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THE MAIMED FIGURE: AN ANCIENT ARCHETYPE IN MODERN LITERATURE.

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THE MAIMED FIGURE:  
AN ANCIENT ARCHETYPE  
IN MODERN LITERATURE  

DISSERTATION  

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for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Graduate School of  
The Ohio State University  

By  
Peter L. Hays, A.B., A.M.  

The Ohio State University  
1965  

Approved by  

Julian Markels  
Adviser  
Department of English
VITA

April 18, 1938 Born - Bremerhaven, Germany.


1961-1965 .. Assistant, English Department, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. Have accepted instructorship for the following year.

PUBLICATIONS


"Hemingway and the Fisher King." Accepted for publication by University Review.

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: English

Studies in American Literature: Oscar Cargill

Studies in the Modern Novel: William Wasserstrom and Leon Edel

Studies in Drama: Henry Popkin

Studies in English Literature: Katherine Koller, Ruth Adams, Robert C. Elliott, and Richard Altick

Studies in Anglo-Saxon Poetry: Charles Dunn

Studies in Medieval Literature: Francis Lee Utley
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I. INTRODUCTION

My concern in this study is with the maimed hero, particularly as that archetype figures in modern literature. And as symbols, maimed characters have figured with particular significance in literature since symbolism developed as a conscious, viable technique under the aegis of Romanticism. ¹ William Butler Yeats wrote of William Blake:

[Blake] spoke of things for whose speaking he could find no models in the world about him. He was a symbolist who had to invent his symbols...He was a man crying out for a mythology, and trying to make one because he could not find one to his hand. ²

In part, this statement holds true for most Symbolists, and of course for Yeats himself. As protégés of Romanticism, they shared the nineteenth century's rejection of Neo-Classicism with almost all that it implied: rationalism, a mechanistic view of the universe, a stable society based on concordia discors, acceptance of tradition, orthodoxy in religion or an almost equally orthodox and conservative Deism, and a taste for poetry which was mimetic and prose-like. Instead, the Romantics elevated emotionalism, subjectivism and even mysticism,
heterodoxy and a love of variety, nature, primitivism, a rejection of traditional authority, and poetry which was enthusiastic, creative, and symbolic. Douglas Bush tells us how and why myth fell into desuetude in the eighteenth century, surviving only in mock epics or as rhetorical embellishments, never as a subject in itself for serious poetic treatment; and also how at the turn of the century there was "a revival of poetry inspired by a rich mythological symbolism." Had he chosen to, Blake could have had a mythology at hand, for late eighteenth-century mythographers were vitalizing and popularizing various old mythologies. Like Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley, Blake had materials at hand. What he chose to do—as Yeats later did—was to fabricate his own mythological system.

However different in other respects, what these poets have in common is their use of symbols in attempting to make finite the infinite, visible the invisible, and recognizable that which is not known but intuited. And to these ends they found the symbols of myth eminently adaptable. For example: "In telescoping the two words [Adonis and Hebrew Adonai] into the form 'Adonais' Shelley was stripping the Adonis legend of its strictly Greek associations and consequently...was raising it to the plane of symbolism."
This symbolic technique, further developed by Nerval, Rimbaud, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Verlaine, and La Forgue, and described by Arthur Symons (The Symbolist Movement in Literature, 1899) influenced Yeats, Pound, and Eliot. During the nineteenth century, the interest in comparative mythology and anthropology, stimulated by the syncretic mythographers, flourished in England and on the continent. Major findings were reported by the brothers Grimm and their students, and by the Cambridge School of Anthropologists, particularly in their inquiries into the origin and nature of Greek drama. Their work also influenced Eliot and, in fact, most intellectually aware authors of the twentieth century, providing ready-made symbols and tales of universally occurring events in an era when nothing seemed stable or permanent. They also provided characters ancient yet timeless, mysterious yet familiar, rich with accretions of centuries of variations.

Since those anthropological investigations of Mannhardt, Frazer, Harrison, Cornford, and Murray, and the psychological studies of Freud, Jung, and their students, a new field of criticism has developed which has availed itself liberally of the findings of both disciplines. This relatively new technique goes by several names: myth criticism, archetypal studies, and,
though with less validity, folklorism. Major works of criticism which such approaches have produced include Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* (1920), Maude Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (1934), Richard Chase's *Quest for Myth* (1949) and his subsequent works, Northrop Frye's *Fearful Symmetry* (1947) and *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), Francis Fergusson's *The Idea of the Theatre* (1949) and *The Human Image in Dramatic Literature* (1957), and Leslie Fiedler's *An End to Innocence* (1955), *No! in Thunder* (1960), and *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960).

Most of these works attempt either to discuss the archetypal or mythic technique in general—for example, Bodkin and Frye—using random examples as they appear suitable, or to apply the method minutely to one author or one work—Weston on the Grail Quest or Chase on Melville. There are very few that attempt to trace the occurrences, let alone the changed appearance, of an archetypal symbol through the literary ages; a few that do so are Dora and Erwin Panofsky's study of the Pandora theme, *Pandora's Box*, Barbara Seward's *The Symbolic Rose*, and W. B. Stanford's *The Ulysses Theme*. (Erich Neumann's *The Great Mother* is an anthropological, rather than a literary study.) I intend to write another such study of an archetype, that of the lame or castrated figure.
Such maiming apparently derives ultimately from ancient fertility rites which involved castration or live sacrifices killed by wounds in their legs, and most limping heroes of ancient literature were apparently such sacred kings and fertility symbols: Adonis, Osiris, Dionysus, Jacob, Hephaestus, and Bran the Blessed. Such students of mythology as Sir James Frazer and Robert Graves discuss the original nature of this fertility sacrifice, the death of the sacred king in his sexual prime, the homeopathic magic believed to be involved, and the gradual progressive rationalization or displacement, as Northrop Frye terms it, of this ritual through castration to actual laming, and then mock laming accomplished by means of high-heeled buskins, all in primitive times. As Graves describes this process of rationalization: "Originally the king died violently as soon as he had coupled with the queen. . . . Later, emascula­tion and laming were substituted for death; later still, circumcision was substituted for emasculation and the wearing of buskins for laming." I deal with this mythological material in the beginning of the second chapter, focussing on two modern authors—Bernard Malamud and Tennessee Williams—who employ in their works this archetypal image of a maimed figure to suggest the primal stage of the ritual, when the maimed hero and his queen presaged fertility.
Having probably lost the significance of the pagan fertility ritual under the influence of the Catholic Church, but still preserving in myth and image the figure of the maimed king, the people of the Middle Ages—who as Frazer records still believed in homeopathic magic—interpreted the king's emasculation negatively, as boding desolation and ruin, rather than as presaging greater fertility. Such a maimed ruler appears as the lame Fisher King in hundreds of Medieval manuscripts in Old French, Middle High German, Welsh, and Middle English, in both prose and poetry. The cause of the king's wound varies with his name and the story in which he appears, but it and the sterility it causes are sometimes seen—as the Black Death—as God's punishment of the king's sins. The maimed Fisher King rules over a blasted land for whose ruin he is responsible, a Waste Land which has become a common symbol in modern literature of a desolate, blighted, crippling environment. In this century the ghost of the Fisher King haunts not only Eliot's poem, but also novels of Hemingway, Lawrence, and Malamud. Similarly maimed figures portend sterility in the works of Huxley, Faulkner, and Williams. In my third chapter I deal with lame figures as symbols of a sterile environment, and in a separate section of it I deal with those whose lameness—like that of the hooved
Devil—mark them as responsible for that sterility, and not merely symbols or reflections of it.

In the fourth chapter, I deal with limping heroes whose wounds mark them as limited, restricted men—real men in a reasonably realistic world, as opposed to the obviously fictitious characters of the chivalric world of romance who surrounded the Fisher King. These crippled characters express their authors' views of life and its possibilities as finite and restricting. And finally, in conclusion, I survey briefly the archetypal approach, what I hope to have proved, and the history of Western literature to see what salient pattern of appearances by the maimed hero emerges.

To some extent the category of *la condition humaine* discussed in my fourth chapter may seem to overlap the previous one of sterility: if an author views life as futile and joyless, he can write about a limited protagonist in a sterile, moribund environment. I think that one can, however, for the sake of discussion, make distinctions between the two. Since I do discuss Jake Barnes in both chapters, let me cite him as an example.

One may interpret Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) as a pessimistic novel in which Jake's sterility and consequent lovelessness are imposed on him simply by a cruel chance of fate. Thus regarded, as it is by Philip Young, it is a novel of the lost generation,
where "most of the characters do seem lost indeed, a great deal of the time. . . . The strongest feeling in it is . . . that all motion is endless, circular, and unavailing." Since most critics seem to share this view, I discuss emasculated Jake Barnes as a symbol of sterility. However, if one interprets the ironic last line of the novel (see Chapter 3 below) as Jake's recognition that he probably could never have been happy with nymphomaniacal Brett, whom he does love, then his impotency is no specially cruel and externally imposed burden. He would have suffered anyway: life is painful. But not completely so. The novel is not entirely pessimistic. There is the camaraderie of Jake, Bill, and the Englishman, Harris. There is the respect Jake and even Brett feel for Count Mippipopololous. There is Hemingway's remark to Maxwell Perkins that he regarded the epigraph "you are all a lost generation" as "splendid bombast," and there is the admission by Philip Young that "not quite all the characters are 'lost'--Romero is not--and the beauty of the eternal earth is now and again richly invoked." Some, myself included, feel that the novel is not even mostly pessimistic, but rather a delineation of a code of behavior for a realistic, limited man existing in a world which can provide pleasures but which can also--and more often--be absurdly and torturously cruel. Jake, like most mortals, cannot have all he wants, or even what he
wants most especially. If he dwells on that sad fact too long, he will crack up. So he tries to think of other things, to distract himself, to live as he can—in short, to adjust to a painful world. And he does.

Maude Bodkin describes the fate of limited men, like Jake and as different from him as is Herman Melville's Captain Ahab, by saying that the individual is torn between his self-assertiveness and his confining destiny. Ahab, whom I also discuss in the fourth chapter, is, like Jake, a limited man: he cannot force his will on the universe. Although as realistic and credible as any figure of Shakespearean tragedy, Ahab certainly approaches the romantic limits of realism. He and Jake Barnes, therefore, may be seen as the opposite extremes of this last category. This difference is that between a romantic, Promethean figure who will stake all at a challenge and, inevitably losing, either suffer great pain or die nobly, and a realistically limned modern character who would prefer to live, however ignobly. Both types exist in life and literature, though in life, at least, the latter predominates. Except in fantasy or pure romance (Faust is an exception), even the Promethean figure ultimately fails. *La condition humaine* is one of limitations.

Miss Bodkin has also defined the extent to which man can transcend these restrictions: "...Life-discipline
can liberate in some degree the spirit 'fastened to a dying animal.'" 14 Through such disciplines as self-control, religious devotion, love, or self-sacrifice, modern authors seek to express the means by which order can be imposed on a chaotic world. Thus in contrast to figures like Ahab who refuse to adjust, Nick Adams and Jake Barnes both learn to make a separate peace, to enjoy things without rushing them, to keep from going out of their minds. Philip Carey, Gene Forrester, and Adam Rosenzweig are each limited men, and each discovers his salvation in the discovery of his own nature, his ability, and his relationship to the world in which he lives.

It must be remembered that these maimed figures in the third and fourth chapters of my study, those whose wounds signify the sterility of the world or its restricting limitations, actually represent perversions of the original maimed character, whose wound presaged fertility. Such ambiguity is unfortunately unavoidable in an archetypal study. And since this is an archetypal study, let me make clear my relationship with the analytical psychology of C. G. Jung, to whom the modern critical term owes its currency.

Jung defines the term and the related one of the collective unconscious variously in his works:

[The collective unconscious] is nothing but a possibility, that possibility which in fact has been handed down to us in the form of mnemonic images. . . . It does not yield innate ideas but inborn possibilities of ideas. . . . 15
The collective unconscious is a part of the psyche which does not owe its existence to personal experience and consequently is not a personal acquisition. The contents of the collective unconscious have never been in consciousness, and therefore have never been individually acquired, but owe their existence exclusively to heredity. The content of the collective unconscious is made up essentially of archetypes.

Fantasy-images undoubtedly have their closest analogues in mythological types. We must therefore assume that they correspond to certain collective (and not personal) structural elements of the human psyche in general, and, like the morphological elements of the human body, are inherited. Although tradition and transmission by migration certainly play a part, there are, as we have said, very many cases that cannot be accounted for in this way and drive us to the hypothesis of "autochthonous revival." These cases are so numerous that we are obliged to assume the existence of a collective psychic substratum. I have called this the collective unconscious.

These selections identify the collective unconscious for us as a subconscious memory of past human history, and as Jung says in the above middle quotation, the individual items in this Ur-memory are forms or images of a collective nature which occur all over the earth as constituents of myth, and at the same time as autochthonous, individual products of unconscious origin.

The primordial image or archetype is a figure that repeats itself in the course of history. Not for a moment dare we succumb to the illusion that an archetype can be finally explained and disposed of. Even the best attempts at explanation are only more or less
successful translations into another metaphorical language. . . . Clear-cut distinctions and strict formulations are quite impossible in this field . . . . No archetype can be reduced to a simple formula. . . . It persists throughout the ages and requires interpreting ever anew. The archetypes are the imperishable elements of the unconscious, but they change their shape continually. 20

And as Dr. Jolande Jacobi summarizes for us,

We must always distinguish sharply between the archetype [the unconscious memory] and the archetypal representation or "archetypal image." . . . When we encounter the word archetype in any of Jung's writings, we shall do well to consider whether the reference is to the "archetype as such," still latent and nonperceptible, or to an already actualized archetype, . . . an "image." 21

This study, of course, deals only with literary actualizations of an archetype, the image, the symbol, of the maimed figure. And as Jung has said, strict definition of such a complex concept is impossible: each age reshapes and reinterprets the symbol according to its needs for expression. Moreover, "just as all archetypes have a positive, favorable, bright side that points upwards, so also they have one that points downwards, partly negative and unfavorable, partly chthonic, but for the rest merely neutral." 22 Thus the archetype of the limping figure may symbolize fertility, sterility, or a combination of both. Thus far, Jung's terminology, the concept he defines, is useful. But let me assert that this is a literary study, not a psychological one, and the provenance of an artist's symbol is not my concern in this study. I shall focus only upon the presence of the archetypal image and its meaning in the works I discuss.
Furthermore, any literary category applied too rigorously quickly becomes a Procrustean bed. Of course, not everyone in literature who limps is a limping hero. An author who writes about war invariably deals with wounded individuals. But to take two examples from the same author, Sergeant Quirt's leg wound in What Price Glory? by Lawrence Stallings and Maxwell Anderson is, so far as I can determine, merely a plot device and of no symbolic significance; but Plumes' wounds in Stallings' novel Plumes are paralleled by his mental condition: he must readjust to a changed, a post-war world although he too is altered in mind and body. His physical wounds are "objective correlatives" for his limited body and limiting world. My effort then is to treat only those maimed characters, main figures in their respective works of literature, whose crippled states seem to me symbolically significant and relevant to an interpretation of the works in which they appear.

What I say of crippled figures in this study may appear obviously relevant to others who are not lame or castrated: the blind or deaf, those missing hands or arms. But I have limited my work to lame or emasculated characters for several reasons. First, the number of characters in English and American literature who are in some way maimed must be enormous, and it would be next to impossible to organize them except perhaps in an
encyclopedia where they were listed in alphabetical order by name or type of wound. And this list of cripples would be expanded immeasurably if all the mentally maimed were included. Thus I discuss only those who at one time or another are impotent or lame. Secondly, the association of lame and impotent should not be problematical. I have mentioned above the ritual relationship between castration and laming. There are also other ties between the two. Linguistically, sexual competence is and has been related to all human achievement by synechdoche and metonymy. They are metaphorically connected, not only because of their general similarity as accomplishments, but because of our ego-gratification and other reactions to them. The Latin verb castrare, like our verb castrate, had figurative meanings including enervate, debilitate, weaken, expurgate, diminish, check, and restrain. Impotent, from the Latin im, not, and potens, to be able, has acquired a particularly sexual meaning while the specifically sexual castrate has acquired general ones. Lameness and sexual disability are also psychologically linked: dream injuries to legs frequently symbolize fear of castration or impotence, sexual or social. And they are related artistically: "Adonis's traditional thigh-wound. . .[is] as close to castration symbolically as it is anatomically"; leg wounds in Medieval literature are frequently believed
to be euphemisms for injury to the genitals; and on a lesser scale, there is leg's usage as a slang term in sexual matters.

Thus it is essential to see that all the limpers discussed in this study are, to some degree of social action, impotent; and although the converse is frequently true—e.g. the Fisher King—it is not necessarily so: all who are emasculated do not necessarily limp. For the sake of this study, however, because of their close relationship, I am labelling all such maimed figures as limpers, using the term loosely and metaphorically to include not only the lame and impotent, but the impotent though not lame. Therefore, by "limping hero" I simply mean a central figure in a literary work whose physical maiming is symbolic of his social condition.

Further, I have limited my study in the main to English and American literature, prefacing each chapter with a very brief summary of mythological and historical background material. But, as Barbara Seward says of her work, I intend my investigation to be embracing though not exhausting, and so I do not hesitate to point out examples relevant to my purpose from whatever field or period, for I hope that my method will provide hints for others to expand into detailed analyses of authors and works other than those I treat (see Appendix II). No doubt I have omitted works or characters that might be significant,
but if my analyses of the included works are enlightening, then my remarks and my method should have relevance to similar but omitted works. Thus I hope to have defined a new symbolic image for literary criticism, that of the limping hero, a concept which I hope will be as useful as quest or rebirth. I also hope to enrich our understanding of certain literary works and our appreciation of their authors.
FOOTNOTES:


6For a general treatment of archetypal criticism, see Wilbur S. Scott, Five Approaches of Literary Criticism (New York, 1962), section 5, which includes a fine

7. The Latin verb *castrare* has as its chief figurative meaning *prune, lop, or trim*—vegetative surgery for greater fertility.

Frye, unless otherwise noted, will be paginated in my text and will refer to the books and editions here listed by each of these authors.

The source of the Grail motif is not known. A hypothetical one by a Breton conteur named Bleheris has been postulated (cf. Weston, pp. 189-209; also Parzival, ed. Helen M. Mustard and Charles E. Passage [New York, 1961], p. xxxiv). The first written source we have is Chretien de Troyes' Li Contes del Graal (c. 1175), which flourished in the hands of continuators (Gerbert, Manessier, and Wauchier), modifiers, translators, and perhaps even in versions independent of Chretien which derive from Chretien's source: Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, Perlesvaus, Didot Perceval, Peredur, Sir Percyvelle of Galles; also in the Estoire del Saint Graal, Merlin, and Queste del Saint Graal romances of the "Vulgate Cycle," which were later reworked by Malory for his Le Morte D'Arthur (1485); as well as later versions by Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King (1842-1885), especially "The Holy Grail" (1869), and Richard Wagner's Parsifal (1882). These Arthurian romances, as well as the German Diü Crône, and the non-Arthurian Sone de Nansai—seemingly
a reworking of Joseph de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathee*—all contain a grail of some sort, holy or not, and a maimed knight, usually a ruler known as the Fisher King.

10 Cf. Weston, pp. 22, 122; and *Parzival*, p. 256.

11 Philip Young, *Ernest Hemingway* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, Pamphlet No. 1 on American Writers, 1959), p. 11.

12 Ibid., p. 11.


24 Frye, p. 189.


II. FERTILITY FIGURES

"Under the names of Osiris, Tammuz, Adonis, and Attis," Sir James Frazer writes, "the peoples of Egypt and Western Asia represented the yearly decay and revival of life, especially of vegetable life, which they personified as a god who annually died and rose again from the dead" (p. 325). This fertility figure, whom Joseph Campbell calls the "ever-dying, ever-resurrected" vegetation god, represented the cycle of seasons, the alternate rule of summer and winter kings; and his death, although lamented, was also celebrated in anticipation of forthcoming and, it was hoped, greater fertility. And, since this god or sacred king represented in his person and acts the fertility of the land, he was not allowed to die a natural death, "lest with his diminishing vigour the cattle should sicken and fail to bear their increase, the crops should rot in the fields, and man, stricken with disease, should die in ever-increasing numbers" (Frazer, p. 267). The equation between the health of the king and of the land was based on primitive faith in homeopathic magic: like produces like. If the king, the champion, the representative,
the "father figure" of the land is well and vigorously procreative, then the land, its fields and flocks, will be likewise. If the king grows old and his virility diminishes, the land will suffer. Hence, at the first sign of aging, or after a fixed time (Frazer, pp. 265-6, 274), the king was killed and his undiminished powers, it was believed, were inherited by his successor—often the man who killed him.

