

TENNYSON'S MAUD, FANTASY OF RENEWAL:

A STUDY OF THE IMAGERY

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A THESIS

in

THE DEPARTMENT

of

ENGLISH

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts at  
Concordia University

Montréal, Québec, Canada

April 1980

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ABSTRACT

TENNYSON'S MAUD, FANTASY OF RENEWAL:

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This paper is a study of the imagery of Alfred Tennyson's Maud. It has five chapters. Chapter I explores Tennyson's artistic intentions in the work and critical responses to it. Chapter II considers the thematic texture and its possible roots in both nineteenth century thought and Tennyson's own intellectual and emotional outlook. Chapter III focuses on the function of the imagery as agent of dramatic action in the poem and identifies the particular groups of images to be discussed in Chapters IV and V. These include: imagery associated with the traditions of the scapegoat; myths of regeneration; the archetypal anima figure in literature; and images of stones, vegetation and blood, with particular reference to the alchemical opus as a strategy for spiritual regeneration.

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## CHAPTER I

### TENNYSON'S ARTISTIC INTENTIONS: CRITICAL RESPONSES

In an unpublished letter to the clergyman-poet Archer Gurney, dated 6 December 1855, five months after publication of Maud, Tennyson wrote:

. . . now I wish to say one word about Maud which you and others so strangely misinterpret. I have had Peace party papers sent to me claiming me as being on their side because I had put the cry for war into the mouth of a madman. Surely that is not half so wrong a criticism as some I have seen. Strictly speaking I do not see how from the poem I could be pronounced with certainty either peace man or war man. I wonder that you and others did not find out that all along the man was intended to have an hereditary vein of insanity, and that he falls foul on the swindling, on the time, because he feels that his father has been killed by the work of the lie, and that all through he fears the coming of madness. How could you or anyone suppose that if I had to speak in my own person my own opinion of this war or war generally I should have spoken with so little moderation. The whole was intended to be a new form of dramatic composition . . . I do not mean to say that my madman does not speak truth too . . .<sup>1</sup>

Tennyson's surprise that the immoderate call for war to end a corrupt peace, uttered by the hero of his poem, should have been perceived as the war-cry of the poet himself, seems

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Paul Turner, Tennyson (London, Henley and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1976), p. 144.

genuine enough. Yet, even in this disclaimer he chooses to be equivocal . . . "I do not mean to say that my madman does not speak truth too . . ." It is not then surprising that criticism of Maud has so often been centred on what was seen as a distasteful glorification of war, and this does a great injustice to the poem. However, the equivocation that Tennyson often exhibited in his statements and his poems does point to what Valerie Pitt has called a "true dialectic" in his work, in which ". . . an awareness of the romantic wastes, the fluent and unshaped, appears through, and sometimes is imposed upon, an intense realisation of normal activity and order."<sup>2</sup> Tennyson first subtitled Maud "The Madness" and the reader should perhaps note Kenneth Burke's reminder about literary titles in general that, "The events restate explicitly what the title contains implicitly: they draw out in temporal arpeggio, all that is struck simultaneously, as a chord, in the title itself."<sup>3</sup> Maud is a "dramatic composition" about madness.

Edgar F. Shannon Junior, in his study of the critical

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<sup>2</sup> Valerie Pitt, Tennyson Laureate (London: Barrie Books Ltd., 1962), p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth Burke, The Philosophy of Literary Form, 3rd ed. (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1973), p. 448.

response to Maud,<sup>4</sup> states that a survey of the comment printed by eighty-five newspapers, magazines, and quarterly reviews in Britain during the three and a half years after its publication, shows clearly that the poem was subjected to some of the bitterest denunciation Tennyson had thus far met with in his literary career. It was not, however, without its admirers, of whom perhaps the most extravagantly enthusiastic was Tennyson's friend John Foster, who praised it as "Containing hardly a weak line, full of deep feeling and purpose, exquisitely musical and instinct with the subtlest perception of the most perfect works of the Laureate."<sup>5</sup>

Shannon's summaries of the principal contemporary reviews show that the critics mentioned most often such things as the poem's references to current social and political problems, the implications of what was seen to be Tennyson's own advocacy of war as a panacea for these ills of society, and the innovative versification of the work. Similarities between Maud and the melodramatic novels of the time together with the works of the so-called "Spasmodic" poets were also mentioned. Commercial successes by two "Spasmodics" had recently appeared, Alexander Smith's A Life Drama (1853),

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<sup>4</sup> Edgar F. Shannon Jr., "The Critical Reception of Tennyson's Maud," PMLA, vol. 68 (1953), pp. 397-414.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 399.

and Sydney Dobell's Balder (1854). Smith's is a verse-play, full of borrowings from Tennyson's earlier works, about a poet who, after the girl he loves is married off to a rich, elderly man, becomes deeply depressed, but finally marries another girl and goes "forth 'mong men . . . in the armour of a pure intent" to do "God's work." The features of Maud which it specifically anticipates include a fawn image, falling in love with the voice of "a maiden singing in the woods alone;" "evenings cawed by clouds of rooks;" the extinction of the whole human race "with a master-stroke;" a contrast between love and the "cold" stars; haunting by the reproachful face of a girl; and a call for "mad War!" Apart from love and madness, the most important ingredients paralleling Maud to be found in Balder are the stars as "pitiless signs;" a "phantom" of the hero's dead wife's past beauty, singing, and her repeated use in her madness of the buried-alive image; talking flowers, including an "imperial Lily" by "Eden-gate," and the Crimean War.<sup>6</sup> It is certainly possible that Tennyson may have been influenced by the "Spasmodics," but the imagery of the pitiless stars, to take but one example, was part of the Zeitgeist of that period of evolutionary theories and discoveries, and one has only to compare the phrases "cold stars" and "pitiless signs" to what Tennyson does with this same image, to recognize

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<sup>6</sup> Turner, pp. 140, 141.

his superior eloquence:<sup>7</sup>

Asad astrology, the boundless plan  
 That makes you tyrants in your iron skies,  
 Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,  
 Cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand  
 His nothingness into man.

(l. XVIII. 634-8)

In The Victorian Temper, Jerome H. Buckley includes a chapter on "The Spasmodic School," in which he says that Maud did indeed contain "traces of Spasmodic emotion," and that:

Its cursing, distraught, Byronic hero, sentimental and violent, "the heir of madness with the makings of a cynic," though clearly in direct descent from the narrator of "Locksley Hall," lived in the same world of delirious fancy that produced Walter and Balder.

He noted also that ". . . the monodrama in form, theme, and substance recalled the most ambitious efforts of Smith and Dobell." But Buckley concludes that in Tennyson's poem, the rhetoric and imagery reach heights of eloquence infinitely beyond those of the Spasmodic school. He says:

In its melodrama, Maud may have drawn freely from Spasmodic materials; yet it subjected them to the discipline of a painfully acquired technique and the self-consciousness of a mind trained to distrust the egotist's escape. Whatever its possible

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<sup>7</sup> All quotations from the poem will be taken from the Norton Critical Edition, Robert W. Hill, Jr., ed., Tennyson's Poetry (New York: W. W. Norton & Co. Inc., 1971). See Appendix, "The Divisions of Maud," p. 111.

<sup>8</sup> Jerome Hamilton Buckley, The Victorian Temper (New York: Vintage Books Ltd., 1964), p. 63.



debt to a passing literary convention, Maud derived its ultimate intensity from the author's understanding of his hero's divided emotion. Long after the Spasmodic School had been forgotten, the monodrama retained a personal significance; it stood as the last major expression of a conflict in Tennyson between "romantic" inclination and Victorian demand, a conflict which had animated his whole development.<sup>9</sup>

The dichotomy between romanticism and what Buckley calls "Victorian demand" may account for a similar division in the criticism reviewed by Shannon, for each of the various elements noted in the poem had its enthusiastic advocates and fierce denunciators. The criticism, Shannon says, was sharply divided, with the derogatory reviews slightly outnumbering the laudatory, and strident abuse tending to obscure judicious praise, and he concludes that:

Maud represents Tennyson's most vehement effort as a social critic and reformer. From the reception of the poem, it was apparent that he had misjudged his audience and had projected his poetry too deeply into the realm of abnormal psychology, politics and opinion.<sup>10</sup>

In the light of Tennyson's letter to Archer Gurney, it would appear that Shannon is inaccurate in believing that the poet's main artistic intention was "vehemently" directed towards social criticism, reform, politics, and opinion. The vehemence

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<sup>9</sup> Buckley, p. 65.  
<sup>10</sup> Shannon, p. 414.

emanates rather from the realm of abnormal psychology in which Tennyson places his hero, and this, together with the experimental dramatic form would tend to mislead some readers.

Criticism of Tennyson has always moved within the context of an historical judgment, and is therefore liable to be modified by any change in attitude to his period, or by any shift in understanding of it.<sup>11</sup> Tennyson is felt to have responded to the demands of his audience in a manner which compromised his private vision, and these supposed demands have always been a relevant factor in the criticism of his poetry. As Valerie Pitt has observed:

The normal judgment of Tennyson in the thirties and forties was based on assumptions, which were often demonstrably untrue. Victoria's reign was supposed to be a period of monumental complacency and moral stagnation; its capacity for self-congratulation, so it was said, was only equalled by its self-deception, and this corruption of the public mind spread itself into literature and art.<sup>12</sup>

In fact, as Pitt says, "Tennyson's generation was at once more complex and more interesting in itself than the myths of its successors suggest. Outwardly the Victorian period presents a façade of solid community belief; inwardly it displays all

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<sup>11</sup> Pitt, p. 247.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

the symptoms of a disintegrating culture."<sup>13</sup> Tennyson himself, in his great poem In Memoriam universalizes his own experience, and in this work he expresses his longing for an authoritative religious tradition in which he could find comfort. He shows himself sensitive to the social and intellectual change that was characteristic of his age, and his concerns must have been shared by many of his contemporaries.

As can be shown, Tennyson's work has been regularly revalued on the basis of differing critical criteria. For example, John Killham, in his review of modern criticism (1960), has found that:

The critics in the Criterion and Mercury after the first War, whose position can be termed neo-classical, sought in Victorian poetry, but seldom found, intelligibility, conciseness, dramatic distance, and respect for the traditional principles of poetic form. In the dry light of this approach--which can admirably illuminate a Marvell--the Victorians showed themselves as vague, self-preoccupied, concerned too much with sound and too little with sense, over-fond of decoration and incompetent in the organization of their material.<sup>14</sup>

Tennyson, Victorian Poet Laureate, perhaps more than any other artist, has suffered from the myths about what constituted

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<sup>13</sup> Pitt, p. 248.

<sup>14</sup> John Killham, ed., Critical Essays on the Poems of Tennyson (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1960), pp. 9-10.

"Victorianism," which have distorted the critical view of the period, and Maud in particular has suffered more at the hands of careless and insensitive critics than any other of his works.

Maud's apparent didacticism and social commentary inevitably becomes equivocal because of the mental state of the hero, as Tennyson must surely have realized. The poet's concern was the portrayal of inner action in character by means of a "monodrama." He told his son that the poem was:

. . . a little Hamlet . . . the history of a morbid poetic soul under the blighting influence of a recklessly speculative age. He is the heir of madness, an egotist with the makings of a cynic . . . the peculiarity of this poem is that different phases of passion in one person take the place of different characters.<sup>15</sup>

Tennyson interpreted Hamlet primarily in the manner of nineteenth-century criticism as a study of character in which action is basically internal, and what he admired most in Shakespeare's play, according to his letters, was the way Hamlet was depicted as being caught between madness and sanity. His first subtitle of "The Madness" reinforces the view that his main interest was in describing a deranged consciousness as it passed through different phases of feeling.

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<sup>15</sup> Hallam Tennyson, Alfred Lord Tennyson: A Memoir, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan & Co., 1906), vol. 1, p. 396.

Robert Langbaum in The Poetry of Experience has pointed out that the dramatic lyric and lyrical drama of the romanticists always contained the potential for the eventual articulation of the dramatic monologue form. Tennyson and Browning, he suggests, inherited a form which required one more step in its development to achieve the objectivity which the romantic confessional style lacked. In taking this step, Browning, in "My Last Duchess," and Tennyson in "Ulysses," "St. Simeon Stylites," "Tithonus," and the Choric Song from "The Lotus Eaters," deal with emotional perversity. As Langbaum says:

In the dramatic monologues, Tennyson's feeling for the pathology of the emotions makes for the same final effect as Browning's use of the extraordinary moral position. There is the same tension between sympathy and judgment; . . . Sympathy adapts the dramatic monologue for making the "impossible" case and dealing with the forbidden region of the emotions, because we must sympathize in order to read the poem.<sup>16</sup>

The style of the dramatic monologue tends to present its material objectively and apart from moral judgment, which may remain secondary or problematical. Langbaum goes so far as to say:

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<sup>16</sup> Robert Langbaum, The Poetry of Experience: The Dramatic Monologue in Modern Literary Tradition (New York: Norton Co., Inc., 1967), pp. 92-93.

