the fort is abandoned. The people fall back on their valley farms for a living. "The gold and silver, the laughter and riot, the soldiers and all the gringos had gone. But the land remained and the people dug in to sink their roots."⁸ Maria too has been drawn to the flash and

⁸Frank Waters, People of the Valley (Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1941), 49. Subsequent references to this edition will appear in the text.

excitement of the gringos; her first child is fathered by a gringo soldier from the fort. But like her people, Maria is not greatly affected by this first contact with the Anglos. The child is sickly, inactive and sterile; the father leaves without knowing Maria has borne his child.

Maria moves in with the fervently Catholic Onesimo and bears him a daughter. But here she encounters sterility of another sort. Alienated from the local church by a greedy priest, Onesimo and other poor men turn to the heretical Penitentes, a brotherhood of flagellants. His frustrated religious fervor and ascetic bent lead Onesimo to ever more dangerous acts of physical self-chastisement until he dies on Easter while re-enacting Christ's suffering on the Cross. His death leaves Maria and her children as outcasts from both the orthodox Catholics and the Penitentes. To the former they are the family of a heretic, to the latter the family of a man whose death showed that he lacked the proper faith. Ultimately, the greedy priest in turn accepts a death by sacramental wine he knows has been poisoned in order to heal the divisions in the valley. However, the pragmatic Maria rejects the efficacy of martyrdom:

Strange the faiths of men! Onesimo and the padre, enemies, had both died in His name, and their deaths had proved nothing but the strength of their own faith. . . . [T]o the earth, the living earth which alone would endure, Maria turned again (People, p. 72).

Maria is about eighteen when Onesimo dies. For the next three decades she makes an at first precarious but then increasingly, but never lavishly, successful living by using her native shrewdness, the herb lore and folk medicine learned of the old goatherders, and by her intimate knowledge of the land, people and customs of her valley.

She travels from one end of the valley to the other and beyond: "The beautiful blue valley grew and prospered. So did Maria. . . . Maria from the valley. Maria del Valle. She became the valley" (People, p. 75).

At fifty, Maria's powers over things of the earth are respected and feared even by the monied classes, the gente de razon (the people of reason) and the gringos, and she holds unquestioned sway over the simpler people of the valley. After Onesimo she does not live with another man, but she has several more children by different fathers. Following the promptings of nature rather than the conventions of man, she mates once with each man when the need moves her, but she raises her children alone. Thus, it is to everyone's surprise including her own that she is courted by the elderly Don Fulgencio Garcia y Valdes, the most wealthy land owner in the valley. After much suspicious hesitation on Maria's part, they are married because Maria cannot find a good reason not to and because despite her five children by five different fathers, it will be her first legal marriage. The marriage is neither physically nor spiritually consummated. Maria eventually returns to her own hut, still wondering why Garcia married her at all. Garcia, who has used the marriage to steal a valuable piece of land that Maria was unaware she owned, deteriorates from a shrewd money manipulator to a crazy miser who spends his time guarding the tree under which his gold is buried while his real wealth, his land and property, decays around him from neglect. He, like the goatherders, dies in a flood which also washes away his gold.

In Maria's eighties she and her valley face their greatest challenge. Modern technology finally arrives in the valley in the

form of a dam proposed to control flooding and drought. Since the dam is the project of those in the valley already cut off from the soil (the gringos and the gente de razon), Maria instinctively opposes it. But the people of the valley, who are simple people of the soil, cannot cope with those for whom (like Don Fulgencio) the symbols of wealth are more real than the land itself. Maria leads the people in a resistance which delays but cannot stop the building of the dam. Thus even Maria's hard-won wisdom does not stop the incursion of Anglo-American technology. And her people's strengths are not of the sort that can stand before those who see the land objectively as something to be exploited. Because of the dam which they are repeatedly told will improve their lives, many lose the land which is the center of those lives: it is condemned and taken from them for use in the dam's construction. Maria, however, wins them a reprieve. She arranges for them to move to a smaller valley higher up in the mountains. There they will have a second chance to prepare themselves to cope with the technology which must find them however far up the mountains they go. Maria, now ninety, remains behind in her beautiful blue valley, dying in the same hut in which she was born so many years before. She dies content, knowing that in being true to her own time, the time of the land, she has gained the wisdom which has given her people of the valley a breathing space in which to make the difficult transition into the new time of the machine.

To find the ending of People of the Valley unsatisfactory, as some readers have, is to miss the fundamental point of the whole book. Maria must be defeated by the dam. Only that lesson can complete her hard-won education and set her free. The reader must

come to see, as Maria does, that the dam symbolizes not one but two things, and only the first is evil.

At first and for a long time, she can see it only as a threat to her people and their way of life:

This is the meaning of any dam, that it would obstruct the free flow of faith which renews and refreshes life and gives it its only meaning. It is self-enclosing. It means stagnation. It means death (People, p. 177).

It is another of those symbols, like Don Fulgencio's gold, which separate people from reality. So bedazzled does Don Fulgencio become with his symbolic wealth that it becomes impossible for him to enjoy or even protect his real wealth, his fine house, his mill, his horses, his rich farm land. And those who would build the dam also think of it apart from the land and the people. They too, Maria knows, would separate the people from their real wealth, their land, by the use of abstractions like water districts and eviction notices.

But "In dimensional time and space nothing is only what it seems to be" (People, p. 134). Just as the valley itself has different faces which are reflected in the history of its names, so the dam can be looked at in at least another way. It too is a part of life. The machine technology it represents is, to be sure, different from the life Maria has always known. But that does not make it bad. Gold destroyed Don Fulgencio, but Maria uses it without being caught up in its corrupting symbolism. Is the problem then in the gold or in how it is used? May not the same be true of the dam?

What Maria finally learns is that to oppose the dam is to build another symbolic dam just as evil as the first. To do so would, in a different way but just as effectively, "obstruct the free

flow of faith which renews and refreshes life and gives it its only meaning."

For Maria's great insight is that whole eras and ways of life, like people, mature, grow old, and are replaced by new ways of life. The time of the land, the time of a ritualistic and largely unconscious attachment to the tierre, the mother earth, is passing. The Anglos call this progress, but Maria is too wise to confuse progress with automatic improvement:

Maria believed in fulfillment instead of progress. Fulfillment is individual evolution. It requires time and patience. Progress, in haste to move mass, admits neither (People, p. 134).

Hence, people achieve fulfillment in a particular era, but not necessarily because of it. Otherwise the beautiful blue valley should have produced a valley full of Marias instead of just one. So the question is, why did Maria achieve fulfillment? The answer lies both in the faith she acquires and in how she acquired it. During those thirty years from Onesimo's death until the marriage with Don Fulgencio, she created a faith for herself. She worked tirelessly to achieve oneness with her valley, to learn the land, the people, and the customs more intimately than anyone else. At first she did this so that she and her family could survive. Her success soon made survival assured, but that only led Maria to redouble her efforts. However, unlike Don Fulgencio's labors in the acquisition of wealth, Maria's efforts lead her into reality not away from it. She accepts more, not less, responsibility for the welfare of others as her power increases. Maria has found that what matters is faith in life not belief in a dogma; whether dogma builds a church or a bank, it must

pretend that life is static while Maria knows that life is in constant movement like water. Thus her

faith is not a concept. It is not a form. It is a baptism in the one living mystery of ever-flowing life, and it must be renewed as life itself is ever renewed (People, p. 177).

She tries to explain to the Spanish-American judge, Don Eliseo, who is caught on the fence between the time of the land and the time of the machine that one grows to fulfillment only if one is true to the faith that speaks to his innermost self:

My friend, good judge, Don Eliseo. We move through time. But the moment comes when each must stop and assert that truth of which he is a part. It is not the whole truth, for man himself is yet incomplete. But it is the only truth he has. It is his integrity.

For me, compadre, that moment has come. I see the good in the future. I see the good in the past. But I am of my time, and must assert that which I am, and the faith behind it.

So we must part. It is for you, being younger, to move on, I, being old, will stand for what I am (People, p. 167).

The need to find a faith to be true to is a theme that runs through all of Waters' best fiction. Compare Maria's advice to the counsel given to Martiniano by Palemon in The Man Who Killed the Deer:

I have faith in my body. I have faith also in the form of life which is my greater body.

.....

Now, you, my friend, have your mortal body also, and are at peace with it. You too have a greater body, your form of life. It is not mine, for our old ways you reject; nor is it the Government's, this white man's, for you reject it also; but one you must have. Who knows which is best? They are all the same. All are merely shells of life. But they must be lived within harmoniously to be free. For only when there is no sense of imprisonment in form is the substance of spirit able to overflow and become one with the flowing stream of all life, everlasting, formless and without bounds.

Forgive me, my friend. Do you see what you lack? Not a form of life, for there are three for you to choose from: our old ways, the white man's new ways, or your own which may be part of both or newer still. You lack only a

faith in one of them. The faith that will set you free from bitterness and envy and worry.⁹

Palemon and Maria would both readily give up their lives rather than betray their faiths. Yet both realize that those greater bodies to which they give such loyalty are merely the shells of life. Obedience to them is not an end in itself but a means to freedom. That is why finding a faith is not so easy as Palemon makes it seem. Maria's and Palemon's faith is not the faith of a true believer in Eric Hoffer's sense; it cannot be given to anything that demands obedience, total and absolute, as an end in itself. But faith in life shared by a believing community can make the necessary freedom easier to achieve. Of that D. H. Lawrence was also aware:

Men are free when they are obeying some deep, inward voice of religious belief. Obeying from within. Men are free when they belong to a living, organic, believing community, active in fulfilling some unfulfilled, perhaps unrealized purpose.¹⁰

It is possible, even likely, Maria realizes, that the time of the machine may produce such a community. However, Maria is still faced with a dilemma because it is also obvious to her that a faith in life compatible with machines has not yet been developed. That leaves Maria only one choice: she must fight a delaying action. She buys time for her people. Time for them to survive while a faith develops for the time of the machine:

Do I forget my people? Listen. You are of one time, like myself. But you have not exhausted its meaning, and so must belong to it awhile yet.

⁹Frank Waters, The Man Who Killed the Deer (Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1942), 65-66, emphasis added.

¹⁰Lawrence, Studies, 12.

For there are to your eyes two times. The time of the land, and the time of the machine, this great Maquina which replaces it. Now the time of the land has its faith, and we belong to it; it has taken long to root in our hearts, our blood has watered it. But the time of the Maquina has yet no faith, and so we must refute it.

Do you see? No man can belong to a time until it has also a faith he can belong to. . . . And so you must accept your own time which has a faith until the new time has also given rise to a faith, and you are ready for it (People, p. 184).

And so she sends her people higher up the mountains. Their journey to the new, higher valley is symbolic of the simultaneous journey they must take to a higher level of consciousness. As Maria has, they must learn to handle abstractions without allowing the power of abstractions over reality to cut them off from reality itself.

But Maria has already made that journey. By living to the fullest in her time and place, she has learned what is to be learned in any time and place:

There is nothing ever lost but unreal, evanescent images; nothing ever gained but a perception of the enduring reality behind them. This is difficult to learn. We must first learn that there is only one time, and that it contains all, eternally (People, p. 201).

CHAPTER II

THE YOGI OF COCKROACH COURT: A KARMA OF LOCALITY

The People of the Valley's Maria is caught between faiths. The old time of the land, of a largely unconscious life close to the soil, to the rhythms of nature, is being superceded by the new time of the machine, a technological age. This new age has yet to develop a faith by which people can grow to fulfillment. Because the technological era itself has yet to achieve maturity, it is hard for people under its influence to do so either.

Maria's solution is to buy time for the as yet unfulfilled people of her valley by sending them farther up the mountains. Her hope is that by the time technology and her people meet again (as they inevitably must) both will have matured, and there will be a new faith and a people capable of living by that faith.

But what of those who have no mountains to go to and no Maria to look after them? It is of them that Waters speaks in The Yogi of Cockroach Court. People deals with the Spanish of the Southwest; Deer with the Southwestern Indians. Yogi looks at a third Southwestern ethnic group, the mestizos or mixed bloods. For the most part these people are in a worse plight than the Spanish or the Indians. While those two groups must adapt their old cultures to the new age of the machine, the mestizo has no culture to begin with. He is claimed by neither Indian, Spanish, nor Anglo-American societies. In the 1920's and 1930's, Waters found that people of this sort were attracted to the border towns between Mexico and the

United States because these towns were themselves a cultural no man's land between the two countries.¹ Yogi is set on the Mexican side of one such town.

To it drifts Barby, a young half-Mexican, half-American, who is fleeing both the storm which destroyed his coastal fishing village and the drunken Anglo-American father who made that village more hell than home. The exhausted boy seeks shelter in The Lamp Awake, the strange little shop of Tai Ling, a Chinese Buddhist who is one of the many Chinese originally imported to western Mexico as a cheap source of labor.

Tai Ling allows the boy to stay. Generous but detached, the shopkeeper sees to the boy's physical survival. But such care does nothing to ease the terrible insecurities produced by Barby's childhood. He grows up physically robust, but emotionally and spiritually starved.

On the side and rear of Tai Ling's shop is the Plaza de las Cucaracha. "Cockroaches" is the local term for the prostitutes whose cribs make the Court the least reputable section of a town which Thomas Lyon has aptly described as a place "in which everyone seems to make a living by catering to the unhealthy desires of everyone else" (Lyon, 115). As a boy Barby sells peanuts and cashews in the bars of the court. Later, he works in them as a waiter, getting thereby his name, a shortened version of his occupation--barboy. He moves on to other occupations, but always he lacks a

¹Conversations with Frank Waters, John Milton, ed. (Chicago: Sage-Swallow Press, 1971), 22-23.

sense of purpose, a sense of place, and a sense of emotional security; he grows up driven almost solely by his animal instincts. His life lacks purpose.

He comes closest to finding a purpose through his love for Guadalupe. A percentage girl (a bar girl) at one of the night clubs, Guadalupe too is a mixed blood. Whereas Barby is half Mexican and half American, Guadalupe is half Indian and half Spanish. Orphaned by parents killed in a Mexican revolution, she is raised at a Mission School, but leaves in her teens because "She simply couldn't be good when virtue demanded stupidity" (Yogi, 84). She and Barby become lovers. However, while Barby is torn between an undernourished spirit and instincts too readily aroused by the vice-mongers of Cockroach Court, Guadalupe's dichotomy is sexual. Barby's very need for the security of her love leads him to do things which drive her away. Trying to possess her totally, he begins interrogating her, attempting to learn about every moment of her life before he knew her.² He forces out of her an admission of a lesbian affair. His response is a mixture of brutality and craven pleading which not only forces her permanently to the lesbian side of her nature, but also keeps her from ever treating anyone else as anything but a means to Guadalupe's ends.

She leaves the border town for a career as a second rate dancer and spends the rest of her life locked into a sterile repetition of using people as objects in order to avoid facing the

²Frank Waters, The Yogi of Cockroach Court (Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1947), 80. Subsequent references to this edition will appear in the text.

shallowness of her own character. Barby tries to replace his need for her by seeking money and power. But since it is not money or power that he really wants, no amount of either is enough. Becoming involved with a gang of smugglers, he is killed attempting to sneak illegal aliens across the border into the States.

Tai Ling has watched the affair between the two first with hope and then with increasing disappointment. His halfhearted attempts to counsel each of them are total failures, as is his attempt to give Barby stability by setting him up in a tavern of his own. Meanwhile, he himself tries increasingly to withdraw from the sordid world around him in order to concentrate on the yogic practices he hopes will bring him release from what he sees as an illusory world of lust, ill-will, and stupidity. But (Cockroach Court being little used to recognizing simple goodness) the more Tai Ling isolates himself, the surer his neighbors are that he is up to something nefarious.

Barby's fatal accident touches off a gang war between rival factions in the underworld of the border town, and Tai Ling is caught in the middle because one side assumes (mistakenly, of course) that he is the leader of the other faction. His enemies trap him in his cellar where a beam brushes his leg. Unable to escape either the cellar or the pain in his leg, he is finally forced to meditate upon the reality of suffering, instead of using his yogic discipline to keep it at arm's length. In this way he comes to the crucial realization that he has all along made the error of separating life from the principles that guide it (Yogi, 259). However, as with Rogier, Tai Ling's awareness of the self-imposed nature of his

isolation from life comes too late for him to be able to act upon it. In fact, it comes, again like Rogier's, at the moment of death.

One of the most informative articles yet written on The Yogi of Cockroach Court is Charles Adams' "Teaching Yogi in Las Vegas or Cockroach Court Revisited." Adams has pinpointed, for instance, the major difference between Yogi and most of Waters' other novels:

Usually in Frank Waters' novels, a benevolent spirit of place provides the constant with which the characters can attune themselves, thus not only making possible a harmonious relationship with their environment, but resolving the conflicting dualities of their natures. A border town, having a negative spirit of place, prevents this attunement and actually militates against both internal and external harmony. A border town is a point of transition from place to place, and [most of the novel's] characters fail because they cannot make that transition. That is their pathetic failure, but it is also their didactic success.³

The border town's inhabitants are, for the most part, like Barby: half breeds or drifters or both, coming from nowhere and with nowhere to go. Thus, it is almost impossible for them to resist the destructive influence of a place which caters to humanity's darker side. Such a setting exacerbates rather than heals the conflicts within rootless people.

Adams goes on to note that the drugs, alcohol, gambling, and prostitution which flourished in Tai Ling's Prohibition Era border town also exist in Las Vegas today. In his Frank Waters Seminar at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, Adams found that people who read Yogi after having grown up in Las Vegas find it easy to

³Charles Adams, "Teaching Yogi in Las Vegas or Cockroach Court Revisited," South Dakota Review, 15, 3 (Autumn 1977), 41. Subsequent references to this article will appear in the text.

understand the pernicious effect the border town has on flawed or rootless people such as Barby:

There is a Las Vegas saying that "If something is going to happen to you, it happens quicker in Las Vegas." Indeed, many people accept the theory that individual karmas work themselves out with unusual, sometimes amazing, speed in Las Vegas. The city has been compared to "an open hearth furnace, where the strong get stronger and the brittle crack" (Adams, 38).

As with Las Vegas so with the border town of Yogi: by itself a negative spirit of place does not make a person fall, but if that person has a dubious sense of balance or just no good reason for staying on his feet, he will fall more quickly and devastatingly in such a place.

However, readers should not get so caught up in the grimly realistic account of the self-destruction of Barby and the perversion of Guadalupe that they forget Cockroach Court serves as only half the title of the book. Again, as with People of the Valley, an accurate reading of the novel must deal with the implications of its title. We must see the fates of Barby and Guadalupe in the perspective of Tai Ling's search for enlightenment. The full title, The Yogi of Cockroach Court, indicates that Tai Ling's relationship to the court is the central problem in the book. Again, as Charles Adams puts it:

Barby, Guadalupe and Sal [another percentage girl and friend of Guadalupe's] . . . lack the discipline which might have saved them. However, even Tai Ling, who has the strength and discipline, fails to see that his personal salvation cannot be effected without involvement in his environment, without recognition of the common humanity which occupies even the negative Cockroach Court (Adams, 41).

Tai Ling's lack of involvement is the book's fundamental lesson. Not only does it keep Tai Ling from understanding and hence being able to better help Barby, Guadalupe, and the others, but it also is the

very stumbling block that keeps him from achieving enlightenment, the ultimate goal of his life. As we have pointed out in reference to Maria, much privacy is a requirement of fulfillment, but much of Tai Ling's isolation is loneliness rather than aloneness. Waters sees the former as negative but the latter as an asset.⁴ Aloneness is positive because it is part of an alternating cycle, each half of which reinforces one's feel for the unity of all existence. The other half is, of course, a joining together with other human beings after the time alone. However, while Maria's long periods of aloneness make her better able to cope with her fellow humans, the more Tai Ling and Joseph Rogier retreat into themselves, the less capable they become in caring for or about other people.

Even readers as careful and observant as Thomas Lyon have missed or underplayed the fundamental irony involved in Tai Ling's misunderstanding of the goal he seeks. Lyon, indeed, even mentions, in passing, that it is interesting that although Tai Ling wants to be a "Bodhisattva," he does little to help Barby or anyone else on the evolutionary road to nirvana (Lyon, 115). To see just how "interesting" this state of affairs is one must heed Waters' acknowledgement at the end of the novel and examine the Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup translation of Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines as edited by W. Y. Evans-Wentz and published by Oxford University Press. It is essential to the meaning of Yogi to recognize that Tai Ling is not a Charlie Chan; his Buddhism and yogic discipline, unlike Chan's Confucianism, are not cosmetic. They are not intended merely to add a dash of exotica

⁴Conversations, 74.

to the story, but rather are intrinsic to its meaning. In fact, a good introduction to The Yogi of Cockroach Court is Evans-Wentz' "General Introduction" to Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines. And so we will look at it next.

This discussion is hardly an attempt to explain Mahayana Buddhism in all its ramifications. It will, however, be an attempt to explain that version of Buddhism which has influenced Yogi of Cockroach Court explicitly and has had an implicit effect on most of Frank Waters' work, because it has helped shape his vision of reality. Waters' own mystical experience of existence has been made clearer to him by his finding accounts of similar experiences in a number of different sources. The common reality that these accounts and his own experiences point to forms the ultimate reality Waters tries to communicate in his work and contains the values by which he lives. As he has said in a dialogue with John Milton, "[I]f I find correspondences between Indian ceremonialism and psychology and Oriental religious philosophies, these are basic values."⁵

The goal of all Buddhism is to achieve nirvana. However, argues W. Y. Evans-Wentz, most Westerners misunderstand what is meant by that concept:

[Nirvana] instead of implying, as its critics have proclaimed, absolute annihilation of being, really implies a condition of being so transcendent, and so superior to that implied by the soul theory, that for the Unenlightened it is utterly beyond human conception. When man is no longer man; when man has blown out the flame of animal desires and transcended personality and the belief in the permanent existence of an ego or soul, has evolved beyond the lowly state of humanity, has conquered himself

⁵Conversations, 53.

and the world, has dissipated Ignorance, then will Nirvana be realized and understood.⁶

Tai Ling's search is for this transcendent condition. However, he is not just a Buddhist but also a yogin or yogi. The practice of yoga

implies a joining or yoking, of the enlightened human nature to the enlightened divine nature in such manner as to allow the higher to guide and transmute the lower. It also has been taken, but less generally, to imply a yoking or harnessing, or disciplining of the mind itself by means of mental concentration (Evans-Wentz, p. 21).