Since the king was killed to preserve for his tribe his powers, especially his procreative ones, his death often involved his genitals or, what euphemistically represented them, his legs. Since this is a study of an image in modern literature, not of ancient ritual and mythology, I cannot devote space to a detailed discussion of the displacement process whereby death-by-castration became, progressively, castration alone, then a token wounding such as hamstringing or dislocating a thigh, which would produce lameness and signify castration, and finally just the wearing of high-heeled buskins to produce an uneven step. This process records the history whereby individuals were initiated into sacred kingship, or the process whereby one king was replaced by another. Osiris, Tammuz, Adonis, and Attis all suffered emasculation or thigh wounds: usually in the earlier versions of the myths that recount their histories, their wounds clearly involve their genitals.
Thus, for example, Uranus was castrated by his son, Cronus, who then ruled in his father's place. Similarly, Agdistis, an androgynous Phrygian god, was emasculated by other gods, and from Agdistis' severed male parts an almond tree sprang. From its fruit Nana conceived Attis, with whom Agdistis (a doublet of the Phrygian earth mother Cybele) fell in love. In order to prevent Attis from marrying anyone else, Agdistis caused the beautiful lad to castrate himself and to bleed to death under a tree. In later versions of the tale, Attis was gored to death by a boar, but the symbolic involvement of his death with fertility is suggested by Frazer in his description of the rites of Attis, performed alike in Rome and Phrygia, and closely resembling Syrian rites of Tammuz.

[On March 24, the Day of Blood, the] high priest drew blood from his arms and presented it as an offering. . . . The inferior clergy whirled about in the dance with waggling heads and streaming hair, until, rapt into a frenzy of excitement and insensible to pain, they gashed their bodies. . . . in order to bespatter the altar and the sacred tree with their flowing blood. . . . The novices sacrificed their virility. Wrought up to the highest pitch of religious excitement they dashed the severed portions of themselves against the image of the cruel goddess. These broken instruments of fertility were afterwards reverently wrapt up and buried in the earth or in subterranean chambers sacred to Cybele, where, like the offering of blood, they may have been deemed instrumental in recalling Attis to life and hastening the general resurrection of nature, [then occurring]. . . .(p. 349)
Osiris was killed by his brother Set, and his body was rent to pieces, all of which Isis recovered, except for the genitals; in another version of the myth, Set, in the form of a boar, gored Osiris to death (Frazer, pp. 362-7, 475; GM, I, 72; II, 115). And Tammuz and Adonis, actually two names for the same deity in different lands, were also killed by boars. These gods symbolized the fertility of their lands, in Jessie Weston's phrase (p. 38), "the Life principle": the period between their death and their resurrection was one of infertility; hence people prayed for the gods' speedy return and often made live sacrifices to that end in the name of the gods.

Other figures of mythology, later than these early nature gods, "escaped the final penalty of sacrifice as representative of the Dying God" (Weston, p. 41), but still bore wounds that marked them as sacred kings. As such, they underwent an initiation which often included such elements as a ritual contest or combat, death, and rebirth in a new, more powerful identity--one which enabled them to bestow on their lands and families the fertility which they now represented. Jacob lost his name and became the eponymous founder of the nation of Israel when he wrestled through a dark night with an angel who dislocated Jacob's thigh (Gen. 32: 24-31). Oedipus ("swollen foot") is such a sacred king; so is boar-scarred Ulysses. Anchises, father of the founder
of Rome, slept (as Adonis had) with Aphrodite, and was maimed by a thunderbolt hurled at him by Zeus when Anchises was indiscreet enough to make public that he had slept with the goddess (Aeneid, II, 649); Graves alleges that Anchises was wounded as part of the ritual of union with the goddess and notes the similarity to the wounding of Adonis under similar circumstances (GM, I, 71). And Anchises' son, Aeneas, was lamed as Jacob was: in the battle before Troy, Diomedes threw a rock which "struck Aeneas on the groin where the hip turns in the joint that is called the 'cup-bone.' The stone crushed this joint, and broke both the sinews..." (Iliad, V, 303 ff.). But Aeneas was rescued by his mother, was healed by Latona and Diana, and went on to become the father of Rome, as Jacob had founded Israel.

Not necessarily the whole leg but the foot alone was often considered sacred. Frazer says, "The divine personage may not touch the ground with his foot," and gives examples of actual people whose feet were not allowed to touch the earth (pp. 593, 169-70, 594-99). In Welsh mythology, there are two figures whose feet are similarly connected with the wealth and happiness of the land: Bran and Math. Bran (Bendigeidfran, son of Llyr and king of England) possessed a cauldron of rebirth—in it slain warriors were reborn. But when Bran is struck in the foot by a poisoned spear, both
the isles of Ireland and England are laid waste. Another Welsh king, "Math son of Mathonwy was lord over Gwynedd . . . . At that time Math. . . . might not live save while his two feet were in the fold of a maiden's lap, unless the turmoil of war prevented him."  

Belief in homeopathic magic—that the health of the king affects that of his land—is long since dead, and we would be extremely suspicious and mistrustful of a gouty old man distributing largesse or of a gnarled old woman with a cane who made all our wishes come true. The heroes of serious literature today are heroes only in their particular literary frames of reference: with few exceptions, our writers do not write about gods, kings, or even princes; they write instead of individual men whose problems may well have meaning for us, but whose successes or failures do not affect us directly at all, except perhaps by way of example. We tend to associate the "health of the land" and its "vitality" with moralists and politicians, whom we habitually do not listen to. But though the surface concerns of our literature may seem to have altered, the pattern of the dying and reviving hero remains, sometimes denoting fertility, sometimes not.

Bernard Malamud is a contemporary author for whom this motif is still quite alive. In his first
novel, *The Natural* (1952), he uses it to indicate sterility, but in his second novel, *The Assistant* (1957), Malamud uses it as a sign of fertility. In *The Assistant*, the protagonist is Frank Alpine, a wanderer without a home or values, who robs Jewish grocer Morris Bober one November day; but when the man with whom Frank is robbing the store impatiently pistol whips the old man, Frank gives Bober a cup of water. He is compassionate and does not particularly want to rob Bober, but he is also desperately poor and hungry. He is twenty-five and looks much older, an orphan who has never known love, success, or satisfaction; a born loser. As he says:

I've been close to some wonderful things—jobs, for instance, education, women, but close is as far as I go.... Sooner or later everything I think is worth having gets away from me in some way or other. I work like a mule for what I want, and just when it looks like I am going to get it I make some kind of stupid move, and everything that is nailed down tight blows up in my face.... With me one wrong thing leads to another and it ends in a trap.

In this case, the trap is Morris' grocery. Frank, ashamed of his part in the robbery and sorry for Bober, returns to help the old man—to become his assistant. Alpine longs for a code to live by and is attracted by Bober's endurance in the face of calamity, by his acceptance of life with all its hardships, by his compassion, and by his religion; and at the same time he is repelled by the
pain, the suffering, and the lack of comfort which his code brings the grocer. He asks Morris:

"What I like to know is what is a Jew anyway?"

". . .The important thing is the Torah. This is the Law—a Jew must believe in the Law. . . . This means to do what is right, to be honest, to be good. This means to other people. Our life is hard enough. Why should we hurt somebody else? . . .We ain't animals. . . .This is what a Jew believes" (pp. 123-124).

Frank is also attracted to Bober's daughter Helen, and gradually wins the friendship of father and daughter—only to lose both. Unable to do right, even when he wants to, Frank steals meager sums from the small amounts in the grocery store cash register; Morris would give him more money if Frank asked for it, but Frank steals anyway, arousing the grocer's suspicion even though he cannot, at first, prove theft. One day Morris purposefully watches Frank, catches him stealing a dollar, and fires him. Helen meets with Frank in spite of her mother's objections to him as a "goy" and finds herself falling in love with him. Then, on the same February night that her father fires him, while she is waiting for Frank in the park, someone attempts to rape her; Frank drives off her attacker, then takes her by force himself.

Later when Bober becomes ill, Frank sneaks back into the store, operating it while Morris recuperates. When the grocer is better, he forces Frank to leave.
At the end of March, however, Morris catches pneumonia while shoveling snow and dies three days later. At his funeral, a warm, spring-like April day, Frank slips and falls into Morris' grave, landing on the grocer's coffin. Afterwards Frank goes back to the store that had been Bober's tomb-in-life for twenty-two years, assuming the support of Mrs. Bober and Helen, and working at an additional job as well so that Helen can attend night school. Frank also assumes Morris' values, his honesty and his compassion: his descent into Bober's grave marks Frank's death as an uncommitted wanderer and his rebirth as Bober's spiritual son—one who lives by the law. The novel ends in spring a year after Bober's death:

One day in April Frank went to the hospital and had himself circumcised. For a couple of days he dragged himself around with a pain between his legs. The pain enraged and inspired him. After Passover he became a Jew. (p. 246)

There is thus a death and revival pattern in the novel marked by the seasonal changes—twice from wintry fall to warm spring—and by Frank's personal history. He undergoes a rite of initiation—begun at Morris' grave, marked by his circumcision, and completed by his conversion—which prepares him (to borrow a title from Malamud) for a new life, based on the role of the grocer and endowed with Bober's responsibilities and beliefs.
My previous critical terms of "fertility" and "vitality" may seem somewhat strained here, but such critics as Jonathan Baumbach and Theodore Solotaroff feel, as I do, that the novel ends on a transcendent note: that Alpine has found himself, as well as increased moral vigor and sounder mental health. 12

Both the above critics (Baumbach explicitly, Solotaroff by implication) feel that Alpine must live his new life alone, without Helen. Of this I am not sure. 13

At the end of the novel, Helen confesses to herself her feelings for Frank.

Although she detested the memory of her experience in the park, lately it had come back to her how she had desired that night to give herself to Frank. . . . She had wanted him. . . . If he had made his starved leap in bed she would have returned passion. She had hated him, she thought, to divert hatred from herself. (p. 239)

She learns how hard Frank is working and thinks:

He had kept them alive. Because of him she had enough to go to school at night. . . . It came to her that he had changed. It's true, he's not the same man, she said to herself. I should have known by now. She had despised him for the evil he had done, without understanding the why or aftermath, or admitting there could be an end to the bad and a beginning of good. . . . He had been one thing, low, dirty, but because of something in himself--something she couldn't define, a memory perhaps, an ideal he might have forgotten and then remembered--he had changed
into somebody else, no longer what he had been. She should have recognized it before. What he did to me he did wrong, she thought, but since he has changed in his heart he owes me nothing. (p. 243)

The next week she enters the store and speaks to Frank--only the second time in almost a year since her father's death, the first time of her own volition--to thank him for all of his trouble. She tells him that she will consider his offer to take more money from him so that she can go to college during the day, blushing as she does so, and also tells him that she is still using a volume of Shakespeare he had given her as a present long before. And that night Frank hears her fight with and leave--perhaps permanently--her one boy friend.

Perhaps Frank and she never become completely reconciled, but most of the barriers that had existed between them have been removed. After Frank's assault on Helen, the one comment from her which Malamud gives us, the one that closes the chapter, is, "Dog--uncircumcised dog!" (p. 168). That too has been changed.

As Baumbach has noted, "Frank's attraction to Helen is an uneasy fusion of the sensual and the spiritual. . . ."; also, Frank's "redemption is made possible by his uncompromising love for Helen--which provides the impetus for his commitment to the store" (pp. 453, 456). Perhaps it is part of the impetus
for his commitment to Judaism, too. Frank was strongly attracted to Judaism and to Helen, and wished to "belong" to both; and he has taken what steps he can, accomplishing the first goal, doing as much as he could to achieve the second. The first brings him rebirth and spiritual peace; the second would bring him sexual fulfillment, a satisfaction of his social needs, and probably children.

"'Helen' was the name of the Spartan Moon-goddess, marriage to whom...made Menelaus king," and her name is etymologically related to Helle, bright goddess of death and resurrection. Thus, to the extent to which Helen has redeemed Frank and brought him to his goals, and could bring him to the others, she is suggestive of a fertility goddess.

There is another sign which attests to the special nature of Helen's role. In Symbolic Wounds, Dr. Bruno Bettelheim discusses the relationship of circumcision to ritual forms of emasculation. Speaking of the self-mutilation of the priests of Cybele (cf. p. 24 above) he says, "This example of ritual castration, and many others not mentioned here, indicated that it was exacted by maternal figures as a sign of devotion and submission on the part of their male followers. ...(p. 92). If Mrs. Bober objects to Helen's consorting with a non-Jew, if Helen herself loathes Frank because he is "an
uncircumcised dog," then Frank is willing to have himself circumcised as a sign of "devotion and submission"—to the Law of Judaism, as Morris Bober spoke of it, and to Helen. Bettelheim also says, "Loeb is convinced that circumcision was originally performed as a sacrifice to a female goddess. . . . He follows Barton who holds that originally all circumcision was a sacrifice to the goddess of fertility."15 And Frank's circumcision for love and religion (the two are most probably related) during the Paschal season, the time of propitiation, coincides not only with the death and resurrection of Christ at the time of hobbling, but also with the castration of Attis and Adonis (and their priests) on behalf of their respective loves and fertility goddesses, Cybele and Aphrodite.16

Tennessee Williams provides us with another symbolic fertility goddess, and one whose lover limps before her, in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (1955). In fact, mythological allusions are frequent in Williams' plays: the title and general outline of Orpheus Descending, the sacred grove of "royal palm trees" that forms the background for Sweet Bird of Youth, and the setting of Streetcar Named Desire, as Williams describes it in his notes before the play and has Blanche repeat them: "They
told me to take a streetcar named Desire, and then transfer to the one called Cemeteries and ride six blocks and get off—at Elysian Fields!" (Act I, sc. 1). Blanche, like Val Xavier of Orpheus, has come to a hellish otherworld. Nor are these classical allusions accidental. Writing of his childhood, Williams has said, "I would rather read books in my grandfather's large and classical library than play marbles and baseball and other normal kid games. 17 Moreover, he studied Greek at Washington University, St. Louis. 18

The situation in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof is as follows. The night before the action of the play takes place, Brick Pollitt, in a vain, drunken effort to recapture the glory and sense of accomplishment he had as a high school and college athlete, breaks an ankle trying to jump hurdles standing on a high school track. Throughout the play, Brick hobbles with cast and crutch, which symbolize his moral crippledness; he tries, too, to withdraw from the (as he calls it) mendacious world into himself and into an existence anaesthetized by alcohol. Brick had had a latently homosexual friendship with another football player, Skipper, and Brick's wife Maggie disliked the resultant triangle. In jealousy, she told Skipper to admit his homosexual feelings to Brick as such, or to leave Brick to her. Skipper tried to do the former, but Brick, disgusted
by the idea of homosexuality and the idea that he might have any such tendencies, rejected their friendship on those terms--and rejected Skipper, who turned instead to drugs and alcohol and died shortly thereafter. Brick blames himself for Skipper's death, but projects his guilt onto Maggie for precipitating the crisis, and tinges with the disgust of abnormality her normal sexual desire for him. For the months since Skipper's death, Brick has not slept with Maggie, and on that fact the play turns.

Brick's father, Big Daddy, is dying of cancer, and the other son, Gooper, and Gooper's again-pregnant wife Mae, want to be sure to inherit Big Daddy's wealth and his plantation for themselves and their five "no-neck monsters"¹⁹ (another mythological allusion?). Maggie wants the inheritance for herself and Brick, but Brick wants only to escape from the world of "mendacity"--including his own--in alcohol; he is, as he says to his father, "almost not alive" (p. 94). Big Daddy would prefer to leave the plantation to Maggie and Brick, if they have children who can inherit it in turn. So Maggie lies to Big Daddy and the rest of the family, saying that she does carry Brick's child; and, in the last moments of the play, having taken away Brick's crutches--the wooden one he walks on, and the alcohol he lives on--she literally
forces Brick into bed with her to turn the lie into truth. She forces Brick back into an active life and into an attempt to have children, with this dialogue accompanying that scene:

Brick: I admire you, Maggie.

Maggie: Oh, you weak, beautiful people who give up with such grace. What you need is someone to take hold of you—gently, with love, and hand your life back to you. . . .(p. 158)²⁰

Maggie seems to do just that: she gives Brick his life back, and from him, Williams implies, she will conceive more. For in spite of Maggie's childlessness during the play, which contrasts her with her teeming sister-in-law Mae, Williams identifies Maggie-the-cat as the fertility goddess, Diana, in her earlier Greek identity as Artemis, bow-carrying mother-deity and birth-goddess.²¹ When Mae comes on stage with a bow she has found, asking Brick if it is his, Maggie replies:

Why, Sister Woman— that's my Diana Trophy. Won it at the intercollegiate archery contest on the Ole Miss campus. . . . Brick and I still have our special archers' license. We're goin' deer huntin' on Moon Lake as soon as the season starts. I love to run with dogs through chilly woods, run, run, leap over obstructions—(pp, 28-29)

The cat is a sacred animal of Artemis' and is itself regarded as a fertility spirit.²²
The continuation of life, the fertility of land and people, is a major, constantly repeated theme of the play: childless Maggie is taunted by her prolific sister-in-law Mae, Big Mama is a translation of Magna Mater, and Big Daddy wants Brick to have a son who can inherit the plantation, which is repeatedly described (pp. 65, 93, 154) as rich and fertile; even Big Daddy's dirty joke about an elephant in heat echoes the theme by Big Daddy's allusion to the "excitin' odor of female fertility!" (p. 151).

In *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, then, Brick has watched Big Daddy face impending death from cancer, he has seen Maggie endure him in spite of his antipathy toward her, and he has seen her defend her marriage to him before his family. At the end of the play, Williams makes us feel that Brick has, if not solved his problems, then at least learned to live with them. We feel that Brick will give up his excessive self-pity and the liquor with which he nourishes it, and that he will "stand on his own two feet" as much as his newly broken ankle will permit. He has not only received his life back from Maggie, as the contest-scarred victor received the crown of sacred kingship from the fertility goddess' representative or priestess, but Williams intimates that Brick will propagate more life, father children who will follow
him in ruling over Big Daddy's plantation, 28,000 acres of fertile Delta land, "of the richest land this side of the valley Nile."

In "good" English and American literature today, accounts of victims, sufferers, and anti-heroes are far more prevalent than stories which end optimistically. In The Assistant and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, therefore, the implied union of a newly-wounded male with a female identified by the author for us as a fertility goddess just intimates that the result will be not only increased life, but also life that is healthier and morally superior to what it had been; in neither case is there more than an implication, for strongly affirmed positive endings would probably have been regarded by critics and public alike as false, sentimental, and "Hollywoodish." And although both Malamud and Williams use symbols in their works, both are regarded as realists. But each has artistically incarnated, in a form which parallels the history of the dying and reviving god, a belief that man can undergo degradation--spiritual death--as a rite de passage to a life which is better, fuller, and more meaningful.
FOOTNOTES:


Cf. Frazer, pp. 338-9 on the dying god as the reaped grain, and GM, I, 41, 72; II, 115, on the relationship between harvest sickles and boars' tusks.

Pesach, "the Passover, . . . occurs on the date of the annual resurrection of Adonis. . . ." (Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God [New York, 1964], III, 138), and pesach is etymologically related to the Hebrew word for lame or hobbling. Moreover, the partridge, the sacred bird of Aphrodite, lover of Adonis, does a hobbling mating dance, holding one heel ready to strike at rivals. "In Palestine this ceremony, called the Pesach ('the hobbling') was, according to Jerome, still performed at Beth-Hoglah . . . , where the devotees danced in a spiral. Beth-Hoglah is identified with 'the threshing-floor of Atad,' on which mourning was made for the lame King Jacob. . . ." GM, I, 316.


Bernard Malamud, The Assistant (New York, 1957), p. 36. All subsequent quotations will be paginated in my text and will refer to this edition.

13 Granville Hicks also believes that Frank and Helen may come together ("Portraits of the Authors as Men," Saturday Review, July 10, 1965, p. 28).


16 The New World Dictionary relates pesach to the Assyrian pasahu, to propitiate. Cf. note 7 above.

17 From an article in the New York Times, March 8, 1959, which appears as a forward to Williams' Sweet Bird of Youth (New York, 1962).

19Tennessee Williams, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (New York, 1955), pp. 15, 16, 20, etc. Subsequent quotations from this play will be paginated in my text and will refer to this edition.

20It should be noted that the play ending I describe is that of the Broadway or acting version, written by Williams at Elia Kazan's request, and that it differs from Williams' original ending. However, the dialogue is Williams', it does appear in most published versions of the play, and Williams has never seen fit to repudiate it as inappropriate.