Even where the speaker is specifically concerned with a moral question, he arrives at his answer empirically, as a necessary outcome of the conditions within the poem and not through appeal to an outside moral code. Since these conditions are always psychological and sometimes historical as well--since the answer is determined, in other words, by the speaker's nature, and the time he inhabits--the moral meaning is of limited application but enjoys within the limiting conditions of the poem a validity which no subsequent differences in judgment can disturb.<sup>17</sup>

Whatever the philosophical legitimacy of Langbaum's position, his perspective, at least, is perhaps useful to an appreciation of Maud, a poem in which the hero passionately hates the society in which he lives, and at times the family, that he believes has ruined his life, and falls into despair at what he sees as his own hopelessly desolate state within a dissolute society.

Gradually, and despite his bitterness, he develops a love for Maud, the daughter of the hated family, a love which temporarily lifts him out of his despair. Subsequently, he reacts with hysterical intensity to the opposition of Maud's brother, kills him in a duel, and is then plunged into almost total mental disintegration from which he painfully emerges by means of a vision which his disturbed mind creates, but which nevertheless is capable of sending him to engage in a war as a means, he believes, of saving himself from insanity

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

and despair and redirecting the energies of society from its shameful materialism. Any evaluation of the poem must consider the internal validity which the dramatic monologue form gives it, and any historical or political references made by the hero must be weighed on a scale which has as counterweights the dramatic monologue form and the disturbed mind of the speaker by which these references are necessarily modified.

In an investigation of the reasons why nineteenth-century English poets contributed so little to the history of English drama, Terry Otten concludes that, "In retrospect we may speak of two kinds of nineteenth-century drama; conventional popular plays performed in the theatres and experimental dramas composed by major poets."<sup>18</sup> While admitting that there is some truth in all of the explanations usually offered by critics, who attribute the failure of the conventional plays in varying degrees to the depraved condition of the theatre itself, political circumstances and censorship, theatre architecture, audience behavior, theatrical managers, middle class tastes, the star system, staging practices, and

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<sup>18</sup> Terry Otten, The Deserted Stage: The Search for Dramatic Form in the Nineteenth Century (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1972), pp. 3-4.

the absence of constructive criticism, Otten finds another, more crucial cause of the decay in English drama, namely, "a new concept of reality," which creates a serious impasse. He elaborates on this general term in this way:

In rejecting eighteenth-century empiricism and positing the self as the centre of reality, nineteenth-century writers necessarily discarded conventional artistic form. Traditional modes of understanding were no longer functional in light of the intellectual and cultural revolution taking place. The romantic poets transformed lyric poetry, the ode, the sonnet, the romantic tale, the elegy, the epic, into subjective visions of reality. . . . In drama . . . the ascendancy of character, with an accompanying sense of incompleteness and relativity, generated the need for new or revised forms; but recognized dramatic structure proved less pliable than conventional poetic modes.<sup>19</sup>

Otten sees the consequent problem facing any poet who wished to translate his new poetic vision into drama as one of structure; the conflict between subjective matter and objective form. The poet had to seek unity in something other than Aristotelean plot structure, and discover a new expressive form, capable of reflecting his interest in subjective reality. Experimental dramas such as Shelley's The Cenci, Byron's Cain, Tennyson's Maud, and Browning's Pippa Passes, Otten asserts, "pointed drama in a new direction, even though none of them was produced on the contemporary stage or

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 4, 5.



directly influenced the development of drama in that century."<sup>20</sup>

In Maud, the absolute autonomy of the dramatis persona and the fact that the dramatic locus of the poem is the mind of this persona, determine, as Otten observes, that external incidents are not important for what they do to the speaker, but for what they reveal of him. He says:

The action is the record of his agonizing search for some sense of identity, some reason for existing in a world alien to his being. The whole of nature is described according to his distraught vision. Scenes and events never assume values of their own, but rather expose the half-crazed speaker, who in projecting his ever-changing moods transmogrifies setting into an image of self.<sup>21</sup>

The early poem (published eighteen years before in The Tribute) from which Maud was eventually evolved, appears in Part 2. IV., as the lyric beginning "O that 'twere possible." This poem, which is placed at the point just before the hero lapses into insanity, clearly indicates the structural pattern and the dramatic method of the whole monodrama. The audience

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 3. Otten is not entirely accurate in this: The Cenci was first staged in 1886 by the Shelley Society in a theatre rented by them for the purpose, and it has been performed publicly since then. See Percy Bysshe Shelley, The Cenci, R. A. Duerksen, ed. (Indianapolis & New York: Bobbs & Merrill Co. Inc., 1970), p. xiii.

<sup>21</sup> Otten, p. 80.

receives information on the actions and motives of all characters and the record of all events only as they are modified by the mind of the speaker. Every image he evokes in his "soliloquy" therefore becomes an "objective correlative"<sup>22</sup> which serves as a formula for interpreting the speaker's emotions or the state of his mind. The hero had been able for a while to overcome his hysteria through the agency of Maud's love but his killing of her brother and the loss of Maud herself have brought him to his present mood of despair. He reminisces on all that has happened and yearns for some relief from his grief and pain. The young man longs for his lost love, and imagines her singing "as of old." Tennyson had made this song that she used to sing, which occurs in Part I.V., one of patriotic fervour and chivalric heroism, and the hero when he heard it had cried out in anguish at the contrast it presented to the present "so sordid and mean," and himself "so languid and base." Now, in this later, hallucinatory reappearance of Maud, just before her distraught lover lapses into complete madness, he imagines he hears a passionate cry:

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<sup>22</sup> Eliot's term from his essay on Hamlet. See T. S. Eliot, Selected Essays (London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1932), p. 145.

There is someone dying or dead,  
 And a sullen thunder is roll'd;  
 For a tumult shakes the city.

(2. IV. 187-89)

This suggests that his mind is disturbed by the interwoven memories of the cry of Maud's brother as he was stricken in the duel, Maud's own cry "for a brother's blood," the war with its "dying or dead," and the idea of his own possible death in this war, a death linked by the chivalric allusions to his frustrated idealism. Morbidity and disgust for industrial society are expressed in imagery evocative of modern warfare, in the following description of the city:

And the yellow vapors choke  
 The great city sounding wide;  
 The day comes, a dull red ball  
 Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke  
 On the misty river-tide.

(2. IV. 202-06)

He considers suicide:

Or to ask her, "take me, sweet,  
 To the regions of thy rest?"

(2. IV. 226-27)

This solution is denied him, and he longs for:

. . . some still cavern deep,  
 There to weep, and weep, and weep:  
 My whole soul out to thee

(2. IV. 235-38)

Ironically, this wish will be granted in the form of his incarceration in an asylum for the insane, which will be dramatically portrayed in the soliloquy which forms the following

poem. War will recur in Part 3, and the hero will see England's participation in it as an honourable or "chivalrous" fight against evil, and his own commitment to it as a responsible act in contrast to his previous alienation from society. This illustrates how from the very beginning, Tennyson had a design for the monodrama which would effectively demonstrate the hero's mental state in all its phases and his individual solutions to his dilemmas, although these solutions may be controversial when standards other than his own are applied to them. It is obvious that the controversial ending was always intended by the poet, and is dramatically consistent with the character of the speaker.

John Killham, in his valuable essay on the imagery of Maud, claims that:

It is truer on the whole to say that the drama is subordinate to the lyrics rather than the reverse . . . in other words, the imagery is as important as the themes, and the portrayal of character in action serves Tennyson's lyric interests equally with his thematic ones.<sup>23</sup>

I would maintain that thematic interests, if by this one means the philosophical, social, and political ideas of the hero, are in all cases manipulated by the poet and subordinated to the necessities of action in character which in this poem

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<sup>23</sup> Killham, p. 224.

means a dramatic portrayal of the mind of the hero. Maud is not a drama in the sense of being radically an acting script, but is a series of projections of the moods of one character, in which: "The external action is effect, not cause, and evolves in conjunction with internal developments."<sup>24</sup> But if it were to be considered as a conventional drama, one would find a romantic plot resembling Scott's The Bride of Lammermoor. Tennyson placed his hero in a recognizably contemporary setting, and gave him a biography in some ways similar to his own family experience, and thematic interests of the poem are similar to those which may be found throughout Tennyson's work. Killham says that in Maud:

. . . the theme is reducible ultimately to the notion that a psychic balance in man, who is obliged to accept that violence and death have to be faced as part of his lot on earth, is attainable through the experience of love which with maturity can take the form of sexual love.<sup>25</sup>

Tennyson did say that his hero is "raised to a pure and holy love which elevates his whole nature" (Memoir, l. 396), but there is not such a clear synthesis of the dialectic as Killham suggests, and the poem's thematic texture is much more complex than Killham's ultimate reduction would indicate. Tennyson's

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<sup>24</sup> Otten, p. 79.

<sup>25</sup> Killham, pp. 223-24.

method of locating the real action of the poem in the changing moods of the hero, action which is presented in the lyric poems, allows him to explore fully the dialectical alternatives while reserving the option of a tentativeness or inconclusiveness in their resolution. Earlier Tennyson poems such as "The Two Voices," "The Palace of Art," and In Memoriam, do not completely transcend the doubts and fears expressed in them, but reach a tentative resolution, based on a feeling, or a hope, rather than absolute conviction. Maud also follows this pattern. Elton E. Smith, who takes a similar view of Tennyson's recurrent themes, says:

Thus the Tennyson poem becomes a juxtaposition of unlikes that reveal the character of each and both, not statically, but as the very tension between powerful and unsolvable opposites. And the agony with which the poet cries from the toils of opposing tendencies, proclaims his kinship with men of all ages.<sup>26</sup>

The dramatic imperatives had to be met in the imagery. Because the hero's mind has, in a sense, created the horrors of his situation in the poem, he creates the myths and symbols by which the action progresses, and these are the agents of his tentative recovery. Indeed, E. D. H. Johnson has suggested

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<sup>26</sup> Elton E. Smith, "Tennyson Criticism 1923-1966: From Fragmentation to Tension in Polarity," Victorian Newsletter, no. 31, Spring 1967, p. 4.

that Tennyson may stand in very much closer relationship to the symbolist tradition in poetry than has been generally realized.<sup>27</sup> The complex relationships which the mind of the hero creates among the characters are expressed in patterns of imagery which undergo kaleidoscopic changes as the mood of the hero changes. These patterns and their possible symbolic meanings should be the main focus of any evaluation of the poem. For example, the allusions to self-sacrifice or the scapegoat, as applied to Maud in Christian and other symbols, to the brother, whom the hero calls "the scapegoat of his race," and to the hero himself, are very important. The rose and lily symbols have been studied by several critics, but other vegetative images, the pervasive blood imagery, and imagery relating to stones and gems, are significant. The redness of the rose is associated with the flow of blood in the body and light images ebb and flow in a rhythm connected with Maud, and vary from deathlike and icy coldness, to sunny warmth. The association of the rose with passion in all its senses eventually becomes the "blood-red blossom of war with the heart of fire," and an understanding of this metamorphosis is relevant

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<sup>27</sup> E. D. H. Johnson, "The Lily and the Rose: Symbolic Meaning in Tennyson's Maud," PMLA, LXIV (1949), pp. 1222-27, p. 1227.

to the way in which the hero's passion for Maud is transformed into his commitment at the end of the poem, to the war, which he describes as "a cause pure and true."

The hero's habit of distorting his environment, which was essential to the poet's artistic intention, prevented Tennyson from making him a Victorian tragic hero in the classical sense, for, as Terry Otten says:

Tennyson closed off all possibilities of resurrecting him by traditional means because no sense of a communal myth in which a classical protagonist participates is operational in the poem. Unlike Hamlet, the "I" cannot transcend his own psychological and ritualistic role.<sup>28</sup>

The communal myth of the classical protagonist may not be present in the poem, but I would suggest that allusions to traditional myths abound and are crucial to the action.

The technical difficulties which Tennyson created for himself in Maud should be considered in the Victorian literary and social context, as well as in relation to his other work. His conception and execution followed no established tradition, and, in fact, as Otten has suggested, it may be regarded as a forerunner of later developments in European drama such as Strindberg's A Dream Play and The Ghost Sonata, or Bruchner's

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<sup>28</sup> Otten, pp. 87-88.



Woyzeck, Expressionist plays which paved the way for the freedom of subjective expression enjoyed by twentieth-century dramatists. As Otten says:

Tennyson had a sense of modern action in character . . . Tennyson describes setting as the hero projects himself into it with rich variations and "unrealistic" qualities, much as a modern expressionistic dramatist might conceive it on a stage of modern design, luminous colors, and interpretive lighting. In writing a poem as opposed to a play, Tennyson used lyric forms to convey dialogue of the mind as he had done in "The Two Voices," but his concept of a monodrama limited to one character is not impossible to envision on the modern stage.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Otten, p. 89.

## CHAPTER II

### THEMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

The greatest impact on the reader of Maud is made by the intensity and immediacy of feeling expressed by the hero. The drama relies on imagistic changes to advance the action, which takes place in the mind of the hero, and these changes give an illusion of a spontaneous revelation of the successive phases of his emotional state. At the same time the imagery carries symbolic burdens which further illuminate the action.