The school of Buddhism which Evans-Wentz expounds and Tai Ling follows sees Buddhism and yoga as inextricably intertwined:

Buddhism is fundamentally a system of practically applied yoga; and the Buddha ever teaches of such yogic disciplining as will enable "man" thus to realize that he is neither the body nor the mental faculties of the body, but that both are merely instruments, whereby he who makes right use of them attains the sublimest of yogic accomplishments (Evans-Wentz, 7).

It is by such yogic discipline that Tai Ling attempts to achieve enlightenment, which is full comprehension of nirvana. Traditionally, there are four steps in attaining "the sublimest of yogic accomplishments":

The first step consists of intellectual comprehension of the teachings as contained in exoteric scriptures. The second step is dependent upon gaining spiritual comprehension of the teachings; or in other words, upon attaining yogic insight into their esoteric significance. The third step consists of glimpses of reality; and the fourth of full realization. Otherwise stated, there are the sowing of the seed, its germination, the growth, and the fruition (Evans-Wentz, 37).

For all his strength, discipline, and good will, Tai Ling spends most of his life trying to reach step two. And only in the

⁶W. Y. Evans-Wentz, "General Introduction," Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 9. Subsequent references to this book will be in the text.

final days of his life does he begin to get the glimpses into reality that signify step three. In those days, he reaches "the realm of non-thought" by seeing his ego as an onion which when peeled leaves merely another layer of ego. Once he accepts this ego as natural rather than as something to be denied, he can go on. And then he finds that

Almost instantly he was intuitively conscious that it was not his mind which was thus observing itself. The observer had now become the observed. There was something behind the mind (Yogi, 239).

This new awareness on his part after all his years of yogic practice is described as a "sudden, blinding glimpse of reality" (Yogi, 239). Which is to say that Tai Ling has finally achieved step three, the growth stage of yoga.

But why has it taken him so long to get to glimpses of reality? Evans-Wentz might answer that it is because Tai Ling comprehends only one side of yoga:

it may be said that yoga is the practical means whereby the human mind is enabled to realize the illusory character of sense perceptions and objects of the phenomenal world, and, also, of the concept of self as a thing separable from all other selves (Evans-Wentz, 23. My emphasis.).

Tai Ling has the discipline to see the illusoriness of sense perception and is, perhaps, all too ready to see other selves as illusory also. But of his own self, he is rather proud. And it is this largely unconscious pride in his own self that keeps him from seeing all separable selves as illusory. Thus he, like Barby or Guadalupe, suffers from a duality problem: he seeks transcendence of self while being proud of the self that he is seeking to transcend. (Franklin would say Tai Ling is proud of his humility.) And as he ultimately

learns, such a spiritual pride is most difficult to come to grips with.

With this insight into Tai Ling, many pieces of the story fall into place. Tai Ling sees people as he sees his pet fish: both are sources of wonder and amusement, but in the end both are also illusory: "He settled down on a chair at the end of the bar and leaned back to watch his biggest aquarium. His little human fish!" (Yogi, 166). The Buddhism of Evans-Wentz also speaks in fish imagery:

Many men there are . . . who are karmically so attached to the state of human existence that they have no desire for any state less sensuous. Such men are like fish, which, although they be offered the opportunity to evolve out of the water-world to the world of the higher animals existing on the dry land, prefer to remain fish, because they think that there can be no state higher than that they alone know (Evans-Wentz, 12).

However, to see all other men always in this light is not only patronizing but also destructive. For example, seeing Barby as just such a fish, Tai Ling treats him accordingly:

To [the Lamp Awake] and its yogi . . . Barby had wandered years ago. Tai Ling did not put him out. He did not bid him stay, even with the compulsion of kindness (Yogi, 28).

And so, not getting the one thing he needs, active human love, Barby slides from bad to worse. Tai Ling also fails to communicate with Guadalupe because, having repressed all violent passions in himself, he can comment on the problems between her and Barby only as an intellectual bystander. Again, he is misunderstood by his friends and enemies in the town because while he sees himself as self-effacing, they can sense his pride and condescension. They can only interpret such pride as a will to earthly power, and therefore they persist in

assuming he is up to something. So cut off does Tai Ling become from genuine understanding of the world he feels so superior to that when the tong war breaks out (a war he has inadvertently helped to cause), he can only sit in his shop thinking it is all an American movie (Yogi, 249).

Lyon suggests that Tai Ling's dilemma could be seen either as a comment on society's deafness to the mystical view of life, or as Tai Ling's failure to communicate: "[O]utside of a few dry lectures, he has not made his knowledge available. Is nirvana, then completely useless in a social sense?" (Lyon, 120). It is true that society does not recognize what Tai Ling is doing, but, as we have seen, the real problem is that Tai Ling also does not know himself. Therefore, Mr. Lyon's last question is beside the point because Tai Ling's difficulties arise from the very fact that he has not achieved nirvana.

His non-nirvanic state and inability to see himself as others see him is highlighted in a scene as funny as it is horrible. Sal, the friend of Guadalupe, has lost her job and comes to Tai Ling as the last resort before entering the cribs as a prostitute. She confronts a Tai Ling who views himself as a serene, kindly yogi standing by a statue of his favorite Bodhisattva, with the statue is a fish and a human skull. To him the three symbolize mercy, the sea of illusion, and renunciation, respectively. However, what Sal sees is an

old wrinkled heathen Chink and that horrible idol he worshiped! God Almighty! Who could expect any help from him? Why, there was no tellin' what he'd do once he got you alone. Anything was better'n that. Anything! (Yogi, 224).

Sal runs off. Tai Ling shouts for her not to be afraid. But as always, he does not go after her to undo the communication problem.

The effigy of the Bodhisattva is called "'The Great Pitier,' the embodiment of mercy and compassion" (Yogi, 223). Savoring his own superiority, Tai Ling cannot practice active compassion, only a kind of pity which can recognize suffering in others, but which also sees such suffering as a sign of their lack of discipline. He can never reach his goal of becoming a Bodhisattva through such pity because it shows that he still views other selves as separate from himself. A Bodhisattva is one who, having achieved enlightenment, chooses rather than entering nirvana to stay in sangsara, the material, karma-conditioned world of the senses. He makes this choice because he believes

So long as there is one being, even the lowest, immersed in suffering and sorrow, or in Ignorance, there remains one note of disharmony which cannot but affect all being, since all beings are the One; and until all are Liberated there can not possibly be true Bliss for any (Evans-Wentz, 11).

As a Buddhist, Tai Ling believes in reincarnation. In meditation he follows his evolutionary journey in past lives, from the dawn of sentient life until his present incarnation (Yogi, 98-99). Nevertheless, it does not occur to him that there may be a reason involving his own growth that has led him in this life to Cockroach Court. Indeed, he concludes that only by ignoring the atmosphere of the court can he advance farther:

just as his own past constituted what he called an individual character or karma, so did all these manifested thoughts swarming around him (in the court) create a karma of locality. A complete objectivity alone would free him (Yogi, 42).

As we have pointed out, it is the extreme degree of his objectivity which kept him for so long from achieving more than intellectual insights into reality. And here like Maria's dam, the symbolism of Tai Ling's shop takes on a double meaning. For Tai Ling, the Lamp Awake is a name symbolic of his noble choice to be a lamp unto himself (Yogi, 26) in the search for nirvana. However, the image of the lamp can also represent one who has yet to blow out the flames of animal desire (Evans-Wentz, 9):

The life flux has been likened to a flame fed by worldly desires. When man ceases to delight in sensuousness, when he has eradicated every worldly ambition, the flame dies for lack of fuel (Evans-Wentz, 6).

Tai Ling does not finally eradicate his worldly ambition, his intellectual sense of superiority over those around him until he is trapped in the cellar by the beam crushing his leg. With pain and fear as his companions and only a humble candle stub for light, he can concentrate on intuiting the nature of existence rather than being again caught up in his usual cycle of complacently observing himself fighting the good fight for nirvana. The reality of his own suffering at last allows him insight into the reality of the suffering of all people, all sentient beings. He accepts the rightness of his having been placed in this particular karma of locality:

All seemed to have been created for this one purpose of teaching him, in this brief incarnate existence, the falsity of his human ego. He could have fallen to his knees and thanked these circumstantial manifestations for the excessive trouble to which a mere old shopkeeper had put them (Yogi, 260).

Life is for him no longer a movie to be watched and reviewed; it is now something of which he is a part. The moment of his death is

presented not as an annihilation of being but as a transcendence, an entry into a state utterly beyond human conception. Tai Ling has gone from step two in his yogic practices, spiritual comprehension, to step three, glimpses of reality. The seed sown within his soul has germinated and may now truly begin to grow. But to reach fruition, it is likely Tai Ling will need additional reincarnations.

Thus, a study of the influence of Buddhism and yoga on The Yogi of Cockroach Court increases greatly our understanding of the novel. Tai Ling's goal is to be a Bodhisattva. But a Bodhisattva is one who remains in the external world because its suffering has become his suffering. Only when Tai Ling ceases to separate himself from the misery of Cockroach Court does he understand the nature of the goal he seeks. He has learned the lesson contained in the lines from Hexotziquense placed at the beginning of the novel. Lines which translate: "They discredit us and diminish our worth because we are the common people. / Only we who have felt it know what is grief, what is anguish; how well it is known."⁷ Learning to feel the truth of this passage is Tai Ling's success.

The importance of emotional experience in comprehending Yogi fully can also give us an insight into the reading of all Waters' major fiction. In a "Yogic Commentary" on Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, Chen-Chi Chang points out that to understand Buddhism one must be more than an objective scholar of it because Buddhism is, "fundamentally, a system of yoga practically applied"; he goes on to add that even for many Buddhists, Buddhism is "more theorized about

⁷Translation by Julia Angelica.

than practically applied" (Evans-Wentz, xxxiv). That is, Buddhism must be experienced from the inside, emotionally and spiritually, to be fully understood. To intellectualize about it is to miss its essence as a way of experiencing reality. So it is with Waters' fiction. To see his novels (as, for instance, Mr. Lyon argues we should) as "artistic renderings of ideas" is either to misunderstand Waters' intentions or to conclude that the books are artistic failures. For Waters' intent is to convey a way of experiencing the world, not a system for philosophizing about it: "I think the only value of art is to pass on an emotional experience to others. They may not learn from it, yet by arousing an emotional reaction I think you accomplish your job" (Conversations, 13). Therefore as yoga is a disciplined, methodical attempt to re-experience the sense of reality felt by the Buddha, so Waters' major novels need to be encountered as attempts to share with us what it feels like to experience mystical reality.

CHAPTER III

THE MAN WHO KILLED THE DEER: THE NEED AND THE DANGER

A common theme in the novels of Frank Waters is the need of the individual to listen to what psychiatrist Erich Neumann calls "the inner voice." Sometimes, particularly in Pike's Peak, Waters refers to it as "the guiding star." This voice or star is neither reason nor instinct, but something deeper than both. It is the compulsion within a person to do whatever is necessary to develop fully his potential as a human being. When speaking of this compulsion in terms of reason and instinct, Waters calls it intuition. Characters in his novels who succeed in fully maturing do so because they display a willingness to follow the dictates of their intuition. This is, as Neumann explains, often the opposite of following their consciences. Conscience Neumann sees as the product of the persona, the public role individuals learn to play in order to be acceptable to their society:

The development of the persona is the outcome of a process of adaptation that suppresses all individually significant features and potentialities, disguising and repressing them in favor of collective factors, or those deemed desirable by the collective . . . wholeness is exchanged for a workable and successful sham personality. The "inner voice" is stifled by the growth of a superego, of conscience, the representative of collective values. The voice, the individual experience of the transpersonal which is particularly strong in childhood, is renounced in favor of conscience.¹

¹Erich Neumann, The Origins and History of Consciousness, Bollingen Series XVII, 2nd ed., R.F.C. Hull, tr. (Princeton, NJ: Bollingen Paperbacks, Princeton University Press, 1954), 403.

What makes Maria in People of the Valley at once attractive and repellant to most readers is her lack of just such a conscience. She functions according to the dictates of her intuition. This does not make her anti-social because the development of her potential as a human being is bound up with the life of the people of her valley. It does, however, free her of the need for a persona. She is what she is, whether the collective society likes it or not. Hence she cannot help but make those with "sham personalities" uncomfortable. And so she is worshiped and feared, often at the same time by the same people.

Still, to refuse to be ruled by the collective's conscience is not the same thing as following one's intuition, one's inner voice. That is what Tai Ling has to discover before he can successfully practice his yogic precepts. He, too, refuses to adopt a persona acceptable to his community, Cockroach Court. However, unlike Maria, he assumes he can ignore, indeed must ignore, any call to involvement with the society around him. Such is often the ignorance of those who think themselves wise: they become blind to the obvious. Maria teaches her community to accept her on her terms. But Tai Ling's refusal to acknowledge his ties to his community simply leads that community to impose a role on him, that of a devious and evil conniver after power. His inability to understand the unavailability of relationship with those around him leads to a tong war and his own death.

Tai Ling is a product of Oriental culture. Nevertheless, like the Western influenced Don Fulgencio of People, he becomes trapped in a maze of abstractions. Socrates liked to point out how much human

foolishness stems from thinking we know what in fact we do not know. However, may not an equally insidious obstacle to genuine wisdom be caused by a partial truth which its discoverer takes to be an absolute truth? Don Fulgencio learns from his Anglo business friends the power abstract concepts give him over his less sophisticated neighbors. His love for these symbols of wealth incapacitates him from any enjoyment of real wealth. Thinking he is master of the external world, he ends up less able to deal with it than the poorest peon in the valley. Tai Ling starts from a direction directly opposite to Don Fulgencio's, but he ends up almost in the same place. His Eastern training keeps him from the danger of overvaluing the external world or from being tempted by opportunities for power over that world. However, Tai Ling's truth--the importance of the inner world of the mind--leads him to undervalue the external world. In his efforts to work out his personal karma, he does not give proper attention to his karma of locality. In contrast to Maria, he does not accept his relationship and responsibility to the suffering world around him.

C. G. Jung calls an exclusive concentration on the inner workings of the mind the introverted tendency of the East; the corresponding fault, that of ignoring the mind while exploiting the material universe, he deems the extraverted tendency of the West. He adds:

I think . . . the two standpoints, however contradictory, each have their psychological justification. Both are one-sided in that they fail to see and take account of the factors which do not fit in with their typical attitude. The one underrates the world of consciousness, the other the world of the One Mind. The result is that, in their extremism, both lose one half of the universe; their life

is shut off from total reality, and is apt to become artificial and inhuman. In the West, there is the mania for "objectivity," the asceticism of the scientist or of the stockbroker, who throw away the beauty and universality of life for the sake of the ideal, or not so ideal, goal. In the East, there is the wisdom, peace, detachment, and inertia of a psyche that has returned to its dim origins, having left behind all sorrow and joy of existence as it is and, presumably, ought to be. No wonder that one-sidedness produces very similar forms of monasticism in both cases, guaranteeing to the hermit, the holy man, the monk or the scientist unswerving singleness of purpose.²

Thus, whether one is a yogi or a businessman, a rigid denial of half of existence dooms one to the maze of abstraction. Tai Ling escapes this doom because of his willingness finally to listen to his inner voice. When he realizes that voice is something behind and deeper than his personal unconscious (Yogi, p. 262), he is able to advance to a higher perspective of reality, a perspective from which the inner and outer worlds are given equal, and also equally limited, value. The ultimate goal of a yogi, he comes to understand, is not to possess either of these worlds but to give each its proper place by subordinating them to intuition, the call from within to fulfill oneself as a human being. Maria comes to a similar insight. The final stage of her growth comes when she realizes that the dam and the technology it symbolizes also have a proper place in the scheme of things along with her people's instinctual, rhythmic relationship with nature. Hence she sees that while she has reached her potential in the time of the land, those who come after her must seek their full humanity in the time of the machine.

²C. G. Jung, "Psychological Commentary," The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation, ed. W. Y. Evans-Wentz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), xlviii.

Those who live in the time of the machine without having found a faith fruitful for such a time constitute the audience for Waters' writing. It is they who feel both the need and the danger involved in obeying the inner voice and who find in Waters' novels guidebooks to the new reality toward which their own inner voices are leading them. But if Waters is a writer whose time has come, it is at least partly because writers before him have shaped an audience that can hear what he has to say.

Indeed, much light can be shed on the rightness with the land theme in novels like The Man Who Killed the Deer by tracing the growing awareness to be found in the two generations of writers preceding Waters. There is a focusing on the effect of spirit of place on man's soul. In works of authors like Joseph Conrad and D. H. Lawrence importance is given to the connections between external nature and nature within man. In Conrad's Heart of Darkness (1902), for instance, although spirit of place is seen as totally negative, it also dominates the story. The brooding jungle threatens to turn loose the beast within the European psyche. It is against just this chaos of nature that Conrad believes European man must test himself if he is to achieve a lasting maturity. To refuse the challenge of irrational nature is, in Conrad's view, at best to condemn oneself to a hypocritical shallowness and at worst to leave oneself open to be overwhelmed by nature's chaos.

Lawrence, a writer of the generation after Conrad, a generation acquainted with chaos through the example of World War One, also sees a confrontation with nature without as a means to man's greater

understanding of himself. However, a work such as The Plumed Serpent (1926) has taken a step beyond Conrad. While spirit of place in Lawrence's Mexico is a source of danger to all those who open themselves to it, it is also a means, perhaps the only means, by which they may redeem themselves from superficial, overrational lives. Hence, Lawrence, unlike Conrad, sees in a rapprochement with nature the key to modern man's survival. Lawrence was aware that such a rapprochement required from men a balancing of the conscious and unconscious, the intuitive and the rational. However, in works such as The Plumed Serpent he fails to practice what he preaches. The book's major characters do not illustrate a synthesis of the rational and the intuitive, tending instead to be biased against rationality.

It is to novels by Waters that we must turn for full examples of how such a synthesis can actually develop. For example, in The Man Who Killed the Deer we have in Martiniano a major character who achieves important first steps on the path to a reconciliation of rationality and intuition. It is a reconciliation which is brought about by his realization that there is that in nature both without and within him which must neither be suppressed nor given into unquestioningly. He learns, as Conrad's hero Marlowe does not, that nature is a friend as well as an enemy. He also learns, as Lawrence's characters usually do not, that rationality is an indispensable tool for human survival.

Waters has read Conrad and Lawrence. Conrad's work served as a model for Waters' early novel Fever Pitch (Lyon, p. 34). Waters has written about The Plumed Serpent on several occasions. Nevertheless,

the intent of this chapter is not to show the influence of Conrad and Lawrence on Waters' work. Rather, it will seek to demonstrate that Waters' pragmatic mysticism is a logical next step in a line of development present in English and American literature for generations now. Such a demonstration will require detailed examinations of Conrad's Heart of Darkness, Lawrence's The Plumed Serpent and Waters' The Man Who Killed the Deer.

All three works focus on the journey within the self of the central characters. These central characters, Marlowe in Heart of Darkness, Kate Leslie in The Plumed Serpent, and Martiniano in The Man Who Killed the Deer, each travel from an overconscious, ego-centered, rational civilization to a primordial environment which calls forth the suppressed or underdeveloped non-rational elements in his or her nature. The protagonists are all deeply attracted by this new access to hidden parts of themselves, but they are also terrified by this same hidden side. Each tries to project the frightening aspect of this dark side of the self on to nature, on to the land. However, The Plumed Serpent explores this dark side more fully than Heart of Darkness, and Deer brings it under control more productively than either of these earlier variations on the rightness with the land theme.

Marlowe makes his self-discoveries in the process of his search for Kurtz, a Belgian stranded at an ivory trading station far up river in the Belgian Congo. Marlowe learns about himself second hand through his observation and meditations over the history, personality, and fate of Kurtz. Both are employed by a company run by European imperialists who claim to be bringing enlightenment to the more

primitive regions of the world while in fact they are embarked upon a mission of rape and plunder on a vast scale.

Kurtz himself is representative of a European type: "His mother was half-English, his father half-French. All Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz."³ Unlike the great majority of the company's employees, Kurtz comes to Africa at least partially believing in his mission to help "the savages." He is working not just for the company, but also for "the International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs" (Heart, p. 50) and is convinced that "By the simple exercise of our will we can exert a power for good practically unbounded" (Heart, p. 50). However, a long period of isolation in the interior as the only white European at his post changes him. Lacking what Marlowe calls "restraint," which is the ability to subordinate one's personal desires to something trans-personal, Kurtz is corrupted by his power of life and death over the natives in the area of his station. He makes himself one of the gods of the land, and in the process, he takes a native wife and leads the fiercest of the local tribes on raids against other tribes for ivory. Even at the start of his stay in Africa, his missionary zeal was equally distributed between "improving" the natives and sending out record shipments of ivory. As his meglomania increases, he cuts himself off from the company's headquarters nearer the coast.

³Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness, ed. Robert Kimbrough (New York: Norton, 1963), 50. Subsequent references to this book will appear in the text.