III. STERILITY FIGURES

Part 1. Victims

As I have indicated above, there was a negative side to homeopathic magic. If a king were impotent through age or illness, his lands and flocks suffered. Frazer lists many tribes that ritually killed their kings at the end of given periods or at the first signs of their aging, for these primitive peoples believed "their safety and even that of the world. . .[was] bound up with the life of these god-men or human incarnations of the divinity" (p. 265). Miss Weston says the infirmity of the king "reacts disastrously upon his kingdom, either depriving it of vegetation, or exposing it to the ravages of war." Later on she says, "...[The] close relation between the ruler and his land, which resulted in the ill of one becoming the calamity of all is no mere literary invention, . . .but a deeply rooted popular belief, of practically immemorial antiquity and inexhaustible vitality; we can trace it back thousands of years before the Christian era, we find it fraught with decisions of life and death today" (pp. 20, 65).
In this chapter, I want to suggest how modern writers have used this same relationship between the infirmity of one and that of many; and how lameness, in particular, is the infirmity which symbolizes general impotence and suffering. Let me repeat that I am purposefully using *impotence* ambiguously in both its sexual and social sense; and let me say also that in the literature I discuss the impotence and suffering may or may not be coincidental. Thus while Benjy Compson's gelding does not cause him particular pain, it is symbolic of a generalized decline. Furthermore, whereas the few examples of fertility in modern literature which I discussed in the previous chapter were instances of personal enrichment, in this chapter it will be seen that sterility, symbolized by one person's wounds, is usually widespread. Thus Oedipus is crippled although sexually capable, yet his impotence, his inability to appease the gods for the patricide and regicide he was unaware of committing, causes Thebes intense suffering:

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...Thebes is in her extremity
And cannot lift her head from the surge of death,
A rust consumes the buds and fruits of the earth;
The herds are sick; children die unborn,
And labor is vain. The god of plague and pyre
Raids like detestable lightning through the city,
And all the house of Kadmos is laid waste,
All emptied, and all darkened: Death alone
Battens upon the misery of Thebes.
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The most famous example of a king whose wound is a sign of his land's infertility is, of course, the ruler of the Waste Land, the Fisher King, a figure who dominates the literature of disillusionment of the twentieth century. That he does so is largely the result of T. S. Eliot's The Waste Land (1922), in which the Fisher King is the informing character. Eliot's tribute to Jessie Weston in the notes at the end of his poem, and the very obscurity of the poem, made her book From Ritual to Romance (1920) almost required reading. Her study of the maimed king in Arthurian romance, his heritage from ancient ritual and his great symbolic value, has provided modern authors with both an understanding of the many implications of crippled figures and a very useful device for their own writing.

The Waste Land expresses Eliot's concept of the spiritual aridity of life in the 1920's and the lack of real love, faith, and values among the inhabitants of the great urban deserts. As Edmund Wilson eloquently summarizes it:

The terrible dreariness of great modern cities is the atmosphere in which 'The Waste Land' takes place. ...; all about us we are aware of nameless millions performing barren office routines, wearing down their souls in interminable labor of which the products never bring them profit—people whose pleasures are so sordid and so feeble that they almost seem sadder than their pains. And this Waste Land has another aspect: it is a place
not merely of desolation, but of anarchy and doubt. In our post-War [I] world of shattered institutions, strained nerves and bankrupt ideals, life no longer seems serious or coherent.

Eliot echoes the incoherence by the seeming formlessness of his poem, its rapid shifts and abrupt juxtapositions. He achieves a sense of utter sterility by describing the landscape as a "dead land" (1. 2), "A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,/ And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,/ And the dry stone no sound of water" (1. 22-24). In this landscape, the Grail Quest has been debased into the quests for wealth of the one-eyed seller of currants and Phlebas the Phoenician.

And love does not exist. Instead there is Philomela, "so rudely forced" (1. 100); toothless Lil, who aborts her pregnancies; and the typist, who lets the carbuncular clerk

. . . engage her in caresses
Which still are unproven, if undesired,
Flushed and decided, he assaults at once;
Exploring hands encounter no defence;
His vanity requires no response,
And makes a welcome of indifference.
. . . Bestows one final patronising kiss,
And gropes his way, finding the stairs unlit. . . .

She turns and looks a moment into the glass,
Hardly aware of her departed lover;
Her brain allows one half-formed thought to pass:
"Well now that's done: and I'm glad it's over."
(11. 237-252)
The city Eliot describes is an unreal city under brown fog (11. 60-61, 207-8); in the land there "is no water but only rock/ Rock and no water and the sandy road" (11. 331-2), and "dry sterile thunder without rain" (1. 343). Eliot's poem depicts a barren landscape devoid of love and pity—devoid of all human emotions except lust, fear, and apathy—and dominating the entire poem, in person and allusion is the maimed Fisher King (see note to 1. 46, and 11. 51, 60-76, 173-214, and 422-433).

Ernest Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises (1926) captures another aspect of this sterile environment, where despair and futility underlie the nervous search for the only satisfactions that seem left to the characters, sensual ones: warm sunshine and cold, clear water, fine wine, the excitement of bullfighting, or of fishing, or of lover after lover—in short, the peripatetic and self-defeating search for fun. Jake Barnes and Brett Ashley love one another, but Jake, emasculated in the war, cannot satisfy her sexually. So Brett in her nymphomania goes from one unsatisfying affair to another, while Jake tries to exist solely in a world of work, sport, and drink. Jake, as maimed fisherman, is the Fisher King in this novel of misfits. Most of the characters are expatriates, people uprooted by war or chased across Europe by their
own ennui. Jake's wound is echoed in those of Count Mippipopolous and other veterans of public wars and private battles; his sexual impotence, his failure to achieve a normal relationship with Brett, represents the separateness of all the characters—-the prostitute Georgette and the homosexuals who accompany Brett at the beginning of the novel, Cohn and Frances, Mike, the Count, even Romero the bullfighter, who, although sexually capable, must limit his sexual activities and even his love for Brett because it interferes with his dangerous profession.

The pessimism, the cynicism, the general malaise which infects the waste land these characters inhabit is suggested repeatedly by Hemingway. Georgette complains that she's sick, that everybody is. A waiter, commenting on a young married man, father of two children, who has been killed during the running of the bulls, says: "Badly cogido through the back... A big horn wound. All for fun. Just for fun. What do you think of that? ... Right through the back. A cornada right through the back. For fun--you understand" (pp. 197-8). Brett tells Jake that she has ended her affair with Romero and is going back to Mike because Mike is "so damned nice and he's so awful. He's my sort of thing" (p. 243). "You know," she continues, "it makes one feel rather
good not to be a bitch. . . . It's sort of what we have instead of God." Their theological discussion ends with Brett's saying of God, "He never worked very well with me," and Jake's asking, "Should we have another Martini?" (p. 245). A final instance of bitter irony concludes the novel. Brett says, "Oh, Jake, we could have had such a damned good time together," and Jake replies, "Yes. . . . Isn't it pretty to think so?" (p. 247). And so the novel ends on a note which tells us that Jake's wound is deeply symbolic. The people of this lost generation cannot relate, cannot form abiding spiritual unions. Emasculated or not, almost all are impotent.

Hemingway shows especial sensitivity to lame characters as figures for impotence. He was himself severely wounded in the leg during the First World War, and most of his characters who have been to war (and several who have not) are similarly scarred. Yet the wound, "the unreasonable wound" as Frederick J. Hoffman calls it, is more than just a piece of personal history for Hemingway: it figures symbolically in many of his works.

In "Indian Camp" (1924), one of Hemingway's first published short stories, such symbolism is evident. The story takes place in an Ojibway Indian camp in Michigan where Dr. Henry Adams goes, with his son Nick, to aid an
Indian woman who has been two days in labor. Dr. Adams performs a Caesarian section with a jack-knife, then sews the woman up with "nine foot, tapered gut leaders," all without an anaesthetic for the woman, whom four men hold down in the lower bunk. In the upper bunk lies the husband, unable to help or even to stand and watch because he had cut his foot badly with an ax three days before. After having finished working on the mother, Doctor Adams says, "Ought to have a look at the proud father. They're usually the worst sufferers in these affairs. . . . I must say he took it all pretty quietly." He has taken much quietly, but not without suffering: unable to bear his wife's pain without being able to do anything, unable to listen to her screams any longer, the man slit his throat and bled to death while the doctor was at work in the bunk below bringing his (the Indian's) son into the world. In this classic initiation story, Nick learns about the pain of birth and death, the two great events of life, which in this instance Hemingway presents cyclically. As combats between mythical heroes often represented conflicts between seasons, contests that did not achieve any final resolution but were in fact merely opposite points on a cycle, so here Hemingway succinctly represents life and death as just such a cycle, presenting it both literally and symbolically. Nick and his
father enter the camp at dusk and leave at dawn, when a bass jumping from the lake makes "a circle in the water," which Nick thinks feels "warm in the sharp chill of the morning" (p. 95): life and death, day and night, light and dark, warm and cold, and the eternal circle sum up the situation here. And just as fish have been a symbol of vitality and fertility, so maiming has foreshadowed death.

In a later story, "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen" (1933), Hemingway again uses the symbol of the Fisher King to denote waste and futility, but he has split the maimed king's role between two characters: an unnamed, sensitive boy who amputates his genitals and a Jewish physician, Doc Fischer. This morbid tale which takes place in Kansas City on Christmas Day is narrated by a persona called Horace, a newspaper reporter, and concerns a boy of about sixteen who considers his erections sins against purity. The boy pleads with two doctors, Fischer and Wilcox, asking that they castrate him. They refuse, and the boy, not actually knowing what castration is, amputates his penis with a razor. He is brought to the hospital, but bungling Dr. Wilcox cannot stanch his loss of blood, and so the boy bleeds to death on Christmas.

Several points, especially a full comprehension of the nature of each character, are essential to an understanding of the story's meaning. Wilcox insists
on his full title (possibly reflecting his lack of confidence
in his own ability): Horace never refers to him except as
Doctor Wilcox, whereas Fischer is always the more familiar
"Doc." Not only is Wilcox incompetent, he is also harsh
and insensitive to others. When the boy makes his request,
Wilcox replies crudely:

"You're just a goddamned fool. . . .Oh, go
and ___________ [sic]."

"When you talk like that I don't hear you,"
the boy said with dignity to Doctor
Wilcox. . . .

"Get him out of here," Doctor Wilcox said.
(pps. 47-48)

When Fischer mentions that it is "the day, the very anniver-
sary, of our Saviour's birth," Wilcox's prejudiced reply
is "Our Saviour? Ain't you a Jew?" (p. 49). And, besides
his inability to save the boy's life, Wilcox drinks on
duty (p. 45) and relies entirely on The Young Doctor's
Friend and Guide. As Horace says,

Doctor Wilcox was sensitive about this
book but could not get along without
it. . . .He had bought it at the advice
of one of his professors who had said,
"Wilcox, you have no business being a
physician and I have done everything
in my power to prevent you from being
certified as one. Since you are now
a member of this learned profession I
advise you, in the name of humanity,
to obtain a copy of The Young Doctor's
Friend and Guide and use it, Doctor
Wilcox. Learn to use it. " (p. 44)
Fischer is a Christ figure. He is a slim, blond Jew, he is a "fisher of men," he heals men with his hands and has suffered for it (p. 49), and he has ridden an ass, as he makes evident when he tells Horace about the boy's death and Wilcox retorts:

"Well, I wish you wouldn't ride me about it... There isn't any need to ride me."

"Ride you, Doctor, on the day, the very anniversary, of our Saviour's birth?"

"Our Saviour? Ain't you a Jew?" Doctor Wilcox said.

"So I am. So I am. It always is slipping my mind. I've never given it its proper importance. So good of you to remind me. Your Saviour. That's right. Your Saviour, undoubtedly your Saviour—and the ride for Palm Sunday." (p. 49)

Fischer suffers, not only from Wilcox's prejudice, but also because of his own compassion. A "willingness to oblige" and a "lack of respect for Federal statutes" (p. 49), perhaps those which forbid doctors to aid fugitive criminals without reporting that aid, had caused him great trouble earlier, "on the coast." His compassion is obvious from his tender and sympathetic treatment of the boy, who responds by begging Fischer in particular to help him. Fischer's education is also obvious. Besides the "certain extravagance of [his] speech which seemed to... [Horace] to be of the utmost elegance" (p. 45), there are his attempt to speak to the boy in the latter's own religious
vernacular and the quality of his irony, his puns based on Biblical and medical metaphors. I have quoted the Wilcox-as-ass passage above; in another instance Fischer satirically alludes to St. Luke by referring to Wilcox as "the good physician" (p. 48); and, when Wilcox continues to stress Fischer's separateness from the rest of humanity because of his religion, Fischer replies, "You hear him? Having discovered my vulnerable point, my achilles tendon so to speak, the doctor pursues his advantage" (p. 50).

However, "education" does not of itself fully describe Fischer or adequately indicate his likeness to Christ. Fischer's superiority in ability, intelligence, self-confidence, and compassion irritates Wilcox and provokes him to a sarcastic comment—"You're too damned smart" (p. 50)—that both reflects Wilcox's own inadequacies and, ironically, defines Fischer's distinctions. And the same epithet could well have been hurled at Christ by his scorning contemporaries. Finally, both Christ and Fischer have visited hell—one to harrow, one to be harrowed:

"The hell with you," Doctor Wilcox said.

"All in good time, Doctor," Doc Fischer said. "All in good time. If there is such a place I shall certainly visit it. I have even had a very small look into it. No more than a peek, really. I looked away almost at once. (p. 50)
The ironic tone of the entire story, in fact, is established at the outset by the title, "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen," especially when we recall the full context of that line:

...Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Saviour was born on Christmas Day,
To save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray,
O tidings of comfort and joy....

As Harry Levin has said, "The ironic contrast--romantic preconception exploded by contact with harsh reality--is basic with Hemingway..." And instead of the pleasant home scene such a carol might suggest, where men might indeed rest themselves merry, we have the harsh carbolic-tainted atmosphere of a hospital where there is much to cause dismay, where Satan's power (here ignorance of bodily functions and a too-strict religious fundamentalism) have caused a boy's death, and where the tidings are far from comfortable and joyous.

As Hemingway says in its first paragraph, the Kansas City of the story is much like Constantinople in that both are characterized by dry, dusty, wind-blown hills. It is, in Frederick Hoffman's terms, a landscape as assailant: "...The prevailing landscape...suggests fear and loss as consequences of the disappearance of a vitally confident and a passionately felt trust..."
desert is in the city, the city in the desert. . . . Persons do not recognize each other, since they are not aware of the commitment necessary to spiritual relationship." And Fischer is impotent to save the boy's life in this waste land in which there is pain and loss and lack of human contact, and in which the crude and unfeeling like Wilcox ostracize and isolate the strange and the different——the hypersensitive boy and the Jewish doctor.

In "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (1936), Hemingway again uses a wound to indicate sterility, waste, and corruption. In this story, Harry, a writer, is dying from gangrene in his right leg as a result of an unattended, innocuous-seeming scratch of a thorn. 14 As he lies on a cot, watching the vultures and hyenas that smell his impending death and wait for him to die, Harry thinks of his life, his career, and his wife. He recalls much that he had experienced which had affected him profoundly, but about which he had never written until he could write about them properly: "Now he would never write the things that he had saved to write until he knew enough to write them well" (p. 54). And when Harry's wife asks, "Don't you love me?", he answers, "No, I don't think so. I never have" (p. 55). But then later he recants: "Don't pay any attention, darling, to what I say. I love you,
really. You know I love you." Thus he slips "into the familiar lie he made his bread and butter by" (p. 58). Harry's writing has been easy, slick, facile, and often untrue--like his life--ever since he married for money. And so "each day of not writing, of comfort, of being that which he despised dulled his ability and softened his will to work so that, finally, he did no work at all" (p. 59). "He had chosen to make his living with something else instead of a pen or a pencil" (p. 60). He had chosen to live by selling himself, his vitality, and he has been castrated by the act and rendered impotent: his ability to write is gone, he has failed "to work the fat off his soul," and he will die in a few hours. Because he has prostituted himself, there is no redemption for him. His leg wound symbolizes his personal corruption and moral decay, and his death.

Both Eliot's poem and the works of Hemingway I have discussed express the disillusionment, the sense of waste and sterility, that dominate the literature of the lost generation. Besides theirs, three other works published in the twenties are about maiming and sterility, two in 1928--Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point* and D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and one in 1929--William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*. 
In Lawrence's novel, Sir Clifford Chatterley, Bart., returns to England from World War I paralyzed from the waist down and impotent. Lawrence uses Chatterley's disability to represent both the decayed power of the nobility, particularly when it is out of touch with the common people, and the unhealthiness that Lawrence felt was inherent in a mechanized state which transfigured the land and turned men into grimy, unfeeling servants of industrialism. Sir Clifford, no longer capable of sexual creation, devotes himself to intellectual pursuits, to writing and to his business—the family collieries. Lady Chatterley's father says, "As for Clifford's writing, it's smart, but there's nothing in it. It won't last!" As for his business:

The curious thing was that when this child-man, which Clifford was now and which he had been becoming for years, emerged into the world, he was much sharper and keener than the real man he used to be. This perverted child-man was now a real business man. . . . When he was out among men, seeking his own ends, and "making good" his colliery workings, he had an almost uncanny shrewdness, hardness, and a straight sharp punch. . . . In business he was quite inhuman. (362-3)

Even Mrs. Bolton, who nurses and mothers Clifford, reacts against this unnaturalness:

. . . In some corner of her weird female soul, how she despised him
and hated him! . . . In the remotest corner of her ancient healthy womanhood she despised him with a savage contempt that knew no bounds. (p. 363)

The key words are inhuman and healthy. In business, Clifford is cold, practical, inhuman; and his conversations with his friends betray not only his coldness but also theirs, their "belief in the world of the mind" (p. 68), and their theoretical discussions of life as if it were a dry, mathematical problem. In contrast, Lawrence presents us with Mellors, the gamekeeper, warm, alive, sensitive, and—another key word—tender. (Tenderness was the original title of the novel [p. 13].) As Mark Schorer says in his introduction to the novel, "The basic contrast between life-affirming and life-denying values, between 'tenderness' and the 'insentient iron world' is the sole subject of Lawrence's symbolic amplifications. . ." (p. 32); and it is Mellors who represents the natural life of the forest and its inhabitants, and who gives life to Connie's child, while Clifford is not only sterile himself but represents the "insentient iron world." For Lawrence was violently opposed to all people who, whether in pursuit of wealth, God, or knowledge, denied their physical beings and thereby denied part of their lives. They were, for him, not fully alive, and so impotence and maiming became viable symbols for him.
Inhumanity is central, too, to *Point Counter Point*, for it is the common failing of nearly all the characters in the novel. One of the central characters, Philip Quarles, a self-portrait of Huxley, was lamed in childhood by an accident. His disability not only prevents him from leading a full life, but also symbolizes that deficiency. Denied complete physical resources, Quarles approaches everything intellectually and unemotionally—even his marriage. What feeling he has for his wife and son, he cannot articulate.

All his life long he had walked in solitude, in a private void, into which nobody, not his mother, not his friends, not his lovers had ever been permitted to enter. Even when he held her [his wife Elinor] thus, pressed close to him, it was by wireless, as she had said, and across an Atlantic that he communicated with her.

In Elinor's words, he is "almost human" (p. 93), and so, for one reason or another, is almost everyone in the book, with the exception of the Rampions, Huxley's fictional portrait of D. H. and Frieda Lawrence. Walter Bidlake leaves his pregnant mistress whom he doesn't love to chase after Lucy Tantamount, a woman who loves no one, but who indulges in parties, drinking, affairs, and general debauchery for no other reason but curiosity. Burlap is a monstrous hypocrite who tries to make love to his wife's best friend after his wife's death, and eventually drives the friend to suicide. Spandrell (whose life and
character is distantly based on Baudelaire's) is a compulsive sinner, debauchee, and—ultimately—murderer. Walter's and Elinor's father, John, is an old rake dying of cancer in the home of a wife who keeps repeating her name in an attempt to believe in her own existence. Quarles' son dies of meningitis in minutely described, horrifying scenes, interspersed primarily with details of Burlap's seduction of his frigid landlady. And so on.

The novel expresses Huxley's extreme disgust with humanity, and as Jocelyn Brooke says, Huxley's work resembles Eliot's Waste Land in that both deal with "broken images." And in Point Counter Point, especially, there are a plethora of such shattered, impotent figures. Lord Edward Tantamount, a cuckold, experiments with newts whose legs he amputates; and his brother Charles, born a cripple, spends his days being pulled about the family estate in a donkey cart while he devotes himself to trying to prove logically the existence of God. And Spandrell calls his step-father "an impotent old fumbler" (p. 99).