Political, social, and philosophical concerns are expressed vehemently in the "soliloquies," but because it is immediately established that the hero is mentally disturbed and that he is not, therefore, an entirely reliable commentator, the importance of his utterances as topical social or political commentary is undermined. It is thus established that these are not the main themes of the poem but serve an oblique purpose as elaboration of the hero's mental environment rather than a direct one of social or political criticism. The portrayal of the mind or "spirit" of the hero then emerges as the main theme of the work. Martin Dodsworth is probably accurate in his observation that:

Tennyson did not write to express ideas but in order to express states of mind which are of interest not so much for their own sake as for what they imply concerning the nature of reality itself. "Spirit seems to me to be the reality of the world," Tennyson once said. The proposition is not untenable, but it is perplexing. His poetry is about that perplexment.<sup>30</sup>

The dramatic portrayal of a disturbed mind perplexed by many worries, thoughts, and opinions, is the main theme of the poem. The main critical task then is a study of the way in which symbolic patterns of imagery work in conjunction with the dramatic form to accomplish Tennyson's aesthetic purpose, and consideration of the sources of some of the hero's perplexities is a necessary preliminary to this task.

Valerie Pitt has noted that Tennyson's own mind was of the "brooding" type, which makes more of a limited experience than those of brisker, less introspective men. She elaborates on this view in this way:

Tennyson's was a mind not easily led to explain things to itself in terms of rational analysis: he thinks, it would be reasonable to say, in the arrangement of sounds, in symbols and in pictures. His interpretation of experience was slow in forming itself, moving not by an arrangement of neat conceptual counters, but in a long

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<sup>30</sup> Martin Dodsworth, "Patterns of Morbidity: Repetition in Tennyson's Poetry," The Major Victorian Poets: Reconsiderations, pp. 7-34, Isabel Armstrong, ed. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), pp. 33-34.

organic growth. His mental life was, if the distinction be admitted, feminine, not masculine, contemplative, not active.<sup>31</sup>

I think this is an accurate observation, and Maud, as Pitt suggests, is perhaps the most interesting example of this retrospective shaping, for it evolved from a single lyric, "O that 'twere possible," written fifteen years earlier. Realizing the dramatic and thematic possibilities of this poem, Tennyson was able to extend it from an expression of grief at the loss of a loved one to the full exposition of a disturbed personality. Various concerns, personal, social, political and philosophical, race through the hero's mind, but the monodrama form ensures that his interpretation of them is the only one expressed and thus "universal" concerns are subordinated to the process of revealing the mind which contains them. In Maud Tennyson returned to a recurrent theme in his work, namely the repudiation of a neurotic withdrawal into the self, accompanied by the suggestion that spiritual regeneration and personal integration may be achieved by striving actively for a moral life in a social context. The hero eventually arrives at such a solution by means of intuition and painful experience. His active imagination creates the progressive changes in imagery which constitute the

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<sup>31</sup> Pitt, p. 8.

dramatic movement of the poem, carrying his mind from its initial despair on to the reviving effect of Maud's love, then through the reversal which follows his killing of Maud's brother and the loss of Maud to the eventual achievement of a personally acceptable resolution of his problems.

The philosophical, social, political and personal concerns to which the hero refers throughout the poem are representative of many of the questions which troubled the sensitive Victorian but the poet was able to take these familiar themes and still treat them in a way sufficiently original to startle many of his first readers. As his friend Arthur Hallam had early discerned: "The features of original genius are clearly marked. The author imitates nobody; we recognize the spirit of his age, but not the individual form of this or that writer."<sup>32</sup> In these socio-political and philosophical themes of Maud, as in the early poems to which Hallam was referring, we recognize the spirit of the Victorian age, and also some parallels in Tennyson's personal history. Before embarking on a detailed study of the imagery, a brief examination of this background may enable us to acquire the

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<sup>32</sup> Arthur Henry Hallam, "The Lyrical Poems of Tennyson: On Some of the Characteristics of Modern Poetry, and the Lyrical Poems of Alfred Tennyson" (1831), Robert Hill, Jr., ed., Tennyson's Poetry, pp. 546-552, p. 549.

"sympathy" or understanding of the speaker that is an essential adjunct to the dramatic monologue form, although we may then either accept or reject the views that he expresses. In his study of the dramatic monologue form Robert Langbaum suggests that:

Although the fact that a poem is a monologue helps to determine our sympathy for the speaker since we must adopt his viewpoint as our entry into the poem, the monologue quality remains nevertheless a means, and not the only means, to the end--the end being to establish the reader's sympathetic relation to the poem, to give him "facts from within."<sup>33</sup>

Thus the secondary themes in such a poem are more than mere background detail setting the scene for the dramatic action taking place in the hero's mind; they are a means of allowing the reader access to the whole psychic milieu of the hero. The articulation of the hero's concerns and the dramatic portrayal of his various moods allows the reader to sympathize with him (in Langbaum's sense) by having the "facts from within." The concerns preoccupying the hero and his reactions to them, illustrate his personality and emotional problems. Since many of these concerns, if isolated from the particular reactions of the hero, would be seen to originate in the Victorian intellectual climate a brief consideration of some of the origins will indicate the foundation "colouring" on

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<sup>33</sup> Robert Langbaum, The Poetry of Experience: The Dramatic Monologue in Modern Literary Tradition (New York: Norton & Co. Inc., 1967), p. 78.

which Tennyson painted the particular portrait of the disturbed mind of his hero.

Writing of the Romantic reaction to the mechanistic or Deist theories of the eighteenth century, Alfred North Whitehead claims that modern western thought exhibits two radically inconsistent attitudes which account for much that was half-hearted, wavering and enfeebling in our civilization. He asserts that:

A scientific realism, based on mechanism, is conjoined with an unwavering belief in the world of men and of the higher animals as being composed of self-determining organisms . . . the enterprises produced by the individualistic energy of the European peoples presuppose physical actions directed to final causes. But the science which is employed in their development is based on a philosophy which asserts that physical causation is supreme, and which disjoins the physical causes from the final end. It is not popular to dwell on the absolute contradiction here involved.<sup>34</sup>

By Tennyson's time, these contradictory elements in modern thought had disclosed the fundamental divergence of their jarring interpretations of the course of nature and the life of man. Tennyson's In Memoriam, Whitehead suggests, is the perfect example of this divergence. These are opposing views of the

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<sup>34</sup> Alfred North Whitehead, "The Romantic Reaction," reprinted from Science and the Modern World, in John L. Mahoney, ed., The English Romantics: Major Poetry & Critical Theory (Lexington, Mass. & Toronto: D. C. Heath & Co., 1978), pp. 645-55.

world expressed in various elegies.<sup>35</sup> The different sections of the poem present the poet's reflections on the dilemmas he faced in his long period of grief at the loss of his friend, and these dilemmas, ontological, epistemological and religious, were very much a part of the Victorian intellectual climate.

Three main features characterized the Victorian period: the conception that this was a period of tremendous change; the beginning of the predominance of epistemological over metaphysical concerns; and the pervasive effect of "Darwinism" which saw man merely as part of natural evolution of animal species rather than as a spiritual and unique creation of God.<sup>36</sup> These assumptions of Darwinism were prevalent in English thought even before the publication of The Origin of Species in 1859.

In an article which attempts to define the "Victorianism" of Victorian literature Michael Timko suggests that:

Faced with the irrefutable (for them) Darwinian evidence that had demonstrated man no longer able to claim spiritual origins, confronted with the Kantian epistemological dichotomy, the Victorians turned to the knowable, and they sought for certainty in the

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Michael Timko, "The Victorianism of Victorian Literature," New Literary History, no. 6, 1974-75, pp. 607-27, p. 610.



human qualities that would prove both man's humanity and his humanness . . . In the face of the epistemological dilemma, one never faced by the Romantics, the Victorians responded by emphasizing man's human qualities and the need for social morality . . . The epistemological and Darwinian awareness of the Victorians must be seen then, in terms of the changed nature of the "imaginative awareness" effected by "experience."<sup>37</sup>

However, countering the growing materialism of English thought were other influences which insisted on man's spiritual nature and the freedom of his will. For example, towards the end of the eighteen-thirties, the study of Kant seems to have become established as an element of English philosophical tradition. Carlyle's important papers on German thought, which were published about 1830, and the publication of the first complete translation of the Critique of Pure Reason in 1838, contributed greatly to this influence. An anonymous writer of an introduction to a translation of a biography of Kant published in 1836 wrote:

What Sir Isaac Newton accomplished in Physics, a century later, Kant achieved in Ethics. The dazzling and wonderful announcement, that the Human Will is--as the Will of every Intelligent throughout the Universe--autonomic and autocratic is . . . the centre of Kant's thought which radiates its light into all the details of his epistemological investigations. The

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 613.



found only in the individual's heart.<sup>40</sup>

The eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher David Hume, in A Treatise of Human Nature (1739-40), claimed that, as knowledge is dependent on experience derived through the senses, and as the senses frequently deceive, one can have no absolute knowledge of things but only one's impressions of them. In other words, there are no things apart from experience but merely chains of experiences which constitute the things.

Influences such as these, when added to the nineteenth-century scientific discoveries and resultant philosophical speculations, produced a Victorian state of mind which Richard Altick describes in this way:

The romantic faith in the powers of the mind, broadly conceived, to command all knowledge, gave way to an oppressive sense that the human intelligence, such as it was, had to content itself with a very limited comprehension of the universe in which it had its moment of ill-adapted

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<sup>40</sup> The wider roots of Satan's boast are traced in MP, L111 (1956), 80-94, to ancient Stoic denials of a local Tartarus and of its torments as existing anywhere but in the consciences of sinners, to the Renaissance distortions of the Stoic doctrine that the mind is master of its fate, and to the interpretation of Christ's teaching that "the kingdom of God is within you" by Jacob Boehme and his disciples as meaning that "We have heaven and hell in ourselves" (Boehme's The Threefold Life of Man, xiv; 72). See Merritt Y. Hughes, ed., John Milton, Complete Works and Major Prose (Indianapolis & New York: The Odyssey Press, 1967), p. 217, n. 255.

existence. The only human certainties were that everything in ethics, religion, history, experience, was relative and that absolutes, if they did exist, were beyond man's grasp; and that since evolution was the basic law of life, all was flux. This was the mood in which a considerable body of mid- and late-Victorian literature was written.<sup>41</sup>

Tennyson was as sensitive as any of his contemporaries to these currents of thought, and in his poems he explored the possibilities of several responses to the problems raised.

In Memoriam considers many such questions, but as an elegy it is specifically concerned with the possibility of the immortality of the human soul in the light of new scientific discoveries. The persona describes his agonized search for reassurance after the death of his friend, and is able to achieve some measure of comfort by means of transcendental experience and intuition in the absence of any certain knowledge:

But in my spirit will I dwell  
 And dream my dream and hold it true  
 For tho' my lips may breathe adieu  
 I cannot think the thing untrue.

Poem 123.

His answer to the uncertainties raised by Darwinism is the brave but still frail cry that man is a spiritual being: "in

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<sup>41</sup> Richard D. Altick, Victorian People and Ideas (New York: W. W. Norton & Co. Inc., 1973), pp. 232-33.

my spirit will I dwell"--but in the absence of convincing scientific or even religious evidence of immortality, he can only assert his own intuitive belief in the power of human feeling or intuition:

A warmth within the breast would melt  
The freezing reason's colder part  
And like a man in wrath the heart  
Stood up and answered, "I have felt"

Poem 125.

"Freezing reason" seems to mean scientific thought as distinct from human feeling and human consciousness, for Tennyson once remarked to a friend, "No evolutionist is able to explain the mind of man or how any possible physiological change of tissue can produce conscious thought" (Memoir I, p. 323). Nineteenth-century science had placed man among the animals in a context of a "Nature red in tooth and claw" (Poem 56). Man's position as a unique being, singled out for special care by God seemed to be destroyed by these discoveries:

So careful of the type? but no.  
From scarped cliff and quarried stone  
She cries, "A thousand types are gone;  
I care for nothing, all shall go.

Poem 56.

As Altick has pointed out:

Science, it appeared, had liberated man only insofar as technology had enabled him to gain ascendancy--a tragically limited one--over nature. But science now revealed that in the

longer view, far from being free, man was caught up in exorable processes of nature from which there was no escape . . . but . . . might not a further refinement of the attributes which had enabled him to arrive at his present eminence enable him, as Tennyson wrote in In Memoriam to "Move Upward, working out the beast / And let the ape and tiger die?" It might, but in Darwin's account of biological development there was no assurance that it would, because . . . the natural process contained no hint of intelligence or purpose, let alone benevolence or justice.<sup>42</sup>

To the biological determinism of Darwinism was added another of the period's secular beliefs, the determinism of economics.

As Altick notes:

Both rested on the assumption of eternal struggle and iron bound laws, which man was powerless to breach. The history of animals, from amoeba to man, gave warrant to the assumption by analogy, that cutthroat competition was an ineradicable fact of economic life and that prizes were reserved for those best equipped to survive.<sup>43</sup>

In reaction to these daunting theories, the idea arose that a man's social conscience could enable him to ameliorate conditions for both himself and his fellows by action taken in concert.

A dialectical type of consideration of ideas like these pervades the whole of Tennyson's work. This quality

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<sup>42</sup> Altick, pp. 229-30.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 232.

of his poetry Elton E. Smith describes as one of "tension in polarity." He says:

Tennyson was consistently working with the shifting planes of physical appearance, spiritual reality, personal identity, and poetic imagination--all in the focus of the problems they present to faith and life and art. He desired to assure himself and others, but, because he could never release the tension from either one of the poles on which his thought was hooked, he could never reach the static condition of perfect assurance or denial. . . . At the moment we expect affirmation, Tennyson affirms, but in his prose comments to his friends confesses that he is not so sure as the words might sound. Thus the Tennyson poem becomes a juxtaposition of unlikes that reveal the character of each and both, not statically, but as the very tension between powerful and unresolvable opposites.<sup>44</sup>

In "De Profundis," as he gives his newborn son two greetings, Tennyson expresses his belief that man is an ethical being. In the first, he places the moment of the child's birth in the context of infinity:

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
Where all that was to be, in all that was  
Whirl'd for a million aeons, thro' the vast  
waste dawn of multitudinous eddy light.