Marlowe has been hired to take a small steamer up river and bring Kurtz out. But it is months before Marlowe can reach Kurtz. In that time he has a great deal of time to mull over the stories, legends almost, which have already sprung up about the trader. Surveying the petty evil and emptiness of the company's men at the Central Station, Marlowe concludes that at least Kurtz does not damn the human race by his insignificance as most of the other traders do: "Whatever he was, he was not common. He had the power to charm or frighten rudimentary souls into an aggravated witch-dance in his honour; he could also fill the small souls of the [company men] with bitter misgivings" (Heart, p. 51).

Nevertheless, Kurtz--the representative of European imperialism at its most grandiose, if not at its best, has not survived the moral challenge of the African jungle. In Europe, Kurtz' self-praised will-to-do-good was untested. For in Europe the policeman and the neighborly whisper of public opinion are always at hand (Heart, p. 50). It is when the European, the rational white man, finds himself in the dark, primitive, isolated places of the earth that he must come face to face with those dark, primitive regions within himself. And the jungles of the Congo are such a place. Marlowe describes their effect on him as he safaris into the Central Station:

We were wanderers on a prehistoric earth, on an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet. We could have fancied ourselves the first men taking possession of an accursed inheritance, to be subdued at the cost of excessive toil (Heart, p. 36).

It should be noted that the emphasis is not on the jungle itself but on the effect such a place has on a white European. This effect

daunts Marlowe, but it crushes Kurtz. Despite the considerable power of his personal magnetism and the deadly power of his white man's guns, Kurtz gets into trouble because he lacks "innate strength," the "capacity for faithfulness" which is necessary for moral survival in what is for the rational white an area with a very negative spirit of place (Heart, pp. 37, 50). (We hear almost nothing about how the natives feel about their land.)

Still, the protagonist is Marlowe, not Kurtz. Otherwise, as critics have often pointed out, the length of Marlowe's musings on Kurtz are artistically unjustifiable. Marlowe finally meets Kurtz only when the trader is on the point of death. Nevertheless, there is time for Marlowe to sense a kinship to this man whose degeneration Marlowe abhors. When Kurtz slips away from his sick bed in a last delirious attempt to return to the demon kingdom he has made for himself among the natives, Marlowe goes alone into the night to bring him back. Marlowe claims that he does not understand why he feels he must go alone (Heart, p. 66). However, to the reader, it is clear that Marlowe by then sees in Kurtz the dark side of Marlowe, a side whose existence he must be responsible for, like it or not, if he is to exercise his own "capacity for faithfulness." For this reason also, he later lies to Kurtz' Intended back in Europe, preserving her idealistic picture of Kurtz; he can neither disclaim nor publicly accept the dark side of himself which he identifies with Kurtz.

Marlowe tells his listeners that it will be difficult for them to comprehend Kurtz as Marlowe has because they are sitting safe in London: "Here you all are, each moored with two good addresses, like

a hulk with two anchors, a butcher round one corner, a policeman round another, excellent appetites, and temperature normal" (Heart, p. 48). Although Marlowe does not openly draw the analogy, the reader cannot help seeing Marlowe's friends as being much like the citizens of the "sepulchral" European city which headquarters the company and holds Kurtz' Intended. Returning from Africa to that city, Marlowe, like Gulliver back from his travels, finds the inhabitants detestable: "They were intruders whose knowledge of life was to me an irritating pretense, because I felt so sure they could not possibly know the things I knew" (Heart, p. 72). They are content "to dream their insignificant and silly dreams" (Heart, p. 72); Marlowe must restrain himself "from laughing in their faces, so full of stupid importance" (Heart, p. 73).

Yet he does not laugh. Nor can he openly tell them what he has learned. Rather he must sit in the dark like a Buddha dressed in European clothes (Heart, p. 6) and preach to his complacently rational friends a sermon which conveys his insights into the dark side of man indirectly, as "a glow brings out a haze" (Heart, p. 5).

At one point Marlowe says he has "laid the ghost of Kurtz' gifts with a lie" (Heart, p. 49) to the Intended. But he hasn't, of course. He is still trying to plumb the meaning of Kurtz' "gifts" through telling his friends of his encounter, an encounter whose meaning has not yet fully surfaced in his consciousness:

It seems to me I am trying to tell you a dream--making a vain attempt, because no relation of a dream can convey the dream-sensation, that commingling of absurdity, surprise, and bewilderment in a tremor of struggling revolt, that notion of being captured by the incredible which is of the essence of dreams (Heart, pp. 27-28).

Without pretending to exhaust the full meaning of this marvelously provoking Conradian tale, an interpretation of Charlie Marlowe's dream can be offered which shows its influence on The Man Who Killed the Deer. This interpretation requires that we dwell on two points about the story which critics are generally in agreement upon. First, on the psychological level, Marlowe's journey is one of self-discovery. As in the more directly told Secret Sharer (1912), the protagonist discovers the dark side of his own nature by projecting it onto another character whom the protagonist then accepts as intimately connected to himself, thereby learning to acknowledge the dark possibilities within himself. Second, the darkness of Nature in the form of the jungle is the darkness of an unconscious mind whose workings are as unknown and inscrutable as the jungle appears to be to Marlowe. From the point of view of modern psychoanalytic theory, Nature is feminine. Conrad views the instinctive or the feminine with fear; Waters, however, was quick to realize that instead of suppressing the feminine, one needs to incorporate it into conscious self. Like Nature in Heart of Darkness, the unconscious is seen as feminine "because the unconscious, alike in its capacity to bring to birth and to destroy through absorption, has feminine affinities" (Neumann, p. 125). Therefore, in assessing the extent to which Marlowe has come to terms with his whole self, we must consider his attitude toward the feminine.

At the time this story was written, Sigmund Freud was leading psychologists to the European rediscovery of the dark, instinctual side of the mind. Like Charlie Marlowe, rational Europeans were both

fascinated and terrified by the new knowledge of this previously unsuspected part of themselves. However, and again like Marlowe, the more they learned of it, the more its repression seemed justified. It was difficult for them to accept the existence of a "savage" within their own breasts. Marlowe's own technique for surmounting this reticence is to journey into the unconscious as observer. It is Kurtz' dilemma which is real; Marlowe's own appears to him to be a dream and his vicarious participation in Kurtzian degeneration is "a choice of nightmares" (Heart, p. 63). This stance allows Marlowe to recognize the inner voice which tells him to explore the dark side of himself. Yet, it also allows him, when necessary, to deny the first hand reality of the dark side, projecting it upon Kurtz instead. Hence, Marlowe's "wrestle" with death from illness on the return down river is anticlimactic to him. It merely increases his understanding of Kurtz: he concludes that Kurtz dared to be fully alive, but his own restraint keeps Marlowe from risking such a first-person encounter with "The horror!" (Heart, p. 72). Heart of Darkness is a masterpiece of impressionism. We get not Africa as an inhabitant might see it, but a view from the outside: its effect on over-conscious Europeans. Just so, we get not an account of Marlowe's night journey through the self so much as we get his impression of Kurtz' failed journey.

Evidence that Marlowe's own journey of self-discovery has not been completed is revealed by his consistently dualistic attitude toward the feminine. The feminine in the form of wild nature is fierce and inscrutable. It has "the stillness of an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention" (Heart, p. 34). It is what

Jungian psychologists call the Terrible Mother which seeks to devour the son/lover, who is nevertheless drawn mothlike to its flame. On the other hand, the feminine in the form of European womanhood is an object to be patronized and lied to because of its purity, innocence and naivete:

It's queer how out of touch with truth women are. They live in a world of their own, and there had never been anything like it, and never can be. It is too beautiful altogether, and if they were to set it up it would go to pieces before the first sunset. Some confounded fact we men have been living contentedly with ever since the day of creation would start up and knock the whole thing over (Heart, p. 12).

In particular, Kurtz' Intended is, in Marlowe's view, much too fragile to be told the truth about Kurtz:

Did I mention a girl? Oh, she is out of it--completely. They--women I mean--are out of it--should be out of it. We must help them to stay in that beautiful world of their own, lest ours gets worse (Heart, p. 49).

That is, we must keep their souls, like the souls of Kurtz' natives, rudimentary so that they can worship men and men can substitute that worship for the self-knowledge only the night journey provides. And thus does Charlie Marlowe attempt to bury Kurtz' gifts of frightening self-knowledge with the lie he protests he hates so much to tell. Woman's supposed fragility must serve as the reason for his own unreadiness to face the darkness of the transpersonal feminine within himself.

Marlowe's Europe with its sepulchral cities and hypocritical imperialism has cut itself off from the reality of the unconscious, the inner, feminine world of the mind. In doing so, the civilization that has produced Kurtz has become artificial and inhuman. Kurtzian man has taken what Jung calls the extraverted tendency to such

extremes that the true horror Kurtz discovers is not the natives, or the jungle, but himself. And the final irony of the tale is that not only do Marlowe's listeners not comprehend it (as he keeps telling them they won't), but Marlowe himself does not understand the full significance of the tale he has told.

Thus, Conrad's oblique approach more than redeems itself. Kurtz encounters the jungle within his own soul; Marlowe encounters Kurtz; the complacent Londoners listen to Marlowe. And the reader has the opportunity to learn from all three encounters more than the participants do. None of the characters, not even Marlowe, has followed his inner voice to a merging and transcendence of reason and instinct. The reader can also learn that while the pressure of the inner voice may be universal, the path an individual must take in following it is not the same in all times and places or indeed the same for any two human beings.

Thus, Marlowe's path to growth as a person is not the same as that of one of the Congolese natives, although both can grow. And Tai Ling's path is different from either because his Oriental background makes it so. What Conrad is concerned with in Heart of Darkness is the European path to maturity. His Africa is a vivid stage for a European drama. And the drama consists of Marlowe's struggle to meet the truth of primordial, savage man "with his own true stuff--with his own inborn strength." But to meet the savage, to observe him from the outside is the most Marlowe is able to do; the temptation to project the problem within outward upon Kurtz and Africa is still too strong.

Nevertheless, Marlowe points to the source of the problem: European culture's rational complacency. To listen to the inner voice

is always difficult, but never more so than in a culture biased against introversion. Marlowe's sermon preaches the dangerous sterility of European culture.

In 1902 Heart of Darkness implies there is something terribly wrong with the cultural soil of Europe. By 1926, the year The Plumed Serpent was published, Conrad's brilliant early insight was a conventional wisdom. World War One had made Europe's susceptibility to the irrational rather evident. Kurtzian man had gone ashore with the natives of the unconscious for a howl and a dance that had lasted four years and in the process he had invented infernal rites that would make the cannibals of the Congo blush.

The horrors of that war were vivid in Lawrence's imagination when he wrote The Plumed Serpent; therefore, his European protagonist, the Anglo-Irish Kate Leslie, rejects Europe. The inner voice takes her to Mexico. She is attracted to Don Ramon Carrasco and General Cipriano Viedma because they are attempting to create a new cultural soil in Mexico. In effect what they are attempting is the invention of a religion which will satisfy the need for the non-rational in man's soul and yet circumvent the danger of turning loose Kurtzian man.

Kate Leslie has come to Mexico after the death of her husband in an Irish rebellion. In early scenes she finds modern, big city Mexico repulsive. On the surface it has a veneer of the European civilization she has rejected, and underneath lurks the cruelty, poverty, and resentment of the conquered Indian races who have neither been assimilated by Western culture nor Europeanized by the Catholic Church. Kate journeys to Lake Chapala to escape the psychological oppressiveness of Mexico City.

Her arrival on the spermy-white waters of the lake marks the real beginning of her inner journey to a spiritual rebirth. For here Don Ramon has his headquarters. And here begin his efforts to create a new religion of Quetzalcoatl that will free the Mexican people of the deadening influence of European mechanized civilization and free in the people the power within their own dark Indian blood.

Where Marlowe resisted adamantly the temptation he felt to join the African natives for a dance and a howl, Kate is moved despite misgivings to participate in the dance rituals created by the Columbia University-educated Ramon. While feeling European man is "widdershins," spinning in reverse, undoing the soul he originally had, Kate, like Marlowe, distrusts any attempt by modern man to return to the primitive in his soul. She recalls that Joachim Leslie, her late husband has "said that evil was the lapsing back to old life modes that have been surpassed in us":

This brings murder and lust. But the drums of [Ramon's rituals] are the old rhythm, and that dancing round the drum is the old savage form of expression. Consciously reverting to the savage. So perhaps it is evil.

But then again her instinct to believe came up.

No! It's not a helpless, panic reversal. It is conscious, carefully chosen. We must go back to pick up the old, broken impulse that will connect us with the mystery of the cosmos again, now we are at the end of our own tether. We must do it. Don Ramon is right. He must be a great man, really.⁴

She is strongly attracted to the tall, handsome, powerful Ramon. However, he does not feel an equal attraction, seeing her rather as an

⁴D. H. Lawrence, The Plumed Serpent (New York: Vintage, 1926, 1959), 84, 150. Subsequent references to this edition will appear in the text.

important possible convert to his new religion. It is his full-blood Indian second in command, Cipriano Viedma who feels a sexual attraction to Kate. As Kate is both drawn to and suspicious of Ramon's instinctual, non-rational religion, so she is attracted and frightened by those same qualities in Cipriano:

His [English university] education lay like a film of white oil on the black lake of his barbarian consciousness. For this reason, the things he said were hardly interesting at all. Only what he was. He made the air around him seem darker, but richer and fuller (Serpent, p. 88).

Ramon's religion grows despite increasingly violent opposition by the Catholic Church. An attack by assassins is kept from succeeding by Kate, but Ramon nevertheless receives wounds from which he nearly dies. He sees his recovery as a spiritual rebirth and merges his identity with that of his god, Quetzalcoatl. In turn Cipriano becomes the war god of the Aztecs, Huitzilopochtli. They want Kate to be Malintzi, the female member of their pantheon. Kate agrees both to marriage with Cipriano and to a place in the pantheon, but she cannot be rid of her misgivings.

Ramon and Cipriano gain secular as well as religious power. Cipriano trains his soldiers with ritual and costuming from Ramon's religion. The current Mexican president, a socialist, allies with them to banish the Catholic Church and make Ramon's new faith the state religion. Cipriano's troops fight to enforce this change. Ramon has those involved in the assassination attempt on him executed in a religious ceremony. Cipriano begins judging prisoners he captures. Those he believes to be brave, he allows to join his army; the rest he personally stabs in the heart.

Carlota, Ramon's ardently Catholic wife, dies opposing Ramon's new faith and Ramon takes a new wife, the self-effacing Teresa. Kate is jealous of Teresa, feeling the latter's submersion of her individual ego in favor of her role as Ramon's wife is something Kate herself is not yet willing to do for Cipriano. She knows that both Cipriano and Ramon would tell her:

Soul! No, you have no soul of your own. You have at best only half a soul. It takes a man and a woman together to make a soul. The soul is the Morning Star, emerging from the two. One alone cannot have a soul (Serpent, p. 425).

Nevertheless, she keeps asking herself, "must she admit that the individual was an illusion and a falsification?" (Serpent, p. 426). She tries to convince herself that Ramon and Cipriano have gone too far, that their religion has become patriarchal, masculine to the extreme:

When Cipriano said: Man that is man is more than a man, he seemed to be driving the male significance to its utmost, and beyond, with a sort of demonism. It seemed to her all terrible will, the exertion of pure, awful will (Serpent, p. 423).

She begins thinking of running away from both men, of going back to a Europe which lacks a living faith but which will allow her "that little star of her own single self" (Serpent, p. 425). However, she knows this would be a turning back from the journey into the self she has begun in Mexico:

Yet Kate herself had convinced herself of one thing, finally: that the clue to all living and to all moving-on into new living lay in the vivid blood-relation between man and woman (Serpent, p. 436).

In the final scene of the novel she confronts Ramon and Cipriano at Ramon's hacienda on Lake Chapala. She tells them she will return to Europe. Ramon refuses to cajole her into staying. He leaves, saying

she must do what she really wants to do. Cipriano, however, assures her passionately of his love for her. The novel closes with her response: "You won't let me go!" (Serpent, p. 487).

Frank Waters has called The Plumed Serpent "perhaps [Lawrence's] greatest novel, for its imaginative scope and evocative mood."⁵ But Waters goes on to say that "The Plumed Serpent is one of the most horrible prophecies ever written, and the obituary of [Lawrence's] misguided faith" ("Quetzalcoatl," p. 106). This "misguided faith" is Lawrence's "literary fight to return man to the instinctive forces of life, to the deep dark wisdom of the blood" ("Quetzalcoatl," p. 104). Lawrence, Waters argues, was after something much deeper than merely freeing readers from a Victorian prudishness about sex:

He was oppressed by the tragic split between the dual opposites of life itself--the conscious and unconscious, instinct and reason. He abhorred the deadening constriction of life in our machine age. . . . How Lawrence excoriated those who proclaimed the universe a well-oiled machine! . . . Strike off the shackles of our shallow rationalization, our materialistic-mechanistic civilization, he urged. Go back to the realm of the instincts, back to the deep dark wisdom of the blood! ("Quetzalcoatl," p. 104).

Waters, of course, shares Lawrence's concern with mechanistic civilization, but he has serious reservations about the solution he sees Lawrence proposing in The Plumed Serpent. Both Lawrence and Waters distinguish between the pre-Aztec religion of Quetzalcoatl, which they see as benevolent, and "the totalitarian cult of sun-worship with its wholesale human sacrifices" which the Aztecs made of it (see

⁵Frank Waters, "Quetzalcoatl Versus D. H. Lawrence's Plumed Serpent," Western American Literature, III (Summer, 1968), 106. Subsequent references to this article will appear in the text.

"Quetzalcoatl," pp. 109-113 and The Plumed Serpent, pp. 61, 135). Yet Waters believes "This Aztec vulgarization of Quetzalcoatl was what Lawrence fictionally restored to Mexico in The Plumed Serpent" ("Quetzalcoatl," p. 112). Finally, the religion in The Plumed Serpent is prophetic, Waters contends, not of Mexico in 1926 but of Germany in 1933. Life imitates art: what Lawrence's fictional character Ramon talks about doing, Adolf Hitler does. Thus, at one point Ramon says:

So if I want Mexicans to learn the name of Quetzalcoatl, it is because I want them to speak with the tongues of their own blood. I wish the Teutonic world would once more think in terms of Thor and Wotan, and the tree Igdrasil (Serpent, p. 273).

And that leads Waters to comment:

In [1933] Don Ramon, alias Adolph Hitler, came very much to life. Proclaiming himself Chancellor of the Third Reich, he shouted stridently to the world that Germany once more would indeed think in terms of Thor and Wotan and the tree Igdrasil. . . . Back to the dark, instinctual realm of the blood! Back to the purifying force of pure feeling! The same pattern, but with the emphasis on the Aryan instead of the Indian, the symbol of the swastika instead of the feathered serpent ("Quetzalcoatl," p. 109).

Much of Waters' reaction to The Plumed Serpent also appears in his study of Indian ceremonialism (Masked Gods). When Thomas Lyon dealt with that work, he took Waters to task for his attitude toward Lawrence, feeling that "Waters has underestimated Lawrence" (Lyon, p. 48). Following L. D. Clark's Dark Night of the Body, a booklength study of The Plumed Serpent, Lyon feels Waters gives too little attention to Kate's ambivalence toward Ramon's religion. Lyon notes that "Lawrence has Kate say at the end of The Plumed Serpent that 'one can have too much of it,' meaning the blood-consciousness of the Quetzalcoatl religion; and her very last words are 'You won't let me go!'" These two passages cast doubt on

Waters' interpretation of Lawrence as a simple propagandist" (Lyon, p. 48). Yet Clark, whom Lyon has taken as the authority on The Plumed Serpent (Lyon, p. 157), undercuts Lyon's argument because he firmly believes the "You won't let me go" is actually Kate's commitment to the world of Ramon and Cipriano.⁶ Lyon comes closer to seeing Waters' point when he muses "perhaps all Waters means to do is illuminate the one-way nature of the Road of Life by excoriating attractive side roads and dead ends" (Lyon, p. 48).

In the "Quetzalcoatl" article Waters says:

The Road of Life followed by all of us is a one-way road. There is no returning from reason to primitive instinct: we can but reconcile them on the higher level of intuition ("Quetzalcoatl," p. 113).

A passage in Masked Gods amplifies Waters' objections to the "Indian" religion Lawrence invents for The Plumed Serpent:

There was only one thing wrong with Lawrence's evocation. He did not know enough about Indian ceremonialism. It would have taught him that the Road of Life is a one-way road.

No. We cannot minimize the tragic falsity of the Lawrence cult which urges us, even individually, to regress to the impulses of instinct. For when we do, we disintegrate morally and psychologically.⁷

This last paragraph applies not only to Lawrence but also might be used as the epitaph for Conrad's Mr. Kurtz. But Waters goes on to add, "Yet neither can we allow the conscious ego to totally repress the instincts, impoverishing our life to sterility."⁸ That is why Kate chooses the

⁶L. D. Clark, Dark Night of the Body (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1964), 73-77.

⁷Frank Waters, Masked Gods (Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1950), 408.

⁸Masked Gods, 408.

danger of staying in Ramon's Mexico: she sees her alternative as the living death of European rational sterility. For the same reason Marlowe prefers Kurtz to the hollow men of the company.

However, both Marlowe and Kate are guilty of an either/or fallacy. They are not compelled to choose only between instinct and sterile intellectualism. The genius of both Conrad and Lawrence in the two works we have discussed lies in the extent to which the intuitive artist in each man wrought a work that contradicts many of the rationally held tenets of the main characters and perhaps the authors. For example, Marlowe thinks he has fathomed the mystery of life, but our analysis has shown that he has yet to complete his night journey into the self. In The Plumed Serpent the intuitive artist is busy undercutting the social theorizer and religious prophet. The unworkability of Ramon's religion can be demonstrated internally. It does not depend on analogies to Hitler.