Throughout the novel Huxley weaves a theme of emasculation, as these separate quotations show: "I was talking about the world, not us. It's tame, I say. Like one of those horrible big gelded cats" (p. 111); "The cat, an enormous ginger eunuch" (p. 293); "...the impotent..."
Rampion, arguing with Spandrell about the spiritual quality of Beethoven's music, says, "Eunuchs are very spiritual lovers." And when Spandrell answers, "But Beethoven wasn't a eunuch," Rampion replies, "I know. But why did he try to be one? Why did he make castration and bodilessness his ideal? What's this music? Just a hymn in praise of eunuchism. . . . Couldn't he have chosen something more human than castration to sing about?" (p. 509).

The incompleteness of the castrato--physical and spiritual--is a theme which is also elaborated throughout the novel. Quarles' mother and wife discuss the effects of his wound thus: "It raised an artificial barrier between him and the rest of the world. . . . His poor smashed leg began by keeping him at a physical distance from girls of his own age. And it kept him at a psychological distance, too" (p. 271). Then Philip's mother has similar thoughts about her daughter-in-law Elinor as a mother manquée:

Elinor had many excellent qualities. But something seemed to be lacking in her. . . . It was as though she had been born without natural instincts. . . . To Rachel the reverence for holy things came naturally. It was Elinor's lack of this reverence, her inability even to realize that holy things were holy, which made it impossible for Mrs. Quarles to love her daughter-in-law as much as she would have liked. (pp. 308-9)
Rampion continues the same theme saying that "mechanical progress means more specialization and standardization of work, means more ready-made and unindividual amusements, means more intellectualism and the progressive atrophy of all the vital and fundamental things in human nature. . . . [People] live as idiots and machines all the time, at work and in their leisure. . . ." (p. 357). In fact, Huxley gives Rampion most of a chapter (34) to denounce the sterility of modern life:

". . . My God, what a horror! No body, no contact with the material world, no contact with human beings except through the intellect, no love. . . ."

"We've changed that a little. . . ." said Philip, smiling.

"Not really. You've admitted promiscuous fornication, that's all. But not love, not the natural contact and flow, not the denunciation of mental self-consciousness, not the abandonment to instinct. . . . That's the higher life. Which is the euphemistic name of incipient death."

(pp. 475-6)

Critics have noticed Huxley's dominant pessimism in Point Counter Point and have praised him for the novel's tightly controlled musical structure. What has not been so well noted is how Huxley's disgust and disillusion are echoed throughout the novel by varied but related themes of crippledness, by point-counter-point juxtapositions of maimed man and man manqué, in this symphonic treatment of the generation's broken images.
William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) also deals with decay and destruction, in this case of the Compson family, representatives for Faulkner of the old South with its genteel tradition, its honor, and its internal corruption. The Civil War and the ineptness of the post-bellum Compsons have cost them most of their property. What is left is mortgaged so that Quentin may go to Harvard; he commits suicide for twisted reasons of guilt and pride concerning his sister Candace, who afterward becomes a prostitute. The only males left who bear the once-proud name of Compson are miserly Jason and mentally defective Benjy. Jason has his idiot brother gelded after Benjy's "fumbling, abortive attempt... on a passing female child," and so is the last sexually capable male Compson. But Jason, as Faulkner repeatedly tells us, is childless. Thus Benjy's castration symbolizes his own inability to achieve conventional social contact and foreshadows the exhaustion of his family line. And since the Compsons represent the Old South, their ruin figures its demise in pride, in morals, and in character.

Faulkner again employed castration to signify ruin and desolation in *Light in August* (1932). One of the novel's protagonists, Joe Christmas, is thought to have some Negro "blood" in him. Faulkner never makes
clear whether Joe is part-Negro or not, but in the novel, the suspicion of mixed races stigmatizes Joe as surely as a more obvious deformity would. A childless farmer named McEachern adopts Joe from the orphanage where his grandfather has placed him. A strict fundamentalist, McEachern does not give the boy any affection, accustoming him to a brutal, loveless world where force rules; finally, in rebellion, Joe turns on McEachern and kills him.

Fleeing, he seeks for years to find a place for himself in one of the two races in which he might claim membership, but his light skin marks him as an outsider among Negroes, and he feels that his colored ancestry sets him apart from whites, as indeed it does whenever it is discovered. Denied love as a boy, Joe never experiences it in any of his numerous sexual encounters, the last of which, with Joanna Burden, leads directly to his destruction. As Joanna goes through menopause, she fears that she will lose her sexual hold on Joe, and so tries to force Joe to follow her plans for the future and to make him pray with her— as McEachern had forced him to pray. Joe rebels again and murders Joanna. He is eventually killed by Percy Grimm, a young National Guardsman who achieves, through his uniform, "a sublime and implicit faith in physical courage and blind obedience,
and a belief that the white race is superior to any and all other races. . . ." 22 First Grimm shoots Christmas, then castrates him, gaining "satisfaction from making Joe as unmanly as he is." 23 Where before emasculation foreshadowed, here it sums up: throughout the novel Joe is a victim--of a loveless childhood and of a futile search for personal identity, for peace, for quiet, and for a sense of belonging somewhere. Thus in the 1920's, one poet--T. S. Eliot--and four novelists--Hemingway, Lawrence, Huxley, and Faulkner--created literary works in which maimed characters symbolize sterility and failure.

Dramatists, too, use maiming, and deformity, as a sign of loss and futility. In Tennessee Williams' The Glass Menagerie (1945), Laura Wingfield is a girl crippled since childhood, further denied a normal youth by ill health and painful self-consciousness, who becomes more withdrawn as her mother Amanda increasingly tries to push the girl into the world and into contact with people. Laura retreats into an imaginary world populated by glass figurines--as fragile and as transparent as she--in which her mother's insistent voice is shut out by music from phonograph records left behind by the father who deserted them. When Amanda forces her son Tom to bring a fellow employee home to meet Laura, the gentleman caller 24 turns out to be Jim O'Connor, a boy on whom Laura had a crush
in high school. Jim is a victim of the American dream—of self-advancement courses, and the power of positive thinking propaganda. He is taking courses in public speaking and radio engineering and has grand plans for his future; but as Tom says:

He was shooting with such velocity through his adolescence that you would logically expect him to arrive at nothing short of the White House by the time he was thirty. But Jim apparently ran into more interference after his graduation from Soldan [High School]. His speed had definitely slowed. Six years after he left high school he was holding a job [shipping clerk] that wasn't much better than mine.

(sc. vi.)

Jim tries to infuse Laura with his enthusiasm, but fails. He is, as he calls himself, "a stumble-john" (sc. vii), who not only fails to make Laura more self-confident but makes her still less so, a confirmed recluse. While dancing, Laura and Jim bump into the table on which the unicorn stands, knocking it off and breaking it.

Jim: Aw, aw, aw. Is it broken?
Laura: Now it's just like all the other horses.
Jim: It's lost its---
Laura: Horn! It doesn't matter. Maybe it's a blessing in disguise. . . . I'll just imagine he had an operation. The horn was removed to make him feel less--freakish! Now he will feel more at home with the other horses, the ones that don't have horns. . . . " (sc. vii)
Here Laura's glass unicorn, the "star of her menagerie," serves not as an allegorical representation for Laura, but as a complex symbol for the whole play. By means of it, Williams can suggest not only Laura's sense of estrangement and Jim's impotence, but also—what would otherwise be ludicrous, using a phallic symbol for a girl—Laura's incompleteness and lack of sexual fulfillment.

First, the unicorn serves as a symbol for Laura herself, who feels as much set apart from society as the unicorn was distinct from the horses. The loss of the horn also has obvious Freudian implications for the situation: it suggests in general Laura's present and ultimate infertility, and in particular the fragmented act of love that occurs when Jim kisses her—which makes her radiant—then apologizes, calls himself a stumble-john again, and announces that he is engaged and can never see Laura again—which crushes her. She hands Jim the ruined unicorn as "a souvenir." Finally, as Roger B. Stein points out, the gentleman caller is a saviour who does not save, and the broken horn symbolizes "Jim's impotence when he tries to bring Laura into the 'real' world." The world Laura darkens when she blows out the candles at the end of the play is a planet being darkened indeed by the beginnings of World War II.

25
26
It is a world which denies fulfillment to both crippled Laura and stumble-john Jim and which will soon bring pain to millions.

Other works of literature also contain limpers whose wounds symbolize loss and waste. Bernard Malamud, whose *The Assistant* (1957) I discussed above, uses mythic materials quite deliberately in his first novel, *The Natural* (1952). It is, as Leslie Fiedler has pointed out, an extremely loose adaptation of the Parzival story, in which the quest for the Grail has been modernized and transmogrified into a quest for the league pennant by the Knights, a baseball team. Roy Hobbs, the natural talent of the title and the Parzival of this tale, uses Wonderboy, a bat he has carved out of a tree split by lightning. He is "Sir Percy lancing Sir Maldemer" (p. 32); he rides the Wonder Bed in the Castle of Wonders (p. 64); cf. *Parzival*, stanza 567); and he is a knight "in full armor, mounted on a black charger, . . . with a long lance as thick as a young tree" (p. 231). The Fisher King has been demeaned to Pop Fisher, the Knight's owner-manager; his famous wound, to athlete's foot on his hands; and the Waste Land, to "a blasted dry season. No rains at all. The grass is worn scabbey in the outfield and the infield is cracking . . . ." (p. 45). Roy's hitting cures Pop's athlete's foot and brings the Knights close to the pennant, but Roy's
misplaced love for Memo Paris, who wants more luxury than Roy can afford, tempts him to throw the crucial playoff game. When one hit will win the game for the Knights, Roy finally tries to get that hit, but a young pitcher, a natural, strikes him out as he, earlier in the novel, had struck out another hitting champ. So Roy fails the team, Pop, the fans who love and depend on him, and himself. The novel is one of wasted lives, futility and corruption. The Knights do not achieve their Grail, the Fisher King is not permanently healed, and Parzival, instead of becoming Grail King, suffers and causes suffering.

The emphasis here has been on the desolation symbolized in the literature of the lost generation, but of course authors before Eliot had made significant use of lame characters to figure sterility and impotence. For example, gout is almost a class sign in English literature, as cripples are an inevitable aftermath of war. However, just as authors have used war wounds symbolically—Jake's emasculation representing the sterility of his era—so at least one has also used gout. In Charles Dickens' *Bleak House* (1852-3), Sir Leicester Dedlock's debility is of a piece with the decline of his class and of his family, and it partakes of the general sense of malaise suggested in the novel by its title, the fog and rain that dim most of the proceedings, and even Sir Leicester's family
name, Dedlock. Like Clifford Chatterley after him, Sir Leicester is a member of a class which is losing its power to control: rotten boroughs are disappearing, and an election can no longer be swung for a few hundred pounds. The middle classes are ascending in wealth, in position, and in power, while the nobility must limp along. The Dedlock fortunes are decreasing, Sir Leicester's man does not win the local parliamentary seat, his estate of Chesney Wold is being swallowed up by the rain and is turning into a swamp, he is laid low first by gout and then by paralysis after Lady Dedlock leaves him, and he—the most noble of the Dedlocks and the least reprehensible bearer of that name—will die childless. As J. Hillis Miller says:

The self-enclosure of these characters is not a comfortable insulation... It is rather a somber interment... [There is] a kind of pervasive atmosphere of stalem­ness and immobility. And the life that is lived in this enclosure may be a physical or spiritual paralysis, like that of Grandfather Smallweed or that of Sir Leicester who is "like one of a race of eight-day clocks in gorgeous cases that never go or never went" (Ch. 18).29

It should be stressed, however, that Sir Leicester is as physically crippled as he is in forms of social action, particularly politics.

The theme of crippling—the many parts of man that can be crippled—fascinated Dickens and reappeared in Little Dorrit (1855-7). The central image of the novel
is Marshalsea Prison, but the objective correlative is imprisoning institutions of all kinds, particularly the Marshalsea and the Circumlocution office. A central character, Mrs. Glennam, is restricted to a wheelchair, the prisoner "of her wrathful Calvinist theology and a dark inward sense of guilt." 30 Another character, a schoolmaster and blighter of children's minds, is tag-named Mr. Cripples. Thus through name, plot, authorial commentary, and imagery, Dickens condemns all those institutions, public and private, which maim and pervert men and which continue the aridity that makes waste lands.

In this chapter I have tried to show how, by means of crippling wounds, authors indicate the failings, the incompetency, or the victimized state of certain of their characters. These characters inhabit a world which is usually bleak, sad, depressing. Their lives are grotesque, and perhaps our meetings with them can be best described by someone writing about other, similar grotesques, Paul Rosenfeld in his preface to The Sherwood Anderson Reader: 31

Almost, it seems, we touch an absolute existence, a curious semi-animal, semi-divine life. Its chronic state is banality, prostration, dismemberment, unconsciousness . . . . Its manifestation: the non-community of cranky or otherwise asocial solitaries, dispersed, impotent and imprisoned. . . . Its wonders—the wonders of its chaos—are fugitive heroes and heroines, mutilated like the dismembered Osiris, the dismembered Dionysius. . . .
III. STERILITY FIGURES

Part 2. Victimizers

Modern novels which involve psychological analysis often emphasize the complexity of man; they show that though a man may well be a victim of society or some unreasonable wound, he is also a victim of his own character and so is not entirely an innocent victim. Thus lame Oedipus is a victim of circumstance, but also of his own hubris, and he is a victimizer to the extent that Thebes suffers from the plague for which he is responsible. And so, while it is perhaps arbitrary to try to deal separately with characters who function primarily as victimizers, I think there are enough of these individuals who cause pain, and that enough of them occur in influential roles, to merit their classification into a sub-group, at least, of those maimed figures that inhabit—and here create—waste lands.

That such characters should be deformed—that they should, in particular, limp—is an ancient notion probably derived from two sources: deformity, from the Platonic concept that a man’s character was reflected in his appearance; limping, from the tradition that the Arch Enemy of man, Satan (Hebrew for "the adversary").
has cloven hooves\textsuperscript{33} which he can disguise but not entirely conceal should he take human shape. Thus Goethe's Mephisto has no obvious hooves, but does limp (Part I, sc. v: "Auerbachs Keller"): "Wass hinkt der Kerl auf einem Fuss?"\textsuperscript{34} Artistically, then, it is a small step from Devil to devil or demon, agent of malevolence and evil. Clinschor, the wicked magician in \textit{Parzival}, is a eunuch, castrated for adultery. And Shakespeare added lameness to the list of Richard III's deformities that appeared in Holinshed.

In more recent fiction, Charles Dickens makes obvious use of lameness as a sign of evil with Quilp and Rigaud, the \textit{diaboli ex machina} of \textit{The Old Curiosity Shop} (1840-1) and \textit{Little Dorrit} (1855-7), respectively. Quilp has crooked legs, is an ugly dwarf, and prefers his liquor boiling hot. Caught in villainy, Sampson Brass, Quilp's pathetic accomplice, complains that he is not responsible, that it is "Quilp, who deludes me into his infernal den, and takes delight in looking on and chuckling while I scorch, and burn, and bruise and maim myself. . . ."\textsuperscript{35} Of Rigaud, alias Blandois, alias Lagnier, the official villain of \textit{Little Dorrit}, Dickens says:

\begin{quote}
Cain might have looked as lonely and avoided. . . .Miry, footsore, his shoes and gaiters trodden out, . . .limping along in pain and difficulty; he looked as if the clouds were hurrying from him, . . .as if the fitful autumn night were
\end{quote}
disturbed by him. . . He limped on. . . , toiling and muttering. "To the devil with this plain that has no end! To the devil with these stones that cut like knives! . . . I hate you!" [Later, villagers speaking of Rigaud say] because the man was acquitted on his trial, the people said. . . that the Devil was let loose.  

Meanwhile, Rigaud himself sits at the stove, smoking and warming his feet.

Thomas Mann has also depicted deformed demonic characters. In "Mario and the Magician" (1929), for example, Cipolla, the magician of the title, is a perverted mesmerist. Although there is no explicit evidence that the story is allegorical rather than symbolic, Cipolla is a Fascist demagogue whose career, even prophetically, parallels Mussolini's in some ways.  

Cipolla is a Platonic portrait of evil whose malignancies are made manifest in his rotten teeth, his hunchback, his lameness, and his homosexuality. Moreover, Cipolla's excessive drinking and smoking serve as the fuels for his infernal power. In the same story, Mann reinforces limping as a sign of evil—self-centered, destructive evil—by describing how a local boy, Fuggerio, has his toe pinched by a crab:

[Fuggerio was] a repulsive youngster whose sunburn had made disgusting raw sores on his shoulders. He outdid anything I have ever seen for ill-breeding, refractoriness, and temper and was a great coward to boot . . . . A sand-crab pinched his toe in the
water, and the minute injury made him set up a cry of heroic proportions—the shout of an antique hero in his agony—that pierced one to the marrow and called up visions of some frightful tragedy. Evidently he considered himself not only wounded, but poisoned as well.

Later Fuggerio makes the townspeople feel the national indignity done to them when the narrator's eight-year-old daughter takes her bathing suit off to rinse it clean on the public beach. Mann has reduced the plight of Achilles and Heracles to that of a boy whose toe is pinched by a crab, and Italian super-patriotism to an incident about a nude child, a bitterly satiric comment on Fascist megalomania and Mussolini's plans for restoring to Italy the grandeur of the Roman Empire.

Again in the thirteenth chapter of Dr. Faustus (1947), Mann has used lameness as a sign of demonism for Schleppfuss, Adrian Leverkühn's theology instructor at Halle. Schleppfuss, who dresses in black, has pointed teeth and is remembered by the novel's narrator as dragging one foot when he walked, is an advocatus diaboli who impresses on Leverkühn the nature of evil and the role of women as tempters: women who for Leverkühn are associated with Hanne—the stable-girl whose bare feet were caked with dung and who introduced the great
composer-to-be to music, especially to its bovine warmth—and with the Leipzig whore who gives him the syphilis that inspires and destroys him.

And there appears in James Thurber's *The 13 Clocks* (1950) a limping diabolical figure who, for all the lightness with which Thurber treats him, is actually closer to the archetypal limper than is Satan himself.

... There lived a cold, aggressive Duke, and his niece [actually a kidnapped girl, no relation], the Princess Saralinda. She was warm in every wind and weather, but he was always cold. His hands were as cold as his smile and almost as cold as his heart. He wore gloves when he was asleep; and he wore gloves when he was awake. ... He was six feet four, and forty-six and even colder than he thought he was. One eye wore a velvet patch; the other glittered through a monocle. ... His nights were spent in evil dreams, and his days were given to wicked schemes. ... Even the hands of his watch and the hands of all the thirteen clocks were frozen. Travelers ... would ... say, "Time lies frozen there. It's always Then. It's never Now."

The murderous Duke, who limps because one leg has grown longer than the other due to his constant practice during childhood of using the same foot to drop-kick puppies, is quite obviously a winter king, associated with cold, darkness, and moribund life. His antagonist for Saralinda's hand, a prince named Zorn of Zorna, is young, handsome, vital, and even-legged; and Zorn, in spite of the Duke's wicked machinations, wins Saralinda's freedom for her, as
well as her hand in marriage. As he does so, time is thawed by the princess's warm hand, the thirteen frozen clocks thaw and strike the hour, "a morning glory that had never opened, opened..." (p. 107), and Zorn and Saralinda set sail for the Blessed Isles of Ever After. Spring triumphs over winter once again. A character named Hark in Thurber's romance says, "There are rules and rites and rituals, older than the sound of bells and snow on mountains" (p. 98). The eternal cycle of the seasons is as old as the earth; the ritual enactment of that cycle is almost as old as man. As I have indicated in previous discussion, the winter king in such rituals was often represented by a cloven-hoofed boar. And still in modern literature, those who seek life, love, or purpose have to contend with those who pervert, corrupt, defame, and destroy—with enemies who bear the mark of The Enemy: lameness.