"Life is viewed as we see it in the world, and as we know it by physical science,"<sup>45</sup> was his own explanation of the poem.

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<sup>44</sup> Smith, p. 4.

<sup>45</sup> Hill, p. 196, note 1.

Live and be happy in thyself and serve  
 This mortal race thy kin so well that men  
 Will bless thee as we bless thee O young life, . .

There is indeed a "fated channel where thy motion lives," but Tennyson expresses the hope that this determined part of his existence is "prosperously shaped" for his son. In the second greeting, the belief that the baby is a moral being with a social conscience is stressed. He has the power of shaping his own life, the poet says, by the free choices he will make, and if these are correctly made, he will once again come close to God:

. . . that infinite One  
 Who made thee unconceivably Thyself  
 Out of his Whole World--self and all in all--  
 Live thou! and of the grain and husk, the grape,  
 And ivy-berry, choose; and still depart  
 From death to death through life and life, and find  
 Nearer and ever-nearer Him, who wrought  
 Not matter, nor the finite-infinite,  
 But this main--miracle, that thou art thou,  
 With power on thine own act and on the world.

Thus, faced with the terrifying realization of man's smallness in the universal scheme, as revealed by modern science, Tennyson in this poem celebrates his belief in man's individuality and moral potential, the essence of his humanness and the quality which still makes him unique in nature. Naturally, he can offer no scientific proofs, only the intuitive conviction that the true nature of man is spiritual, but he states the belief clearly and emphatically when he addresses the newborn



baby as "Dear Spirit." However, he was not always able to sustain that note of clear conviction in other works.

Idylls of the King, when viewed as a unified work of twelve poems, shows man realizing his true nature through encounter with earthly experience, and it shows, especially in The Holy Grail, the inadequacy of transcendental experience as a guide to conduct. As Clyde de L. Ryals comments: "Tennyson is here clear that there is no truth for the individual except insofar as he creates it for himself in his actions. Hence the necessity for self-confident and unswerving performance in the demands of that commitment."<sup>46</sup> In many of his poems Tennyson asserts a belief in the power of love and ethical commitment as counter charms against the confusions and terrors of modern life, but he was not always able to sustain his confidence in such beliefs, as conflicting quotations in Hallam Tennyson's Memoir of his father show. On the same page of the Memoir we find these two: "An Omnipotent Creator Who could make such a painful world is to me sometimes as hard to believe in as to believe in blind matter behind everything" and "Yet God is love, transcendent, all pervading" (Memoir II, p. 127). James Knowles, Tennyson's friend, quotes the

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<sup>46</sup> Clyde de L. Ryals, "Idylls of the King: Tennyson's New Realism," Victorian Newsletter, Spring, 1967, pp. 5-7, p. 7.

following comment by the poet on his In Memoriam: "It's too hopeful, this poem, more than I am myself. I think of adding another to it, a speculative one, . . . showing that all the arguments are about as good on one side as the other, and thus throw man back more on the primitive impulses and feelings."<sup>47</sup> Ryals believes that this other "speculative" poem which Tennyson intended to write is Idylls of the King. It may well be, but Maud is equally speculative, and the hero's "primitive impulses and feelings" in his reactions to the circumstances of his life, and his method of dealing with his problems, is a main theme of the poem.

In Maud, the hero speculates on a wide range of questions, such as biological determinism, scientific materialism, economic determinism, the inequities of individual fortune in a cutthroat society, the power of human love, and the problem of self-actualization in a seemingly alien world. But it should be noted that such universal questions are not raised merely for their own sake but in Maud are given a dramatic and personal significance, an individual emphasis and a characteristic imagery. A detailed investigation of the dramatic use of such speculation is the matter of later chapters but the

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<sup>47</sup> Quoted in James Knowles, "A Personal Reminiscence of Tennyson," Nineteenth Century, XXXIII (1893), p. 182.

general tenor of what may be called elaborating or secondary themes of the poem may be considered here. Determinism, biological and economic, is on the speaker's mind when he says:

We are puppets, man in his pride, and Beauty fair  
in her flower:  
Do we move ourselves, or are moved  
By an unseen hand at a game  
That pushes us off from a board, and others ever  
succeed?

(1.IV.126-28)

His hysterical distrust of his fellows, whom he sees as liars and cheats, leads him to wonder, in the broader context of Darwinism, if mankind as a whole is not too base for any hope of spiritual progress because he has achieved so little of it in the millions of years that have so far gone into his development:

A monstrous eft was of old the lord and master  
of earth,  
For him did his high sun flame, and his river  
billowing ran,  
As he felt himself in his force to be nature's  
crowning race.  
As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe  
for his birth,  
So many a million of ages have gone to the making  
of man:  
He now is first, but is he the last? is he not  
too base?

(1.IV.132-37)

Belief in man's unique place in the universe, and the teleological assumptions of the Biblical tradition have been undermined, and God's intentions are now obscure:

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis,  
 hid by the veil,  
 Who knows the way of the world, how God will  
 bring them about?  
 Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world  
 is wide.

(1.IV.144-46)

This issue is raised again, however, at the moment when the young man is most calm and self-possessed, for he has just been assured of Maud's love. When the fears are confronted once more, he has the "countercharm" of Maud's warm human love to sustain him in the face of chilling fears. He talks of the "forlorn" feeling that comes with an understanding of:

A sad astrology,<sup>48</sup> the boundless plan  
 That makes you tyrants in your iron skies,  
 Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,  
 Cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand  
 His nothingness into man.

But now shine on, and what care I,  
 Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl  
 The countercharm of space and hollow sky,  
 And do accept my madness, and would die  
 To save from some slight shame one simple girl? -

Not die, but live a life of truest breath,<sup>49</sup>  
 And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs.

(1.XVIII.634-42;651-52)

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<sup>48</sup> Tennyson's note explains "the sad astrology" as "modern astronomy, for of old astrology was thought to sympathise with and rule man's fate" (Hill, p. 231, note 6).

<sup>49</sup> Tennyson said "This is the central idea - the holy power of Love" (Hill, p. 231, note 7).

His love has brought relief from the horrors which had haunted him, and prompted him to "live a life of truest breath, / And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs." Personal morality is now allied with active engagement in the struggle for social justice. He expresses his disgust with contemporary social and personal ethics while he is most morbid and hysterical:

Why do they prate of the blessings of peace? we  
 have made them a curse,  
 Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is  
 not its own;  
 And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it  
 better or worse  
 Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on  
 his own hearthstone?

(1.I.21-24)

But the social comment is less important in itself than as an indication of the hero's self-disgust, as he suggests that his resistance to the "spirit of Cain" may be worn down, and he himself may "sooner or later," "passively take the print of the golden age - why not?" (1.I.29-30). This same weakness had been his father's downfall when he had indulged in a "vast speculation" and been cheated, and the hero's own despair is rooted in the horror of his father's death, which he believes was the direct result of a madness exacerbated by his financial ruin. The fear that this will be his own fate lies in his cry:

. . . I have neither hope nor trust;  
 May make my heart as a millstone, set my face  
 as a flint,  
 Cheat and be cheated, and die - who knows? we  
 are ashes and dust.

(1.I.30-32)

His feeling of helplessness is coloured by the thought that mankind as a whole is "flint" and "ashes and dust," images associated with evolutionary science. Again, the hero's rage at the "Mammonite mother" who "kills her child for a burial fee" serves as a preliminary to his realization that he is "raging alone" as his father "raged in his mood." Such people and incidents were actually documented in contemporary issues of The Times, the Morning Post and Punch,<sup>50</sup> and Tennyson's friends Charles Kingsley in Alton Locke (1850) and Carlyle in Past and Present (1843) had referred to similar scandals.

The hero's attitude to war also seems to echo closely that of The Times and Punch, as will be seen from Paul Turner's account of the references to the Crimean War in the contemporary press:

The speaker's hope that "God's just wrath shall be wrecked on a giant liar" (III, 45) echoes statements in The Times that the Czar had "set truth at nought" (12 November 1853); that England "will not flinch from a quarrel in which she believes HEAVEN will still be her

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<sup>50</sup> Turner, p. 142.

friend" (23 February 1854); that the war will end in "the signal punishment of the gigantic offender" (28 March 1854). Punch was full of references to the Czar's dishonesty (I've no Allies, and must depend On Lies without the Al'), and the view of the war as essentially just was expressed in a famous cartoon, "Right Against Wrong," showing an indignant Britannia standing with drawn sword beside a lion whose massive countenance imitates her frown of stern disapproval. The belief that the heart of the English people beats "with one desire" (III, 48) comes from the assertion (Times, 20 February 1854): "It is a war to which every party in the State, and almost every man in the country, gives assent," and not only the suggestion that war may be better than the "canker" of peace, but even the image: "many a darkness into the light shall leap" (III, 46) appears in a Times leader (14 February 1855): "war has some positive advantages . . . it . . . raises to the surface of affairs many an ardent spirit that would otherwise have smouldered in obscurity."<sup>51</sup>

While Tennyson apparently takes these attitudes almost verbatim from the press and makes them his hero's, the way in which he uses the war imagery and the hero's attitudes is much more subtle.

In addition to the general social, philosophical, and political undercurrents, there are many similarities between Tennyson's own life and that of the hero in Maud, and these have been explored very fully by R. W. Rader.<sup>52</sup> For example,

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<sup>51</sup> Turner, p. 143.

<sup>52</sup> R. W. Rader, Tennyson's "Maud": The Biographical Genesis (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1963).

Tennyson's father was subject to violent outbreaks much like those of the hero's father who would "rage in his mood"; Maud's father, the "grey old wolf," with his "broad estate and the Hall," is reminiscent of the poet's grandfather and his home Bayons Manor and the "gew-gaw castle" of the ostentatious home of the Tennyson D'Eyncourts, another branch of the family. Rader's investigations focus most importantly on the women in Tennyson's life, and he believes that Maud is a composite of the three women with whom the poet had been in love, Rosa Baring, Sophy Rawnsley, and Emily who became his wife. The use of the rose and lily symbols in the poem lends some support to this view. Christopher Ricks makes similar autobiographical claims for the work when he says:

Maud was an intense and precarious attempt-- compacted and impacted to encompass the bitter experiences of four decades of a life in which many of the formative influences had been de- formative. Maud is a story of hereditary melancholia and madness; of a father's bank- ruptcy and suicide; of family feud; of a love which unexpectedly flowers in spite of snobbery and opposition, but then, unexpec- tedly and grimly, is shattered; of death and loss; of brutal Mammonism. It is a story which gave fierce play to all the central griefs of Tennyson's life.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Christopher Ricks, Tennyson (New York: Macmillan Co., 1972), p. 246.



Many apparent autobiographical connections could be made, but direct identification between Tennyson and the hero of Maud would be injudicious. His sentiments are coloured as much by the Victorian social and intellectual environment as by the poet's own experience, and these were the raw material of all Victorian artists. If we consider Maud as an aesthetically complete work, while it may be illuminated by specific biographical reference, it will be seen to be artistically valid and consistent.

Roy Basler, on the other hand, sees the poem as a dramatic study in psychic frustration, and develops this thesis in the light of modern non-rational psychology, claiming that the work antedates by half a century the works of Sigmund Freud. This approach has obvious dangers but Basler seems to be more accurate than Rader and Ricks when he identifies the themes of Maud in this way:

In the opening stanzas of the poem, Tennyson presents his hero as a personality whose conscious thought processes are distinctly unstable. This instability is grounded in the fear of incertitude. The hero's religio-ethical system has been largely undermined by the new science of the nineteenth century, which presents a non-ethical view of life with force reigning supreme. He cannot without painful doubt keep his traditional ethic in the face of science, nor yet can he be content with the data of science; for, although science reveals man as the biological brother of all nature, it affords no satisfactory ethical meaning, and

although traditional Christianity affords him a satisfactory meaning bolstered by an absolute god, the hero cannot reconcile it with the scientific fact which he knows and must recognize. This much is the element of conscious conflict, in which sex and all aspects of human life are identified with nature and rapine, and in which his own ego is identified with the absolute ethic and spiritual dignity of orthodox Christianity. His wish to resolve this conflict leads him to attempt, however futilely, to adopt an impossible attitude of cynicism, from which he can observe, without becoming involved in, the miserable spectacle of human existence: "I will bury myself in myself, and the devil may pipe to his own."<sup>54</sup>

While Basler's reading offers several insights, I am in fundamental disagreement with respect to his assessment of the hero's condition at the end of the poem. However, Basler does not, as do other critics, implicate Tennyson in the supposed "madness" of his hero. Examples of this critical tendency can be seen in Ricks and Rader who lean to the view of Maud as Tennyson's poetic auto-exorcism. In assessing their approach one should perhaps remember W. K. Wimsatt's warning:

The meaning of a poem may certainly be a personal one, in the sense that a poem expresses a personality or a state of soul rather than a physical object like an apple. But even a short lyrical poem is dramatic (no matter how abstractly conceived) to a situation (no matter how universalized). We ought to impute the thoughts and

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<sup>54</sup> Roy P. Basler, Sex, Symbolism and Psychology in Literature (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1948), p. 76.

attitudes of the poem immediately to the dramatic speaker, and if to the author at all only by an act of biographical inference.<sup>55</sup>

As Wimsatt says, personal studies as distinct from poetic studies need not be derogatory, but he cautions:

The intentional fallacy is a confusion between the poem and its origins. . . .It begins by trying to derive the standard of criticism from the psychological causes of the poem and ends in biography and relativism. The Affective Fallacy is a confusion between the poem and its results (what it is and what it does). . . .It begins by trying to derive standards of criticism from the psychological effects of the poem and ends in impressionism and relativism. The outcome of either Fallacy, the Intentional or the Affective, is that the poem itself, as an object of specifically critical judgment, tends to disappear.<sup>56</sup>

Many readers of Maud have fallen into this kind of error and failed to accept the work as an aesthetic endeavour complete in itself and with the right to be received on its own terms.