In the first place the great founder of the new Indian religion is not an Indian. As far as we know, Ramon's ancestry is Spanish; his education American. Yet he presumes to tell Cipriano and the other genuine Indians the secrets of the Indian soul! This contradicts Ramon's own racial blood theories which say that each racial group has its own blood wisdom not available to anyone not of the blood. Where then is his blood knowledge? Hence, we have Kate, a European, attracted to Ramon's religion because it too is European at the core. It is Cipriano's unconscious understanding of this situation that keeps him questioning Ramon:

[Cipriano] was always testing Ramon, to see if he could change him. When he found he couldn't, then he submitted, and new little fires of joy sprang up in him. But meanwhile, he had to try, and try again (The Plumed Serpent, p. 210).

This is not the relationship Ramon describes as fitting between blood aristocrats, rather it is that between the white Kate and her Indian servant Juana. The following is Kate's musing on her relationship with Juana and her family, but does it not describe Cipriano's relationship to Ramon as well?

While the white man keeps the impetus of his own proud, onward march, the dark races will yield and serve, perforce. But let the white man once have a misgiving about his own leadership, and the dark races will at once attack him, to pull him down into the old gulfs. To engulf him again (Serpent, p. 162).

As Conrad's Africa is but the backdrop for a drama concerning the European soul, so the real focus of Lawrence's Mexican drama is also the European, not the universal human soul. Hence, from its inception Ramon's religion contradicts its own deepest tenet: that wisdom comes only from the racial blood. But even granted this rather large objection to it, there are still problems because Ramon's theoretical religion is not the one that actually takes shape. As in Mr. Kurtz, Don Ramon's will to power is inextricably bound up with his will to do good. He expresses a desire to return to the pure religion of Quetzalcoatl before the Aztecs perverted it by mass sacrifices (Serpent, p. 135). However, Cipriano as First Man of Huitzilopochtli, the Aztec god of war, is soon conducting ritual executions as part of the religion's ceremonies, with the full approval of Ramon. Don Ramon also says he does not want to become another Porfiro Diaz, a grasper

after secular power (Serpent, p. 210), but he allows Cipriano to use his army to make Ramon the most powerful man in Mexico.

Kate is on the right track when she sees what Ramon and Cipriano are doing as the product of excessive male will, the male will of the intellectual European, Ramon. Even his contact with his god reflects his difference from his supposed fellow Indians. The Indians are attracted to the details of everyday life: "Like all savages, they [Cipriano's soldiers in this case] liked doing small things. And, like most Mexicans, once they were a little sure of what they were doing, they loved doing it well" (Serpent, p. 399). Ramon, on the other hand, finds "It was hard to have to bear the contact of commonplace daily things, when his soul and body were naked to the cosmos" (Serpent, p. 119).

As the Africa of Heart of Darkness, however accurately some of its detail is captured, is but the backdrop for a drama going on within the European soul, so Lawrence's Mexico is also a Lawrencian backdrop rather than a Mexican reality; the real struggle is not for the soul of Mexico but for the soul of Kate Leslie. L. D. Clark concludes that:

Lawrence not only created a religion on his own terms, as a novelist may, but also a context in which to put it, his own aboriginal land which he calls Mexico. That he was not trying to reconstruct Mexico as it is, in the realistic sense, is admitted by most.⁹

Clark finds Katherine Anne Porter's 1926 review of The Plumed Serpent aptly describes the true nature of Lawrence's concern in the novel:

⁹Clark, 78.

The Plumed Serpent is a confession of faith, a summing up of the mystical philosophy of D. H. Lawrence. Mexico, the Indians, the cult of the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl--The Plumed Serpent--all these are pretexts, symbols made to the measure of his preoccupations (Dark Body, p. 79).

Therefore, Kate's choice between the sterility of Europe and Ramon's religion of the blood is due not to realities as Lawrence found them in Mexico, but to conflicts within Lawrence himself. One of the major conflicts was between Lawrence the intuitive student of the human condition, and Lawrence the patronizing social prophet. The intuitive Lawrence knows as well as Waters that modern man cannot return to the instinctive; that Lawrence has said:

We can't go back to the savages: not a stride. . . . we cannot turn the current of our life backwards, back towards their soft warm twilight and uncreate [sic] mud. Not for a moment. If we do it for a moment, it makes us sick (Studies in Classic American Literature, p. 145).

Kate argues that if the return is careful, and consciously chosen rather than a panic backing away from the responsibility for consciousness, such a program is not evil. But as I hope I have shown, the nature of Ramon's religion refutes her claims. His return is Kurtzian and like Kurtz he has made himself one of the gods of the land; there is not only a Cipriano at his side, there is a Cipriano within him (Serpent, p. 211).

Is there then no way to overcome the willfulness and sterility of the modern consciousness without turning loose the savagery and perversion trapped within the modern unconscious? Marlowe seems to say, "No, the heart of man is dark; the best one can do is recognize that it is so and make a manful attempt to restrain that darkness." Ramon argues that if one is a very careful Kurtzian, one can have a

dance and a howl with no harm done. But what Ramon does belies what he says he believes. In the case of both stories, the beckoning of the inner voice has been heard, but not followed. The civilized Marlowe can only say that the savagery must be restrained. The civilized Kate Leslie comes to believe her only choice is between Ramon's Kurtzian universe and a sterile Europe, and Europe she rejects. But again it must be stressed that this is a false dichotomy: Maria, for instance, can find room in her philosophy for both the valley and the dam. The American educated Ramon preaches that his is a religion of growth from within, but his troops seize Mexico and have his religion made the state religion. On the other hand, the Oriental Tai Ling, after also underestimating the external world's influence on him, finds that an interest in the outer world can be motivated by compassion, not just the will to power.

Thus, Waters' answer to the dilemmas posed by The Plumed Serpent is to be found not in non-fiction works like Masked Gods or the Quetzalcoatl article but in his novels. Particularly, we should look to The Man Who Killed the Deer, Waters novel about Indian America. Deer also has a protagonist caught between a rational white culture and a "backward" Indian culture. He, like Kate Leslie, is in need of spiritual rebirth. He is even caught in the middle of a struggle between an old established religion (Pueblo ceremonialism) and a new made to order one (the Native American Church). But most importantly, it has, in Martiniano, a main character who not only hears the call of the inner voice, but also heeds it, facing both the need and the danger

such a call entails and arriving finally at a reconciliation of instinct and reason on a higher level of intuition.

However, Martiniano's journey to that higher level of understanding is a long and painful one. Taken from his people of the Taos Pueblo at the age of twelve, he is educated in the white man's schools and trained as a carpenter. He returns to the pueblo when he is eighteen to find that he fits smoothly into neither the white world nor the red. His white training as a carpenter is not needed in the pueblo or the nearby sleepy Spanish town of La Oreja. He takes up the farming of his late father's pueblo land, but seems to continually come into conflict with the tradition-minded elders who run the pueblo. His rationally trained mind and stubborn disposition find little sense in the ceremonial duties and obedience to the old customs which the elders demand of all Indians in their community.

The story begins with Martiniano's killing of a deer on government forestry land after the hunting season. This act runs him afoul of both the white and the red authorities. Having killed the deer out of season, he is arrested and beaten by forest rangers. He has also killed the deer without the proper ceremony and attitude, thus bringing him again into trouble with the Council of the pueblo for his anti-traditionalism. He is spared jail only when his friend, Byers, the pueblo's favorite white trader, pays his fine.

The killing of the deer sets off the two major plot lines. The pueblo renews its efforts to regain control of the forestry land surrounding its sacred Dawn Lake, the symbolic center of the tribe's religious life. This effort in turn symbolizes the tribe's attempt to

keep the old way of life alive in the face of the steady encroachment by white materialistic civilization. The other and dominant thread of the plot is Martiniano's search for a deeper understanding of himself and his place in the social scheme of things.

Left stranded between the old way of the pueblo traditionals and the new way of the ego conscious white culture, Martiniano is sadly in need of something to believe in. This need leads him to Manuel Rena, the local leader of the Native American Church. The Peyote Road, as it is called in the pueblo, is an attempt to find a religious purpose in life by the taking of the hallucinogenic peyote mushroom. This is done in a controlled ceremonial setting because the purpose is not escape but self-exploration. It is an attempt by those for whom the traditional pueblo religion has broken down to find a way back to a religiously purposeful universe. At first Martiniano thinks he has found something, but the deer he has killed begins haunting his dreams, refusing to give him any peace.

In flashbacks we find that Martiniano had also sought earlier in the love for his wife, Flowers Playing, to find a faith to build his life upon. But the deer has spoiled his hope there too; his thoughts of it are like a wall between the two of them, cutting off emotional and sexual contact.

One night on his way to the Peyote Road meeting at Rena's the deer appears before him and blocks his way. He calls himself a crazy Indian but feels compelled to obey such an omen. He returns home to find this obedience to his inner voice leaves him free to make love with his wife for the first time in months.

That same night the Peyote cultists are raided by the pueblo authorities including Martiniano's best friend Palemon. The traditionalists see the Peyote Road as a threat to Indian ceremonialism, a threat which must be stamped out as un-Indian, as simply another trick of the white man to destroy the old Indian ways.

Martiniano tells Rena that his vision has caused him to decide to leave the Peyote Road. Rena understands since he believes each man must find his own way, and he has had his own such promptings by the inner voice. Martiniano respects Rena and can now admit to himself even a grudging respect for the stubbornness of the traditionals, but he still feels committed to neither way. The inner voice does lead him to publicly acknowledge his part in the Peyote Road meetings. For this he is given a lashing in the pueblo plaza. He endures the pain and humiliation stoically, thereby winning the respect of the pueblo elders. His new found peace is capped by Flowers Playing, who announces that she is pregnant, something they have both long wanted.

However, he almost immediately slips into the error of thinking his progress has been the result of his conscious efforts, of his own will:

For the first time he had found peace. The crop from his new fields would pay off his debt: next year it would make him a rich man. By then he would have a family. And he had found a faith. All this accomplished by himself, alone! Triumph mounted within him.¹⁰

¹⁰Frank Waters, The Man Who Killed the Deer (Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1942), 180. Subsequent references to this edition will appear in the text.

This hubris brings the deer back to torment him again. At a ceremonial in the plaza, he makes his last attempt to defeat it by a conscious and willful act. To crown the ceremony and bring luck to the pueblo for the coming year, someone must climb up a smooth pine pole and remove the deer carcas and groceries that have been placed there for the feast ending the ceremony. The regular participants fail. A bad omen. Unasked, Martiniano offers to try. To him the deer appears to be exactly the one he shot. He makes a valiant effort but fails. The pole has to be chopped down. And as it falls "With it crashed the last cracked walls of his pride":

The deer he had killed had defeated him again--for the last time. For he knew now there was something about it not to be overcome, not to be escaped from; but which must be lived with and understood.

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It is a deep truth and difficult to learn that the greatest deeds must be done by him who is content to remain unknown lest his action be impeded by too ready acclaim (Deer, p. 196).

But Martiniano is learning. He sees now that his people's secretiveness and self-effacement serve this noble purpose of preventing heroic actions being flawed by hubris. He learns more as he watches Flowers Playing enact the honored role of Deer Mother during the important Deer Dance. Watching the dance he re-experiences his whole struggle with the deer in his soul:

Martiniano watched [the dancers] with a hypnotic horror. He felt himself cringing before that manifestation of the blind force which had pulled him back from his own strivings toward a new and resplendent faith--back into that warm flow of human life of which he was still a part. His own revolt, his anger and his fear; it all came out of him anew and was echoed by the sobbing, tortured cries of the deer before him (Deer, p. 214).

He has finally learned that what has always been lacking in him was not some external form to believe in, but rather faith in the substance of life within him, faith in his own inner voice:

He did not know. But within him he felt something stirring awake. The power within him that knew what he did not know. It was like a great coiled serpent sleeping within him (Deer, p. 215).

Now, he is prepared to perform an heroic act in the proper Indian manner. In the opening of the story, Palemon had answered the wounded Martiniano's wordless call for help and rescued him. Palemon's son, Naipata, is injured on the mountain side while on the final exercise of his initiation into manhood. This time it is Martiniano who answers the voiceless call and who without fanfare brings Naipata back to the pueblo.

The birth of Martiniano's son completes the father's spiritual rebirth. Martiniano asks to participate in the ceremonial duties he had for so long thought pointless; he now feels an unforced part of the pueblo community. The child has made him see himself as a part of the greater whole. Meanwhile, the deer has disappeared, replaced now by the power within him which knows what he does not and on which he can not rely:

There was no road, predetermined and secure, that he could lay for his son. There was only the faith that his life was the courage of man to make his own step in darkness, his single glimmer, and pass on unafraid (Deer, p. 254).

Meanwhile the pueblo has also won its victory: the government agrees to grant them unrestricted use of the lands around Dawn Lake for fifty years. Martiniano knows this is no final victory for the old ways, only a reprieve. But he decides his son will have the

traditional religious training he himself was deprived of because of his years at the white schools--if such training is still available when the boy reaches twelve, the age at which it begins:

One must not forget one's beginning. . . . Times were changing, and his son should know something of the old before he was confronted with the new (Deer, p. 264).

Martiniano's friend Byers, the Indian trader, knows also that the traditional Indian way must pass:

There can be no oases in the desert of evershifting time, no idyllic glades of primitive culture in the forest of mankind, no ivory towers of thought. We are all caught up in the tide of perpetual change. These pueblos, these reservations must sometime pass away, and the red flow out into the engulfing white (Deer, p. 261).

But Byers sees the days of white culture are also numbered. It is doomed to self-destruction by its own "monstrous materiality" (Deer, p. 261). He hopes the civilization that succeeds both will have learned from the Indian that man is one with all of life.

And that is what Martiniano, although cheated of the traditional kiva training, has nevertheless managed to learn for himself. That knowledge has led to his rebirth as a mature and balanced human being, "[a] man reborn, as men are ever reborn out of their dead selves, by life itself":

For as there are many faiths and many conceptions of the one paradox by which man exists as transient flesh and enduring spirit, all these faiths stem from the one faith, the wonder and mystery of which we are an inseparable part. Let each man, though bereft of teacher, priest and preceptor, but depend upon this faith, and so be reborn by life itself into the greater whole. And so see before him at last, through the cycles of his widening perception, the one road which is his to tread with all (Deer, p. 257).

It is the substance of the faith in the wonder and mystery of life which the traditionals of the pueblo Council and Lawrence's Don

Ramon Carrasco want to preserve. But both the Council and Don Ramon have a tendency to forget that their way to the substance of life is not the only way. The Council persecutes those who take the Peyote Road, blaming them for abandoning the traditional religious ceremonialism. Yet the peyote eaters are those for whom the traditional ceremonialism has ceased to be a path to the meaning of life. For his part, Don Ramon can believe "the mystery is one mystery, but men must see it differently" (Serpent, p. 273), and still turn around and take it upon himself to decide how other men should see the mystery by trying to impose his religion on them. Like so many other men, he has found part of the truth, but he cannot rest content, as Martiniano can with the knowledge of his own finitude: other men must accept his truth as the truth. Therefore, if the Catholic Church opposes him, it must be banned; if the country will not accept him with open arms, it must be encouraged to by the gentle persuasion of Cipriano's army. As time passes Ramon's "wisdom" makes him less not more understanding of his fellow man and even less capable of appreciating the mystical in the commonplace: "It was hard to have to bear the contact of commonplace daily things, when his soul and body were naked to the cosmos" (Serpent, p. 199). For all his talk of giving back the Indians their faith, it is actually they, at gun point if necessary, who must validate his. He accuses Kate of having a core of repudiation in her soul (that is, a pride much like Martiniano's before the deer on the pole finally defeats him). And this is true. Kate alternates between a desire for an extreme and hence unhealthy individualism and an equally strong and unhealthy desire to throw off that individualism completely and submerge

herself into the collective unconscious. But Ramon suffers from a much more dangerous problem--spiritual pride. Like Tai Ling, he is enormously proud of the self he thinks he is trying to transcend. This makes him so convinced of his status as an aristocrat of the spirit ("One must have aristocrats, that we know," Serpent, p. 272) that it soon becomes difficult to tell the servant of Quetzalcoatl from the god he serves. He tells his followers, "We will be masters among men, and lords among men. But lords of men, and masters of men we will not be. Listen!" (Serpent, p. 196). But if any Mexican finds this distinction ambiguous, Cipriano and his army are there to make its meaning clear. Ramon also tells the socialists, "It is time to put away the grudge and the pity, No man was ever the better for being pitied, every man is the worse for a grudge" (Serpent, p. 395). Yet Ramon replaces pity with his aristocrat's condescension, and his execution of all those involved in the attempt to kill him might by some be construed as the bearing of a grudge. No, Ramon falls, as all men do, somewhat short of the divine stature he sees himself as possessing. He easily forgets that once one becomes dependent on the form of a faith rather than on its substance, the rigidity of the form betrays the substance. Byers makes a similar objection to what he sees as the peyote roaders' overdependence on peyote: "No people, no sect in possession of the awareness of spiritual power within themselves requires an outside stimulus or depends wholly upon sacerdotal paraphernalia" (Deer, p. 130). Thus while Ramon opposes the Catholic Church for its dependence on sacerdotal paraphernalia, his religion is open to the same charge. It is a point Palemon tries to make clear

to Martiniano when Palemon speaks about the uses and limitations of the "greater body," the social and religious forms one chooses to give allegiance to:

Who knows which is best? They are all the same. All are merely shells of life. But they must be lived within harmoniously to be free. For only when there is no sense of imprisonment in form is the substance of spirit able to overflow and become one with the flowing stream of all life, everlasting, formless, and without bounds (Deer, p. 65).

Martiniano listens with respect to his friend Palemon, but he cannot, for a long time, follow Palemon's advice because he must learn more about the substance of life (that within him which knows what he does not know) before he can successfully choose from among the forms of life. When he leaves the Peyote Road, it is because the deer has begun to teach him how to know the substance of life that is within him. Manuel Rena, the Peyote Chief, understands Martiniano's departure because like Palemon and Byers, he is aware of the difference between form and substance: "I understand," Rena tells Martiniano; "I would have you obey the voice within you as I obey that within me" (Deer, p. 114). On the other hand, Ramon's intolerance for anyone else's voice within shows that for him form has come to dominate substance.

Palemon had told Martiniano that his choices were between the forms of the white way, the red way, or some combination of the two. It is that last choice that Martiniano picks. Here Byers helps him because Byers has made a similar choice: knowing Indian life is far from perfect and that white consciousness is far from totally evil, he has nevertheless, found association with Indian ceremonialism his best means to the substance of life. But his efforts to develop a

viable form of life have been like Martiniano's a long and painful journey.

The key to why certain Waters characters grow while others do not may lie in an understanding of the necessity of pain to growth. To listen to the inner voice of intuition leads to wisdom, but not to freedom from suffering. For Martiniano the symbol of this inner voice is the deer:

This deer he had killed. . . . He did not know what it meant. It brought him evil and unhappiness. Then it saved him from evil and brought him happiness. Could it be true that real happiness comes only from real unhappiness conscientiously endured? Had he come upon a great truth which proclaimed that in the fruit of evil lies the seed of good? (Deer, p. 114).

It is this allegiance to the inner voice which is Waters ultimate answer to both Kurtzian man and Don Ramon's religion. Marlowe is right: one must have restraint, an innate strength that allows us to face the dark side without succumbing to it as Kurtz did. And Ramon is right in insisting we must come to terms with the wisdom of the blood and that if the conscious mind denies this, it inevitably becomes sterile. But Marlowe fails to see that the seed of good can lie in the evil fruit of Kurtzian man. And Ramon confuses the wisdom in the blood of every human being with benighted racial theories.

In the section of Masked Gods immediately following his rejection of the road to the future proposed in The Plumed Serpent, Waters offers an alternative. It is the way, he says, recommended not only by modern psychiatrists like Jung, but also by Chinese and Tibetan Buddhism and American Indian ceremonialism (Masked Gods, p. 409). This alternative is a refusal to repress either instincts or conscious ego. "Then, when our pain and suffering seems too great to be borne, a solution will

develop spontaneously in the depths of the unconscious" (Masked Gods, p. 409). Waters then quotes the Jungian psychiatrist M. Esther Harding as to how the solution will appear. Her description could be used as a plot synopsis for The Man Who Killed the Deer:

Such a solution . . . will not appear in the form of an intellectual conclusion or thought-out-plan, but will arise in dream or fantasy in the form of an image or symbol, so unexpected and yet so apt that its appearance will seem like a miracle. Such a symbol has the effect of breaking the deadlock. It has power to bring the opposing demands of the psyche together in a newly created form through which the life energies can flow in a new creative effort.¹¹

Jungians call such a solution the reconciling symbol. For Martiniano it is the deer which he comes to see as representing all of life, conscious and unconscious, the old red ways and the newer white ones. For Maria it is the dam which, although the product of the white's ego conscious technology, is also a part of all life. For Tai Ling it is his acceptance of the universality of human suffering as the evil fruit only from which the good seed of enlightenment can arise.

Thus, in each of the novels of the Southwest Trilogy the rightness with the land which is achieved is ultimately a rightness with all of life, life both within and without the human achiever. Martiniano, by his growth freed of the deer within, sees it symbolized without by the constellation of the Pliades, which his people call The Deer:

And he knew now that there is nothing killed, nothing lost, if one looks far or deep or high enough to see how its

¹¹Masked Gods, 409.

transmuted meaning is imprinted for all men to read and understand. Ai. A man drops but a pebble into the one great lake of life, and the ripples spread to unguessed shores, to congeal into a pattern even in the timeless skies of night (Deer, p. 266).