In this chapter I have made a division between limping characters caught up in a sterile, futile world, symbolizing that world, and those who, to a large extent, are responsible for that sterility. I have put Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Huxley's *Point Counter Point* in the section on victims, yet the authors obviously intend that the characters in their works be seen as at least partly responsible for their own predicaments. There are thus victimizers, victims, and self-victimizers—
but such fine discriminations, besides being extremely difficult to make, are beyond my purpose. I want to show not the minute motivations of each character, nor how much of him is good or bad, but how modern writers use maiming to symbolize certain things about their characters. Thus, Clifford Chatterley's narrow class consciousness and warped personality are in large part responsible for the sterile state in which Lawrence depicts Chatterley, even though the immediate cause of the latter's impotence is his war wound, which serves as an objective correlative for his inner faults. I have placed Chatterley among the victims of a sterile world; another might see him more as sinning than sinned against. But the degree of his own involvement in his restricted condition is a moot point I will leave to others. I stress his wound--and the Fisher King's--as a sign of their common sterility.
FOOTNOTES:


2. Roger Sherman Loomis constructs a sound case for the development of the Fisher King's story from the history of Bran. (Loomis, pp. 64, 170-1, 242-50, 350-55; and 386, where he cites the similar conclusions of Heinrich, Nutt, Rhys, Anwyl, Brown, Kempe, Nitze, and Newstead. Also W.T.H. Jackson, p. 113.) This development includes such variations and innumerable doublets of the maimed king as Bron, Brons, Joseph of Arimethea, Pellinor, Pellehan, "Bliocadran," Gahmuret, Amfortas, Sir Percivale, and Peredur. (See the pp. cited in Loomis above; see also, and especially, p. 511. For Sir Percivale, *Le Morte D'Arthur*, XIV, x. For Peredur, *Mabinogion*, p. 206. I cannot help but wonder if Tristan's two noisome wounds near his loins, accompanied as they are by widespread lamenting, owe something to the traditional location of the Fisher King's wounds. Cf. Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan*, trans. A.T. Hatto [Middlesex, 1960], pp. 7, 35-6, 138, 341.)


6 Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* (New York, 1926), p. 16. Subsequent references to Hemingway's novel will be paginated in my text and will refer to this edition.

7 *The Twenties*, pp. 66-76.

8 April, 1924, *transatlantic review*, pp. 230-34; later in *In Our Time* (New York, 1925).

9 *The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway* (New York, 1938), p. 94. Subsequent references to Hemingway's short stories will be paginated in my text and will refer to this edition.

10 Critics have noticed Hemingway's concern with suicide in "Fathers and Sons" (1933) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), and their interest has intensified since he killed himself in 1961. They usually date Hemingway's
concern with his father's suicide in 1928, but "Indian Camp" shows his interest in the subject four years earlier.

11 Of course, Achilles was a sacred king, a fertility figure who was killed at full virility, often at the winter solstice. And if Graves is correct in identifying mistletoe with Uranus' severed testicles (GM, I, 37-38, 41), then the day of the boy's death gains additional ironic significance.


14 "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" first appeared in Esquire, August 1936. Hemingway could read French fluently, and I wonder if he had read and was influenced by Andre Malrauz's The Royal Way (1930), in which a sexually impotent adventurer, Perken, a burnt-out shell of a man, dies of gangrene which results when a Cambodian war spike penetrates under his kneecap.

15 Interestingly, Mark Rampion, a character in Huxley's novel, is based on D. H. Lawrence and propounds and lives by the philosophy of the full life which Lawrence incorporates into Lady Chatterley. (Jocelyn Brooke, Aldous Huxley [London, 1954], p. 21; John Atkins, Aldous Huxley [New York, 1956], pp. 137ff.)
Cf. The Mortal No, p. 417. Hoffman describes the scene of the novel as an "industrial wasteland," a "lost world," and says:

Clifford Chatterley is an additional thrust at the image of modern hell. His role of the diseased "fisher king" is a parody of Eliot's use of the idea. His paralysis leaves him deprived not only of sexual power but of sensual will, and he behaves like a child going about in a plaything mechanical chair, through which he pettishly exercises control over his universe.

D. H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover (New York, 1959), p. 51. Subsequent quotations from this novel will be paginated in my text and will refer to this Grove Press edition, edited by Mark Schorer.

Point Counter Point (New York, 1947), Intro. by Harold H. Watts, p. xxi; Atkins, p. 140.

Aldous Huxley, Point Counter Point (New York, 1928), p. 90. Subsequent quotations will be paginated in my text and will refer to this edition.

Brooke, p. 8.

William Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury (New York, 1946), p. 18. Similar is Thomas Mann's novel Buddenbrooks (1900), about the decline and fall of the genteel Buddenbrooks family. The decay becomes apparent
in the fourth generation in the novel, and is marked—among other signs—by Christian Buddenbrooks' sciatica-producing lameness.


24 That Williams is conscious not only of ancient mythology but also of modern psychiatry is evident from this speech of Tom's at the opening of scene three: "... The idea of getting a gentleman caller for Laura began to play a more and more important part in mother's calculations. It became an obsession. Like some archetype of the universal unconscious, the image of the gentleman caller haunted our small apartment. ..." *The Glass Menagerie* (New York, 1945). Moreover, Laura does not limp in "Girl in Glass," the short story on which this play is based. Williams obviously added this physical flaw to Laura so that it might constantly remind the audiences of her plight.


26 Ibid., p. 149.

28. He must be Parzival because he does heal Pop Fisher, even if only temporarily. Parzival, too, was a natural, brave from birth and born to become Grail King (cf. **The Natural** [New York, 1952], p. 237, "He coulda been king"), though very much of a fool or simpleton at first (Loomis, p. 239). And the name of Roy Hobbs, it seems to me, means King Lout or King Rustic.


30. Edgar Johnson, **Charles Dickens** (New York, 1952), II, 886.


32. See Stith Thompson, **Motif-Index of Folk Literature** (Bloomington, Indiana, 1956) III, 137-8, 165-6, 321-2; Motifs F551, F517, and esp. G303.4.5., resp.

33. It seems that the Devil has cloven hooves because a common Hebrew word for demon, or satyr (*satyr* appears in the New Revised Standard Edition at Lev. 17:7, Is. 13:21, and 34:14) means literally he-goats, and these demons were so pictured. "Just as the Arabs degraded the gods of the heathen to *jinn* and attributed to them some of the hairy characteristics of animals, so these satyrs appear to have
been originally heathen deities."

"Satan is clearly a development out of the group of spirits which were in earlier days thought to form Jahweh's court, members of which were sent upon errands of disaster to men" (George A. Barton, "Hebrew Demons and Spirits," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics [New York, 1951], IV, 598), and he has retained one of the animal characteristics of that group: cloven hooves.

34 Thomas Mann said that Mephisto "is the genius of fire, he has reserved to himself that destructive, sterilizing, annihilating element. The red waistcoat and the cock's feather are the outward signs of his infernal nature. . . . The cloven hoof is replaced by a slight limp" (Essays, trans. H.T. Lowe-Porter [New York, 1957], p. 26). Cf. Mann's treatment of Cipolla.

35 The Old Curiosity Shop (London, 1907), p. 484.


Significantly, too, the narrator learns of Leverkühn's visit to the whore in a letter in which Leverkühn tells "what is afoot betwixt me and Satan," how he was led to the whorehouse by a guide with "diabolical pronunciation," a "small-beer-Schleppfuss," whom the narrator terms Adrian's "betrayer." (Thomas Mann, Doctor Faustus, trans. H.T. Lowe-Porter [New York, 1948], pp. 141, 142, 148.)

James Thurber, The 13 Clocks (New York, 1950), pp. 17-18. Subsequent quotations from this romance will be paginated in my text and will refer to this edition.

IV. HUMAN BEINGS

The final category I wish to treat, and the largest, is that in which the wound signifies its bearer's "humanness"—his frailties, his weaknesses, his mortality—in existential terms, the absurdity of being a limited man with unlimited hopes, visions, and dreams. And I must repeat that by a category I simply mean those characters evincing sufficient functional similarity to be discussed as a group, and not some absolutely definable type. Men are complex and paradoxical; why should symbols which represent them be any less so? And as there was ambivalence in the previous chapter between victims and victimizers, so will there be in this section; indeed, according to some authors, to be born is to be a victim. Furthermore, there may be different but equally valid interpretations of a work of art; Hamlet is the greater for its complexity, not lesser because critics cannot agree about why Hamlet acts as he does. Similarly, although I have mentioned both Oedipus and Jake Barnes before in contexts of sterility, I shall discuss them again here as examples of common humanity; for my
purpose is to show how an awareness of the limping hero
can enrich our comprehension of literature: I wish to
define a tool for use for greater understanding more than
I wish to provide definitive interpretations.

In mythology, pain was often a requisite price for
knowledge. Mutilation often accompanied one's ritual of
initiation into the sacred mysteries of his tribe and it
was also the price that many individuals paid for initiation
into secret mysteries of nature. 1  Odin gave an eye that
he might drink from the Well of Wisdom, then hung nine
days crucified on "a wind-rocked tree" in order to learn
the secret of Runes. Smithcraft, too, was considered a
sacred mystery. "...Every Bronze Age tool, weapon, or
utensil had magical properties and...the smith was some­
thing of a sorcerer...That the Smith-god hobbles is
a tradition found in regions as far apart as West Africa
and Scandinavia...
2  The most famous lame smith is,
of course, Hephaestus-Vulcan; another is the hamstrung
Norse smith Weyland.

Men have made pacts, covenants marked by pain,
with God or Devil that assured them greater wisdom or
power from the time of Jacob, who was lamed on becoming
Israel, till the time of Adrian Leverkühn in Thomas
Mann's Dr. Faustus, who gave his soul to the Devil and
his body to the slow, torturous death of syphilis for
great musical ability. As Mann says:

> . . .Certain attainments of the soul
> and intellect are impossible without
disease, without insanity, without
spiritual crime, and the great invalids
are crucified victims, sacrificed to
humanity and its advancement, to the
broadening of its feeling and knowledge--
in short, to its more sublime health.³

Friedrich Nietzsche and Edmund Wilson have said the same:
"It is as though the myth [of Oedipus] whispered to us
that wisdom. . . .is an unnatural crime, and that whoever,
in pride of knowledge, hurls nature into the abyss of
destruction, must himself experience nature's disinte-
gration";⁴ "...genius and disease, like strength and
mutilation, may be inextricably bound up together."⁵
And so lame Oedipus, scarred almost from birth, whose
knowledge causes the Sphinx to destroy herself, pays
for his knowledge through his crimes and his guilt.
Wilson was speaking of Philoctetes, of whom he said:
"The victim of a maladorous disease which renders him
abhorrent to society and periodically degrades him and
makes him helpless is also the master of a superhuman
art which everybody has to respect and which the normal
man finds he needs."⁶

At the end of Philoctetes, Heracles tells
Philoctetes, "...You/ Must win, it is ordained, through
Like Oedipus, Philoctetes possesses special talent, and like Oedipus he suffers. Says the chorus of him, "'Tis ever a curse for a man to be marked/ Above the common lot" (p. 170):

No other again
Has yet come near
To such misery,
Such endless pain;
Never has been
Such an agony
As the man we have seen
Has suffered here.

This fate he endures,
This wickedness,
Who had done no wrong
By force or fraud
To any on earth
His whole life long,
A lover of truth
and gentleness.

Tis a wonder to know
How patiently
Year after year,
As the days of woe
Dragged slowly on,
He has lingered here,
Listening alone
To the sound of the sea. (pp. 185-186)

What the Chorus says of Philoctetes might also be said for that other patient sufferer, Job. Both pay grievously for the knowledge their pain brings them.

Ever since the expulsion from Eden, man's lot has been pain. Frye links Philoctetes with Adam:

In many tragedies... the central character survives, so that the action closes with
some adjustment to a new and more mature experience. "Henceforth I learn that to obey is best," says Adam, as he and Eve go hand in hand out to the world before them. A less clear cut but similar resolution occurs when Philoctetes, whose serpent wound reminds us a little of Adam, is taken off his island to enter the Trojan war.8

Man, if he is to survive, must adjust, however painfully.

Such is the lesson, too, of The Sun Also Rises (1926). The world depicted is a sterile one, and the lives of most of the characters are empty and futile. Denied the fulfillment of sexual love, marriage, and children, Jake Barnes seeks gratification in drinking, fishing, and male companionship; but like Nick Adams in "Big Two-Hearted River," Jake must manage these pleasures very carefully, lest he lose control on them—and on himself.

My head started to work. The old grievance. Well it was a rotten way to be wounded and flying on a joke front like the Italian. . . . In the Ospedale Maggiore. . . .that was where the liason colonel came to visit me. . . . I was all bandaged up. But they had told him about it. Then he made a wonderful speech: "You, a foreigner, . . . have given more than your life. . . .Che mala fortuna! Che mala fortuna!

. . .I lay awake thinking and my mind jumping around. Then I couldn't keep away from it, and I started to think about Brett and all the rest of it went away. I was thinking about Brett and my mind stopped jumping around and started to go in smooth waves. Then all of a sudden I started to cry. (p. 31)
In a little while I felt like hell again. It is awfully easy to be hard-boiled about everything in the daytime, but at night it is another thing. (p. 34)

Jake lives in a chaotic world not of his own making, and he has been crippled by it. The only order in the world is that which Jake can impose on it. Like Romero, a symbolic counterpart whose life depends on precise, carefully controlled movements, so Jake's existence, his dignity, and his peace of mind depend on the carefully patterned response he can make to life.

...In the face of necessities forced upon him by the several levels of isolation (forms of impotence), Jake fashions for himself a pattern of discretion and restraint. ... Jake must practice a code, must suppress anger and fear, must accept his condition. ... The wound has forced him into a position where survival and sanity depend upon his balance and self-restraint.

And he does make a patterned response, he does impose order. Like Count Mippipopolous, Jake has "lived very much" and has learned the secret: "to know the values" (p. 60). He has learned to value the friendship of Bill Gorton, with whom he can talk freely, drink freely, and fish, and with whom he can share the beauty of the land, the riches of nature:

We ate the sandwiches and drank the Chablis and watched the country out of the window. The grain was just beginning to ripen and the fields were full of poppies. The pastureland was green, and there were fine trees, and sometimes big rivers and chateaux off in the trees. (p. 87)
It was a beech wood and the trees were very old. Their roots bulked above the ground and the branches were twisted. We walked on the road between the thick trunks of the old beeches and the sunlight came through the leaves in light patches on the grass. The trees were big, and the foliage was thick but it was not gloomy. . . ."This is country," Bill said. (p. 117)

And as Philip Young has said, Hemingway richly invokes the beauty of the eternal earth; and since Hemingway does so through Jake's point of view and narration, we are convinced that Jake does value what he sees. He also likes to fish, and he makes us share that love:

... As I baited up, a trout shot up out of the white water into the falls and was carried down. Before I could finish baiting, another trout jumped at the falls, making the same lovely arc and disappearing into the water that was thundering down. I put on a good-sized sinker and dropped into the white water close to the edge of the timbers of the dam.

I did not feel the first trout strike. When I started to pull up I felt that I had one and brought him, fighting and bending the rod almost double, out of the boiling water at the foot of the falls, and swung him up and onto the dam. He was a good trout, and I banged his head against the timber so that he quivered out straight, and then slipped him into my bag. (p. 119)

Most importantly, Jake values artistry like Romero's which, through restraint and control, imposes order on confusion and confers dignity and even beauty on the artist.

Romero's bull-fighting gave real emotion, because he kept the absolute purity of line in his movements and always quietly
and calmly let the horns pass him close each time. He did not have to emphasize their closeness. . . . Romero had the old thing, the holding of his purity of line through the maximum of exposure, while he dominated the bull by making him realize he was unattainable, while he prepared for the killing. (p. 168)

Thus Jake's personal limitations, as well as the sterility of his world, are symbolized by his emasculation. And to the extent that each of us is unable to achieve our desires, we all are to some extent impotent, limited, and restricted. But Jake, like most of us, adjusts, survives, and finds pleasure and enjoyment where he can.

Another maimed and restricted figure in American literature, but one at the opposite end of the spectrum of adjustment from Jake Barnes, is Captain Ahab, in *Moby Dick* (1851). We know that Melville was a voracious reader, and the vast tapestry of his novel contains threads from many mythologies, Oriental and Occidental, and especially Christian. These allusions all enrich the novel, but the following are the most pertinent to this study: the *Pequod* leaves Nantucket on Christmas, the day of the winter solstice and a day appointed for (the beginning at least) of the ritual combat between sacred kings and their successors. And "Ahab, like the divine hero Adonis, suffered a 'seemingly inexplicable, unimaginable casualty.' . . . Like the saviour-heroes, Ahab withdrew from the world after being wounded. Only when . . . [he] began to feel
the springlike breath from the south [p. 111] did Ahab return to the world to perform his fated task. "11

Ahab is like ancient Adonis; he is also like the medieval Fisher King. The autumn before the Pequod leaves Nantucket there occurs the "inexplicable casualty" mentioned above, a doubling of the wound that deprived Ahab of his leg.

[Ahab] had been found one night lying prone upon the ground, and insensible, ... his ivory limb having been so violently displaced, that it had stake-wise smitten, and all but pierced his groin; nor was it without extreme difficulty that the agonizing wound was entirely cured. Nor. . .had it failed to enter his monomaniac mind, that all the anguish of that then present suffering was but the direct issue of a former woe; and he too plainly seemed to see, that as the most poisonous reptile of the marsh perpetuates his kind as inevitably as the sweetest songster of the grove; so, . . .equally. . ., all miserable events do beget their like.

(pp. 355-6)

And so does this one. The shattered leg is only one of many omens of doom which Ahab receives, and the groin wound not only presages failure, but its agonizing nature and resistance to cure make it a counterpart to the other debility of Ahab's which Melville mentions in this same passage: Ahab's monomaniac mind.

For Ahab's quest is mad, mad with hubris. Starbuck calls it blasphemy, but Ahab replies:

All visible objects, man, are but as pasteboard masks. But in each event-- in the living act, the undoubted deed--
there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the mouldings of its features from behind the unreasoning mask. If man will strike, strike through the mask! How can the prisoner reach outside except by thrusting through the wall? To me, the white whale is that wall. . . .(p. 139)

Ahab would pit man's puny might against the whale, against nature. He is man who cannot endure, who cannot adjust, who is mad and doomed to failure in an unequal contest, but who is also magnificent in his courage in spite of the omens and in the face of death itself. He is heroic in his attempt to force nature to take cognizance of man, to make the cosmos recognize the strength of man's will and determination. And he dies like the gods of Norse mythology—and like Macbeth, in combat with the enemy he has hurt most.

Ahab's great wound portends the failure of his revenge; his "dismasting" has Freudian implications, too. The closer he comes to Moby Dick, the more Ahab abjures human relationships: he leaves behind wife and child, does not consider the lives and fortunes of his crew, denies Starbuck's aid and friendship, and finally, he even deserts Pip—or rather, forces Pip to desert him:

Lad, lad, I tell thee thou must not follow Ahab now. The hour is coming when Ahab would not scare thee from him, yet would not have thee by him. There is that in thee, poor lad, which I feel too curing to my malady. (p. 402)
It is bitterly ironic that he loses all ties with humanity in his effort to impress the human will on nature.

Ahab and Jake Barnes represent two of the reactions described by modern authors to man's limited condition: rebellion and adjustment. There is a third response, not really an action at all, not as heroic as rebellion nor as practical as adjustment, an ambiguous response hard to locate on any sort of continuum: endurance—painful, long-suffering endurance, like that of Job. These are three ways in which man reacts to the conditions of his life.

Theologically, limitations have been man's lot since Adam was driven from Eden, and since then laming has symbolized man's plight. In the Bible, God says to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; they shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise their heel" (Gen. 3:15). And to indicate the longevity of this condition and its human ubiquity, characters who symbolize humanity by limping have frequently been named Adam: Hemingway's Nick Adams, Wilder's Mr. Antrobus, Isak Dinesen's Adam, and Robert Penn Warren's Adam Rosenzweig, among others.

Ernest Hemingway's Nick Adams appears in several volumes of short stories. He is wounded in Chapter VI of In Our Time (1924); in the story "Cross Country Snow" in the same volume, we learn that he cannot telemark because
of his leg. In *Men Without Women* (1927), the unnamed narrator of "In Another Country" (apparently Nick) is receiving therapy to help him bend a stiff knee, and other victims of the war are patients in the same hospital, also receiving aid in an attempt to live normally in spite of their injuries. In *Winner Take Nothing* (1933), in a story significantly titled "A Way You'll Never Be," Nick suffers not only from his stiff leg but also from brain damage, or psychological injuries, sustained when he was wounded. He says to a friend, "Let's not talk about how I am. . . . It's a subject I know too much about to want to think about it any more."¹⁴ The stories about Nick Adams, as I said in the previous chapter, are tales of initiation: Nick encounters the pains of growing up and learns what a man can and cannot do. Philip Young summarizes Nick's career thus:

A short paragraph reveals that Nick is in the war, tells us that he has been hit in the spine, and that he has made a "separate peace" with the enemy. . . . It would be quite impossible to exaggerate the importance of this short scene, which is to be duplicated by a new protagonist named Frederic Henry in *A Farewell to Arms*, and to serve as climax for all of Hemingway's heroes for at least the next twenty-five years.