As we have noted, the thematic texture of Maud is complex, but the main theme, I suggest, is the portrayal of the mind of the hero in all its complexities. His mind is preoccupied with typical Victorian concerns as well as personal problems. It is also the mind of a poet, and therefore, in the hero's search for truth and beauty in his perplexing world,

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<sup>55</sup> W. K. Wimsatt, The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry (Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1954), p. 4.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

one would expect him to operate according to an aesthetic theory acceptable to Tennyson himself. A. S. Byatt suggests that

. . . one of the basic principles behind the organization of Maud lies in the interplay, from lyric to lyric, between the painful learning of separate identity, through the use of "blood and breath" which constitutes the drama, and the typical aesthetic experience that one is what one sees, and is not other than the things one touches, which informs the great lyrics.<sup>57</sup>

He believes that in Maud Tennyson is using the lyrics to describe a series of timeless moments, pure emotion, and aesthetic contemplation while relating them to each other and to a life with a moral structure, and that the major source of Tennyson's inspiration for such an approach is in the writing of Arthur Hallam, from which he quotes the following passage in illustration:

This powerful tendency of the imagination to a life of immediate sympathy with the external universe is not nearly so liable to false views of art as the opposite disposition of purely intellectual contemplation. For where beauty is continually passing before "that inward eye which is the bliss of solitude"; where the soul seeks it as a perpetual and necessary refreshment to the sources of activity and intuition;

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57 A. S. Byatt, "The Lyric Structure of Tennyson's Maud," editor, The Major Victorian Poets: Reconsiderations (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), pp. 69-77, p. 77.

where all other sacred ideas of our nature, the idea of good, the idea of perfection, the idea of truth, are habitually contemplated through the medium of this predominant mood, so that they assume its colour and are subject to its peculiar laws--there is little danger that the ruling passion of the whole mind will cease to direct its creative operations, or the energetic principle of love for the beautiful sink, even for a brief period, to the level of a mere notion in the understanding.<sup>58</sup>

Byatt suggests that what Hallam is recommending here is not examination of the cognitive process "but direct sensual response to exterior objects as a means to relate one's energy to the exterior world and thus release it," and that "Maud, aesthetically and morally, is Tennyson's exploration of the states of mind to and from this ideal."<sup>59</sup>

The poem is unified, and the action advanced, by changes in images which reoccur in the successive moods of the hero, and examination of this process will, it is hoped, reveal some of the "distinctive excellencies" which Arthur Hallam claimed for Tennyson's first published lyrics (1831) ~~and~~ which are also admirably demonstrated in Maud written twenty-four years later. These "excellencies" include, as Hallam says,

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<sup>58</sup> Memoir 1, p. 409, quoted by Byatt, pp. 78-79.

<sup>59</sup> Byatt, p. 79.

. . . his luxurious imagination, and at the same time his control over it . . . his power of embodying himself in ideal character, or rather moods of character, with such extreme accuracy of adjustment, that the circumstances of the narration seem to have a natural correspondence with the predominant feeling, and, as it were, to be evolved from it by assimilative force . . . his vivid picturesque delineation of objects, and the peculiar skill with which he holds them all fused, to borrow a metaphor from science . . . in the medium of strong emotion . . . the variety of his lyrical measures and exquisite modulation of harmonious words and cadences to the swell and fall of the feelings expressed.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Arthur Henry Hallam, "The Lyrical Poems of Tennyson," Hill, p. 549.

### CHAPTER III

#### IMAGISTIC CHANGES AS DRAMATIC MOVEMENT

Observation of the imagistic progressions which illustrate the dramatic movement of Maud reveals that the most effective images are made to function simultaneously on two levels, the hero's recollection or interpretation of events which forms the narrative, and his reflections on universal themes, which provide a powerful undercurrent. One must remember, of course, that the hero's conception of such concerns is always coloured by his state of mind and his particular situation which, as previously noted, is Tennyson's main theme in the poem.

The hero's reactions to the narrative events he describes fall into eight distinct phases as his mood changes. At first he is obsessed with the idea of death permeating life itself, and he finds death and violence in everything he sees. In the first poem he describes a natural scene near his home as if it were the mouth of a predatory beast still dripping blood after the kill:

I hate the dreadful hollow behind the little wood;  
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with  
blood-red heath;  
The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror  
of blood . . .

(l. I. 1-3)

To every question his disturbed mind asks in this place, Echo gives the same answer, "Death," for this was the scene of the horrendous event which had caused his mind to be so disturbed, the violent death of his father. He now believes that even the wind at this dreadful moment in his young life had sounded like a "broken worldling" (l. I. 11). He fancies that the woodlands had, at that moment, been "ruin'd" in sympathy with the financial ruin which had driven his father to suicide, and their "flying gold" recalls the family fortune which had been lost (l. I. 12). The commercial enterprises of the nation, which others call "the blessings of peace" (l. I. 21), he sees as "the lust of gain in the spirit of Cain"--a murderous avarice.

A mood which fluctuates between rising hope and renewed despair follows Maud's appearance at the Hall (l. V-X), and forms the second phase. In poem V, he sees Maud's "exquisite face" and hears her "beautiful voice" singing a patriotic ballad and, as a result, he now begins to think of death in terms of chivalry and "Honor that cannot die" (l. V. 176). The sky in this poem is "sunny", but in the next, this more hopeful mood has been lost again, and the bright sun has dimmed:



Morning arises stormy and pale,  
 No sun, but a wannish glare  
 In fold upon fold of hueless cloud;  
 And the budded peaks of the wood, are bow'd  
 Caught and cuff'd by the gale: . . .

(l. VI. 189-93)

Wistfully, he refers to the budding hope of the previous day:

I had fancied it would be fair

(l. VI. 194)

His mood swings towards hope again when he actually meets

Maud and he now feels that:

. . . a delicate spark  
 Of glowing and growing light  
 Thro' the livelong hours of the dark  
 Kept itself warm in the heart of my dreams,  
 Ready to burst in a color'd flame; . . .

(l. VI. 104-08)

But his dreams are shattered again next morning when "In a  
 cloud, it faded, and seems but an ashen-grey delight" (l. VI.  
 146-48).

Maud's glance and pretty blush in church sends his  
 hopes soaring yet again:

And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,  
 And suddenly, sweetly, strangely blush'd  
 To find they were met by my own;  
 And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat stronger  
 And thicker . . .

(l. VIII. 304-08)

Then once again his hopes are dashed, for in the next poem he  
 sees her riding with her brother and another man, and his  
 despair returns:

There were two at her side  
 Something flashed in the sun  
 Down by the hill I saw them ride,  
 In a moment they were gone;  
 Like a sudden spark  
 Struck vainly in the night.  
 Then returns the dark  
 With no more hope of light.

(1. IX. 321-29)

The fluctuating hope and despair of the second phase evolves into a third mood in which he is still morbid but able to assess his situation:

O let the solid ground  
 Not fail beneath my feet  
 Before my life has found  
 What some have found so sweet!  
 Then let come what come may,  
 What matter if I go mad,  
 I shall have had my day.

(1. XI. 397-403)

He now recognizes that he may be over-reacting to Maud's brother's attitude:

Scorn'd, to be scorn'd by one that I scorn,  
 Is that a matter to make me fret?  
 That a calamity hard to be borne?  
 Well, he may live to hate me yet  
 Fool that I am to be vex'd by his pride!

(1. XIII. 444-48)

He chides himself for his anger:

Peace, angry spirit and let him be.  
 Has not his sister smiled on me?

(1. XIII. 486-87)

This phase ends with his realization that he should try to pull himself together for Maud's sake, if, as he hopes, she loves him:

But if I be dear to someone else,  
 Then I should be to myself more dear.  
 Shall I not take care of all that I think,  
 Yea, even of wretched meat and drink  
 If I be dear,  
 If I be dear to someone else.

(l. XV. 530-55)

The fourth phase is one of calm delight, made possible by his assurance of loving and being loved by Maud (l. XVII-XXI). In the beautiful love poem, "I have led her home" (l. XVIII), he is now "no more so all forlorn" (l. XIII. 629). In the "stormy gulf" of life, he has found Maud, a "pearl" which he feels will be the "countercharm" of all that has troubled him so profoundly (l. XVIII. 640-41). He now finds life "sweet" and sees beauty in the landscape once more. Death is no longer terrifying, for he now believes that, if need be, he would willingly die for Maud's sake:

. . . . and would die  
 To save from some slight shame one simple girl? -

Would die, for sullen-seeming Death may give  
 More life to love than is or ever was  
 In our low life where yet 't is sweet to live.

(l. XVIII. 642-46)

This phase ends, however, with the firm resolve to put away thoughts of death, and live a responsible life:

Not die, but live a life of truest breath  
 And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs.

(l. XVIII. 651-52)

A small note of foreboding does manage to creep in again in

the final stanza as he sees a rose from Maud's garden floating in the stream and imagines it to be "lost in trouble," but his optimism returns in the next phase.

In Poem XXII which forms the next phase, a mood of breathless expectation of joy prevails as he waits for his beloved in her garden. The scene and mood are brilliantly recreated in the imagery, and also in variations in metre which suggest now a dance rhythm:

Come into the garden Maud,  
For the black bat, night, has flown,  
Come into the garden Maud,  
I am here at the gate alone;  
(l. XXII. 849-52)

and now the breathless excitement of an ardent, impatient lover:

She is coming, my dove, my dear,  
She is coming, my life, my fate.  
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near";  
And the white rose weeps, "She is late";  
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear";  
And the lily whispers, "I wait."  
(l. XXII. 910-15)

The hero's killing of Maud's brother precipitates the next phase (2. I-IV). Now, "a million horrible bellowing echoes" of his first mood reassail him and he is also horrified by his own guilt. But with the insight gained by painful experience and the memory of Maud's love, he is able to realize that it is possible for man, though frail, to withstand life's buffeting, as the tiny shell on the Breton shore had withstood the "cataract seas."

In the seventh phase (2. V.), he is mad and believes he is dead. He is now, himself, in a state resembling the "living death" which dominated his thoughts before Maud came. His mad ravings, however, include all the things which had disturbed him before; thoughts of the "wretchedest age since time began," unworthy "Churchmen," arrogant lords, treacherous statesmen, unscrupulous physicians, gossips, the "grey old wolf" (Maud's father), and the merchants who cheat the poor.

The eighth and final phase depicts his belief that he himself has "awaked, as it seems to a better mind" (3. 56), and the evils which were destroying the moral fibre of the nation will soon be swept aside also, for "the heart of a people now beats with but one desire" (3. 49), a desire, he is convinced, for justice and the righting of wrongs. Feeling that his period of madness is behind him, he says that "many a darkness into the light shall leap," an image reminiscent of Persephone's return from Hades, and his own return from madness to sanity (3. 46). The "heart" of the people will now "beat with but one desire" (3. 49) even though, paradoxically, there is war, and war means that "many a light shall darken, and many shall weep" (3. 43). The dreadful hollow, with its "lips dabbled with blood-red heath" of the first phase, an image which seemed like the gates of hell, has now become the

"deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress," an image which at first also seems hellish. But the "lips dabbled with blood-red heath" have now become the mouth of the Baltic fortress, which "flames" with the "blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire" (3. 52-53), an image which combines blood, a heart no longer stony, but "molten," and the red rose, and perhaps symbolizes the rose of Chivalry and the war against evil, allied with an Apocalyptic cleansing fire, as the hero resumes his journey of experience towards his fate and "the doom assigned."

The idea of symbolic death and rebirth, decay and renewal, pervades the whole work, and I suggest that it carries with it all the traditional associations of the scapegoat or sacrificial victim as a vessel of the sins and evils, both personal and social, which may be expelled by such a ritual. A progression occurs from images in which life is permeated with corruption and decay in the form of various evils, to the idea that prevails at the end of the poem, that of rebirth and renewal after a symbolic sacrificial death, and this, I believe, is the key to the imagistic texture of Maud. Inter-related patterns of imagery intertwine in a way which is consistent with the changes in mood of the hero to achieve the desired dramatic movement, but at the same time they are

carefully orchestrated to create an undercurrent of traditional allusions.