CHAPTER IV

PIKE'S PEAK: THE ONE SECRET SELF

Although published after The Man Who Killed the Deer (1942), The Yogi of Cockroach Court (1947) was discussed first because this study is not an examination of Waters' development as a writer but an analysis of the rightness with the land theme in his major novels. It is Maria who discovers that rightness with the land is more than a non-rational oneness with nature; those who follow her must find a faith which sees the machine as also a part of all of life. Tai Ling must learn that the karma of locality has to be accepted, not ignored, if the rightness with all of life which he calls enlightenment is to be achieved. Martiniano comes to accept his karma of locality as a member of the Indian community of his pueblo, but he also accepts, as his elders cannot, the inevitability that the old ways will fall before the encroachment of machine civilization. Thus, having found "in the profundity of immeasurable depths, the hidden, haunting mystery of his deeper self," he, to a greater extent than either Maria or Tai Ling can be "a bridge: between the old and the new, red and white, blind intuition and blinding rationalization" (Deer, p. 50).

The chronology of publication will also be ignored in this chapter. We have left to discuss two Waters novels with white members of the mechanistic civilization as protagonists. But the 1971 Pike's Peak will be dealt with before looking at the 1966 Woman at Otowi

Crossing. Once again the non-linear dream time of the myths Waters tells overrules calendar time. Pike's Peak is both Waters latest and almost his earliest work of fiction because it is a revision of his early mining trilogy--The Wild Earth's Nobility (1935), Below Grass Roots (1937), and The Dust Within the Rock (1940). Nevertheless, in its condensed and rewritten form, its treatment of the rightness with the land theme demands examination immediately following The Man Who Killed the Deer because there are strong affinities between the struggles of Martiniano and Peak's central character, Joseph Rogier.

Both men are skilled carpenters, builders who can shape the material of the external world, but who are not so competent at giving form to the material of their inner world of the unconscious. Each is also caught between the old and the new. Martiniano is adrift between the traditional Indian way of life and white mechanistic civilization. Rogier belongs neither to the Southern ante-bellum plantation culture into which he was born nor to the Northern mechanistic civilization which overwhelms the South as it overwhelms the Indian civilizations of Martiniano's Southwest. Each man must seek what Palemon calls a "greater body," a way of life which enables one to follow the dictates of the inner voice while also fulfilling one's responsibility as a social being.

However, it is also important to discuss Peak after Deer because the differences between the two men are also crucial. Martiniano is red; Rogier is white. Martiniano succeeds; Rogier fails. Martiniano succeeds because when his reconciling symbol, the deer, speaks to him, he obeys. He may call himself a "crazy Indian," but his

Indian's respect for the intuitive saves him. Rogier fails because when his reconciling symbol, the mountain called Pike's Peak, speaks Rogier is betrayed by his white lack of faith in intuition. His ego consciousness will not allow him to wholly believe that some things can never be conquered or possessed, they can only be lived with and propitiated. The walls of Martiniano's false pride crack when he cannot reach the deer at the top of the pine pole. Rogier, in typical fashion for a member of a materialistic society, objectifies his reconciling symbol and tries to save his soul by finding literal, not figurative, gold at the heart of Pike's Peak. His body and his mind must be broken along with his false pride, before he can accept the truth of the rightness with the land myth. And while obsessed with his own salvation, he has like Tai Ling been derelict in his duty to the sufferers around him.

Half stubborn, wild Apache, half sensitive, introverted Pueblo, burdened by the conflicting demands and attitudes of two cultures, Martiniano clings to his intuitive faith in the oneness of all life, and thereby succeeds in growing into a whole person despite the odds against him. He is an example of what faith in a productive myth can achieve. Rogier, seemingly the sanest of men and as indomitable as the mountain he mines, fails. He is a warning: the strength and pride of mechanistic civilization, of man the builder, cannot save him, not unless he can learn that such virtues must be tempered by an obedience to the inner voice, that inner voice which knows "the one wonder and mystery of which we are an inseparable part" (Deer, p. 257).

Before beginning an analysis of a book as long (743 pages) and involved as Pike's Peak, a synopsis of the main plot line may be of some service to the reader.

Book I, The Wild Earth's Nobility, traces Joseph Rogier's movement west from South Carolina to Little London, Colorado, at the foot of Pike's Peak. He establishes a construction firm and a family. Both flourish, but leave Rogier unfulfilled. The silver boom is on in Colorado and many men around Rogier succumb to mining fever, but he refuses all offers to join in the rush for instant riches. However, as he reaches the beginnings of middle age, his feelings of dissatisfaction with himself also increase. The Peak, the attraction of which first caused him to settle in Little London, seems to daily play a larger part in his thoughts. While he continues his successful construction business during the day, he begins to spend his nights poring over mining maps and reports. When gold is discovered on the side of the Peak itself, he begins what is to be a lifelong search for treasure in the mountain. But that search is conducted by the heart and not the head, and so for the first time in his business career Rogier begins making bad investments and losing money. At the close of the book he has been swindled out of a fortune but is ever more set on finding gold in the heart of Pike's Peak.

Book II, Below Grass Roots, follows the growth of Rogier's obsession through a series of ever less profitable mines. The second generation of the Rogier clan is given attention when Rogier's daughter Ona, having married the part-Indian Jonathon Cable begins an only temporarily successful effort to break free from her family's (and

particularly her father's) overwhelming influence on her life. March Cable, third generation of the central characters, is born. Cable tries to break One free by taking his son to the Navaho Reservation in New Mexico where Cable finds work at a trading post which for once satisfies both parts of his racial makeup. But Ona cannot transcend family influence and March's near death in a sudden flood leads to the father and son's return to Little London. Cable returns to work in Rogier's latest mine and dies more from lack of the will to live than from the pneumonia he contracts.

Book III, The Dust Within the Rock, parallels the slow but steady decline of Joseph Rogier with the adolescence and coming to manhood of his grandson March. Rogier's unceasing and unprofitable gold mining exhausts not only his wealth but also takes a heartbreaking toll on his own physical and mental resources. He suffers a seizure in his last totally worthless mine which renders him a semi-invalid in both body and mind. March passes through high school and several years of engineering at the local college while working to provide the family's only dependable financial support. But he leaves college to begin a series of wanderings that take him all over the West and eventually to a job as a mining engineer in Mexico. In Mexico the news of his beloved grandfather's death completes March's own coming of age. He returns to Little London to the graves of father and grandfather at the foot of Pike's Peak. There, he challenges the Peak as symbol of the dark instinctual forces in all men, forces neither father nor grandfather were able to successfully make peace with. He vows to continue their struggle, not by exploiting the earth's mineral resources but assaying

and refining the enormous natural resources to be found within the human spirit. He will work to make clear to his fellow men the true nature of the treasure which all seek one way or another. It is the treasure of self-knowledge and at-one-ness with existence, a treasure for which gold and silver are but pallid symbols.

This plot synopsis has concentrated on the four major characters. The Rogier clan is much larger. And one of the artistic successes of the book is the degree to which the reader comes to feel kinship to this herd of arrogant, untalkative, often foolishly prideful, but also courageous and loyal men and women. But while the family may have been the center of the earlier version of the trilogy, that is not the case with the rewritten book. Much of the over seven hundred pages that Waters deleted dealt with family history rather than the main theme. That theme is signified by the title of the revised version: Pike's Peak. Waters sees the Peak with all its symbolic linkages to the one true Self to be found within the soul of every human being as the dominating presence in the novel and regrets as misleading the publisher's choice of "A Family Saga" as subtitle for the book (Interview with Waters, August 31, 1979 in Taos, New Mexico).

Perhaps even more cutting of minor characters could have been done. Ona's cousin Boné, for instance, is given either too much or too little attention, leaving the reader to expect him to play a significant role just when he wanders out of the story for good. But if the family is not central to the novel, neither are its comings and goings entirely superfluous. The minor family members are drawn in what Northrop Frye calls the "ironic mode." Waters' art forces us to

empathize with people we would like to feel are "inferior in power or intelligence to ourselves, so that we have the sense of looking down on a scene of bondage, frustration, or absurdity."¹ In turn, this identification with life's victims makes us better able to appreciate the challenges that Joseph Rogier, March Cable, and, to a lesser degree, March's parents mount against a society which hinders rather than assists every human's need to know himself.

In Rogier, in particular, we have a hero in Frye's high mimetic mode. He is a natural leader who is "superior in degree to other men but not to his natural environment."² Rogier can stand against a culture which has become so dominated by the rational that it cuts him off from his own emotional and intuitive depths. He fights his way back to those depths, but only at the price of a destructive alienation from his fellow man.

Mr. Waters argues that while stronger than many other men, Rogier is neither a superman nor a madman but a representative man with qualities that exist in all of us.³ I agree. If such an agreement seems to contradict my earlier contention that Rogier functions in the high mimetic mode, it is because one of the great themes of Waters' work is that all of us have more power to function in the high mimetic than we realize. Pike's Peak deals not with demigods but with showers-of-the-way.

¹Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), 34.

²Frye, 33-34.

³Interview with Frank Waters, Taos, New Mexico, August 31, 1979.

The finding of that way is the subject of Pike's Peak. Therefore, Waters' triple decker novel is in an important sense a quest tale, the story of a quest which takes three generations to achieve. It is a search for "the one secret self" which exists in every man but which few ever find. The questors are a grandfather, a father and a son. Each represents a crucial aspect of the American experience and their respective fates are both a commentary on the American past and a prophecy of its future.

The grandfather, Joseph Rogier, is a seeker after meaning. A man whose strong conscious needs have great difficulty dealing with his equally strong unconscious needs, he is representative of an internal conflict which may become a fatal weakness for most European-descended Americans. The father, Jonathon Cable, is an uncomplicated, intuitive man who draws strength from a close relationship with the land. However, his Plains Indian heritage leaves him little able to analyze his feelings even when such analysis is sorely needed. In this he in turn is representative of strength that has become a fatal weakness for many American Indians. The grandson, March Cable, must try to survive the combined perplexities of his dual inheritance, the white and the red.

Although the novel begins in South Carolina before the Civil War and has an important digression into the Mexico of the 1920's and 30's, most of its action takes place in the Colorado Springs area (which in the book is called Little London) over a period from the 1870's until the early part of the Great Depression. The Springs area is a boundary line between the Rocky Mountains and the Great Plains. Before the

coming of the white man, the Springs were a gathering place for many tribes, being sacred to plains and mountain Indian alike.

But long before Rogier arrives in the 1870's, the white man has done his talented best to destroy the land's earlier red inhabitants. Waters dates the military defeat of the Plains Indians as early as 1864. In that year whites from Denver under the leadership of a fanatic named the Reverend J. M. Chivington massacred three hundred old men, women, children (and a few warriors) at Sand Creed, Colorado.⁴ The Indians could not avenge the outrage, even though whites were busy with the Civil War. Thus Indian military defeat was inevitable even though Plains warfare dragged on for another generation.

However, military defeat is not the worst fate to befall a people. In Myths to Live By Joseph Campbell points out the much more devastating effect on the Plains Indians of the systematic destruction of the great buffalo herds in the 1870's and 80's. Campbell suggests that, whatever the reasons for the slaughter, its effects were twofold: to make way for the farmers and ranchers who would support the great railroads and to remove Indian food supplies, thereby forcing them onto reservations.⁵ But the white man's genius for destruction had at least one other result: it destroyed the religion of the Plains Indian by

⁴Waters gives three different casualty figures for the massacre: Frank Waters, Pike's Peak (Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1971), p. 26 (almost five hundred dead); Frank Waters, The Colorado (New York: Holt, Rhinehart, 1946), pp. 254-255 (three hundred killed); Frank Waters, Midas of the Rockies (1937; rpt. Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1947), p. 49 (almost eight hundred killed).

⁵Joseph Campbell, Myths to Live By (New York: Bantam, 1972), p. 88. Subsequent references to this book will appear in the text.

destroying the buffalo which was for them what Campbell calls a "binding symbol." Such a symbol is "the central, pivotal concern of the religiously maintained social order" (Campbell, p. 89). Within little more than a decade the slaughter of the buffalo did what the soldiers could not: it destroyed the psychological center of Plains Indian existence (Campbell, p. 89). The death of the accepted communal religion leads to a search for substitutes, and thus the mescal and peyote cults spread up from Mexico and the Ghost Dance arose. Each was an attempt by the participants to experience visions, to find "within themselves what had been lost from their society, namely an imagery of holiness, giving depth, psychological security, and apparent meaning to their lives" (Campbell, p. 89).

Campbell finds this plight of the Plains Indians one hundred years ago an "illuminating analogy" to the situation Americans found themselves in in the 1960's and 70's. Christianity, like the religion that vanished with the buffalo, no longer provided many Americans with "affect images," that is, with living mythological symbols:

An "affect image" talks directly to the feeling system and immediately elicits a response, after which the brain may come along with its interesting comments. There is some kind of throb of resonance within, responding to the image shown without, like the answer of a musical string to another equally tuned. And so it is that when the vital symbols of any given social group evoke in all its members responses of this kind, a sort of magical accord unites them as one spiritual organism, functioning through members who, though separate in space, are yet one in being and belief (Campbell, pp. 89-90).

Thus, the various American youth and drug cults of the 1960's were, like the earlier peyote and mescal cults, attempts to turn inward for the binding symbol which the outward society no longer provided.

However, while it is true that only in this century have large numbers of people brought up in Christian culture openly lamented that their symbolism was lifeless, yet the advance scouts of culture, individual artists and thinkers more sensitive than their brethren, had much earlier confronted this problem. Already in 1882 in nominally Christian Europe while the Plains Indians were trying to deal with a suddenly meaningless universe, Friedrich Nietzsche wrote his parable of the madman: "'Whither is God?' he cried. . . . 'Do we hear nothing as yet of the gravediggers who are burying God? Do we smell nothing as yet of the divine decomposition? Gods, too, decompose. God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him.'"⁶ Nietzsche pictures his "madman" as delivering his message to people who no longer believe in their God but who refuse to face the abyss this loss of a binding symbol opens up before them: "[T]he madman fell silent and looked again at his listeners; and they, too, were silent and stared at him in astonishment. . . . 'I have come too early,' he said then; 'my time is not yet. This tremendous event is still on its way, still wandering; it has not yet reached the ears of men. . . . and yet they have done it themselves.'"⁷

Joseph Rogier is also a man born before his time. When the Civil War breaks out, Rogier, the impoverished son of a once wealthy South Carolina plantation owner, is working as a carpenter in Baltimore. He flees west to avoid conscription by either side. He is not a coward,

⁶Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, tr. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage-Random, 1974), p. 181.

⁷Nietzsche, 182.

rather he sees himself as a rational man. He feels completely cut off from the emotions that can lead his fellow countrymen to invent large-scale modern warfare and practice it on each other. All his life he will be puzzled by the violent passions which he sees causing havoc to the lives of those around him.

Lacking Nietzsche's education and his profound psychological insight, Rogier, nevertheless, has to cope with a problem that eventually drives even Nietzsche insane: How does one find a new binding symbol when not only is the old one dead, but most members of your culture will not acknowledge that death. Rogier is more alone than even the Plains Indians, who can at least share each other's misery. Campbell comments that the "most important effect of a living mythological symbol is to awaken and give guidance to the energies of life. It is an energy--releasing and--directing sign . . . which will be . . . conducive to . . . participation in the life and purposes of a functioning social group" (Campbell, p. 89). Although he cannot put it into such words, Rogier is in part in search of a symbol that works, that will give guidance and direction to his enormous energies and can give his life purpose. As he flees the Civil War, he recognizes both his separateness and (if only vaguely) his deep need for a binding symbol:

It was perhaps then it suddenly struck him--a strange conviction of his solitary exile upon an insubstantial world fraught with fleshly folly and the frailty of human knowledge. If for the first time in his life he felt both the elation and the disturbing falsity of his complete individual freedom, he

also found himself with nothing to love nor strive for, no allegiance to any creed or land, no star to guide him across the empty earth.⁸

The illusion of separateness as well as the depth of his need make Rogier a prophetic figure. He is prophetic in the way Walter Kaufmann has seen Nietzsche as prophetic: "Sometimes prophecy seems to consist in man's ability to experience his own wretched fate so deeply that it becomes a symbol of something larger. . . . [He] felt the agony, the suffering, and the misery of a godless world so intensely, at a time when others were yet blind to its tremendous consequence, that he was able to experience in advance, as it were, the fate of a coming generation."⁹

Nietzsche ransacked the cultural history of man searching for a new living symbol to replace the old, dead one of Christianity. Rogier seeks the same goal, but his search is conducted in a different dimension. It is Nature, the earth itself, that Rogier digs into. Leaving the embattled East, Rogier joins a wagon train headed for Santa Fe. However, on the way he is stopped by nature in the form of Pike's Peak. Far out on the plains the mountain begins to exert its fascination on him. It appears "like something risen from the depths of dreamless sleep to the horizon of wakeful consciousness, without clear outline yet embodying the substance of a hope and meaning that seemed strangely familiar as it was vague" (Pike's Peak, p. 1).

⁸Frank Waters, Pike's Peak (Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1971), p. 5. Subsequent references to this edition will appear in the text.

⁹Walter Kaufmann, Nietzsche, 3rd Rev. ed. (New York: Vintage-Random, 1968), p. 98.

Like his friend, the Tibetan scholar W. Y. Evans-Wentz, Frank Waters believes that mountains can act as "repositories of psychic energy," repositories which have an effect on the human mind. Waters contends that "If you want to get a chemical reaction you close something in a retort and heat it. The mountains are a retort for spiritual reactions. . . . The pressure drives [people] into the unconscious, the instinctive, the intuitive."¹⁰ Certainly Pike's Peak acts as such a retort for Joseph Rogier. After settling at its foot in the new town of Colorado Springs, he undergoes a slow heating process of twenty years during which he seems to his family and fellow townsmen the paradigm of the successful self-made American businessman. Actually, however, his unconscious need for a living symbol, for an affect image which will both give release to his pent up emotions and purpose to his existence, is building up enormous pressures inside him. His rationalism, his over-developed consciousness, has put him in the position of a tea kettle full of water over an increasingly hotter fire, a tea kettle with all the openings welded shut. Denied a natural release, the kettle must sooner or later explode.

The fate of Rogier, even more than that of Babbitt or Clyde Griffiths (who are after all mediocre specimens at best) is a uniquely American tragedy. His virtues make him a prototype of what our culture tells us the fulfiller of the American dream ought to be. Rogier is both a child of the aristocratic ante-bellum South and a self-made, largely self-educated man. He is a man of few words, but in

¹⁰Frank Waters as quoted in James Petersen, "A Conversation with Frank Waters: Lessons from the Indian Soul," Psychology Today, May 1973, p. 72.

his community his opinions are greatly respected and his honesty is legendary while his courage and dependability are beyond question. Although an unpretentious man, he yet possesses a natural dignity, which, together with his Southern background, causes his associates and employees to address him as "Colonel," even though such a designation embarrasses him, being a title he has never claimed. Having trained himself as a carpenter, he becomes a successful builder. His buildings are as unpretentious and straightforward as he is, and like Rogier himself they are solid, dignified, and built to last.

Unlike Babbitt or Griffiths but perhaps like Jay Gatsby, Rogier is a man whose very strength is also his greatest weakness. Rogier achieves the American dream of material success. He acquires wealth, the respect of the community, and the devotion of his family. Yet his very success at achieving outward prosperity makes painfully clear to him that he has not found his binding symbol, something "to love and strive for." He still has "no star to guide him across the empty earth": "None of them--his family, property, and profession--assuaged the secret conviction of his aloneness. . . . He lacked something, he did not know what" (Pike's Peak, p. 103).

Rogier lacks the ability to give expression to the non-analytical side of his being. For instance, the "monstrous reserve and courtesy" of his Southern upbringing make it impossible for him to openly display affection for his family. Like his father before him, he can show love only to his animals (Pike's Peak, p. 3). Neither money nor prestige can release the pressure in the sealed vessel of his soul. In fact, the more society rewards his over-reliance on reason, the more isolated he

becomes from his intuition and feelings and the less satisfied he is. His animals (a succession of racing horses) exasperate rather than relieve his need for objects for his affections. And the speed he can achieve with his race horses also provides him only momentary escapes from his frustration and discontent. Therefore, thinking himself a rational man, he tries to find in books explanations for his dissatisfaction, but books too fail him: "What he had first hoped to find in them as a simple uneducated man was a simple explanation of the mystery that made him feel an exile on this earth. Whatever the mystery was, it was not simple" (Pike's Peak, p. 127).

Gradually over the years he senses that his fate is somehow tied to Pike's Peak. He was originally drawn to the mountain because it was a hazy but troubling reflector of his own repressed emotional self: it calls to him, offering "the substance of a hope and meaning that seemed strangely familiar as it was vague" (Pike's Peak, p. 1).

Rogier, like many of Waters' over-rational Anglo-Saxon characters, senses that the remaining Indians, decimated and demoralized though they may be, know something about the land that he desperately needs to learn. He is sometimes drawn to the camp of the Mountain Utes, whom the whites still allow to return each year to the sacred spring outside of Little London. On one occasion while watching a Ute dance,

Rogier stirred uneasily. Something in him knew what he did not know. The secret that recoiled from his mind's grasp, that made of him an exile. The primordial power of the earth that must always be propitiated; never conquered, lest the victor be defeated by losing the integrity of his own being. To ally oneself with one's own mother-earth, to be at oneness with its great invisible forces, themselves obeying still greater laws, that one must feel within him the surge of its

hidden strength. To seek always this truth of his own nature, acknowledging it above all temporal else. This was the only true success (Pike's Peak, p. 111).