. . . This shell that has caught Nick in the spine is of a piece with the blows he took [as a boy in Michigan]. . . . This wound, which is to be the wound which emasculates Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises* and is to hospitalize Lt. Henry in *A Farewell to*
Arms, and whose scar Col. Cantwell bears more than thirty years later in *Across the River and into the Trees*, is significant even beyond these facts. From here on in, the Hemingway hero is to be a wounded man, wounded not only physically but . . . psychically as well. . . .[Nick's] experiences have. . . cripples him, as Hemingway was also to show, as surely as his initiation to shrapnel has done.

. . . The manhood [Nick]. . . attained was . . . complicated and insecure, but he was learning a code with which he might maneuver, though crippled, and he was practicing the rites which for him might exorcise the terrors born of the events that crippled him.15

Nick, and after him Jake Barnes--whose full first name, significantly, is Jacob--must painfully adjust to life. The kingdom of which Jake is symbolic ruler--as Jacob was ruler of Israel--is no promised land of milk and honey, but is instead a modern waste land*^ where man's life is circumscribed by pain and loss, and his achievements are limited by his limited abilities.

War, which has forced Nick and Jake to adjust, has given similar unreasonable wounds to others. Richard Plumes--in Lawrence Stallings' *Plumes* (1924)--a contemporary of Nick, is descended from a family whose representatives have been wounded in the Revolutionary, Civil, and Spanish-American Wars. Richard has a thigh mutilated and a knee shattered in the First World War; and although he wears leg braces, he needs crutches or heavy canes to walk.
Stallings makes it clear that Richard is not alone in his plight: there are other crippled veterans looking for jobs in a new United States. They had gone to war as optimistic boys and returned as cynical, battle-hardened veterans intimately acquainted with death. They had left a country unsure of its strength or its place in the world, but they returned to a loud, clamorous, optimistic nation. And they had to adjust to the new society as much as they did to their own maimed selves. Plumes finally gets a job in a chemical laboratory run by the federal government—the one agency whose possible bias toward cripples Richard can lay a claim against. His supervisor, Mr. Gary, "a sallow, reed-like young man, with a face that might have worn a crown of thorns, limped from both ankles..." (p. 109). Plumes too makes a separate peace: he had gone to war because it had been the family tradition that a Plumes always fought in the battles of the United States; Richard decides that if his son ever goes to war it will not be because he believes that dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.

War and lameness figure also in Thorton Wilder's The Skin of Our Teeth (1942), John Knowles' A Separate Peace (1959), and Robert Penn Warren's Wilderness (1961). George Antrobus in Wilder's play about la condition humaine is a metaphor for all men. He is man, anthropos,
and Adam: "He comes of very old stock and has made his way up from next to nothing. It is reported that he was once a gardener but left that situation..."\textsuperscript{17} He is also Noah; a moralist and a lecher; inventor of the wheel, alphabet, and multiplication tables; and a ceaseless quester after improvement, material, mental, and spiritual. He and his family endure the glacier, the Flood, and a war, and he returns from the last limping. Wilder's theme is that man faces constant crises, many of his own making, but that he always survives by the skin of his teeth. He survives, but he suffers pain, anguish, and misery, and his lameness is a sign of that suffering.

Knowles' novel is about two boys in a New England prep school in the summer, fall, and winter of 1942. They are approaching manhood, which at another time would mean college and jobs in a secure future, but now boys their own age are going to war and to death. Their school, which has trained thousands of boys in the humanities, is now training them for war. Part of the school is even taken over by the army. Gene, the protagonist of the novel, is an intelligent boy of better-than-average physical prowess, but his best friend Phineas possesses natural grace, daring, and great personal magnetism—and Gene is envious. One day when Phineas dares Gene to leap with him from a tree limb into a river, Gene jars
the limb, causing Phineas to lose his balance and fall, crushing his leg on the river bank below. Phineas' wound in *A Separate Peace* is as much an unreasonable wound as any in Hemingway's works. For Phineas must learn to cope with his changed state and his hatred of Gene as much, if not more, than with the wound itself. And Gene must deal with his guilt, his love for, and his responsibility to ungraceful, crippled Phineas. Phineas' shattered leg and its effect on the two boys echoes the way World War II has shattered their lives. It is not only unreasonable, but it even seems unreal—a nightmare consisting of lurid accounts in the press, radio, and movies, a malicious joke perpetrated by adults, affecting them only by the changes it has wrought on their sequestered school. Phineas breaks his leg again and dies, but not before he and Gene have come to terms with one another. In the process, Gene learns not to fear himself or others. Through the love, understanding, and sacrifice of Phineas, Gene makes the most important peace of all, with himself, as he grows up.

Warren's novel *Wilderness* concerns a clubfooted Bavarian Jew named Adam Rosencweig, who comes to America in search of freedom. Christ, the second Adam, wandered forty days in the wilderness; Warren, in this novel of strained parallels, has his Adam wander through the Civil War Battle of Wilderness. Rosencweig finds that laws
alone do not inhibit freedom; like Gene, he finds his freedom when he finds himself. One of the epigraphs to the novel is from Pascal's *Pensées*, number 397:

The greatness of man is great in that he knows himself to be miserable. A tree does not know itself to be miserable. It is then being miserable to know oneself to be miserable; but it is also being great to know that one is miserable.  

Fleeing Rebels overpower Adam and steal his boots, including the surgical one that enables him to walk with a minimum of difficulty. The novel ends, in Warren's trite and blatant metaphor, as Adam manages to stand on his own, bare two feet. He is alone in a strange country on a field of war; he is a Jew among Gentiles, a cripple without friends or special talent. We might well expect him to be miserable, but he accepts his lot, and Warren would have us think Adam great.

The final Adam I wish to discuss is the limping Adam of Isak Dinesen's "Sorrow Acre" (1942), a story which, like Wilder's play, is a metaphor for life. Dinesen makes distinct parallels between the setting of the story, a Danish farm in the eighteenth century, and the story of creation in the Bible: "The garden and the fields had been...[Adam's] childhood paradise"; and when his uncle offers him snuff, Adam replies, "No, thank you, Uncle, it would ruin my nose to the scent of your
garden, which is as fresh as the Garden of Eden, newly created." "From every tree of which," said his uncle smiling, "thou, my Adam, mayest freely eat" (p. 59).

Adam's uncle is the god of this tale—he has the power of life and death over his peasants—and he teaches Adam that power brings with it responsibility, suffering, even pain. Lame Adam learns that "all that lived must suffer; the old man, whom he had judged hardly, had suffered, as he had watched his son die, and had dreaded the obliteration of his being. He himself would come to know ache, tears and remorse, and, even through these, the fullness of life" (p. 62).

Lameness, then, in these works of Hemingway, Stallings, Wilder, Knowles, Warren, and Dinesen that I have discussed in this chapter, signifies that man no longer dwells in Paradise. There is still much that he can enjoy in life, but he must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, and sometimes his place in life through the bloodshed of others. He must know pain, deprivation, and death. He is unlike the characters in the previous chapter, in that he does not inhabit a land entirely waste and desolate. All is not pain, loss, cynicism, and despair; instead, these novels contain a realistic picture of life as most of us know it and live it. Northrop Frye states the condition in this fashion:

As soon as Adam falls, he enters his own created life, which is also the
order of nature as we know it. The tragedy of Adam, therefore, resolves, like all other tragedies, in the manifestation of natural law. He enters a world in which existence itself is tragic, not existence modified by an act, deliberate or unconscious. Merely to exist is to disturb the balance of nature. Every natural man is a Hegelian thesis, and implies a reaction: every birth provokes the return of avenging death. This fact, in itself ironic and now called Angst, becomes tragic when a sense of a lost and higher destiny [or the imagined concept of one] is added to it. (p. 213)

Perhaps a paradigm for these lame and limited men might be Philip Carey in W. Somerset Maugham's Of Human Bondage (1915). Carey, a clubfoot, is a victim, simply, of being human. The novel's title is taken from Spinoza, from the title to the "Fourth Part" of his Ethics: "Of Human Bondage; or of the Strength of the Emotions." Spinoza's preface to this section begins thus:

The impotence of man to govern or restrain the emotions I call "bondage," for a man who is under their control is not his own master, but is mastered by fortune, in whose power he is, so that he is often forced to follow the worse, although he sees the better before him.  

Maugham's novel is about Carey's efforts to overcome this impotence and, like Adam Rosenzweig, to stand on his own. Carey is tormented about his clubfoot as a child, is orphaned at nine, and is raised by an uncle and aunt who do not understand children in general or him in particular. He makes several false starts toward a profession, loses himself over a mean slut far beneath him socially and
intellectually, and loses a much better woman because of the other. Finally, after bouts with extreme poverty, disease, and various occupations, Carey finds a profession, a wife, and his own niche—all of which add up to finding himself. Carey's clubfoot, his lameness, marks the curse under which all men suffer—the material difficulties of the world—and an added burden that exists at least for all sensitive men—the realization that they must know who they are and what they should do with their lives, and then act as they think they should.

The problem of self-identification and of the role one must play is not always a matter of choice. Often it is forced upon a character, or so, at least, it seems to him. He feels constrained by the world into a position he would never choose for himself. He is denied comfort, possessions, and even love by forces external to him and beyond his control. Not just life, *la condition humaine*, but some particular aspect of it causes these strictures. In some of the works I have discussed, war appears as this force, but poverty, membership in a minority race or religion, and historical destiny are also some of the conditioners which shape lives and help create maimed heroes, or deny them the power to change. Charles Dickens shows Tiny Tim (*A Christmas Carol*, 1843) primarily as an object of pity, but the little cripple is also the story's
most memorable symbol of the painful, blighted lives that struggle to exist in conditions of poverty caused by the unfeeling Scrooges of the world. Dickens contrasts themes of warmth, music, love, and plenty—the Christmas of the Fezziwigs and bustling London—with themes of cold, dreariness, loneliness, and want. One of the story's original illustrations depicted the scene at the end of Stave II, when out from under the robe of Christmas Present creep Want and Ignorance, "wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable" children created by man's lack of generosity. These children are crippled socially, Scrooge spiritually, and Tiny Tim physically.

Social stratification and poverty also affect Ab Snopes, the central character of William Faulkner's "Barn Burning" (1939). Ab is a ne'er-do-well sharecropper, a Mississippi red-neck with a touch of the demonic about him. He wears a stiff-black coat, his "wiry figure...[walks] a little stiffly from where a Confederate provost's man's musket ball had taken him in the heel on a stolen horse thirty years ago," and he loves and uses fire "as the one weapon for preservation of integrity, else breath were not worth the breathing." He revenges himself by burning the barns of those he thinks wrong him, and almost every man he ever worked for "wronged" Ab. But Ab cannot change social or economic order just by violating legal
order; he cannot make society admit him to a rank in its hierarchy higher than the one he earns by his labor and abilities: his pride and use of violent means are not force enough. His son Colonel Sartoris Snopes, named for the romantic and idealistic cavalryman of Faulkner's *The Unvanquished*, is torn between family loyalty and his knowledge that his father's acts are wrong and futile. Finally, unable to prevent his father from another act of revenge, the boy informs against him; then, against the background of a fire-reddened sky and the shooting of Ab, the boy leaves: "He went on down the hill, toward the dark woods within which the liquid silver voices of the birds called unceasing—the rapid and urgent beating of the urgent and quiring heart of the late spring night. He did not look back."

24 Faulkner shows maimed Ab rebelling against society which first chastises him, then kills him, but Faulkner also shows young Snopes setting out on a road that holds all the promise of spring.

Part of Ab's troubles stems from his heritage: he is white trash, poor, uneducated, possessed only of stiff-necked pride. Other characters in literature, also crippled, also suffer because of their individual heritages. I have already mentioned Faulkner's Joe
Christmas (Light in August, 1932) who feels cut off from the rest of humanity because of his "mixed blood."

Socially impotent and finally emasculated, Joe is a crucified victim of racial prejudice. Doc Fischer in Hemingway's "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen" (1933) is another impotent victim of another form of discrimination—a religious one, a prejudice which causes the torment of Noah Ackerman in Irwin Shaw's The Young Lions (1948) and of Joey Goldstein in Norman Mailer's The Naked and the Dead (1948), the suicides of Isaac Bloom in James Jones' From Here to Eternity (1951) and of young Sammy Goldenbaum in William Inge's Dark at the Top of the Stairs (1958), and the paralysis of Peter Coen in Arthur Laurents' Home of the Brave (1945).

Coen—Coney as he is called in Laurents' play—is an hysterical paralytic who cannot walk because of the guilt he experiences in reaction to the relief he felt when his friend Finch was shot and he himself escaped physical injury; and his guilt is particularly deep-seated because he associates it with his religion. Coney is a Jew who has known anti-Semitism, as a boy in Pittsburgh and in the Army:

[Coney tells his friend] I told you I heard something in the middle of the night once. Some drunken bum across the hall from my aunt's yelling: Throw out the dirty sheenies! . . . That was us. But I just turned over and went back to
sleep. I was used to it by then. What the hell! I was ten. That's old for a Jew. When I was six, my first week in school, I stayed out for the Jewish New Year. The next day a bunch of kids got around me and said: "Were you in school yesterday?" I smiled and said, "No." They wiped the smile off my face. They beat the hell out of me. I had to get beat up a coupla more times before I learned that if you're a Jew, you stink. You're not like other guys. You're--you're alone. You're--you're something--strange, different. . . . Well goddamit, you make us different, you dirty bastards! What the hell do you want us to do?25

Now, guilty about leaving Finch, Coney thinks that the prejudice of others is justified because of the revulsion he feels against himself. His doctor tries to convince him that all men, Jews and Gentiles, experience relief in battle at not getting shot, that he is not particularly cowardly or inconsiderate because he is a Jew. Coney is crippled as much by the prejudice with which he has been inculcated as he is by the shock of Finch's death; like Joe Christmas, he has been alienated and emasculated by society. A chance remark of his sergeant reveals to Coney what the doctor had told him, psychologically convinces him of what he had known but had not been able to believe: all men feel relief at survival; all men are alike. Coney regains the use of his legs, shakily. He has conquered the prejudice that crippled him, but it has left its mark upon him, and it still exists to maim others.
Ab Snopes need not have rebelled with violence. He could have suffered and borne his troubles, including his poverty and low station, enduring as Philoctetes and Job had. Similarly, Philip Quarles and Laura Wingfield need not have withdrawn into themselves because of their disabilities: Richard Plumes, Nick Adams, Jake Barnes, and others adjusted to their plight, why couldn't Joe Christmas and Peter Coen? This question involves two artistic problems: the author's conception of his character's personality or disposition, and the value that the author places on rebellion for its own sake (the two problems are related insofar as the author creates a passive character or a distinctly rebellious nature, whatever the situation). Are Job and Philoctetes less "heroic" for their passivity than Satan and Prometheus are for their rebelliousness? The problem of interpretation is a weighty one, and one which must ultimately be undertaken by each reader. But by understanding the significance of the limping hero, the reader may better interpret for himself. The following may provide a case in point.

Eugene McNamara has written a close analysis of William Styron's *The Long March* (1952) in terms of its plot movement, its narrative structure, and its pattern of metaphor. He begins his article by stating the
truism that "all works of art reflect and echo the tenor of their time," then exemplifies his remark saying that if Private Prewitt of From Here to Eternity (1951) is an archetypal individual, then Lieutenant Culver, the central figure in Long March, "is the corresponding antithetical myth-figure; the archetype of conformity, of acceptance" (p. 267). The novella is about life in a Marine training camp during the Korean War, especially as seen by Lieutenant Culver and Captain Al Mannix, two World War II veterans who have been recalled from civilian life. Their upset and displacement, and a short mortar round that drops on a chow line and kills eight young soldiers, set the tone of the novel, its sense of uneasiness and horrible futile waste. The balance of the story concerns a thirty-six mile forced march at night which the Colonel, "Rocky" Templeton, hopes will fuse his men into a self-confident, cohesive unit of fighting men.

The march is horrifying. Men collapse from fatigue, and a nail which has come through Mannix's boot cuts deeper and deeper into the Captain's foot. In defiance of Templeton, whose apparent cold-blooded acceptance of eight boys' deaths as an unfortunate accident revolts him and whose forced march order he considers compound stupidity, Mannix deliberately disobeys the Colonel's order to drop out of the march
and ride back to the base, dragging his swollen, aching foot as he hobbles along first with, then behind, what remains of his men.

Culver is the story's narrator. He observes for us, he comments. But he is neither man enough to join Mannix in open rebellion against the Colonel nor to quit the march. Styron shows us Culver's thoughts as he realizes that

. . .he was not independent enough, nor possessed of enough free will, was not man enough to say, to hell with it and crap out himself; . . .he was not man enough to disavow all his determination and endurance and suffering, cash in his chips, and by that act flaunt his contempt of the march, the Colonel, the whole bloody Marine Corps. But he was not man enough, he knew, far less simply a free man; he was just a marine—as was Mannix. . . .

McNamara says of Culver that "the choice he thought had to be made between Mannix and Templeton was not a choice between good and evil, but only between two different kinds of men. And Mannix, as much as Culver loves him, is out of date, obsolete, dangerous. 'He was trapped like all of them in a predicament which one personal insurrection could, if anything, only make worse' [p. 56]. The Colonel must be obeyed, not because he is right, but because he is the Colonel" (M., p. 270). They are in a state tantamount to war, and obedience without question to orders right or wrong is the only source of order among the chaos.
Upon examination of the novella's metaphoric pattern, McNamara comes to these conclusions:

One begins to see Mannix's rebellion in a somewhat different light. He is not merely the Individualist (Natty Bumppo, Prewitt) but is the old original Adam (or even Satan...), filled with pride and defiance...

Templeton...is...a "young ecclesiastic...He is "priest-like," "tenderly contemplative," "a stern father," and sometimes, flatly, "the priest."..."Rockey [sic]" Templeton is seen as a kind of religious leader, like Moses (or Peter)...Mannix remains the recalcitrant Old Adam, unconverted, unconvinced, while Culver, like another famous convert who saw the light while on a journey, is converted during the march.

Thus Mannix is...the unbaptised, the fallen. He rejects the ministrations of the priest and rejects the ritual of the march, which is a rite of passage intended to make Marines out of boys...Mannix remains obdurate, accepting the ritual as an imposed duty which he will perform in "proud and wilfull submission" and hence, instead of grace and cleansing, Mannix not only remains fallen, but damns himself. Templeton, the priest, directs the ritual of the march not out of hate, but like the "stern father," out of love. (M., pp. 270-1)

I agree with Professor McNamara as far as he goes, but feel that he stops short. If Templeton is the temple, the seat of organized religion, and Culver the convert to that religion, Mannix the rebel must be, in this play on names, the representative of man. He is lame old Adam, and nearly a cleft-foot, non-serviam Satan too, but he is also more: he is a Christ figure.
Styron describes Mannix, his pain, his suffering, in these terms:

The light of dawn, a feverish pale green, had begun to appear, outlining on Mannix's face a twisted look of suffering. His eyes were closed. (p. 93)

Mannix's perpetual tread on his toe alone gave to his gait a ponderous, bobbing motion which resembled a man wretchedly spastic and paralyzed. It lent to his face too...an aspect of deep, almost prayerful passionate concentration—his eyes thrown skyward and lips fluttering feverishly in pain—so that if one did not know he was in agony one might imagine that he was a communicant in rapture, offering up breaths of hot desire to the heavens. (pp. 113-114)

His face with its clenched eyes and taut, drawn-down mouth was one of tortured and gigantic suffering. (p. 119)

Mannix's favorite expletive is "Jesus," even specifically, at times, "Christ on a crutch!" (p. 33). Mannix is a Jew; he is Old Adam and the Second Adam, the Son of Man: Jesus. The nail which pierces his foot parallels the crucifixion too closely to leave any doubt. Moreover as Caiaphas, high priest of the temple of Jerusalem denounced Jesus, so "the Colonel looked at him steadily for a moment, coldly. Mannix was no longer a simple doubter but the heretic, and was about to receive judgment" (p. 109). Note Styron's use of the definite article: the heretic; limping anti-Christ and lame, scourged, thorn-crowned, speared, and crucified Christ have become one (Mannix was badly
lacerated by mortar fragments during World War II and is also a mass of scars from head to swollen foot). And the scene at the end of the novel, between the maimed Jewish captain, who is wearing only a towel as a loin cloth, and the Negro maid, "the two of them communicating across that chasm one unspoken moment of sympathy and understanding" (p. 120), emphasizes Mannix's relationship with Christ and shows that Mannix is not just a personal rebel but a spokesman for the individual worth and human dignity of all people who have endured centuries of pain and persecution.