The hero creates a sort of mythopoeic function for Maud, her brother, and himself, by using the allusory power of certain images. They are aptly modified as the poem proceeds, to suit the changing mood of the hero, but at the same time they provide many allusions which subtly suggest mythical and traditional themes of regeneration. The hero himself is in a state of hysterical inertia resulting from the horror of his father's death. This had followed a financial ruin which the hero believes was caused by commercial corruption and cheating, and his horror causes him to see corruption, evil and violence everywhere. He creates around the idea of Maud, a fantasy in which she not only becomes the agent of his own revival, but also directs his troubled mind towards a soothing pool of traditional ideas of how the corrupt world might be purified and regenerated. In myth and literature there is a wealth of symbols associated with the idea of progression from corruption to restored purity, from death to rebirth, from a sinful life to spiritual renewal. Three groups of such symbols are operative in Maud: images associated with sacrifice and the scapegoat as a rite of purification of evil in society; allusions to vegetative regeneration myths such as those of

Adonis and Persephone; and a pattern of imagery that links Maud with the archetypal anima figure as mediator or spiritual guide, and these will now be considered. Changes in stones, vegetation and blood, in alchemical tradition meant spiritual renewal also. In Maud there are groups of images of stones, animals and blood, and flowers and gardens, which undergo progressive changes or acquire symbolic significance as the poem proceeds, and these will be the focus of the following chapter.



## CHAPTER IV

### STRATEGIES FOR RENEWAL

#### The Scapegoat and Sacrifice

J. E. Cirlot has identified the basis of most cosmogonies as the "cosmic sacrifice," expressing the idea that the creation of forms and matter can take place only by modifying primordial energy. Such a modification, so far as most primitive and protohistoric peoples are concerned, was seen to exist in such painful forms as mutilation, struggle, or sacrifice.<sup>61</sup> The hero of Maud had felt at the moment of his father's death, that his own "pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart" (l. I. 14). This image powerfully describes the feeling of instant and devastating loss of vital energy at the traumatic moment, and he moves from that experience to the feeling that the whole world is in need of regeneration. His mind creates the pathetic fallacy of "ruin'd woodlands"<sup>62</sup> at the scene of his father's death, and the wind echoes his own mental state when it seems to him to wail like "a broken worldling" (l. I. 11).

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<sup>61</sup> J. E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), p. 65.

<sup>62</sup> "Ruin" here reflects not merely the decayed leaves of the autumn woods, but the financial ruin of the hero's family, and his own "ruin" or loss of innocence.

The principal evil abroad in the world, as he sees it, is a "Mammonite" materialism, which has produced what he ironically calls a "golden age" (l. I. 30), an age of cheats and liars, in which "The spirit of murder works in the very means of life" (l. I. 40). The hero's father could be seen as the first sacrificial victim in the poem. But he sacrifices himself to Mammon, and his death is therefore a parody of the traditional ritual of the scapegoat, for it contains no element of redemption. The hero's inability to find the energy to free himself from a state which resembles a living death is projected onto an image of an outwardly peaceful society hiding moral corruption and social irresponsibility:

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the  
   days gone by,  
 When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together,  
   each sex, like swine,  
 Peace in her vineyard--yes!--but a company forges  
   the wine.  
 And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's  
   head,  
 Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the  
   trampled wife,  
 And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the  
   poor for bread,  
 And the spirit of murder works in the very means  
   of life.

(l. I. 31-40)

Thus the hero's first mood reflects a state of "living death" in himself which is echoed in imagery of a society in which the only signs of vitality are death-dealing violence and a

predatory immorality. The natural world also reflects this mood as the young man feels that "the whole little world where I sit is a world of plunder and prey" (l. IV. 125). After the scene of individual inertia and universal corruption has thus been dramatically presented, the sudden arrival of Maud heralds a change of some sort. The hero's first reaction is to remember that she was beautiful and beloved in the happier times before his father's death but he is now so disturbed that he can only react to the new situation with fear and a desire to hide: "I will bury myself in myself" (l. III. 76). He is unable to react normally to anything, is in fact already "buried" in himself. This propensity to see death in everything is now directed at Maud, as he imagines her cold and deathlike, "faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null. / Dead perfection, no more" (l. II. 82-83). He feels that mankind is helpless: "We are puppets" (l. IV. 126). "For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the veil" (l. VI. 143), and the only possible course lies in attaining the supposed cold detachment of a Stoic or Epicurean philosopher, "not to desire or admire" (l. IV. 121-22, 150-51). At this point, the culmination of the first phase, his mind comes back to Maud. He is still unable to see love as a positive feeling, and wants to flee from the possibility of its "cruel madness" (l. IV. 156).

He describes Maud as a "milk-white fawn" and this epithet perfectly conveys the idea of a pampered, luxury-loving creature. But the image may also allude to Marvell's poem "The Nymph Complaining of the Death of Her Faun" and suggests a spotless pure creature like the traditional sacrificial lamb or goat which is made the bearer of the symbolic load of evils in society, and by its death rids the society of them. The faun (Maud), he says, has "but fed on the roses and lain in the lilies of life" and this introduces two important images to the poem, roses and lilies. Hitherto, redness has been associated with violence in such images as the "blood-red heath" and "red-ribb'd ledges" of the place where his father had fallen to his death. On the face of it, this progression of redness from its bloody associations to the red of roses has a softening effect appropriate to the arrival of Maud. But the idea of the sacrificial animal retains the bloody associations, while elevating the concept of violent death to that of life-giving or atoning (though still violent) death which is implicit in sacrifice. The image functions admirably within the context of Maud itself, but the Marvellian allusion reinforces the retention of the bloody associations, because in that poem the lips of the faun "ev'n seemed to bleed," and it is a poem of "complaint on the death of the faun." But it has the effect of changing the

association of redness or blood from senseless violence to ritual sacrifice.

At this point it would be useful to consider some of the traditional literary strategies connected with the idea of the scapegoat. Kenneth Burke gives the following summary:

- . . . the "scapegoat," the "representative" or "vessel" of certain unwanted evils, the sacrificial animal upon whose back the burden of these evils is ritualistically loaded . . . This vessel, delegated to the role of sacrifice, must obviously be "worthy" of sacrifice. A few basic strategies for making him so may be listed.
1. He may be made worthy legalistically (i.e. by making him an offender against legal or moral justice so that he "deserves" what he gets).
  2. We may make him worthy by leading towards sacrifice fatalistically (as when we so point the arrows of the plot that the audience comes to think of him as a marked man and prepares to relinquish him . . .
  3. We may make him worthy by a subtle kind of poetic justice, in making him the sacrificial "vessel too good for this world" hence of the highest value, hence the most perfect sacrifice (as with the Christ theme, and its secular variants) . . . <sup>63</sup>

Faced with the seemingly hopeless situation depicted in the first phase, the hero's imagination begins to construct a fantasy, with appropriate imagery, which applies all three of the traditional strategies of sacrifice which Burke identifies, to the three main characters of the poem. Maud becomes

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<sup>63</sup> Burke, pp. 39, 40.

a sacrificial symbol of the type that is "too good for this world"; her brother is an "offender against moral justice"; and the hero himself will "qualify" in this same category as the killer of the brother, and also in another category identified by Burke:

Perhaps the most normal mode of expiation is that of socialization (the "socialization of losses") . . . So the patriot may slay for his country, his act being exonerated by the justice of serving his group.<sup>64</sup>

The second phase or mood of the hero immediately involves him in the idea of sacrificial death for himself. Poem V of Part 1 tells of Maud:

Singing of men that in battle array,  
Ready in heart and ready in hand  
March with banner and bugles and fife  
To the death, for their native land.  
(1. V. 169-72)

This poem suggests the idea of dying "for their native land," and refers to the sorry state of that land, as he sees it, and to his own offenses:

Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and  
mean,  
And myself so languid and base.  
(1. V. 178-79)

In contrast to his own baseness, he now imagines Maud to have

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<sup>64</sup> Burke, p. 50.

the attributes of Christ--"light" and "grace" (l. V. 176), the purity of Eve before the Fall, "in the happy morning of Life" (l. V. 166), and thus makes her worthy of sacrifice by her goodness. The hero, on the narrative level, still scorns her, fearing she is "neither courtly nor kind," but his mind at the same time is idealizing her, and he feels the impulse to

. . . move to the meadows and fall before  
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,  
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,  
Not her, not her, but a voice.

(l. V. 185-89)

She seems like a goddess, or Christ, when the hero describes her in these terms:

When I saw the treasured splendor, her hand  
Come sliding out of her sacred glove  
And the sunlight broke from her lip.

(l. VI. 272-74)

. . . The grace that, bright and light as the crest  
Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,  
And she knows it not -- O, if she knew it,  
To know her beauty might half undo it!  
I know it the one bright thing to save  
My yet young life in the world of Time,  
Perhaps from madness, perhaps from crime,  
Perhaps from a selfish grave.

(l. XVII. 552-59)

Ward Hellstrom notes that in Christian symbolism, the peacock is used to symbolize the many graces which endow the soul with beauty at the time of baptism. The power to dispense grace or salvation belongs to Christ, and Hellstrom quotes evidence supplied by Christopher Ricks to indicate that Tennyson

associated Maud with Christ:

The following two lines--382-83--were deleted from section X of Part one of an earlier version by Tennyson: "And Maud, Who when I had languished long, / Reached me a shining hand of help." If Christopher Ricks is right, and I think he is, that "The second MS line will have seemed too close to In Memoriam lxxxiv 43: 'Would reach us out the shining hand'" (Ricks, Poems, pp. 1059-60 n.), we may assume that Christ, whose shining hand is spoken of in the elegy, was not far from Tennyson's mind when he worked on Maud.<sup>65</sup>

By applying imagery traditionally associated with Christ to Maud, the hero also endows her with associations of the pure sacrifice who will provide grace or atonement for all sins and evils.

Maud's brother is implicated in the idea of sacrifice when the hero calls him "That oil'd and curled Assyrian bull" (l. IV. 233). This epithet expresses all the scorn the hero feels for the brother's opulent philistinism, and he obviously, at the narrative level, regards him as the epitome of the worldliness and materialism that he so abhors. The bull has figured frequently in mythology, usually as a symbol of man's animality, and in the myth of Theseus, the Minotaur, a bull-like creature, is a symbol of man's uncontrollable instinctive forces. In Mithraic ritual, the Persian god Mithras sacrificed a bull as

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<sup>65</sup> Ward Hellstrom, On the Poems of Tennyson (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1972), pp. 80-81.



a symbol of the victory of man's spiritual nature over his animality, and sacrifice of a bull was also part of the Dionysiac religious rites, where it signified much the same thing. In Assyria, according to Frazer, the bull was born of the sun, and represented the active, masculine principle.<sup>66</sup> The hero explicitly makes the brother the vessel of all the sins of the "race" when he says:

And heap'd the whole inherited sin  
On that huge scapegoat of the race,  
All, all, upon the brother.

(l. XIII. 484-86)

Of course, in the narrative, he is referring to Maud's family as the "race," because he attributes the death of his father to the fact that he had been cheated by Maud's father, and the brother, as heir to the family fortune would also inherit the father's guilt. But the word "race" is a peculiar one to use in reference to a small family, and suggests a larger application to society as a whole.

In this same passage, the hero absolves Maud from any sin by reason of an imagined "virgin" birth, that disassociates her from "the grey old wolf," her father, and makes her "only the child of her mother."

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<sup>66</sup> Sir James Frazer, O.M., The Golden Bough, One Volume Edition, abridged (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1941), p. 34.

Her mother has been a thing complete,  
 However she came to be so allied.  
 And fair without, faithful within,  
 Maud to him is nothing akin.  
 Some peculiar mystic grace  
 Made her only the child of her mother.  
 (l. XIII. 478-82).

Once again, in his imagination, Maud has attributes of Christ, and both she and her brother have acquired sacrificial associations.

In addition to these fantasies, one gets the strong feeling that, while on the surface the respective roles of the three characters are clearly delineated, in the sub-stream of the hero's fantasy, they seem to represent aspects of himself, and this is consistent with his habit of projecting himself on to everything he sees. Maud seems to symbolize his idealism and spirituality, as well as his warm human love (qualities which are symbolized by the lily and rose in the poem), and the brother all the characteristics associated with the bull in mythology. Perhaps then, it is not too fanciful to suggest that the division of the hero's self represents a sort of sparagmos, the tearing apart of the sacrificial body which is an image found in the myths of Osiris, Orpheus and Pentheus.<sup>67</sup> There are several images which are applied to both Maud and

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<sup>67</sup> Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 148.

her brother, but with positive associations for Maud, and negative ones for her brother. The following examples will illustrate this point:

"The colours red and white are used in connection with Maud in the rose and lily symbols, and blushing or paleness, and while the brother is said to have a "broad-blown comeliness, red and white," "broad-blown" suggests over-ripeness or unseemly extravagance.

Maud's feet are like "sunny gems on an English green" and she herself is a "pearl," a "jewel." Her brother has a "barbarous opulence, jewel-thick."

Maud's presence has made the hero's life "a perfumed altar-flame" but the brother's "essences turn the live air sick."

Maud's glance has had the effect of making his heart "beat stronger, and thicker" while the brother's "stony British stare" has "Gorgonized him from head to foot."

Northrop Frye, in his study of demonic imagery in literature, has found that

In the sinister human world the individual pole is the tyrant leader, inscrutable, ruthless . . . The other pole is represented by the pharmakos or sacrificed victim who has to be killed to strengthen the others. In the most concentrated form of the demonic parody, the two become the same.<sup>68</sup>

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68 Ibid.