Unfortunately, it is the curse of the over-conscious man that he can be aware of a truth intellectually which he cannot act upon existentially. So it is with Rogier. And this gap between knowledge and action leaves him with the lifelong suspicion that nature in the shape of the Peak is concealing from him the secret of his existence: "And there swept over him the peculiar oppressive feeling that within the immutable depths of that majestic and enigmatic earth-being [the Peak] still remained hidden the ultimate destiny that was his to seek alone" (Pike's Peak, p. 115).

The rational technologist within Rogier keeps insisting that what he seeks is an object which can be seized, possessed, conquered. At the same time another part of Rogier, his mystical, religious self, sees his goal as propitiation, as seeking a oneness with the great invisible forces of nature:

Rogier had come to believe it was a matter of rhythm. For the inherent spirit-of-place of each continent, each land, vibrated to a different, indigenous rhythm. And only by attuning himself to this vibratory quality of his motherland could man release the dammed up power of creation within him. . . . In the mountains you felt it best. . . . [Pike's Peak] was alive as the whole earth was alive, each living stone, every breathing plant. And through the years he had come to recognize it as a homogenous entity, the androgenous mother of mountains which embraced the dual aspects of all creation (Pike's Peak, p. 128).

The two sides of Rogier's dual nature, his rational consciousness and his intuitive, feeling self, fight within him for dominance. Because his waking, passionless, pragmatic self will accept nothing less than the total repression of his emotions, his non-analytical self, rather than being destroyed, is simply driven to more and more extreme measures.

The heat under the sealed kettle is steadily increased. Finally, Rogier's repressed non-analytical self seizes on gold, gold at the heart of Pike's Peak, as the symbol which can reconcile the two halves of Rogier. But because the two halves are at war, the meaning of the symbol is distorted. His blindly rational side cannot prevent his other self's increasingly frantic efforts to break out, but it does force a fatal misdirection of those efforts. The true goal of Rogier's lifelong quest is the integration of his intellectual and emotional halves. But Rogier's pragmatism does not allow the existence of a goal which cannot be measured, seen, or touched; therefore, his goal must be an object. When gold is actually discovered on the Peak, this dilemma is solved. The Peak has tantalized him from the moment he first saw it. Now it can offer him a physical treasure--gold which can be torn out of the mountain by mining technology. The need to find gold begins to obsess the already wealthy Rogier. Gold in the Peak, symbolic of the wholeness to be found somewhere in his own unconscious, becomes with each passing day more of a necessity to him. His attempts to resist the growing urge to hunt for it result in his leading a dual life. By day he remains "a man contemptuously indifferent to the craze for gold";

by night he sat alone in his office . . . his topographical maps and geological reports spread out on the drafting board, fingering a piece of ore. No one could have discerned if and where the two men fused. Yet at that contact between the logical analytical man of his time, and that tormented spirit which knew no turning of the road to what he sought . . . might have been glimpsed the disturbing image at the end of his quest (Pike's Peak, p. 116).

Eventually, inevitably, the "tormented spirit" dominates. Rogier, the epitomy of the practical, prudent American businessman, wastes several

fortunes and half a long lifetime sinking worthless shafts into Pike's Peak, forced to dig not where the literal gold is--on the shoulder of the mountain--but where metaphorical gold always is--in the heart of the mountain.

That Rogier's plight should be increased by the very strength of his rational pragmatism is at once symptomatic of the plight of Western civilization as a whole and of America particularly. On the one hand, he seems to be a substantiation of C. G. Jung's warning to all of Western civilization "that the use of analytical reason alone cannot heal the psyche and, more fundamentally, that it is just this attitude with its overemphasis on the rational side of consciousness that is at the root of the mental disaffections of modern times."¹¹ On the other hand, his obsession with using technological means to attempt to solve a spiritual problem is in tune with his American culture.

Geological and mining terminology become Rogier's ritual language. Technology replaces the Christianity that Rogier recognizes as devoid of living symbols. But his technological symbolism, while giving him strength, further alienates him from his society. For his society is as yet consciously unaware that it has a much stronger belief in technology than in Christianity. Therefore, unlike "the living mythological symbol" of which Campbell speaks, Rogier's search for gold does not make him better able to participate in a functioning group. His fellow townspeople, his partners and employees, even his wife and children are forgotten in his ever increasing need to find the treasure.

¹¹C. G. Jung quoted in Ira Progoff, Jung's Psychology and Its Social Meaning, Rev. ed. (New York: Julian Press, 1969), p. 50.

Campbell would say he is in the grip of a pathological symbolism:

when the symbols provided by the social group no longer work, and the symbols that do work are no longer of the group, the individual cracks away, becomes dissociated and disoriented, and we are confronted with what can only be named a pathology of the symbol (Campbell, p. 89).

Rogier's rationality becomes more and more merely a tool of his other self, a self which is unformed, irrational, but possessed of the enormous energy which a living symbol (even a pathological one) releases. His obsession gives him, like Captain Ahab, a sense of purpose which most in his society lack and so like bobbing flotsam his family and many others are pulled along in his wake even though his fixity of purpose leaves him largely oblivious of their existence.

He cannot be truly aware of their existence until he has found that which will for once in his life allow him to be fully aware of himself. But it is only after decades of futilely blasting shafts into the granite of the mountain that the pressures and frustrations of his search for literal gold bring down upon him a series of seizures which, while they fatally weaken his body, allow him glimpses into the true, metaphorical, nature of his search. Since first sighting it on the prairie, he has believed that:

it was that high snowy Peak which had drawn and held him like a lodestone he could not escape. Into its granite depths he had drilled and blasted toward its glowing heart, the luminescent sun, the golden flower of life. But now, sitting in the afternoon sun, he stared at the Peak without seeming to see it objectively manifested before him. It was where it had always been--inside him. . . . [It] was no longer a friend to be coerced, an enemy to be combatted. It was like himself, a material shell, a transient symbol (Pike's Peak, p. 658).

However, because the journey to his "one secret self" has been by means of pathological symbolism, Rogier dies still isolated from

his fellow man. He has no means in his last enlightened days to pass on even to those closest to him the sense of wholeness he has finally found within himself or his sudden realization of how blind he has been to the emotional needs of those around him.

It is left to March Cable to vindicate his grandfather's sufferings by learning from them as he learns from the sufferings of his father. March's Anglo grandfather fails to achieve a true oneness with the land. Even at the end of his life Rogier's is not an existential awareness of "the one secret self" because he is still cut off from other human beings: He dies a stranger to his wife and the shame and violation of having even the woman closest to him, his daughter Ona, catheterize him when he can no longer make water on his own does more than his physical injuries to break his will to live (Pike's Peak, p. 706). His sense of separateness, his lack of any symbol to bind him to the rest of mankind, remains his doom.

On the other hand, March Cable's father, the part-Cheyenne Jonathon Cable, finds oneness with the land and still perishes. Largely Indian by inclination, whatever he is by blood, Jonathon cannot survive without contact with the land, which for him means the prairie or the desert. He leaves the artificiality and pathological technology of Little London and seems to find the perfect compromise as a trader on the Navaho reservation. Here he can use both his white training in business and his red intuitive feel for the land and the people who have attuned themselves to it. He takes his son with him, leaving behind the wife whose love for him does not outweigh her commitment to the moribund culture which is destroying much of her family. But after the son's life

is threatened by a flood, Cable suddenly decides to return to an environment in which he cannot survive and which indeed kills him within a few years. Why? What has moved him when the love for his wife could not? "For what had he forsaken [the Navaho reservation] this manifested outer form of his secret inner self, this land and its people whose blood-beat was tuned to his?" (Pike's Peak, p. 401).

On the surface the answer is fear, fear of almost being responsible for his son's death. This fear drives him back to Little London even though he knows almost immediately that he has denied his "inner voice," has betrayed his "one secret self": "On that first morning home [in Little London], when he rose and looked out the window, it was with a feeling he had turned his back upon something that would haunt him always" (Pike's Peak, p. 400). The flood, a capricious act of cruelty by the land itself, destroys Cable's new found equilibrium. A totally instinctive oneness with the land leaves Cable open to the dark side of Nature, both the Nature without and within himself. He can put the flood in no perspective; he can only bow before it and leave the one place in which he feels truly at home. Just so after returning to Little London he eventually bows before the negation that floods up within his own soul:

Educated, loving Ona and his children, he had found himself time and again in a position to succeed to a dull and comfortable existence. And then from somewhere within him rose without warning a wave of black negation washing him adrift on the other side of that vast gulf in which lay the centuries between [his white and red heritages] (Pike's Peak, p. 473).

In tune with the animate universe, Cable cannot long survive his return to Rogier's technological nightmareland. His potential for an

instinctual oneness with the land cannot save him. "Cable never reasoned by analysis. He simply felt" (Pike's Peak, p. 473).

Unfortunately, being able to feel is often not enough because feelings can be confusing and ambiguous, particularly when they are most powerful. Cable lacks the defensive rationality which would help him identify his true "inner voice," that spokesman for the transpersonal within each person which knows what a man needs as opposed to what he may think he wants. As M. E. Harding has said,

Such is man's vaunted freedom and hybris. Unless he accepts his own inner guidance, he becomes a mere puppet of fate. If he sets himself up against the inner voice, asserting that he is free to choose what he wants, he inevitably becomes the victim of the dragon [which is his own unconscious]. Only when he voluntarily chooses that which he inexorably must do, has he any free will at all.¹²

Cable cannot choose to run away from his new found wholeness. He knows that almost immediately. But almost immediately is not soon enough. The analysis he is incapable of would have told him that his wife and son would be best served by his remaining where he was. Instead, the susceptibility of his intuitive nature to waves of black negation sends him to an early death. He returns to what is for him the soul-killing bleakness of work in Rogier's mine--"back to a meaningless routine that little by little crushed out of him all spontaneous life" (Pike's Peak, p. 473).

Cable falls victim to a weakness that Waters believes Cable shares with many traditionalist Indians: the inability to adapt in the face of rapid, drastic disruptions of a close symbiotic relationship with nature:

¹²M. E. Harding, Psychic Energy, Bollingen Series X, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Bollingen Paperbacks--Princeton U. Press, 1963), pp. 279-280.

And now caught without escape he did not, like the white, fight violently against the unbeautiful. Like an Indian, he refuted it as if it did not exist. But there was nothing left. Nothing but the heaviness of frustration settling in his heart, the stifling sense of self-unfulfillment. So he sat . . . stolid, taciturn, without hope. Sat as the thousands before him had sat wrapped in their blankets: in the dwindling Reservations, in Indian schools, in jails; fed, clothed, administered to, but with the mainspring of life broken within them. . . . It was as if their whole inward existence had been geared to a rhythm that once broken could never be attuned (Pike's Peak, pp. 473-474).

Cable dies within months of returning to the mine.

Both Rogier and his son-in-law are heroes. They are incarnations of that hero with a thousand faces of whom Joseph Campbell has written. And they are heroes of a truly modern sort because they attempt what Campbell sees as the task of the hero today: "The modern hero-deed must be that of questing to bring to light again the lost Atlantis of the co-ordinated soul."¹³ The need in both Rogier and Cable to listen to the inner voice, to find the guiding star leads each to reject again and again "a dull and comfortable existence." And each achieves a momentary triumph. But, alas, only a momentary one. Ultimately, they are in that category of heroes in which Eric Neumann places Oedipus: heroes whose fight with the dragon of the unconscious is only partially successful. Each lacks full consciousness of the significance of his deed and therefore cannot, like the fully successful hero, return triumphant from his quest for "the one secret self." Each in a different way is swallowed again by the Uroboros, that Great Earth Mother which symbolizes the forces of the unconscious that each was

¹³Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, Bollingen Series XVII, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Bollingen Paperbacks-Princeton U. Press, 1968), p. 388.

seeking to blend with the conscious self into a greater and unified whole. Rogier is defeated by excessive reliance on the masculine side of the great duality, Cable by overdependence on the feminine side. As Neumann points out,

Annihilation through the spirit [the masculine side] . . . and annihilation through the unconscious [the feminine side] are identical, as the study of every psychosis teaches. The collective spiritual forces are as much parts of the uroboros [the non-personal unconscious] as the collective instinctual forces pulling in the opposite direction.¹⁴

If either pull is hard enough, the result is the same: the destruction of the person's efforts to make of himself someone who is in tune with all of his potentialities, both conscious and unconscious.

It remains for March Cable to redeem the efforts and fulfill the promise of his grandfather Rogier and his father Jonathon Cable. And it is through March's journey to the one secret self that the role of the land as healer becomes clear.

In an essay called "The Transcendent Function," C. G. Jung discusses the relative responsibilities of patient and analyst in a Jungian analysis. The relationship described will help to illuminate that which the three questors of Pike's Peak share with the land. Jung defines "transcendent function" as the result of a union between conscious and unconscious contents.¹⁵ Conscious and unconscious join to form a greater whole, a whole which differs not only in quantity from its parts but in quality also. Such a union gives the patient a new

¹⁴Neumann, p. 187.

¹⁵C. G. Jung, "The Transcendent Function," The Portable Jung, ed. Joseph Campbell, tr. R. F. C. Hull (New York: Penguin, 1971), p. 273. Subsequent references to this essay will appear in the text.

perspective, a new attitude toward himself which allows him to function with an enormous increase in effectiveness because his energies are no longer wasted by a civil war within his psyche. The achievement of this goal is a two step process. First one individuates the conflicting forces; then one integrates them. Individuation is the recognition and full development of both sides of a dual nature.¹⁶ In March's case this means a coming to terms first with his spiritual inheritance from his rational Anglo grandfather and then a coming to terms with the very different but equally powerful heritage of his intuitive Indian father.

Jonathon Cable dies when March is twelve. Therefore, March spends his adolescence under the influence of his grandfather to whose house the Cable family returns after Jonathon's death. Even when his father was still alive, March had spent summers at his grandfather's mine, the Sylvanite. So for him Colorado Springs and the mountain that overshadows it are imbued with the attitude that his grandfather's culture holds toward nature: the exploitative, technological view. March begins individuating, that is, consciously evaluating his grandfather's heritage just when it appears outwardly that he has fully accepted it: he enters a mining engineering program at the local college. His work in the program sends him back to the mining district on the side of the Peak. There he sees the end result of the exploitative, "rational" attitude toward nature. The mountainside has been raped and gutted and then largely abandoned. And the miners whose livelihood is tied to the

¹⁶Calvin S. Hall and Vernon J. Nordby, A Primer of Jungian Psychology (New York: Taplinger, 1973), p. 82.

district have also been abandoned to the ghosttowns and tar paper shanties that the big mining corporations leave as they shut down or pull out in favor of higher profits elsewhere. It is this devastated reality March sees when his major professor, a total devotee to the power of reason, tells him:

Clear your mind of old beliefs. Think freely. All nature, everything that exists, is nothing in itself. It has no life, no meaning. We have reduced all to its simple expression in scientific laws. Now, by learning to apply them, we will at last be masters of the universe, of life itself (Pike's Peak, p. 624).

March grows restless as his awareness of the onesidedness of the analytical outlook deepens. While the class is being drilled in scientific definitions, Indian alternatives force themselves upon his mind. Thus, while lightning viewed one way is "an electrical discharge caused by an electrical potential set up as a result of rising air currents blowing off the edges of the larger water drops in the cloud," it is also "the red fork tongue of the great serpent whose large image is wrapped around the mouths of the huge water jars, the fertility serpent" (Pike's Peak, p. 632). Even March's aging and confused grandfather has come to see that scientific explanations do not really explain the essence of things: "Rogier for all his queer ideas, had at least an appreciation of life's mysterious profundity, its torment and beauty, [Thomason, March's teacher, the one who thinks he is a master of the universe], never" (Pike's Peak, pp. 624-625).

March comes to realize that the totally analytical outlook cannot be responsible for the work of the greatest scientists, the work on which Western technological culture is based:

March was vaguely aware that just as there were but few true artists there were also pitifully few real scientists. Like [his teacher] Thomason the rest of them were merely industrial engineers. Their consciousness did not deepen with the perception of nature and her laws; they were mastered by their own machines. They believed they were geniuses, forgetting that genius is the power of evoking life, not throttling it. It was the love of truth, love of life, that lead to pure science. But these men were interested only in the application of science to commercial ends. They were industrialists (Pike's Peak, p. 650).

With this insight March recognizes that he cannot "give up life for industry" (Pike's Peak, p. 650). He has reached the end of his individuation of the analytical side of himself. It is time to search for that part of him which is his father. Already he has been told, "You've got a sense-intuition that'll be stronger than your mind will ever be" (Pike's Peak, p. 630). Now he must put that part of himself to the test. He leaves school and the job at the railroad yards that has paid his tuition. He finds that the experience with the railroad has been infinitely more valuable to him than his time at school because in the yards theory and practice cannot be estranged from each other (Pike's Peak, p. 654).

Searching for his father's heritage, he works his way across most of western North America. But eventually he is drawn to Mexico, "the motherland of Western America as England was that of the east. The meeting place of time and timelessness. March felt a wriggle up his spine. He was coming home at last" (Pike's Peak, p. 675). It is in Mexico, while working as a mining engineer at a remote silver mine, that March undergoes the rite of passage which brings him to the successful end of the first stage of his search for a transcendent function. Both his father and grandfather before him had undergone a

dangerous confrontation with Indians, each facing down his opponents with a show of courage and control (Pike's Peak, pp. 29-30, 374-375). Now, it becomes March's turn.

He finds himself in a situation in which he must function simultaneously on an analytical and an intuitive level. He and his engineering colleague, the only non-Mexicans in an isolated village, find themselves after a long drinking bout alone with a group of increasingly hostile Indians. His friend passes out. March finds his only hope of forestalling the potentially murderous Indians will require the efforts of both sides of his nature: "The Indians waited with inexhaustible patience. Yet March knew that in his weakness lay his strength: to maintain an unceasing awareness, to give like adobe, but to feel within him a core of granite" (Pike's Peak, p. 686). He succeeds because the words "I am my father and I am also my grandfather" (Pike's Peak, p. 686) become for him not just a statement of historical fact, but an inner experience.

The rest of March's stay in Mexico is a testing of the validity of his new-found wholeness. If the fusion of adobe (his father) and granite (his grandfather) is real, it will bear comparison with the unconscious, intuitive strength of his father's race. And so it turns out. March takes a long trip through the wild backcountry of Mexico, dwelling in turn with ever more primitive Indian tribes. Finally, he meets the Tarahumaras, perhaps the most primitive tribe in North America, a people whose lives are almost totally unconscious. In them he finds not an ideal rightness with the land but poverty, disease, and a marginal existence which denotes a pitiful dependence on the whims of

nature. He returns to the U.S. and Colorado Springs knowing that like the analytical outlook, the totally intuitive view of existence is no answer to the questions of life either: in order to survive and without giving up their intuitive base even the Indian races are moving toward a greater consciousness (Pike's Peak, pp. 702-703). In the end he sees a cultural blending of the qualities of both races, the white and the red. For neither can survive without the strength to be found in the culture of the other:

A gradual amalgamation of race was an inevitable necessity, March thought. . . . An amalgamation that would not be a scientific mixture of customs, beliefs, and wills, that would not be an economic trade, but which would gather these in its flow. A fusion that would be the death of each, the white and the Indian, as he is today. A death and a great rebirth. And from them together, the new American--a new continental soul reborn, with new spiritual conceptions and moving to a more profound rhythm than either had ever known (Pike's Peak, pp. 726-727).

March sees the land itself, the American continent, acting as the mediator in the individual's and the culture's amalgamation of masculine and feminine polarities. The role given to the land in relation to all of the major characters in Pike's Peak is similar to that played by the trained analyst in C. G. Jung's essay "The Transcendent Function." In Pike's Peak nature like Jung's human therapist acts as a mediator of the transcendent function within the individual: "helps him to bring conscious and unconscious together and so arrive at a new attitude" ("Transcendent Function," p. 279). The journey to this new attitude involves two phases: individuation, the full awareness of one's conscious and unconscious components, and integration, the fusion of those two parts into a greater whole which is itself the transcendent

function because it rises above either conscious or unconscious attitudes alone.

During the first or individuating phase transference, the projecting of unconscious contents onto an object (be that object analyst or mountain), plays a crucial role by allowing the person to deal with parts of himself that he could not reach without being able to project them elsewhere; it is a means for him to see the back of his head as it were. So "The patient clings by means of transference to the person who seems to promise him a renewal of attitude; through [transference] he seeks this change, which is vital to him, even though he may not be conscious of doing so" ("Transcendent Function," p. 279). In the same way Rogier clings to Pike's Peak and Jonathon Cable clings first to the prairie and later to the desert of the Navaho reservation--the spirit of each place awakens in them the possibility of a new attitude, the possibility of a balance between conscious and unconscious demands which are vital to both. That neither is fully aware of the significance of the pull of spirit of place on them is also in the nature of transference which in an adult becomes "a metaphorical expression of the not consciously realized need for help in a crisis" ("Transcendent Function," p. 289). Jung goes on to argue that one way in which a patient deals with an emotional disturbance is by giving it visible shape ("Transcendent Function," p. 290). The Peak is the visible shape of Rogier's disturbance. The attributes he gives it reflect the state of his repressed emotionality. He sees the mountain for the most part as benignly feminine but occasionally as threateningly masculine because of the crucially needed feminine

elements in himself which are blocked by his own shell of conscious masculinity. Furthermore, his finding a physical importance for the Peak (a place to find literal gold) actively engages his conscious, intellectual side: "a product is created which is influenced by both conscious and unconscious, embodying the striving of the unconscious for the light and the striving of the conscious for substance" ("Transcendent Function," p. 290).