Professor McNamara's statement that "all works of art reflect and echo the tenor of their time" is only part of the truth; true works of art also reflect and echo the tenor of all time. Styron is obviously concerned with the universal as well as the contemporary. He describes a tableau between Templeton and Mannix in the operations tent, saying that "in the morbid, comfortless light they were like classical Greek masks, made of chrome or tin, reflecting an almost theatrical disharmony" (p. 29). The march is an exodus: "Panic-stricken, limping with blisters and exhaustion, and in mutinous despair, the men fled westward, whipped on by Mannix's cries...Dust billowed up and preceded them, like Egypt's pillar of cloud..."

(p. 99). And like ancient sacred heroes, many of whom--including Christ--served as scapegoats, Mannix "was unable
to touch his heel to the ground even if he had wanted to" (p. 110). Styron also says of Mannix, "He only mutilated himself by this perverse and violent rebellion" (p. 101), a comment which might apply to Hephaestus, Prometheus, or even Christ.

Mannix is a heretic and Templeton is a priest, but it is important to see Mannix's heresy in terms of Christ's, and to see Templeton as someone like Dostoyevsky's Grand Inquisitor. Templeton does represent order, and like the Grand Inquisitor's, his system is ultimately less painful than Mannix's; for Templeton does not force the men to march as Mannix does--the Colonel has provided trucks on which they can ride. And as McNamara has pointed out, Templeton's concern at times is paternal in nature. The conflict between Mannix and Templeton, then, is not merely the rebellion of an inferior against a superior, nor even that, as McNamara titles his article, of absurdity versus authority; Mannix and Templeton are "mighty opposites." They represent stable social order and the rebel who wants to change that order--a rebel who in mild form produces progress, and in the extreme, anarchy--who wants to change things for the better or just to alter them for the sake of change.

Styron does not answer the question, which is more valuable, an orderly system or a rebel willing to
challenge it; nor will I. One may consider Mannix's rebellion as a personal non serviam or a public proof of man's incontrovertible will and indomitable spirit in spite of pain. But however one decides, one must see Mannix as a descendant of Old Adam and Satan and Second Adam, as representative man, limited and limping.

In a way, Mannix is the opposite of those characters I discussed before who had painfully to adjust. Mannix, like Ahab, fights painfully not to. The encroachments of modern civilization upon the individual seem to some authors to represent an aspect of life especially emasculating; life, they might say, is bondage enough, modern life is a prison. William Faulkner constructed what is almost a parable of the individual's fight against the inevitable forces of history, the individual in this case being not a human, but Old Ben, the titular protagonist of "The Bear" (1942) -- the story of young Ike McCaslin's initiation to manhood. "Old Ben, the two-toed bear in a land where bears with trap-ruined feet had been called Two-Toe or Three-Toe or Cripple-Foot for fifty years, [where] only Old Ben. . . . had earned a name such as a human man could have worn and not been sorry." 30 Faulkner's prosopopoeia is quite deliberate -- Old Ben is more human than many men--
and Faulkner is explicit about the symbolic value of Old Ben’s maimed foot:

...The boy...divined what his senses and intellect had not encompassed yet: that doomed wilderness whose edges were being constantly and punily gnawed at by men with plows and axes who feared it because it was wilderness, men myriad and nameless even to one another in the land where the old bear had earned a name, and through which ran not even a mortal beast but an anachronism indomitable and invincible out of an old, dead time, a phantom, epitome and apotheosis of the old, wild life which the little puny humans swarmed and hacked at in a fury of abhorrence and fear, like pygmies about the ankles of a drowsing elephant;--the old bear, solitary, indomitable, and alone; widowered, childless, and absolved of mortality--old Priam reft of his old wife and outlived all his sons.

The bear, like nature which he symbolizes, is still mighty and gigantic, but he is an anachronism, a holdover from the past; and, as the men have maimed the land with their plows and axes, so they have crippled Old Ben with one of their traps. However, through the bear, the old king of the forest, and Sam Fathers, his priest, Ike McCaslin is initiated into the mysteries of woodlore and is taught self-confidence, responsibility, pride, and humility.

Faulkner suggested the implacable course of history by means of a wound in an earlier work, too, in *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936), the story of Thomas Sutpen’s grand design. Slighted by a Negro butler, Sutpen, then a poor mountain boy, dreams of building a dynasty and a magnificent mansion set on a large plantation. He ships
to Haiti, returns with twenty Negro slaves with whom he carves a huge plantation out of Mississippi wilderness. He builds his mansion, marries a girl of good family, has children, but then the Civil War comes and the design starts to crumple. One of Sutpen's sons kills another, taxes take most of Sutpen's land, and he is killed by the poor white grandfather of a girl on whom he fathers a baby girl. His children die and his mansion burns. Nothing is left of Sutpen's grandiose schemes but four gutted chimneys rising from the ashes of his home and his children, and the idiot, mulatto grandson of Sutpen's murdered son. Sutpen had gone to Haiti as a virgin, and, during a rebellion there he received a wound which "came pretty near leaving him that virgin for the rest of his life too." 32 His dream to form a dynasty, his desire for a great plantation, and all his work toward both, come to naught. His groin wound foreshadows this inevitable destruction before the forces of history, as do the wounds of both Benjy and Old Ben—"Benjamin, our last-born, sold into Egypt." 33

Modern civilization, the plight of contemporary man, la condition humaine—these are also the subjects of the theatre of the absurd, but unlike Ahab, or even Mannix, the protagonists in this drama are foredoomed not just to failure, but to unheroic, ignoble failure. They
cannot win, and most cannot even make grand gestures. Their defeats, for the most part, are pitiable but not tragic. Their achievements are of endurance only.

Samuel Beckett has built many of his plays and novels around "crippled, legless, paralyzed heroes":

in *Waiting for Godot* (1952 [original French publication], 1954 [first English or American edition]), Estragon is tormented by too-tight boots; in *Endgame* (1957, 1958), "a blind old man, Hamm, sits in a wheelchair. Hamm is paralyzed, and cannot stand. . . . In two ash cans that stand by the wall are Hamm's legless parents, Nagg and Nell"; in *Molloy* (1951, 1959), the title figure suffers stiffening in one leg, shortening of the other, and loss of toes; in the same novel, Moran is also crippled and suffers the loss of his son, while searching for Molloy; in *The Unnamable* (1953, 1959), Mahood (Manhood?) is a one-legged dervish; in *Malone Dies* (1951, 1959), bedridden Malone still clutches half a crutch, his last mode of transportation—and MacMann (son of man?), a character invented by Malone, moves by rolling along the ground; in *Eleutheria*, an unpublished play, the protagonist lies in his bed until the very end of the play; in *Act Without Words* (1957, 1958), a man is stranded on the desert, completely immobile as the play ends; in *Embers* (1959), the protagonist sits at the seashore
throughout the play, musing; and in the ironically titled *Happy Days* (1961), Winnie is buried up to her breasts in the first act, up to her neck in the second. When not physically hobbled, most of Beckett's characters are extremely immobile; and, in the plays where they can or do move, their locus is very limited: *Endgame* takes place in one small room; Krapp never leaves his room.

The crippled characters have usually been maimed in bicycle accidents: Nagg and Nell lost their legs in the wreck of their tandem bicycle, Molloy and Moran were injured while on bicycles, etc. Hugh Kenner, in his study of Beckett, explains that Beckett's conception of a perfect man consists of a Cartesian philosopher on a bicycle.

[He would be a] Cartesian Centaur, [with] body and mind in close harmony: the mind set on survival, mastery, and the contemplation of immutable relativities... the body a reduction to the uncluttered terms of the quintessential machine. From the Beckett canon it is... clear that M. Godot, ...[the] solving and transforming paragon, does not come today, but perhaps tomorrow, and that meanwhile the Molloys, Morans, and Malones of the world must shift as they can, which is to say, badly. Cartesian man deprived of his bicycle is a mere intelligence fastened to a dying animal.

The Cartesian Centaur was a seventeenth-century dream, the fatal dream of being, knowing, and moving like a god. In the twentieth century he and his machine are gone, and only a desperate élan remains...
Man in the twentieth century, says Beckett, is an almost helpless cripple striving to make his way in an absurd universe: man cannot be, know, or move like a god; he can never know, he can move only clumsily, and all that he can do, limited man that he is, is endure (see Appendix I).

Man's endurance, again in the face of the inevitable fate characterized by emasculation, appears in Tennessee Williams' *Sweet Bird of Youth* (1959). The play takes place in the Royal Palms Hotel on Easter Sunday, and Williams' stage directions call for a cyclorama as a backdrop on which there should be "nonrealistic projection... , the most important and constant being a grove of royal palm trees": the sacred grove and the day of sacrifice of the sacred king. The constant theme of the play is castration: the local political machine has a young Negro castrated "to show they mean business about white women's protection in this state" (p. 90); Heavenly Finley, Chance's girl, is "cleaned and cured, ... spayed like a dawg" (p. 103); Chance is going to be gelded by Tom Finley, Heavenly's brother; and the Princess Kosmonopolis "is really equally doomed. She can't turn back the clock any more than can Chance" (p. 122), her latest lover.

Chance is an Adonis-figure, not only because of his good looks, as Henry Popkin suggests, but also
because of Williams' emphasis on castration, which we have seen is part of the ritual worship of Adonis, reputedly prince of Cyprus, and his Phrygian counterpart Attis. The Princess refers specifically to Cyprus at one point (p. 104), and the narcotic she and Chance share is hashish—not Oriental opium, Mexican marijuana, or South American cocaine, but hashish, specifically of Moroccan growth. Hashish is an Arabic word, and "the style [of the set] is vaguely 'Moorish'" (p. 17); Williams is constantly suggesting the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Furthermore, part of the second scene of Act II is played in the Palm Garden of the Hotel, and the gardens of Adonis should be familiar alike to readers of Frazer (pp. 341-7) and Weston (p. 47) or Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton. And although most have seen no more in Chance Wayne's name than that his opportunities are rapidly diminishing, one should recall that one of Frazer's favorite terms for a vegetation deity who presides over the cycle of nature is the "waxing and waning god."

One final point on the identification between Chance and Adonis. The play is set on Easter Sunday, yet several times (pp. 41, 47, 120, 122) Williams specifies a musical theme entitled "The Lament"—even though earlier in the play (p. 18) a church choir has supplied "The Alleluia Chorus." But Easter is a time of celebration,
of glorification, of the Resurrection, so "The Lament" is out of place unless it is specifically for the impotent characters of this play. Yet Williams' use of symbols is rarely so narrow; they usually add mythic overtones and a sense of eternal recurrence. And Lamentations and Laments have been a part of the ritual of Adonis (cf. Frazer, 326; Weston, 37, 39-40) which extend in the form of pastoral elegy down to and beyond Shelley's "Adonais."

Not only is Chance's name symbolic, but so is the Princess's. In the original version of the stage play, she was Ariadne del Lago, the Princess Pazmezoglu. Like the mythical Ariadne, she offers a route of escape to the sacred hero. During the run of the play, and in subsequent published versions, Williams changed her name to Alexandra del Lago, the Princess Kosmonopolis. Alexandra is a name Williams had used before, for Alexandra White-side of Battle of Angels (1940); it is a variant of Cassandra, and like Cassandra's, the Princess's advice and warnings to Chance go unheeded. And she is afflicted with the disease that castrates all in the "kosmonopolis," the state of the universe--age.

But even if Chance is equated with mythic Adonis, whose rituals were celebrated at times now associated with Christ (Frazer, 340, 346-9; Weston 46-47), and Easter is a time of resurrection for them both, we are still left
with the question Kenneth Tynan asked in his review of the play (New Yorker, March 21, 1959, p. 99): Does castration equal resurrection? For Williams, in this play at least, the answer is yes, and a line from Williams' "Desire and the Black Masseur" explains why: "... Atonement [is] the surrender of self to violent treatment by others with the idea of thereby clearing one's self of his guilt." 41

Chance has guilt--his mother's lonely death, Heavenly's venereal disease and hysterectomy, and his own wasted life: like Harry he has sold himself, his youth, his vitality. If he were not castrated by Tom Finley, he would be by age. So although Williams may not have prepared us to believe that Chance really desires atonement, there is no other explanation for his willing submission to castration. By refusing to flee with the Princess, by waiting for emasculation at Tom Finley's hands, Chance is showing greater strength, greater determination, greater manliness than he has ever done with his dreams of fame and fortune in Hollywood. However, Chance achieves only a very personal and psychological resurrection, at-onement only with himself (or perhaps with the audience, too), as he ironically gains in manliness at the moment he faces the loss of his manhood. Like Jake Barnes, he finally learns that one cannot capitalize
forever on ephemeral good fortune, but that one--although crippled--must find within one's self reason, purpose, and method for continuing to live.

Miss Bodkin has said that the archetypal hero-figure is caught between what he is and what he would be; I have added that his dilemma, which is simply the human predicament, is marked by a maiming wound, and we have seen how this description applies to Oedipus, the various Adams, Jake Barnes, Sutpen, and Ahab. Indeed, Ahab applies both halves of the description to himself: "Oh, oh, oh! how this splinter gores me now [as it did on Nantucket beach, too]! Accursed fate! that the unconquerable captain in the soul should have such a craven mate" (p. 422)!
FOOTNOTES:

1 Frye, p. 193.

2 GM, I, 87-88; Cf. Frazer, p. 86.


6 Ibid., p. 294.

7 Sophocles, Electra and Other Plays, trans. E.F. Watling (London, 1953), p. 211. Subsequent quotations will be annotated in my text with page references to this edition.

8 Frye, p. 220. It is perhaps significant that the isle on which maimed Philoctetes spent ten years of festering exile was Lemnos, the fiery volcanic isle associated with Hephaestus, the one on which the god's legs were supposed to have been broken. It might also be noted that Philoctetes'
father Poeas, navigator for the Argonauts, disabled Minos' bronze helot Talos by shooting it in the heel; that Philoctetes killed Paris by shooting him in the heel with Heracles' arrows after Paris had killed Achilles in similar fashion; and that Achilles' tutor Cheiron (cf. John Updike's *The Centaur* [1963]) and another centaur Pholus were also killed by Heracles' arrows, in the foot and knee, respectively. (GM, I, 318)

9 Hoffman, *The Twenties*, p. 82.

10 Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, ed. Alfred Kazin (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), p. 109. All subsequent quotations from this novel will refer to this edition and will be paginated in my text.


12 To fly in the face of omens, as Ahab does, blasphemously to seek "vengeance on a dumb brute" (p. 139) no doubt courts destruction. And there are parallel bits of pattern in Melville's grand design which show how close to self-destruction Ahab's quest is: Ahab and Moby Dick are much alike. They are both loners, although their kind are gregarious. Both are wounded in the "leg": Ahab lost his to Moby Dick and limps on an ivory leg carved from a sperm whale's jaw; Moby Dick has three holes
punctured in his starboard fluke (doubtless by whalers), "harpoons lie all twisted and wrenched in him," and "he fan-tail[s] a little curious. . .before he goes down" (p. 138). Both have wrinkled brows (pp. 138, 153, 165). And they both are badly scarred, Ahab by the livid white scar that marks the right (the starboard) side of his face (p. 110), Moby Dick by a crooked jaw (pp. 138, 153).

13 C.G. Jung refers to this passage from Genesis in a case study which demonstrates the psychic, as well as the literary, presence of lameness as a symbol ("Mind and Earth," Contributions to Analytical Psychology, pp. 102-7). Jung records that a young man suffered from severe attacks of pain near his heart, from a choking sensation, and from acute pains in his left heel. There was nothing organic to account for these symptoms. Dream analysis revealed that the young man, an army officer, had been jilted by a girl he loved and that he had repressed his true feelings, which were now making themselves manifest as literal heartache and a lump in the throat (globus hystericus). When he gave vent to his feelings about the loss of the girl, the officer's heartache and choking disappeared, but the pain in his heel persisted. Subsequently the patient dreamed of being bitten in the heel
by a snake and becoming paralyzed. Jung interpreted the dream, and the man's previous pain, in this fashion:

[By rejecting him,) the girl gave him a wound that crippled him and made him sick . . . .[Moreover] he had been the darling of a somewhat hysterical mother. She had sympathized with him, marvelled at him, and humoured him in such an exaggerated way that he never found his right place in school, where he became almost effeminate. Then later, turning suddenly to the masculine side he went away to the army, where he was able to cover his inner weakness by a display of "manliness." Thus, in a way, his mother too had lamed him. (p. 104)

Apparently he [the patient] had once heard of the heel-bite of the snake [in the Bible], but had given it no thought and it was soon forgotten. Yet something in him deeply unconscious heard it and did not forget, bringing it again to the surface at a suitable moment. (p. 105)

It seems as though this hypothetical deeper layer of the unconscious--of the collective unconscious, as I shall now speak of it--had translated experiences with woman into the bite of a snake, and had thereby generalized them into a mythological motif. (p. 106)

Cf. also The White Goddess, p. 276.

14 The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 407.


16 Even the Fisher King, preeminently associated as he is with sterility, does not escape at least one widely diverging interpretation. Urban T. Holmes, Jr.,
reads Chrétien's *Conte del Graal* as an allegory of the conversion of the Jewish Temple to Christianity, with the Grail Castle as Solomon's Temple, and the maimed Fisher King as lame Jacob, religious leader of his people ("A New Interpretation of Chrétien's *Conte del Graal*," *University of North Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures*, VIII [1948], 7-36; originally published in *Studies in Philology* XLIV [1947], 453-476).


19. *Winter's Tales* (New York, 1942), p. 34. All subsequent quotations from this source will be paginated in my text and will refer to this edition.


21. Mr. Maugham has been kind enough to confirm my reading in a personal letter.

22. Miserly Scrooge is associated with the themes of cold and want which Dickens contrasts with warmth and
generosity. And the terms Dickens uses to describe Scrooge are very like those Thurber uses to describe the Duke of Coffin Castle, terms which suggest the chilling qualities of a winter king:

[Scrooge is] hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire. . . . The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue. . . . A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about him; he iced his office in the dog-days, and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

*(Christmas Books [London, 1954], p. 8).*


24 Ibid., p. 516.


26 Eugene McNamara, "William Styron's Long March: Absurdity and Authority," *Western Humanities Review*, XV (1961), pp. 267-272. Subsequent quotations from this article will be paginated in my text and marked M to distinguish from quotations from Styron.

Robert Graves has written an euhemeristic account of Christ's life, *King Jesus* (New York, 1946), in which Graves has Jesus undergo a tribal rite of royal initiation prior to His appearance in Jerusalem. The rite includes a ritual combat that ends, as Jacob's did, in a dislocation of a thigh (pp. 263-264). As proof for his assumption that Jesus was lamed, Graves cites this passage (the editorial insertions are Graves's): "...Balaam the Lame (i.e. Jesus) was 33 years old when Pintias the Robber (i.e. Pontius Pilate) killed him...They say that his mother was descended from princes and rulers, but consorted with carpenters" (p. 6; from the *Lexicon Talmudicon*, sub "Abanarbel," and the *Talmud Bible*, Sanhedrin, 106b, 43a, 51a).

\[29\] Cf. p. 26 above; also Frazer, pp. 576-80; and Maude Bodkin, *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (London, 1934), p. 21: "Our exaltation in the death of Hamlet is related in direct line of descent to the religious exaltation felt by the primitive group that made sacrifice of the divine king,...and by the communion of...[his] shed blood, felt...life strengthened and renewed." The passage from Frazer shows the ritual scapegoat nature of Christ, as the Bible shows Him fulfilling that role politically and psychologically; as for His sacred foot,
in the passage referred to in the note above, Graves repeats the phrase from Matthew 4:6 and Luke 4:11, "Lest you strike your foot against a stone," altering it to read, "Lest you strike your sacred foot against a stone."

30 Go Down, Moses (New York, 1942), p. 230; cf., "The big old bear with one trap-ruined foot. . .had earned for himself a name, a definite designation like a living man" (p. 193).

31 Ibid., pp. 193-194. Interestingly, Priam, whom Faulkner mentions in this passage, was originally named Podarces, "bear-foot"; he was renamed Priam, "redeemed," when his sister Hesione ransomed him from slavery. And Ike McCaslin's full first name is Isaac--the son of Abraham, father of Jacob.


35 Ibid., 27; in Avant-Garde: the Experimental Theatre (Berkeley, 1962), p. 45, Leonard Pronko mentions a Professor Lamont who suggests that Hamm is the wounded
Fisher King, Clov is Parsifal, and the Holy Grail is a jar of dry cookies. Pronko disagrees with this view because he feels that the Fisher King is a scapegoat, suffering for others, while each of the characters in Endgame suffers only for himself. He does say, however, that he thinks the idea pregnant.