It is notable that, at the moment of the brother's death, the hero immediately imagines Maud to be dead also:

Then glided out of the joyous wood  
The ghostly Wraith of one that I knew.  
(2. II. 31-32)

A wraith is an apparition in a person's exact likeness which portends his imminent death. Tennyson later added the lines, "She is but dead, and the time is at hand / When thou shalt more than die" to the edition of 1856, in answer to criticism that the fact of Maud's death had not been made clear in the poem. Perhaps in the first version Tennyson was so preoccupied with this symbolic death of Maud that he failed to realize that his meaning might be obscure to many readers. The hero himself immediately afterwards leaves Britain, a natural development in the narrative, when he has just killed a man in a duel. But in ancient Rome, and in other traditions, it was deemed necessary to drive the scapegoat beyond the boundaries, so that he might carry his sorrowful burden away to other lands.<sup>69</sup> Once in Brittany, the hero himself dies a symbolic death and imagines himself buried:

Dead, long dead,  
Long dead!  
And my heart is a handful of dust,

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<sup>69</sup> Frazer, p. 578.

And the wheels go over my head,  
 And my bones are shaken with pain,  
 For into a shallow grave they are thrust.  
 (2. V. 239-44)

An interesting interpretation of the nature of the brother is offered by Paul Turner. He says that A. H. Layard, the archeologist, had discovered a statue of a great winged Assyrian bull in September 1850, and sent it to the British Museum. Punch cartoonists (5 March 1855) used the Assyrian Bull to represent both Layard himself, and the British Bull, resurrected by Layard, when buried beneath the weight of official incompetence (26 March 1855). For, as Turner says:

. . . Layard was an energetic MP., who had gone to the Black Sea at the moment war was declared, witnessed the battle of Alma from a battleship, returned to England with evidence of the appalling conditions faced by the army before Sebastopol, and then worked hard to improve them. The brother thus acquires in contrast with the speaker, an aura of a man who goes out and does something for the heroes at the front, and his "British stare" (l.xiii. 465) suggests that he is really at heart, that estimable, if limited, character, John Bull.<sup>70</sup>

This interpretation, if accurate, illustrates how Tennyson uses multiple associations in one image. The brother as John Bull, would represent perhaps a more active, forceful self, or even the hero's nostalgic view of an ideal Englishman who, after the

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<sup>70</sup> Turner, pp. 145-46.

imagined sacrificial death could be reborn and replace the mean characters he feels himself, and all his countrymen, to be. He had earlier wished:

Ah God, for a man with heart, head, hand,  
 Like some of the simple great ones gone  
 For ever and ever by,  
 One still strong man in a blatant land,  
 Whatever they call him--what care I?  
 Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat--one  
 Who can rule and dare not lie!  
 And ah, for a man to arise in me  
 That the man I am may cease to be!

(l. XII. 389-97)

#### Regeneration Myths

The idea of the symbolic death of a scapegoat and the rebirth of a purer self and a finer society which clearly possesses the hero's mind, produces a complementary cluster of images which allude to regeneration myths. Frazer finds that the fables connected with Dionysus, and Demeter and Persephone in Greece, Aphrodite and Adonis in Syria, and Isis and Osiris in Egypt for example, all attempted to explain the decay and revival of vegetation in these early agricultural societies.<sup>71</sup>

Robert W. Hill, in a note to Tennyson's Demeter and Persephone, reminds us that

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<sup>71</sup> Frazer, p. 393.

From boyhood Tennyson had shown interest in this myth, and indeed his earliest poem in [sic] his "Translation from Claudian's 'Proserpine'." At the request from his son for a poem about Demeter, he said, "I will write it, but when I write an antique like this I must put it into a frame - something modern about it. It is no use giving a mere rechauffé of old legends" (Memoir II, 364).<sup>72</sup>

Tennyson later quoted the final passages of his Demeter and Persephone (1889) as an example of the "frame."<sup>72</sup> The myth was associated in Greek religion with the idea of human regeneration and the hope of immortality, and Tennyson makes the same association, when, in the concluding passages of the poem, he applies the pagan myth to the religious aspirations of his own age. There are several images in Maud which are strikingly similar to those used later in Demeter and Persephone, and which therefore suggest that the same sort of ideas were operative in both poems. The excited lover says of Maud:

. . . her feet have touch'd the meadows  
And left the daisies rosy.

(l. XI, 434-35)


A similar passage in the later poem, referring to Persephone's return from Hades, and consequent revival of the world, says:

So in this pleasant vale we stand again,  
The field of Enna, now once more ablaze  
With flowers that brighten as thy footstep falls.

(34-36)

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<sup>72</sup> Hill, p. 476, n. 3.



In the "Come into the garden Maud" poem, the hero exclaims ecstatically:

She is coming, my own, my sweet;  
 Were it ever so airy a tread,  
 My heart would hear her and beat,  
 Were it earth in an earthy bed;  
 My dust would hear her and beat,  
 Had I lain for a century dead,  
 Would start and tremble under her feet,  
 And blossom in purple and red.  
 (l. XXII. 915-22)

In Demeter and Persephone we find a similar passage:

For see, thy foot has touch'd it; all the space  
 Of black earth - baldness clothes itself afresh,  
 And breaks into the crocus-purple hour  
 That saw thee vanish.  
 (48-51)

And again in Maud, we find:

From the meadows your walks have left so sweet  
 That whenever a March-wind sighs  
 He sets the jewel print of your feet  
 In violets blue as your eyes.  
 (l. XXII. 886-90)

In the passage preceding the one in which the hero imagines his ashes coming to life as Maud passes over them, there is an image of a "passion flower" at the gate of Maud's garden, from which, he imagines, "has fallen a splendid tear," while he waits for Maud on the fateful night before the duel. The passion flower is the anemone pulsatilla, and is the emblem of Adonis, the flower into which he was, according to the legend, metamorphosed. (In Christian tradition the anemone is



associated with Easter, the time of its blooming in Syria, hence the name "Passion" flower.) Adonis or Tammuz, was traditionally mourned in the lamentation for "Tammuz, yearly wounded." Spenser's Adonis, following the Orphic tradition, is the eternally renewed, mortal parent of generated beings, as well as being himself the type of transient mortality.<sup>73</sup>

Frazer says that

Under the name of Osiris, Tammuz, Adonis, and Attis, the peoples of Egypt and Western Asia represented the yearly decay and revival of vegetable life, which they personified as the god who annually died and rose again from the dead.<sup>74</sup>

This passion flower at the gate of Maud's garden has been mentioned before, in the poem "Maud has a garden of roses" (l. XIV). In this context, a lion "ramps at the top" of the gate, and he is "claspt by a passion-flower" (495-96). Maud's garden in both these poems is a typically English one, with roses, lilies, acacia, pimpernel, and larkspur blooming (all red, white, or blue flowers), and it may be seen as a metaphor for England itself, especially as it has a heraldic lion at its gate. In poem XIV, the hero tells how Maud "walks in her state" and

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<sup>73</sup> Edmund Spenser, "The Garden of Adonis," The Faerie Queene, Book III, Canto vi.

<sup>74</sup> Frazer, p. 324.

"tends upon bed and bower." This suggests that he is imagining a process of renewal at work in the garden of England, through the type of agency that Adonis or Persephone represent in the myths for, as we have noted, Tennyson employed the Greek religious associations of human regeneration and spiritual renewal when using them. The image of the "splendid tear" falling from the passion flower at the gate admirably expresses the idea of revival also in the notion that this metal or stone statue or bas-relief on the gate is weeping--for Tammuz.

The hero's mind is clearly filled with thoughts of death when he imagines Maud:

. . . like a glorious ghost, to glide,  
Like a beam of the seventh heaven, down to  
my side,

(l. XIV. 508-09)

In these lines there are echoes of Dante's Beatrice, and in the final lines of this poem, he again imagines Maud's death when he says he:

Felt a horror over me creep,  
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,  
Knew that the death-like curtain meant but sleep,  
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a fool of the  
sleep of death.

(l. XIV. 523-26)

The combination of a rampant lion and Osiris' emblem in the passion flower image strongly suggests that in his mind Maud's imagined death is linked with the idea of the rebirth

of a strong and noble Britain.

The action of the narrative of Maud takes place between the Spring of one year and the following one, as the image of the "shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave," which occurs both at the beginning and end of the poem, shows. The reference to Mars in Part 3 has always been interpreted, I believe, only by its connotations of Mars as the god of war, and of course, on the narrative level this is valid. Spring has come around once more after the hero's period of madness and he imagines Maud appearing to him as if she:

Seem'd to divide in a dream from a band of the blest,  
And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars--  
"And in that hope, dear soul, let trouble have rest,  
Knowing I tarry for thee," and pointed to Mars  
As he glowed like a ruddy shield on the lion's breast.

This of course refers to Mars as the god of war being now in the constellation of the lion, a symbol for Britain, for Britain is on the verge of a war with Russia. But is not the hero imagining Maud to be urging him to sacrifice himself in that war; and could not that sacrifice be interpreted in his fantasy as being akin to the sacrifice of a scapegoat each Spring in ancient Rome to Mars as both Mammurius Veturius, "the old Mars" and also "Mars Sylvanus," the god of vegetation? Frazer mentions this tradition as an example of the use of the human scapegoat in classical antiquity, and explains that:

Every year on the fourteenth of March a man clad in skins was led in procession through the streets of Rome, beaten with long rods and driven out of the city. He was called Mammurius Veturius, that is, "the old Mars," and . . . must have represented the Mars of the past year, who was driven out at the beginning of a new one. Now Mars was originally not a god of war but of vegetation . . . it was to Mars that the Arval brothers, whose business it was to sacrifice for the growth of crops, addressed their petitions . . . However . . . the representative of the god seems to have been treated not only as a deity of vegetation but also as a scapegoat. His expulsion implies this; for there is no reason why the god of vegetation, as such, should be expelled the city. But it is otherwise if he is also a scapegoat; it then becomes necessary to drive him beyond the boundaries, that he may carry his sorrowful burden away to other lands. And, in fact, Mammurius Veturius appears to have been driven away to the land of the Oscans, the enemies of Rome.<sup>75</sup>

If considered in this light, the hero's decision to go off to fight in the Crimean War would at least take on another dimension. The mere fact of the time of the decision being Spring is perhaps flimsy evidence for such an interpretation, but the time span of the poem is precisely a cycle of one year, and the hero's propensity for allusion to other traditions of ritual sacrifice and myths of regeneration in his fantasies would suggest that such an interpretation is acceptable along with the obvious ones.

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<sup>75</sup> Frazer, pp. 577-78.

Maud as an Anima Figure.

Lionel Stevenson has suggested that the "high-born maiden" who appears in so many of Tennyson's poems, conforms with Jung's archetypal image of the anima.<sup>76</sup> Clyde de L. Ryals, noting the many different characteristics of these maidens, from the weary, isolated figures such as Mariana and the Lady of Shalott, through the matter-of-fact Elaine of the Idylls, to the strong, often cruel, haughty ladies like Lilian, Madeline, Eleanore, and Kate, concludes that the different ladies are but "different states of the poet's mind."<sup>77</sup> Many variations of an anima figure may be found in literature, and she often appears as a guide, or mediator, to the world within or the Self. Some such examples are the goddess Isis when she appeared in a dream to Apuleius, the author of The Golden Ass, the "eternal feminine" in Goethe's Faust, and Dante's Beatrice in the Paradiso.<sup>78</sup> Jung maintains that in the Medieval knightly cult of the Lady, the lady to whose service the knight pledged himself was also a personification of the anima. Later,

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<sup>76</sup> Lionel Stevenson, "'The High-Born Maiden Symbol' in Tennyson," PMLA, LXIII (March, 1948), pp. 234-44.

<sup>77</sup> Clyde de L. Ryals, "The Fatal Woman Symbol in Tennyson," PMLA, LXXIV (1959), pp. 438-41.

<sup>78</sup> Carl G. Jung and M. L. von Franz, eds., Man and His Symbols (London: Aldus Books Ltd., 1964), pp. 182-83.

however, the sublime aspect of the anima became fused with the figure of the Virgin, who then became the object of the boundless devotion and praise.<sup>79</sup>

In a Medieval text, an anima figure explains her own nature as follows:

I am the flower of the field and the lily of the valleys. I am the mother of fair love and of fear and of knowledge and of holy hope . . . I am the mediator of the elements, making one to agree with another; that which is warm I make cold and the reverse, and that which is dry I make moist and the reverse, and that which is hard I soften . . . I am the law in the priest and the word in the prophet and the counsel in the wise. I will kill and I will make to live and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.<sup>80</sup>

As the poem proceeds, the hero transforms his perception of Maud from the girl of his childhood memories to a being at the end of the drama who strongly resembles the anima of this Medieval definition. During the active mental process which is the dramatic action of Maud, the hero begins by endowing Maud with characteristics of other "fatal women" in Tennyson's poems:

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<sup>79</sup> Jung and von Franz, p. 187.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 186.

Cold and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly  
meek,

. . . Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet  
on a gloom profound;

Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient  
wrong

Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as  
pale as before.

(l. III. 88-93)

Later, he imagines her singing a song of Chivalry, as if she  
were his Lady and he her "courtly lover," ready to die for her:

Maud with her exquisite face,  
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,  
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,  
Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,  
Singing of Death, and of Honor that cannot die,

(l. V. 173-79)

At times he accords her the same sort of reverence, and speaks  
of her in terms traditionally reserved for the Virgin:

When I saw the treasured splendor, her hand,  
Come sliding out of her sacred glove,  
And the sunlight broke from her lip.