However, just as a patient cannot permanently depend on the support of the analyst but must eventually seek the transcendent function on his own, so too Rogier and Cable cannot depend on the land to give them stability. They too must ultimately look not outside but inside themselves for help and must stand on their own two feet. Each does so momentarily. But Cable's temporary balance is destroyed by the flood: the effect is as if a patient's analyst were suddenly to physically attack him. Rogier finally realizes that he has transferred his own problems to the Peak but he discovers this only as he is dying. It is too late for him to do what Jung calls paying one's debts to life, which for Rogier means expressing the intuitions and emotions that have been bottled up inside of him his whole life. So he has found his answer but cannot live it which is the vital second, integrative, phase of the healing process:

Once the unconscious content has been given form and the meaning of the formulation is understood, the question arises as to how the ego will relate to this position, and how the ego and the unconscious are to come to terms. This is the second and more important stage of the procedure, the bringing together of opposites for the production of a third: the transcendent function. At this stage it is no longer the unconscious that takes the lead, but the ego ("Transcendent Function," p. 295).

Neither Rogier nor Jonathon Cable successfully negotiates this more difficult stage. The significance of March's confrontation with the Indians is that at that point his ego takes over and begins coming to terms with his dual heritage. The rest of his stay in Mexico, his affair with Conchita, and particularly his trip into the back country tests his new found equilibrium. He must neither deny the unconscious nor succumb to it. Because of his inclination to his father's realm of the intuitive, his greater temptation is to accept oneness with Mother Earth on too instinctual a level.

Only the pain of his grandfather's death galvanizes in March a stable relationship between his dualities. He receives a telegram announcing the death while he is still in Mexico:

For an instant he hesitated before reading the terse message. His presentiment of its meaning changed to a certitude that filled him with a tearing pain and anguish such as he had never known--Then suddenly the words gleamed and blurred before him with the evanescent brilliance of the one and only truth of all men's lives--the gleam of a rising star which lights up for each our loneliness, our grandeur, and despair, then fades and dies without leaving a mark of its passage on the eternal skies of night (Pike's Peak, p. 728).

Upon his return to Colorado Springs, he stands before the graves of father and grandfather and finds that death has equalized their pulls on him. He has attained a rightness with the land which includes but is more than a simple oneness with the land. For Mother Earth like the unconscious must be given only her due or she reclaims all. March knows he "must break the umbilical cord with which [Mother Earth] holds [him]. Great as [she is], there is something greater" (Pike's Peak, p. 742). It is to the search for that "something greater" that March dedicates his life:

There is in me something that will escape you [Mother Earth]. What is the mystery that impregnates your flesh, imbues all earth with life? That is what I am still asking. The one secret self hidden in the dark stopes deep within our lesser selves. That is what I seek! (Pike's Peak, p. 742).

In my introduction I have said that Frank Waters is basically a religious writer. By that I mean his writing reflects his having dedicated himself to an inner search for the one secret self, just as March Cable has. Waters' is a religiousness stripped of all the ephemeral trappings of dogma and of moral or cultural provincialism. It is one of life's little ironies that such a writer should, for much of his career, have been labeled as a "regionalist."

Given Waters' religious bent, an analysis of Pike's Peak which stops at the psychological level leaves off just where the book becomes most original, most profound, and most pertinent to the present generation. For Rogier is groping his way toward an expanded consciousness, a consciousness in which both the rational and the instinctive find their proper place. And although Rogier fails, March makes clear that he will continue the struggle. One can see this struggle as a religious quest, as a search for the universal Self within us. But one can also see it as an evolutionary advance, a breakthrough, an emergence, to a higher level of consciousness which increases our chances of survival as a species. It is a mark of Waters' special brand of pragmatic mysticism that he holds the two viewpoints are merely opposite sides of the same coin.

CHAPTER V

THE WOMAN AT OTOWI CROSSING: DEATH AND RIGHTNESS WITH THE LAND

Rightness with the land eludes Joseph Rogier. Like Tai Ling he can listen to the inner voice with his full attention only at the last moments of his life when all other options have been taken from him. Tai Ling ignores the world around him. Rogier fights it. He cannot muster the trust in life to enable him to see the mountain as a symbol of the oneness of all existence, a oneness of which he is an inseparable part. This being so, he cannot trust the inner world of his own instincts, feelings and intuitions either.

The West in the shape of the mountain cannot do for Rogier what the land does for Martiniano: free him of the illusions of his own strength and importance. For all his attraction to the Western landscape, Rogier still shares too much of the attitude of American pioneer. Visitors often see this attitude more clearly than we do. For instance, the Welsh writer, Jon Manchip White, has noticed:

In the minds of most Americans [nature] is still the great antagonist. Americans have inherited their fear of her from their pioneer ancestors. They assault her frantically; they rip and hack at her; they shoot and slaughter her birds and animals. America came into being and achieved prosperity by raping nature, not appeasing her. It is interesting to drive through the West with American passengers. They seldom utter exclamations of delight at the sight of some magnificent prospect; instead they hunch down and glower at it. They relax when they catch sight of some garish billboard smeared along the roadside; they smile when the car begins to enter the tacky outskirts of a town. To them, as for the pioneers, nature is intimidating and oppressive.¹

¹Jon Manchip White, A World Elsewhere (New York: Crowell, 1975), 16-17. Subsequent references to this book will appear in the text.

Seeing nature as an antagonist, Rogier cannot accept it as a teacher, a healer of the conflict within him. If one were to judge from the fate of Rogier, prospects for white Americans ever really achieving peace with their continent might seem dim indeed. One might even be tempted to chime in with Kate Leslie, who:

sometimes . . . wondered whether America really was the great death-continent, the great No! to the European and Asiatic and even African Yes! Was it really the great melting pot, where men from the creative continents were smelted back again, not to a new creation, but down into the homogeneity of death? . . . The continent whose spirit of place fought purely to pick the eyes out of the face of God. Was that America?" (The Plumed Serpent, p. 83).

But we must remember that this is Kate during her mood of repudiation, when she is telling us more about the struggle going on within her than she is about the continent. So too Rogier's antagonism toward Pike's Peak explains more about Rogier than the effects of the Western spirit of place.

We must remember also that Joseph Rogier is not Waters' final word on the relationship between white Americans and their land. Even in Pike's Peak we have the more promising example of March Cable. And in The Man Who Killed the Deer, Rudolpho Byers, the white trader, has made his peace with both the Indians and their land. However, of all Waters' characters the one who speaks most directly to the problems of twentieth century white Americans is Helen Chalmers, the woman at Otowi Crossing. It is through her that Waters offers his fullest picture of how the Western spirit of place can help white Americans get back in touch with themselves. Helen Chalmers finds a way back to the unconscious part of herself that whites have necessarily had to leave undeveloped on their road to higher consciousness, but which they now

desperately need to reclaim and re-integrate with that consciousness. The larger-than-human scale of nature found in the Western landscape threatens the conscious American's sense of importance as an individual. But this can be just the shock he needs in order to pay proper attention to those non-individual and yet also essential elements within his own unconscious. Again the traveller from abroad is sometimes more aware of this influence of the West than Americans themselves. Jon Manchip White writes that "To drive through such [belittling] landscapes, to walk or ride a horse through time, is a healing process":

You regain contact with nature as we knew it before individuation sundered us and the divorce occurred. This is what it was like in the Garden of Eden, before we knew self-consciousness and ceased to exist in a simple harmony with our surroundings. To live in the West is to be given a glimpse of our aboriginal bliss. "O how I long to travel back, and tread again that ancient track! . . ." (White, p. 8).

However, as we have learned from Conrad and Lawrence as well as from Waters, we cannot go back to the same track; conscious rationality cannot simply be cast off in favor of a full return to the instinctual. Rather the two must be yoked together in a manner that gives each its proper room to function. Frank Waters' The Woman at Otowi Crossing is an exploration of just how such a balancing act can be performed.

Twenty years before the story opens Helen Chalmers had fled an unhappy marriage in the East. On the edge of an Indian reservation in New Mexico, she opened a small tearoom serving passengers of a spur railroad line. She lives there alone, making over the years a marginal income. The story begins as a series of crises close in upon

her. The spur line closes, threatening her means of livelihood. The daughter she abandoned twenty years before announces she is coming out to see her. Finally, she discovers a breast tumor. Her problems trigger the first of a series of mystical experiences that completely alter her conceptions of reality.

It is the beginning of World War Two, and therefore the secret Las Alamos Atomic Research Laboratories are being built not far from her isolated tearoom. She is able to continue making a living by serving dinners to selected Las Alamos personnel. She intuitively feels the breast tumor is cancerous (and it is), but she does not seek treatment. Situated between the new scientific, machine wisdom of those who are building the atomic bomb and the old blood wisdom of the Indians of the San Ildefonso Pueblo, Helen chooses to let the cancer run its course rather than to risk giving up the new perspective on life that her growing rightness with the land is helping her to attain. Indeed, it is just her awareness of imminent death that opens her soul to the healing effects of the Western spirit of place. Once more we can turn to Jon Manchip White for a description of the experience she is going through:

To live in the West is to appreciate, as you cannot do in cities or in teeming Europe, the bedrock realities. They teach you that there is no need to be horrified by the stupendous vacancies of heaven and earth. Viewed from one angle, they render you insignificant; viewed from another, they lend you stature and a kind of immortality. The West teaches you your place; but in that process it bestows on you a sense of peace and acquiescence. You know where ultimately you belong (White, p. 10).

So, perhaps there is a sense in which Kate Leslie is right in calling America the death continent. But perhaps what it whispers to

us is that the secret of a meaningful life can lie in a proper attitude toward death. If many of our contemporaries lead lives of noisy desperation, it is in part because they refuse even to have an attitude toward death. C. G. Jung has pointed out that "To the psyche death is just as important as birth and, like it, is an integral part of life."² If one has no place for death in the scheme of things, the fabric of one's life cannot help having a rather large hole in it.

On the other hand, to accept death as natural, just as natural as birth, is to give one's life coherence. For such an acceptance implies that death like birth has a purpose. When confronted with the reality of her own imminent death, Helen Chalmers in The Woman at Otowi Crossing finds it is not death itself she fears, but rather the seeming meaninglessness of her life: "[The possibility of dying] had thrown her life into true perspective. She did not fear death. It was that nullity of not being, of having never really been. That waste of time, of life, that horrible futility."³

The pressure she feels from this sense of the utter uselessness of her life triggers her first mystical experience. This experience floods her with the knowledge of life's purposefulness: "There seemed nothing she did not know and feel--the slow pulse in a stone, the song of the river, the wisdom of the mountains. For the first time she

²C. G. Jung, "Commentary," The Secret of the Golden Flower, rev. ed., trans. Cary F. Baynes from the German trans. by Richard Wilhelm (New York: Harvest Book-Harcourt, 1962), pp. 124-125. Subsequent references to this commentary will appear in the text.

³Frank Waters, The Woman at Otowi Crossing (Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1966), p. 30. Subsequent references to this edition appear in the text.

glimpsed the complete pattern of the universe, and knew that everything within it, to a blade of grass, was significant and alive" (The Woman at Otowi Crossing, p. 31).

But like hard ground that receives a sudden, life-giving rain, she cannot absorb all this sustenance at once: "It was too much for her. . . . It was as if she had just been reborn with all the freshness, purity and innocence of one entering the world for the first time. But one so different--so wonderful and frightening, so joyous and overwhelming--she could hardly comprehend it" (The Woman, p. 31). Helen's story, the myth of the Woman at Otowi Crossing, is her coming to terms with this new world of meaning. It is simultaneously the story of her coming to terms with her own death.

Even before the mystical experience, she has intuitively decided not to seek expert medical help for the treatment of her newly discovered breast tumor. She senses that she will not find in American medical technology a natural attitude toward death. Instead, it will fight to keep her body alive at any price. As we have seen, more years of a futile existence are not what Helen is seeking. Her decision to avoid hospitals and specialists is an acknowledgment, however unconscious, that she is in the second half of life (she is forty at the time). As Jung explains, the purpose of the first half of life is to live out the implications of one's birth--to grow to biological adulthood and reproduce (Jung, Flower, p. 125). The purpose of the second half of life (which he saw as beginning usually between the ages of forty and forty-five) is to make a gradual preparation for death, to begin a letting go from the things of this world (Jung,

Flower, p. 125). Thus, Helen's goal is no longer that of someone in the first half of life; she does not wish merely to live. If that were so, medical technology would be of use to her. However, she needs to learn how to die meaningfully, and the rational medicinemen of her time and culture cannot help her with this experience. The lessons she must learn come from two sources: from within herself and from a civilization which has not forgotten how to die. So she listens to her Self and to Facundo, the cacique of the San Ildefonso Pueblo.

Self is capitalized because I use it here in the Jungian sense: "The self is not only the centre but also the whole circumference which embraces both conscious and unconscious; it is the centre of this totality, just as the ego is the centre of consciousness."⁴ For Helen this Self is "Something in her [that] knew things she did not know, and spoke to her in a language she had not yet learned" (The Woman, p. 237). It is "Some unseen power [that] had driven her from a young husband and a child and a comfortable home years ago; [had] driven her to a remote and lonely lunchroom at an unknown river crossing in a mountain wilderness" (The Woman, p. 111). But it is also "Something [that] was untying the hard knot inside her; trying to break through the shell of the rational, materialistic world about her; to . . . wordless Facundo, the mute river and mountains, to all that archaic world to which she still owed allegiance" (The Woman, p. 64).

Her first vision reveals the existence of this "essential selfhood" to the conscious part of her mind. However, when she tries to

⁴C. G. Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, ed. Aniela Jaffe, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Vintage-Random House, 1963), p. 398.

explain her new awareness of Self to Jack Turner, her lover and closest Anglo friend, his rationalism (and perhaps his chauvinism) forces him to try to explain it away. At first he calls the demands of this Self "emotional upsets." And he adds, "All women have them" (The Woman, p. 61). When Helen persists in being true to this Self, he sees her as acting "without reason," indulging in "superstitious nonsense," and "abnormal leanings" (The Woman, p. 85). Finally, he tries to send her to a psychiatrist because he sees her as "a neurotic recluse, now in danger of becoming a psychotic lost in a meaningless dream-state" (The Woman, p. 128). But there is more in the world than is dreamed of in Jack's superficial rationalism. Jack confuses growth with deterioration because the direction of the growth does not please him. He wants to possess Helen without having to understand her because that would require a deeper understanding of himself than he is willing to undertake. As Helen comes to realize, while Jack has some of the finest virtues of his American culture, there is in him, as in the culture, much that is boyish (The Woman, p. 60). He lacks the maturity to understand why Helen will not sacrifice her growth for his comfort, her Self to his ego.

A psychoanalyst trained by Jung, Esther Harding, explains the function of the Self that Jack so steadfastly refuses to recognize as anything but "abnormal":

[The Self] speaks with a voice of command exerting a power over the individual as great as that of the instincts. When it functions strongly in a human being [Helen, particularly after the first mystical experience], it produces a preoccupation with the inner, subjective life that may appear to the onlooker to be auto-erotic self-absorption; but if the individual makes a clear differentiation between the personal

self, . . . the ego, and this centre of nonpersonal compelling power, the activity is certainly not auto-erotic but reflects a concern with a superordinated value of the utmost significance for the development of the psyche and therefore also for mankind.⁵

Like Jack, Helen's other rationally-oriented Anglo friends are mystified by the point of her search within herself for meaning. Therefore, she turns to the Spanish villagers and Indians of her New Mexico community. From them she encounters a tolerance for her non-verbal, intuitive exploration of her own identity. That they live less conscious lives than her Anglo acquaintances comforts her: "Their very impersonality took on the strength of a vast anonymity, their silence was eloquent, for somehow they expressed an intuitive awareness of the mystery of which she too was a part" (The Woman, p. 62).

Helen needs whatever reassurance she can find. She is not a hero of the god-like variety who we know from the time of his extraordinary birth is meant to accomplish great deeds. Like Tolkien's Frodo, Helen is a reluctant hero. Helen runs from an unhappy marriage and domineering in-laws, abandoning a child in the process. She hides in the wilds of New Mexico, hoping the larger fates cannot find her in such an out-of-the-way spot. She faces her Self only when such a fate does locate her and backs her into a corner. But then she acts very like the reluctant hero as described by Dr. Harding:

[S]ome heroes . . . are made, not born--made by inexorable circumstance. They suffer the buffets of outrageous fortune until some obstinate streak in them rises up and they refuse to be victimized any longer; then in sheer desperation they

⁵M. Esther Harding, Psychic Energy, 2nd ed., Bollingen Series X (New York: Pantheon-Random House, 1963), pp. 24-25.

turn, like the proverbial worm, and accomplish the task they can no longer avoid, even though the attempt costs them present suffering and may exact the final sacrifice.⁶

Jung has suggested that the reluctant hero in each of us can help himself by determining what myth he is enacting. Once recognized, the myth can be cooperated with instead of futilely resisted.⁷ Helen's first vision gives her a sense of who she is, but it is a dream some-time afterwards that gives her the language of her myth and begins her instruction by Facundo. The dream presents her life-journey in the form of kiva symbolism (The Woman, p. 65). Facundo recognizes this, takes her into the kiva (the Pueblo "church" which is ordinarily forbidden to both women and whites--only Facundo, the pueblo cacique or religious leader, has sufficient authority to suspend this rule), and begins instructing her in the esoteric meanings of Pueblo ceremonialism. But actually, Facundo began her instruction over twenty years before. For it was Facundo who arranged for her to be able to build her tearoom on the edge of Pueblo land (The Woman, p. 27). And the land itself has been Helen's first and greatest instructor. For twenty years while tending her vegetable garden Facundo has watched her progress with this master, the land. It slowly but persistently keys her into her own unconscious, what Jack Turner at one point thinks of as the nine-tenths of her that ice berg-like lies under the surface of her conscious self. When the land has graduated her by

⁶Harding, Energy, p. 251.

⁷Jung quoted in M. Esther Harding, The 'I' and the 'Not-I,' Bollingen Series LXXIX (New York: Pantheon-Random House, 1965), p. 164.

means of her first vision, Facundo is there to conduct her post-graduate work.

In a valuable interview given to James Petersen, Frank Waters discusses the training of those who conduct the great Navaho Sings which Waters describes as "ceremonies for a patient who is ill . . . because he is out of harmony with the cosmic forces."⁸ As with modern psychiatrists, no Singer conducts a ceremonial until he has undergone it as a patient. And the master of a particular Sing does not volunteer information to his apprentices. Therefore, the student's understanding of the ceremonial "unfolds gradually as [the apprentice] learns what to ask for," and "the deeper meanings [of the ceremonies as a whole] reside only within the hierarchy of the Singers" (Petersen interview, p. 67).

Helen Chalmers' relationship to Facundo is comparable to that of apprentice to master Singer. Before he initiates her into the esoteric meaning of Pueblo ceremonialism, he waits to see that she has experienced oneness with tierra madre and then waits for the dream which is her permission to enter the kiva. Even so, Helen must learn not only what to ask but also the Indian way of asking. It is not the Indian way to ask or to answer direct questions because the important questions cannot be put into words. Such verbal inquiries (the pun on Emily's magnum opus is intentional) Facundo pushes aside. He answers only the questions asked by the heart, not by the head. When Helen's

⁸"An Interview with Frank Waters," Psychology Today, May, 1973, 67.

spiritual progress requires information, Facundo gives it and not before. One's spiritual state cannot be changed by an act of the will, only by an organic maturing of the spiritual resources of the Self. The strength of the Self is developed by a letting go which Jung describes as the "art of letting things happen," and which the Chinese call wu-wei, action through non-action. American Indians would call it waiting for the time for right action. To continue with Jung, it is a "letting go of oneself" so that "a singularly appropriate expression of the total personality, an expression which one could not imagine in a more complete form" can present itself to the conscious mind (Jung, Flower, pp. 92-93).

For Helen these expressions come in the shape of mystical experiences and dreams. Facundo does not heal her; he helps her through the process by which she is healing herself. For instance, after her kiva dream Facundo takes her to the kiva itself to show her (without having to put it into words) how well her dream correlates to what the Pueblos have long believed to be reality. Helen's reaction is to think: "How clear everything seemed to her now! Nothing unusual nor fearful had happened to her. She was but breaking through into that hidden reality through her dreams, intuitions, and the symbols long known to these ancient, illiterate Indians" (The Woman, p. 68).

However, the task of the second half of life is not just to discover that there is a pattern to existence, but also to learn how to fulfill one's life in accordance to that pattern, to move meaningfully toward a proper death. To do this is not to deny life, but on the contrary to do what Jung calls paying in full all one's

debts to life (Jung, Flower, pp. 114-115). To die well one must feel he has lived fully: so fully that when death comes one faces it with complete detachment. But as Jung says, "[T]his last is the case only when life has been lived so that no more unfulfilled obligations to life exist, when, therefore, no desires that cannot be sacrificed unhesitatingly stand in the way of inner detachment from the world" (Jung, Flower, p. 114).

For Helen the last years are not a jettisoning of her attachments to other people but a living them through to their completion, an exhausting rather than an abandoning of life's possibilities. Rather than standing pat with her own hardwon and still disturbable serenity, she begins her series of Christmas letters and her Secret Journal for Jack. The intent of her writing is to share her insights with those still caught in the illusion of linear time. She meets with mixed success. Jack does not destroy her Journal as he is apparently tempted to do, but obviously he does not accept it as a true account of reality either. His ego is still in the way: "How could he reverse his beliefs of a lifetime and admit that his view of Miss Chalmers had been wrong" (The Woman, p. 298)? One cannot force a person to develop Selfhood; one can at best (like Facundo) be there to help as Selfhood emerges. With Edmund Gaylord, Helen can act as guide. In fact if one were to draw a picture of the meaning of the myth of the Woman at Otowi Crossing, it might well be of Helen on her bridge at the crossing holding hands with Facundo on the one side and Gaylord on the other.