37Tennessee Williams, Sweet Bird of Youth (New York, 1962), p. 16. All subsequent references to this play will be paginated in my text and will refer to this edition.


40Esquire, April 1959, p. 115.

V. CONCLUSION

I think that it will now be agreed that the limping hero is an archetype, as Northrop Frye defines the term, "a symbol, usually an image, which recurs often enough in literature to be recognizable as an element of one's literary experience as a whole" (p. 365), or as C.G. Jung defines it, "a figure...that repeats itself in the course of history wherever creative phantasy is freely manifested."¹

I have already clarified my position with regard to Jung; it now behooves me to do the same with Frye. My footnotes reveal my dependence on Anatomy of Criticism. However, I am also aware of the limitations of Frye's archetypal approach as they appeared to critics who reviewed the book, and to myself. Some of these limitations I share; others I have tried to avoid.

The most common failing ascribed to the archetypal approach is its reductivism:² that it viewed all works in terms of the common, archetypal elements they shared without mentioning what qualitatively distinguished use in one work from use in another. Although he did make normative statements, Frye tried to avoid value judgments,
which he claims are subjective and unscientific. Unlike Frye, I do think that such judgments have a proper place in literary criticism, and that a large part of them can be based on mutually agreed-upon criteria and therefore not be entirely subjective; however I abstained from making them because I feel that they are outside the limits of my analysis. Their inclusion would have enlarged it unreasonably, for not only would I have had to define my criteria for judgment, but I would also have had to discuss each work in much greater detail than I did. I would have had to relate plots, describe all important characters—not just maimed ones—and discuss structure and style. I would also have had to compare the merits of one work with those of another. But in an analytic study such as this which looks at nearly forty works, such detailed examinations would not only have been tedious and repetitious, but would have required several volumes.

The second major criticism of Frye's book is that its classifications are so broad, and the continuum between irony and comedy so free from obvious demarcations, that distinctions are not always apparent and, except for obvious examples, a work or character may seem to fit in either one of two categories, or in both simultaneously. I have tried to avoid this failing as much as I could, but as I have readily admitted, my categories are heuristic.
Moreover, since I am trying to establish the viability and versatility of the limping hero, that it has and can mean different but related things to different artists, it would have been foolish of me to force a particular reading on a maimed character. Thus, where I thought a work such as *The Sun Also Rises* could reasonably be interpreted two different ways, I have not hesitated to put it into both categories.

Critics also lamented that Frye did not thoroughly apply his method of analysis to one work. Of course, because of the scope of his attempt to form a complete grammar of criticism, Frye could not afford to dwell too long on any one example. Similarly, although my work is far less ambitious than Frye's, I also had to use numerous examples in order to prove the existence, frequency, and adaptability of the maimed figure; and, of course, I could only choose examples which I knew. Unlike Frye, however, who frequently referred to a complex event by only the name of the work in which it appeared or that of the character to whom it happened, I tried to identify fully all maimed figures I mentioned in my text. As has been seen, I also thoroughly analyzed a number of works: *The Assistant*, *The Sun Also Rises*, "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen," *The Long March*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, and *Sweet Bird of Youth*. These works were particularly
suitable for such close analysis because a maimed figure is central to each and also because some aspect of fertility, sterility, or limitations is a primary theme of each. In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, although Clifford's role as a sterility figure is important, Clifford is not the dominant character in the novel. And in a novel as complex as *Moby Dick*, that Ahab has much in common with other maimed figures is significant; but since there is a wealth of other material pointing to the same interpretation, the limping hero motif is not nearly as vital in *Moby Dick* as it is in *The Assistant*, *The Long March*, and *Sweet Bird of Youth*.

And I hope, in the works I have discussed, that I have made clear the significance of the limping hero in relation to each of the works in which he appears. Now let me state the vertical or overall conclusions I have reached. I have tried to collect as many literary limpers as I could, although not especially systematically. It is difficult to number them exactly: are Thammuz, Attis, and Adonis three distinct figures, or only different names for one; are Horus and Harpocrates two or one? It does not matter; the numerical incidence of these characters, though no proof, does indicate the ubiquity of limpers and their particular density in the iconography of certain periods. Since the Classical Age, in which he originated
as a literary figure, the limping hero has been most prominent in the Middle Ages and since the second half of the nineteenth century, for reasons which I noted in my introduction. There certainly have been limpers in literature at other times, but by and large they do not appear to be symbolic.

For example, there are lame characters in English Renaissance drama: Richard III, Brainworm, Rafe Damport, Cassio, and many gout-stricken elders (Falstaff included). How Richard's diabolical nature is augmented by his maimed condition I have already discussed. Ben Jonson might have intended the same for Brainworm (Every Man in His Humour, 1598) when the latter masquerades as a crippled veteran, but except as a trickster or diabolus ex machina—a character who turns the wheels of a creaky plot—Brainworm is not particularly devilish; he certainly does not cause sterility—just the opposite. Rafe Damport (The Shoemaker's Holiday, 1599) is a veteran of the wars who actually has been lamed. Thomas Dekker might have used Rafe, as Stallings uses Plumes, as an example of a maimed man who must readjust to his old life and has great difficulty in doing so. Certainly Rafe has cause since he cannot find his wife, who at the time is being persuaded into a new marriage by a London gentleman. But Dekker does not dwell on Rafe's wound, nor on his
difficulties except as they contribute suspense to the play. Rafe's lameness is no more than a "ruptured duck"—his badge of service. And gout, similarly, serves in the literature of this period only as a note that the person afflicted is well fed. I do think we may see symbolism in gout as Dickens uses it in *Bleak House*, for we know that there are several patterns of symbolism at work in that novel: the fog and mud, Krook's junk shop known as the Court of Chancery, Miss Flite's caged birds, the disease that reveals the common humanity of all, and so on. Most English Renaissance playwrights are not concerned with symbolism, however; beyond surface details there will, at most, be allegory: Nymph Eliza for Queen Elizabeth in George Peele's *The Arraignment of Paris* (1584), or the general indictment of human failings which are particularized in Jonson's plays.

Shakespeare is an exception. Michael Cassio's wound may be symbolic. We know that those left to rule at the end of Shakespeare's plays are not the grand figures, for good or bad, that their predecessors were. Malcolm is a lesser man than Macbeth, Albany than Lear, Fortinbras than Hamlet, Aufidius than Coriolanus, Ferdinand than Prospero, and Cassio than Othello. Shakespeare seems to be saying that the mediocre inherit the earth. And so perhaps Cassio's missing leg at the
end of *Othello* (1604) marks him as such a man—great neither in goodness nor evil, of moderate abilities and personal magnetism—a limited man.

Oliver Goldsmith's "The Disabled Soldier" (1760), like the character of Rafe Damport, is simply an advertisement of British pluck and fortitude, highly dubious in this soldier's case considering his catalogue of woes and the sorry life he has to look forward to, Goldsmith's panegyric notwithstanding. Toby and Tristram Shandy pose something of a problem, as usual (*Tristram Shandy*, 1759-1767). Difficult as it is to separate innuendo from anything else in this "novel," Uncle Toby was wounded in the groin by a cannon ball, much to the Widow Wadman's displeasure; and Tristram's "nose" suffers from heredity, forceps, and window sash. Both are probably impotent, so the Shandy family line is at an end. Indeed, the novel ends on an instance of impotence: that of the Shandys' bull. Yet Sterne treats the Shandys' disabilities almost entirely for humor and as entirely personal (non-symbolic); there is material for both tragedy and symbolism but Sterne develops neither. Thus it is not until the nineteenth century that symbolism flourishes, and in conjunction with the Romantic revival of interest in mythology, that symbolism increasingly featured maimed figures.
The two examples I discussed in the chapter on fertility, Frank Alpine and Brick Pollitt, are, with the little lame balloon man, the only examples I know of maimed figures who denote fertility in twentieth century literature. The remaining modern limpers either signify sterility or impress upon us man's limitations in contrast to his infinite aspirations. As Northrop Frye says, "... in the twentieth century, on the whole, images of descent"—images associated with hell, pain, death, or quests for "dark truths"—"are... in the ascendent." The disillusionment that affected those who lived through the Great War and its aftermaths produced in one decade five great and influential works of art built around maimed figures who symbolized the sterility of the age or the restricted abilities of man: The Waste Land (1922), The Sun Also Rises (1926), Point Counter Point (1928), Lady Chatterley's Lover (1928), and The Sound and the Fury (1929). Since then limpers have continued to proliferate in novel, poem, short story, and play—especially in theatre of the absurd and in that European post-war literature called Trümmerliteratur or Kahlschlagprosa (literature of devastation). In the literature of an era of disappointment, depression, and even self-disgust, a maimed individual has been a particularly apt symbol.
FOOTNOTES:

1 Contributions to Analytical Psychology, p. 246.


4 Kermode, p. 323.

5 Cf. Seward, "...The eras most favorable to symbolism have been the Catholic Middle Ages and the romantic nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (p. 4).

6 That there is no symbolism, according to Earl R. Wasserman (The Subtler Language [Baltimore, 1959] is the point, and is another instance of the "powerfully energetic impotence...[which] hangs over Sterne's novel" (p. 171). Since the public myths of the Neo-Classical age had been demolished, and the personal ones of Romanticism had not yet been invented, Wasserman
feels that the Shandys' language is discursive only, that each rides his own linguistic hobby horse, and that—without symbols—no real communication takes place. Each character lives in his own world, incidents—like Bobby's death—have different meanings for each, and nothing unites the characters' world, just as no organizational pattern unites Sterne's preeminently discursive novel.


8 Albert Soergel and Curt Hohoff, Dichtung und Dichter der Zeit (Düsseldorf: August Bagel, 1963), II, 819. See Appendix I.
APPENDIX I

The endurance of modern man and the conditions which he must endure are the subjects of much of contemporary European theatre, especially that of the so-called theatre of the absurd.

Arthur Adamov, for example, has written a play, La Grande et la Petite Manoeuvre (1953), in which the main character is known simply as le mutilé, "a legless, armless cripple on a pushcart, [who] is kicked into the road by the woman he adores, to be crushed by the crowd." The title of the play, as Adamov explains, refers "to the small maneuver of the social disorder depicted in the play, in contrast to the large maneuver of the human condition itself, which envelops and dwarfs the former (p. 57). The play weaves two plots around two characters who are actually each other's psychological complements.

The active self-sacrificing struggle of a revolutionary leader is shown to be as futile as the passivity of a tormented victim of hidden psychological forces, who is compelled to execute the shouted orders of invisible monitors who drive him to the gradual loss of his limbs. The action takes place in a country oppressed by a brutal dictatorship. The
active character, le militant, leads the victorious struggle against the forces of the police state; in the end he collapses while making a speech admitting that the revolutionaries have been compelled to use the methods of brutal terror to gain their victory. Moreover, the militant has caused the death of his own child. . . . The activist has achieved no more than the passive character, le mutilé, . . . [whose] mutilations. . . are the direct outcome, and expression, of his inability to make human contact, his incapacity for love.

. . . The categorical imperative that forces the militant to risk his life, to leave his wife. . . and ultimately to cause the death of his sick child is shown as springing, basically, from the same inability to love as the implacable self-destructive commands of the subconscious mind that force the mutilé into masochistic self-destruction. (pp. 57-59)

In another play, significantly named Tous Contre Tous (1953), Adamov deals with another aspect of the problem of lovelessness.

In Tous Contre Tous, we are. . . in a country that has been flooded by refugees from abroad; they are easily identifiable because they all limp. The hero, Jean Rist, loses his wife to one of the refugees and becomes a demagogue ranting against them. For one brief moment he is in power, but when the wheel of political fortune turns and the persecutors become the persecuted, he escapes arrest by assuming a limp himself and pretending to be a refugee. He lives in obscurity, upheld by the love of a refugee girl. When there is another upheaval and the refugees are again persecuted, he might perhaps escape death by declaring his true identity. But in confirming that he is the well-known hater of refugees, he would lose the love of the girl. He refuses to do so, and goes to his death.
What the play does suffer from (in Adamov's own view) is its failure to come to grips with the reality of the problem it deals with. It is fairly obvious that this is the Jewish problem, or at least the problem of racial persecution. (p. 63)

"Shibboleth" has been transformed into a limp, and people are still judged by externals; Tous Contre Tous deals with prejudice as did Light in August and Home of the Brave, and all three involve the lameness of the impotent victim or his literal emasculation.

Another dramatist of the absurd, Boris Vian, wrote a play in which the protagonist is accompanied by "a mysterious, silent character, a half-human being, called a schmürz, 'covered in bandages, dressed in rags, one arm in a sling, . . . a walking stick in the other. He limps, bleeds, and is ugly to look at'" (p. 178). In his discussion of this play, Bâtisseurs d'Empire (1959), Martin Esslin asks:

Does the schmürz . . . stand for the mortal part of ourselves that we brutally flog and maltreat without noticing what we are doing? The fact that the schmürz collapses and dies just before the hero of the play does points in this direction. On the other hand, after the hero's death other schmürzes are seen invading the stage. Are they the messengers of death . . . ? Or is schmürz, derived from the German word for pain—Schmerz—simply the silent, ever-present pain of heart disease [from which Vian suffered and died]? (pp. 178-179)

Mr. Esslin does not answer his questions; it is sufficient for this study that he asked them: the schmürz, ugly,
bleeding, and lame, is a symbol of pain and death, man's inevitable fate and ineluctable condition.

In short, non-dramatic fiction, the same symbolism of limitation is evident. Wolfgang Borchert's "The Three Dark Kings" is a modern telling of the Gift of the Magi. The nameless Joseph and Mary of this tale find limited shelter for themselves and their new-born infant in bombed-out ruins. The Magi are three wanderers—old soldiers, wounded, homeless, without shelter or food—who are drawn, not by a star, for the sky is devoid of moon or stars, but by the little family's pitiful fire. No gold, frankincense, and myrrh have they to offer as gifts, but only two yellow bonbons, some tobacco, and a wooden donkey that took seven months to carve. One of the three soldiers trembles constantly from shell shock, one has no hands, and the donkey-carver's feet are badly swollen due to hunger-caused edema. These are dark kings, indeed, fit for a dark nativity in a desolate age. But yet these men give what they can and share the little family's fire. On this bleak Christmas day, against "Joseph's" refrain that he wishes he had someone to punch in the face, the actual humanity of these people stands out like the little fire, a spot of light and warmth amidst waste and ruin.

In Heinrich Böll's "On the Bridge" a crippled war veteran is given a sinecure, counting all pedestrians
who cross a bridge. But the soldier resents the clockwork world of inhuman precision and accuracy to which he must contribute, so he cheats. When he is angry, he does not count certain pedestrians, denying the traffic engineers the totals they desire; when he is in a generous mood, he pads his figures. But one person he never counts, regardless, a girl with long brown hair and delicate feet who crosses the bridge to her job in an ice cream parlor. The girl, his little darling he calls her, is not even aware of his affection, but he refuses to deny her her individuality by lumping her in with other statistics: "My little darling shall not be multiplied and divided and changed into a percentual nothing" (p. 185). The crippled counter's dishonesty is not much of a rebellion against the status quo (especially since his statistics are recorded with a certain percentage of error), but it is enough, for him, to assert his individuality and humanity in an increasingly mechanistic and inhuman world.

Finally, in Ilse Aichinger's "The Bound Man," a man is attacked and robbed by thieves who leave him tied up but so that he can just move his limbs. He can not only hobble along, but he learns to do so with such grace that a circus hires and exhibits him. In spite of his bonds, his movements become so deft and graceful that he wins respect and even love. But when he faces a wolf in a
stunt which the circus has arranged, the woman who cares for him slashes his ropes in fear for his safety, and he moves blunderingly and awkwardly, so much so that although he could subdue a wolf while bound, he must now shoot the wolf to save himself. Miss Aichinger's parable is open to many interpretations, one of which would be that when man recognizes his limitations and adjusts his life accordingly, he can act well as Jake Barnes does (or even courageously, as Hemingway defines it: grace under pressure). When he ignores his bonds or struggles against them, when he pretends that he is not limited, man can only flounder about awkwardly.

These three short stories and the Absurdist plays, both those of Beckett in Chapter IV and those I have cited in this Appendix, are but a few examples of a post-War literature which, in Europe as in America, announces that man is a severely limited creature. Beckett and Adamov in La Grande et la Petite Manoeuvre view this situation pessimistically; the short story writers and Adamov in Tous Contre Tous see it as less so: there is a human spirit which enables man and enables him either to make the best of his limited life, or to end it not pitifully but with the dignity of tragedy.
FOOTNOTES:

1Esslin, p. 58. Subsequent quotations from Esslin will be paginated in my text.


3*Erzählungen* (Opladen: Middelhauve, 1958), pp. 184-6. Subsequent quotations from this story will be paginated in my text and will refer to this edition.

APPENDIX II

The following is an alphabetical list of limpers in literature whom I have not discussed in my main text. I am sure that there must be others; I simply list these, however, to indicate further the ubiquitousness of the limping hero. Many of these characters could easily be put into the categories I have set up: Fertility--Asinius, Llew Llaw, the little lame balloon man, and the sacred kings of classical mythology, Achilles, Cretan Zeus, etc.; Sterility Victims--Ethan Frome, and Tony; Victimizers--Claire Zachanassian, R.E. Meehan and Silas Wegg; Human Limitations--Richter Adam, Peachy Carnehan, Rickie Elliot, Père Goriot, Fred Henry and Colonel Cantwell, Sy Levin, and Porgy. I can see no symbolic value in the wounds of some of the others--Long John Silver and Sheridan Whiteside, for example.

So, for either further research or the satisfaction of curiosity, here are some more limpers:

Achilles (slain by Paris' arrow in the Aethiopis, ninth century BC, still limps in H. D.'s poem Helen in Egypt [1961]).
Richter Adam, Der Zerbrochene Krug (1808), Heinrich Kleist.

Amahl, Amahl and the Night Visitors (1951), Gian-Carlo Menotti.

Androcles' Lion, Androcles and the Lion (c. 14), Aulus Gellius; (1916), George Bernard Shaw.

Asinius, The Golden Ass (ante 124), Apuleius.

Paul Berthalet, the lame puppeteer of Helen Deutsch's film Lili (1954); Paul does not limp as Crake Villeridge, his original form in Paul Gallico's "The Man Who Hated People," Saturday Evening Post, 28 October 1950.

Bloody Five, Mann Ist Mann (1924-5), Bertolt Brecht.

Father James Brown, The Living Room (1953), Graham Greene.

Cash Bundren, As I Lay Dying (1930), William Faulkner.

Anthony Burns, "Desire and the Black Masseur," One Arm (1948), Tennessee Williams.

Father Butt, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916), James Joyce.
Colonel Cantwell, *Across the River and into the Trees* (1950), Ernest Hemingway.


Darley, *Justine* (1957), Lawrence Durrell.

Lame Devil, *Le Diable Boiteux* (1707), Alain René Le Sage. Also called *Asmodeus*; or, *The Devil on Two Sticks*. Le Sage’s novel is based on Luiz Velez de Guevara’s *El Diablo Cojuelo* (1646).

Diarmuid, in one version of the tale he is gored to death by a boar on a hunt arranged by his jealous uncle Finn; in another, he kills the boar but paces its length at Finn’s request, and a poisonous bristle pierces his heel and kills him.


Fleece, cook on the *Pequod, Moby Dick* (1851), Herman Melville.

Ethan Frome, *Ethan Frome* (1911), Edith Wharton.

Père Goriot, *Père Goriot* (1834), Honoré de Balzac.


Harry Heegan, *The Silver Tassie* (1928), Sean O'Casey.

Helmbrecht Schlingdasgeu, *Meier Helmbrecht* (c. 1250), Wernher der Gartenaere.

Fred Henry, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), Ernest Hemingway.


Horus, stung in the heel and killed by a scorpion.


Nigger Jim, *Huckleberry Finn* (1884), Mark Twain.


The Little Lame Balloon Man, "In Just-" (1924), E. E. Cummings.

Llew Llaw Gyffes, Welsh solar deity, struck in the groin by a poisoned spear hurled by his wife's lover as Llew Llaw has one foot on a caldron, one on a buck, and his hair tied to an oak tree branch.

Gertie MacDowell, *Ulysses* (1922), James Joyce. The one-legged sailor who begs his way through the novel is another limper.


Paris, killed when Philoctetes shot one of Heracles' poisoned arrows into his heel.


Perth, *Moby Dick* (1851), Herman Melville.


Tom, *Typee* (1846), Herman Melville.

Tony, *They Knew What They Wanted* (1924), Sidney Howard.

Sheridan Whiteside, *The Man Who Came to Dinner* (1939), George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart.


Claire Zachanassian, *Der Besuch der alten Dame* (1956), Friederich Dürrenmatt.
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