It is Gaylord who comes to comprehend Helen's preference for Facundo's Indian sense of time over Jack's Anglo clock time. For Jack, time is linear movement. He is "a man imprisoned within a superficial and fallacious time-span limited only to those events looming highest on its surface horizon, his whole being keyed to the reportorial realm of the ephemereal present" (The Woman, p. 60). Like Gaylord before his Self emerges, Jack can "not live today for anticipating tomorrow" (The Woman, p. 157). Unlike Jack, however, Gaylord frees himself from the tyranny of time as movement, perceiving it instead as duration, as the "spherical geometry of the complete rounded moment" (The Woman, p. 300). Helen prefers the image of time as a pool with depth rather than movement (The Woman, p. 58). In a clear pool all things are visible if we but know what we are looking at. So also in life there are no unpropitious moments, only people unable or unwilling to discern the propitious. All meaning, as Helen discovered in the first mystical experience, is omnipresent, but we must learn to apperceive it, to build our capacity for accepting it and acting in accordance with it. Else, the fault is in ourselves, not in the stars.

The fault is also in ourselves if we are not faithful to the myth within us. Helen can help Gaylord and Tranquilliano (a Pueblo youth maimed in both body and spirit by his experiences in the Second World War) because they are ultimately willing to help themselves. It is a lesson Helen had to learn also. While Jack cannot muster enough courage to consider whether the attitude of a lifetime toward Helen could be mistaken, it is just such foolishness on her own part

that Helen does face. Not long after the first mystical experience, she comes to see herself as "a strange person playing familiar roles":

The emotions she had believed she felt belonged not to her, but to the roles she had been playing. Her marriage . . . had not hurt her. . . . It had hurt only the woman who had persisted in identifying herself as a tragically disillusioned young bride. So it was with the remorse and guilt that had followed after her abandoning Emily, and her present faulty relationship with Emily and Turner. They all belonged to the worldly roles she played. Not to the essential selfhood that had been revealed to her [in the first mystical experience] (The Woman, p. 56).

In this willingness, when the chips are down, to be true to one's Self, Gaylord is Helen's spiritual son. Just as Jack in the shallowness of his knowledge of himself is Emily's spiritual father. When he discovers Emily on her way to an abortion, he knows she will regret it but is overwhelmed by her hysteria. Being a rationalist, he is helpless before intense emotion--his own or anyone else's. So he takes the easy way out and helps Emily abort her child. For her part, it is easier for Emily to kill her child than to cease being a child herself. Like Salzburg, the young scientist who fatally radiates himself during a "criticality experiment," Emily at the moment of testing is a pathetic, terrified child playing with forces she has not attempted to truly understand (The Woman, p. 218).

However, it is Emily, not the forces, which are at fault. The view of time as duration denies as illusion that any person's character is made or unmade by the passage of linear time. Commenting on the apparent difference between the pre- and post-abortion Emily, the narrator says:

Between them there seemed one of those great gaps noticeable in so many persons after even a short passage of time. No such gap exists, of course. At every moment in our lives we are all that we have been and will be; a seed whose growth unfolds in a pattern predestined to it from germination. Our failure to perceive any continuity only betrays how shallowly we ever know anyone, especially ourselves (The Woman, p. 46).

To one still trapped in linear time this view will seem a rather bleak denial of free will. However, it merely says that the seeds of Emily's later "brittle maturity" were in her, not forced upon her from outside. Such is the message which The Tibetan Book of the Dead tries over and over again to convey: enlightenment can be achieved only when one understands that he alone is preventing it: "Man is in fact liberated, but does not know it. When he realizes it, he is freed."⁹ Emily has been betrayed not by events or by Jack Turner but by her own selfishness: "As all men think, so are they, both here and hereafter, thoughts being things, the parents of all actions, good and bad alike; and, as the sowing has been, so will the harvest be."¹⁰ The advantage of the reluctant heroes like Helen and Gaylord over the more aggressive Jack and Emily is that they are not misled by the apparent strength of the ego, a strength that evaporates in the face of intense emotional dilemmas. Helen and Gaylord know they need more than the ego: they need a whole Self to deal with life.

The form of the book itself reinforces the message that time is duration. Sandwiched between two passages from Helen's Secret Journal

⁹Sir John Woodroffe, Foreword, The Tibetan Book of the Dead, 3rd ed., ed. W. Y. Evans-Wentz (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1960), p. lxxii.

¹⁰W. Y. Evans-Wentz, Introduction, The Tibetan Book of the Dead, 3rd ed. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, ed. (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1960), p. 30.

which act as banks, the work begins as an apparent narrative stream; we think we are to get the chronology of Helen's last years. However, the stream keeps changing into a pool by means of flashback and flash-forward. Eventually, we take the hint. This is not the story of a becoming, a tale of change over time, but rather an unveiling of something that was there in the beginning if only Helen and we had eyes to see it. Helen does not change; she removes the psychological blinders that prevented her from knowing herself.

As Helen comes to see that all time is contained in the "spherical geometry of the complete rounded moment," so also she learns that all the physical universe is meaningfully interconnected. She has a vision and a dream which predict the first explosions of the A and H bombs, respectively. Waters argues that the energy of the mind which leads to Helen's mystical experiences is not different ultimately from the energy of matter released in atomic explosions. The world is one world and both mysticism and nuclear research must be recognized as natural parts of the world. This again is knowledge that is at the bottom of everyone's pool if each cares to look hard enough for it. Helen dies as the H bomb is born. Gaylord sees the two as balancing events, two releases of enormous energy: the triumphant departure, the questionable arrival.

We must consider in such a context the picture of Helen on the bridge, of Helen as a bridge. Helen's awareness of the reality of her own death frees her to learn the meaning of life from the spirit of place of the Southwestern landscape and from the Indians like Facundo who have adapted themselves to the land. She achieves a

merging of life with death into a purposeful whole. Helen as a symbol, as a mythic figure, points the way to what Waters views as the inevitable merging of Facundo's world of blood wisdom with Gaylord's world of rational science. Such a synthesis will create a product superior to its separate parts. It works out to an equation: natural man + scientific man = "Not only the destroyer, but the maker of worlds without end" (The Woman, p. 297).

Thus, we have journeyed through Waters' five tellings of the myth of rightness with the land. In the first three, the Southwest Trilogy, we watched non-Occidentals struggle to find a place for the dangerous gift of ego consciousness which produces technological civilization. In the last two works, Pike's Peak and The Woman at Otowi Crossing, we watched equally heroic efforts to break loose from the tyranny of that same ego consciousness and renew acquaintance with the unconscious, the instinctual. Those ventures into the Self which succeeded followed the map of Nature. The travellers used the transpersonal grandeur of the Western landscape to attune themselves to the grandeur of the country within the Self. One last time we will turn to Jon Manchip White for a validation that the Western spirit of place does have such an effect on the sensitive observer. Here he describes the psychological reaction of a visitor to the Grand Canyon:

There is a strange sense of being turned somehow inside out--as if you were contemplating an interior rather than an exterior landscape--an "inscape," as Gerald Manley Hopkins called it. "O the mind / Mind has mountains, cliffs of fall / Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. . . ." Aldous Huxley has noted the phenomenon in his Heaven and Hell. "The revelation of the wilderness, living its own life according to the laws of its own being, transports the mind towards its antipodes; for primeval Nature bears a strange

resemblance to that inner world where no account is taken of our personal wishes or even of the enduring concerns of man in general." The sights of the voids and ranges of Nature suddenly give us a glimpse of the voids and ranges within us. . . . Such moments awaken a primitive terror. To look at the Grand Canyon is to look at eternity and death. Few people desire to dwell on those entities (White, p. 12).

However, to dwell on those entities, on eternity and on death, is precisely what anyone wishing to complete the journey to the Self must do. And although Nature without can act as a guide to Nature within, each individual must still make that trip for himself. Like the Nature whose reality they pay tribute to, Waters' major novels can also provide guidance to the would-be traveller into the Self. It is such guidance as modern man is more sorely in need of with each passing day. But one of the glories of Waters' work is that wisdom is not offered as a threat, but as a promise. And The Woman at Otowi Crossing is the culmination of Waters' novels because of Helen Chalmers' joyous affirmation of the promise of imminent evolutionary advancement:

This process of awakening with new awareness, a new perspective on everything about you, of perceiving the "spherical geometry of the complete rounded moment" . . . this is the wonderful experience I've been going through. How many thousands of obscure people like me all the world over are having the same experience right now? . . . it's a normal, natural experience that eventually comes to every one of us. So when your turn comes . . . don't be afraid. Be glad! It's our mysterious voyage of discovery into the last unknown, man's only true adventure . . . (Crossing, p. 300).

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: THE ART OF THE MIDDLE WAY

In his study of The Machine in the Garden, Leo Marx has explored attempts by the American literary consciousness to find a place in its mythology for both nature and technology. The works of Frank Waters constitute another and seminal chapter in that quest. Waters' novels suggest a way of healing the split between instinct and reason. While this split is much older than machine America (the split is implicit in the story of Adam and Eve, as Carl Sagan has noted), attention to its consequences has become a matter of life or death for our present technological civilization. We must return to the garden of nature, but not to stay. Both Lawrence and Waters have pointed out that any attempt to return permanently to a less conscious existence ends in sickness, degeneration and death. But Faulkner and Van Tilburg Clark have shown that turning our backs on the unconscious also leads to sickness, degeneration, and death. Only a middle way remains open to us. And that middle way requires the development of what Colin Wilson calls Faculty X: "a sixth sense--a sense of the purpose of life quite direct and uninferred."¹ Waters calls this sixth sense "intuition" and sees its emergence as the next step in man's evolutionary journey.

Waters' novels are both mimetic and didactic, a showing and a telling of what it is like to stand on the threshold of a new era in

¹Wilson, 58.

human development. His task as an artist is to convey to us people who, as Waters puts it, experience "the emergence from the unconscious of those contents which unified with conscious elements will lead to a union of the opposite polarities."² Healing is a good metaphor for how such splits as that between reason and instinct are overcome because the new transcendent whole does not appear overnight. Maria del Valle's growth toward wholeness takes her all of a long and busy life. Joseph Rogier and Tai Ling probably achieve only an awareness of their own potentials for wholeness, not the thing itself. Martiniano and March Cable succeed only in laying the foundations for lives to be spent in the exploration and union of their own polarities.

To convey his characters' quest for the union of the dualities within them, Waters employs a system of checks and balances. As each branch of American government is intended to check and balance the power of the others, so Waters balances mimesis with open didacticism, showing with telling, action with passivity, naming with analysis. For each thesis he offers an antithesis. The attentive reader must then supply the synthesis. The reader must be able to see that however fully one side of a dichotomy is presented, it can never be the whole truth. This method works most effectively for Waters when he avoids an omniscient narrator who spells out for the reader the synthesis he should be allowed to discover for himself. An omniscient narrator, even if he spells out his reasoning process, requires of the reader a different (because less intuitive) participation. Hence, his

²Frank Waters, Mexico Mystique (Chicago: Sage-Swallow, 1975), 281.

passionate editorializing on such topics as the injustices done to the American Indian tend to be much more effective in his nonfiction.

At his best, however, Waters finds ways to subordinate his didacticism to his art because he is ultimately interested in communicating a mystical vision, not a philosophy. To that end he will limit the omniscience of his observer-narrator, using him to introduce either characters who balance each other out or a single character whose inner dialogue provides the balance of dualities. Thus the monumental Maria is matched with a series of men who help the reader to see how the struggle for greater self-understanding is going on within her. The gringo soldier, Onesimo, the cattle butcher, Don Fulgencio, Judge Don Eliseo, each adds to our understanding by reflecting a facet from the jewel which is Maria's growing maturity. From the gringo she learns that individuals, even institutions like the fort, pass away but the land abides. From Onesimo and his enemy, the priest, she learns that martyrdom for abstractions is a sin against the unchanging reality of the land. From the cattle butcher and the other men she mates with, she learns how to give in to the rhythms of nature without being subjugated to them. From Don Fulgencio she learns defensive rationality, that there are times when one must be able to manipulate abstractions like money or water districts in order to protect one's hold on the concrete realities of life. Judge Don Eliseo helps her to see that an era, a whole cultural milieu, even one's own, has only a relative value; it too can pass away like an individual or a fort.

In a Waters' novel it is sometimes the character's and always the reader's responsibility to reach a conclusion that transcends the paired opposites, to move on to an at least slightly higher level of

comprehension. That is why, for instance, Charles Adams can call the characters of The Yogi of Cockroach Court individual failures but didactic successes. They do not learn, but the reader does. He learns that everyone is inextricably involved with the suffering of others; we are all bound by karmas of locality. Tai Ling gains that insight at the price of a painful death. The seeming maturity of Guadalupe, like the brittle maturity of Emily Chalmers in The Woman at Otowi Crossing, is a dead end because it is static; they try to deny a major premise of Waters' worldview: change is the law of existence; nothing and no one can remain the same. Emily tries to deny the existence of a world of frightening flux by hiding in academia. Guadalupe sees Barby and the women lovers in her life as merely an endless series of replacements provided by a universe which exists to keep Guadalupe happy. Each denies the challenge to grow which a world of dualities constantly presents to them. They are examples of the human fish that Tai Ling watches, fish that,

although they be offered the opportunity to evolve out of the water-world to the world of the higher animals existing on the dry land, prefer to remain fish, because they think that there can be no state higher than that they alone know (Evans-Wentz, 12).

Not just the characters, but the reader himself is being challenged not to remain static. Tai Ling is right in thinking people often act like his fish. He is wrong in thinking they must always do so. Waters' universe is dynamic. In seeing his human fish as permanently fixed, Tai Ling himself comes perilously close to lapsing into the brittle maturity of Guadalupe. He makes himself one of the very fish he contemplates so patronizingly. And in turn if the reader patronizes Tai Ling, what does that make him? Thus by using mimesis for a

didactic end, Waters seeks to provoke the reader into an awareness that he too is caught up in the search for the middle way.

Sometimes Waters encourages the reader to participate in the balancing of dualities by leading us to identify with a participant-narrator who is himself trying to resolve dualities. An example is Rudolpho Byers in The Man Who Killed the Deer. Often Byers expresses Waters' own deep affinity for all things Indian, but Byers' is a warts-and-all acceptance of the Indian, not a blind romanticizing of the noble savage:

Often during his lonely life he had cursed the chance which had made him an Indian trader. No man knew better these people who had drained his youth, shaped his life and thought, and stamped on him forever their racial traits. He knew their surface indolence and cunning, their dirt and filth and lice, their secretiveness, barbarity, ignorance and stubborn denial of change. And so no man could better refute the sickly sentimentalism of lady tourists, the pampering enthusiasm of museum collectors, the false idealism of escapists and the mock gravity of anthropologists, ethnologists and myth mongers toward them--all the whining, shouting voices that proclaimed the Indian as nature's pet, a darling of the gods, and the only true American. Sometimes he damned them all to hell, swore that he would close up his post and go off to live . . . the life of "a respectable white man."

What held him he never knew, but it was always there. In the look of an eye, in a curious phrase, in the beat of a drum--in a thousand irrelevant incidents that slowly built up into a whole he could not see, but which he felt existed (Deer, 39).

Because Byers himself swings between the polarities of a repulsion and attraction toward Indians, his conclusions about them can carry more weight with the reader than an omniscient narrator ever could. We know that Byers himself is struggling toward a better understanding of the pull Indians have on him. Hence, we can take his pronouncements, not as the final word on the subject, but as conclusions as tentative as our own. And thus Waters can use Byers to give

the reader hints as to how an open-minded white might react to Waters' Indian characters, without telling the reader that is how he must react:

[Indians] couldn't be thought about intelligently. They had to be either dismissed or taken on their own ground. And their premises of life were based not on the rational, the reasoning, evaluating approach, but wholly on the instinctive and intuitive. Things came or they didn't; they didn't proceed logically from point-to-point. So you had to take them or leave them as they were in fact, not in theory (Deer, 40).

Byers cautions himself (and the reader) about the efficacy of verbalizing the Indian's non-verbal outlook: the Indian had "something that could never be put into words not even by an Indian" (Deer, 40). On the other hand, Byers is also aware that the inability or unwillingness of the Indian has led to the loss of those non-verbal truths possessed by the Indian way of life: "By infallible instinct and undivided consciousness the Indian had proved the validity of his approach. And because he couldn't or wouldn't express it articulately the whole shebang was passing with him" (Deer, 30).

The ability to resolve the conflict between the non-verbal (instinctual) world and the verbal (rational) one is the sign that a Waters character has succeeded in finding the middle way. When words are found to say the previously unsayable or to think the previously unthinkable, it is because of "the emergence from the unconscious of those contents which unified with conscious elements will lead to a union of the opposite polarities." Hence, in The Man Who Killed the Deer the profound outlook of the elders of the Council and even of Palemon must be put in italics because their traditionalist training makes them leery of words. But for the reader the very existence of

those passages in italics argues that the nonverbal can, to some degree at least, be verbalized. Indeed as Maria finds out in her struggle with the dam, abstractions, words as symbols, are also a part of the natural world and, if used with the proper precautions, can strengthen our hold on concrete reality by bridging the gap between the worlds of instinct and reason.

The importance that words play in finding the middle way can be illustrated by examining The Woman at Otowi Crossing. At the opening of the story Helen Chalmers is balanced between cultures. She is neither over-rational nor blindly instinctual. Hence she is a candidate for the middle way. Her mystical experiences leave her with great insight into an Indian, nonverbalized worldview. But they also create in her a powerful need to explain herself, to put into words what the non-verbal world view has to offer members of a technological society. She is placed between the loving but stubbornly skeptical Jack Turner and the supremely instinctive and even more stubborn Facundo. It is her efforts to keep a foot in both their worlds that leads her to make so much more of her glimpses into the purposefulness of the universe than do most people who have a mystical experience: "It seemed to her now that she was caught between two worlds, belonging to neither. Somehow, sometime, she had to make a choice between them. But how?" (The Woman, 54).

Her inability to choose, however, forces her to learn from both. From Facundo's instinctive, nature-oriented culture she learns how to carry over her mystical insights to everyday life. Facundo teaches her how to live fully in the present moment:

The sense of [Facundo's] presence, and of his complete awareness of the moment and all things that composed it, brought her back to the familiar. She felt the warmth of the sunshine, caught the smell of pine needles, heard the wind in the cottonwoods (The Woman, 32).

Facundo teaches her that her mystical insights are not madness or eccentricity, rather they are doorways onto the wonder of everything we accept as ordinary in daily existence:

How clear everything seemed to her now! Nothing unusual nor fearful had happened to her. She was but breaking through into that hidden reality through her dreams, intuitions, and the symbols long known to these ancient, illiterate Indians (The Woman, 68).

Or to once again put it in the words Waters uses in Mexico Mystique, she is experiencing "the emergence from the unconscious of those contents which unified with conscious elements lead to a union of the opposite polarities" (Mexico Mystique, 281).

Jack and the other members of her conscious, rationally-oriented culture force Helen to verbalize what she has learned from Facundo and her mystical experiences. Although she thinks she is offering explanations and keeping her Secret Journal for the benefit of Jack and the others, such attempts at putting into words what she is undergoing has an important and positive effect on her. It forces her to practice defensive rationality. Such a use of rationality as a tool rather than a way of life gives her an adaptability that Facundo's culture--for all its wisdom--lacks. Thus she transcends not only Jack's abstraction-dominated culture, which is trapped in "the ephemereal present" (The Woman, 60), but also Facundo's culture with its difficulty in dealing with those who can manipulate abstract concepts. Like Maria and Martiniano, Helen discovers that one must learn to use rationality without being used by it. Maria learns to see

the dam and the thinking that can build the dam as part of the natural world even though they are alien to her accustomed way of living. Martiniano learns to function in both the Indian and the white worlds because he realizes that the purposefulness of the universe supercedes, while including, both.

Waters' dialectic, his juxtapositioning of dualities, can work in subtle ways. To show us what Helen has gained from Facundo, Waters offers us Helen's encounter with Tranquilino, the ironically named war veteran who returns to the pueblo damaged in body and spirit. Helen does not cure him any more than Facundo cures her, but her faith sparks in Tranquilino a resurgence of his own belief in the mystical view of life. Just so, Facundo nurtures an awareness which already exists in Helen as it does in everyone.

Thus a Waters' novel moves a reader through a continuous series of dualities seeking to lure him ever farther along the middle way. It is a technique appropriate to his message. Those of us who belong to the culture of the machine have gone, he would argue, farther from the land, from nature, than we can afford to go. To move forward we must swing back a ways toward the other extreme of a too instinctual dependence on nature. Without giving nature more than her due, we must learn again to give no less than her due. Those sensitive to spirit of place can achieve such a balance by living in harmony with their environment and by accepting the responsibilities for others entailed in their particular karma of locality. To achieve rightness with the land means one has learned to listen not just to nature without but nature within, to the inner voice in each of us which knows what we must do to find our middle way, the only right way for us

between extremes. The intent of Waters' novels is not just to convey to us what it feels like to find the middle way, but "[t]o assure [us] its a normal, natural experience that eventually comes to every one of us" (The Woman, 300).

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VITA

Daryl Aleck Grider was born in Conrad, Montana on January 11, 1949. He attended public schools in Billings, Montana and graduated from Billings Senior High School in 1967. That fall he entered Eastern Montana College, and in May of 1971 received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English.

Thence with Liberal Arts degree firmly in hand, he went to do battle with the world.

The world won. Therefore, he returned to Eastern Montana College in the fall of 1973, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Education in May of 1974.

In the fall of 1974 he accepted a teaching assistantship at The University of Nevada, Las Vegas. In June of 1976 he received a Master of Arts degree in English.

A teaching assistantship was also given to him at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville in the fall of 1976. In December 1980 he received the Doctor of Philosophy degree in English.

The author is a member of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association and the Modern Language Association.