(l. VI. 273-75)

Some peculiar mystic grace  
Made her only the child of her mother.

(l. XIII. 482-83)

Only in the beautiful love poem, "I have led her home"

(l. XVIII), when the hero is most sane and self-possessed,

does Maud seem to be a real flesh-and-blood, beloved woman.

In his first thoughts, Maud is a "bad dream" who "may  
bring me a curse" (l. I. 72). He next compares her to that  
epitome of the "fatal woman," Cleopatra, and imagines that she

means to "ensnare" him (1. VI. 212-19). Immediately after he kills her brother, he imagines her as a "Wraith" which stays with him throughout his period of madness, haunting and terrifying him:

She is standing here at my head,  
Not beautiful now, not even kind.  
(2. V. 303-04)

He recognizes that this manifestation is a figment of his own mind when he says:

A shadow flits before me  
Not thou, but like to thee.  
(2. IV. 151-52)

. . . It leads me forth at evening  
When all my spirit reels  
At the shouts, the leagues of light  
And the roaring of the wheels.  
(2. IV. 157-62)

She is now "That abiding phantom cold!" (2. IV. 195), the "blot upon the brain / that will show itself without" (2. IV. 201-02). At the end of the poem, he imagines her "divide from a band of the blest" as she "spoke of a hope for the world in the coming wars" (3. 10-11). She is now, it seems, a counselling, prophetic anima, the spiritual mediator, instructing him, and giving him a message of hope of spiritual regeneration for himself, and a "hope for the world."

All these characterizations of Maud could be seen as reflections of the hero's feelings about himself, or aspects



of his psyche, which as Jung says, is a function of the archetypal anima figure in human history.

The ending of Maud could be seen as a resumption by the hero, at the prompting of his anima, of his Bildungsroman in search of spiritual development. There is a parallel in Faust where, after the death of Gretchen, Part II begins with Faust's sleep of self-purgation, which resembles the period of madness which the hero of Maud undergoes. Faust awakens to a world which becomes ein Paradies (ll. 4679-94) and M. H. Abrams says that:

This spiritual rebirth, however, is correlative with the reviving life of nature in the spring, from which Faust arises as a secular new Adam, to resume his unwitting pilgrimage toward a redemption in this life. His goal symbolized in the final lines of the drama as a female figure-- "Das Ewig-Weibliche/ Zeit uns hinan"--is an infinite beyond attainment so that his triumph consists mainly in the experience of sustaining the desire which never relaxes into the stasis of a finite satisfaction.<sup>81</sup>

By the end of the poem, the hero seems to have resolved his confusions and terrors through the agency of Maud, at least to the extent that he is able to resume his life with all the responsibilities of the situation in which he finds himself,<sup>82</sup> for,

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<sup>81</sup> M. H. Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature (New York: W. W. Norton & Co. Inc., 1971), pp. 244-45.

<sup>82</sup> Tennyson wrote that the period of insanity having passed, the speaker is left "sane but shattered" (Memoir I, p. 405).

as he says:

And myself have awaked, as it seems, to a  
better mind,  
It is better to fight for the good than to  
rail at the ill;  
I have felt with my native land, I am one with  
my kind,  
I embrace the purpose of God, and the doom  
assign'd.

(3. 56-59)

## CHAPTER V

### BLOOD, STONES, AND VEGETATION IMAGES: ALCHEMY

John Killham has pointed out that ". . . it is the main characteristic of Tennyson's art in Maud that several images develop simultaneously and show occasional interdependence."<sup>83</sup> Killham takes three groups of such images, those relating to animals, stones, and flowers, to illustrate this contention, while another critic, A. S. Byatt, in a similar investigation, substitutes imagery relating to the flow of blood in the body for Killham's animal imagery. Byatt maintains:

There are various related groups of ideas, which grow out of each other. The contrast between red and white, rose and lily, passion and purity is related to imagery of blood in the body through things like Maud's blush or paleness, the roses, which were "not roses but blood," "the red life spilt." The imagery of the movement of blood is related to various images of growth and the smooth flow of natural processes. There is imagery of the growth of light and darkness, and of the growth of plants through the seasons of the year, both connected with the idea of uninterrupted flow of energy which, as I suggested earlier, the flow of blood is the basic symbol for.<sup>84</sup>

We have already considered how imagery of growth and decay may

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<sup>83</sup> Killham, p. 230.

<sup>84</sup> Byatt, pp. 83-84.

allude to regeneration myths. The way in which Tennyson alternates imagery of the flow of blood in the body with antithetical images of petrification or lack of vital energy, such as those of stones, bones, and dust, creates a similar pattern of decay and fresh growth. These patterns may be observed in images of a blasted landscape which change to budding trees, green grass, and blooming flowers; stone and dust images which change to images of jewels, and all these changes are correlated with the changing feelings of the hero.

At the beginning of the poem, the hero thinks of blood, not as a symbol of vital energy but in images of violent death and destruction. These images also permeate the landscape, as he remembers the "dreadful hollow" whose lips are "dabbled with blood-red heath" and whose "red-ribbed ledges drip with a silent horror of blood" (l. I. 1-2). The representatives of mankind in this phase are the predatory "old man," Maud's father, who had left the hero's family "flaccid and drain'd" while he himself, vampire-like, "dropt off gorged" from the financial scheme which ruined them (l. I. 20), the druggist who pestles poison behind symbolically crimson lights (l. I. 37), and the "Mammonite" mother who "kills her babe for a burial fee" (l. I. 45). The rock which fell with the hero's father when he fell to his death, and presumably "mangled, flattened,

and crush'd, and dinted him into the ground" (l. I. 7-8), lies still at the scene. This stone seems to have almost an animate malevolence, as if it were lying in wait for the hero to send him to a similar fate, and it probably also in his mind symbolizes a fallen world. At this moment too, his own heart, which should have been pulsating with warm blood, seems to him to have become congealed and drained of its vital energy, as his ". . . pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart" (l. I. 15).

After the hero meets Maud, he seems to see the landscape as glowing with the rich beauty of precious stones:

A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime  
In the little grove where I sit.

(l. IV. 101-02)

The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of  
the land.

(l. IV. 107)

In the great central love poem "I have led her home" (l. XVIII), the day is "golden" and:

A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,  
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

(l. XVIII. 649-50)

This is reminiscent of Apocalyptic symbolism, in which the New Jerusalem, which descends from "a new heaven" to a "new earth," is described as a glowing mass of gold and precious stones (Revelation 21).

Maud herself seems like a lifeless stone statue at first as he describes her "cold and clear-cut face" (l. III. 88). But when the hero starts to love her, her feet are "like sunny gems on an English green." She is ". . . like a precious stone / Set in the carven gloom" of her room (l. XIV. 497-98). In poem XVIII he feels the regenerative power most strongly:

And never yet so warmly ran my blood  
 And sweetly on and on -  
 Calming itself to the long wish'd for end,  
 Full to the banks, close on the promised good.  
 (l. XVIII. 601-04)

Maud is now a "pearl," a precious stone traditionally associated with salvation, and he calls her the "countercharm" of all that has troubled him (l. XVIII. 641-43).

The poignant verses "See what a lovely shell," which occur while the hero is brooding on his situation, now that he has killed Maud's brother, give us an image of a stonelike substance which embodies both the frailty of a tiny creature and the "force to withstand, year upon year, the shock of cataract seas" (2: II. 49-77). According to Tennyson, "The shell, undestroyed amid the storm perhaps symbolizes to him his own first highest nature preserved amid the storms of passion."<sup>85</sup> With the wisdom gained by his painful experience, perhaps he

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<sup>85</sup> Hill, p. 239, n. 7.

now feels that there is no need to make his heart "as a stone" as he had thought at the beginning of the poem, in order to withstand the "cataract seas" of the hostile world around him. There is the suggestion that the creature which had lived in this tiny shell, which is a "miracle of design" (2. II. 56), is perfectly fashioned for all that its life will present, and the Creator of this tiny creature has also provided the hero himself with the means to survive the horrors of his present situation.

Much of the imagery connected with Maud is drawn from her "gardens", the estate of the Hall, which consists of several areas. The first mention of Maud's garden is the "high Hall-garden" of Poem XII which is said to be full of birds singing Maud's name, and it is not made clear whether this is the same as the rose garden which plays such an important role in the poem. Then there is a woodland area which the hero calls "our wood," and this is a different wood from his own "dark wood" which surrounds his house (1. XII. 416-22). Maud's wood is the place where the lovers meet, and here there are "myriads" of "woodland lilies" which seem to symbolize their pure love or the "grace" which Maud's presence brings to it and which is lacking in his own "dark wood." This "little wood" has "hollows" or "valleys" which the hero later refers to as "the valleys of Paradise" (1. XXII. 893). There is also

a daisy-studded meadow where the hero hears Maud singing her song of Chivalry under a cedar tree (l. V. 162-63), and finally "Maud has a garden of roses / And lilies fair on the lawn" (l. XIV. 489-90).

The rose garden is first mentioned when the hero sees Maud tending her flowers and begins to think of her as a regenerative power. However, in Poem XXII, the rose garden is the scene of the confrontation between the hero and Maud's brother and this casts a shadow on the imagery of Maud's purity and radiance. It is entirely appropriate that both divine and demonic elements should be in the rose garden at this time, for it is here that the fatal meeting which leads to the duel takes place. The brother has been called a Sultan: "The Sultan as we name him" (l. XX. 790) and in another poem the hero had talked of a Sultan's garden as being "a garden of spice" (l. V. 143). Now, in this poem, the hero says that "the woodbine spices are wafted abroad / And the musk of the rose is blown" (l. XXII. 854-55), suggesting that the heavy perfume which is associated with the brother now pervades the garden and gives it the atmosphere of the forbidden garden of an Arabian Nights Sultan. The metre of this poem sometimes has a breathless quality which, together with the use of the flower imagery in the manner of Persian erotic poetry (in which flowers are identified



with the beloved), suggests that the hero's passion is becoming out of control.

The two most important flowers in Maud's garden are the lily and the rose. Several critics have speculated on the symbolic meaning in Maud, and I quote from two of them, E. D. H. Johnson and Ward Hellstrom.

Johnson sees the rose and the lily as the emotional poles between which the tension develops, illustrating the dramatic intensity of the situation, particularly in the climactic poem l. XXII, "Come into the garden Maud." He sees the rose as signifying passion, impatience, jealousy, and the lily the passive qualities of fidelity, resignation, and perhaps fatalism, and he quotes the references in stanza 10 to the red rose, "She is near, she is near," and to the lily, "I wait," to illustrate the distinction between them. The rose, Johnson says, later becomes equated with the very life principle as "the soul of the rose went into my blood" (l. XXII. 882), and eventually it symbolizes not only the passion of love, but also the violence to which the passion had been tending from the outset: "And I almost fear they are not roses, but blood" (2, v. 315).<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> E. D. H. Johnson, "The Lily and the Rose: Symbolic Meaning in Tennyson's Maud," PMLA, 64 (1949): 1222-27.

Ward Hellstrom, who suggests that the use Tennyson made of these same two symbols in Idylls of the King, throws more light on their symbolic value in Maud, says:

In Balin and Balan, published long after Maud (1855), Tennyson clarifies the meaning of the lily and the rose in Idylls of the King. While Balin waits in a garden where a walk of roses is crossed by a walk of lilies, he overhears Sir Lancelot describe a dream:

. . . Last night methought I saw  
That maiden Saint who stands with lily in hand  
In yonder shrine. All around her prest the dark,  
And all the light upon her silver face  
Flowed from the spiritual lily that she held:  
(255-59)

Guinevere answers: "'Sweeter to me' she said,  
'this garden rose/ Deep-hued and many-folded!'"  
(264-65). In the Idylls Guinevere rejects the "spiritual lily" and chooses the rose as she chooses the flesh rather than the spirit. Lancelot also chooses flesh rather than spirit when he chooses Guinevere, the rose, rather than Elaine, "the lily maid of Astolat." . . . in The Idylls of the King, at any rate, the lily and the rose represent quite clearly the spirit and the flesh.

I suggest that in Maud the lily and the rose have a similar symbolic value. Though Maud may represent for the hero a combination of innocence and passion, she is, as "Queen lily and rose in one," the combination of flesh and spirit. By identifying Maud with both the rose and the lily, Tennyson is insisting on her physical and spiritual reality, and such insistence is of considerable importance. For to deny either the flesh or the spirit is to lose the way to spiritual regeneration, because the only way to the spirit is through the flesh, as we saw in In Memoriam. As Carlyle had said in Past and Present, "the Ideal always has to grow in the Real" (II.iv).<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Hellstrom, pp. 77-78.

Johnson and Hellstrom have thus fully explored the general significance of the rose and lily symbols in Maud. But other flowers bloom in Maud's garden: the passion-flower, the emblem of Adonis, to which we have already referred; the blue violets and larkspur, the white acacia and white rose, and the scarlet pimpernel which, as we have noted, suggest that this red, white and blue garden also represents England, for England itself is often spoken of figuratively as a garden.

The imaginary blossoming of the hero's dead heart if Maud were to tread on his grave, is in flowers of "purple and red." This probably refers again to the legend of Adonis and the red and purple anemones which are his emblem. According to Ovid, Adonis was metamorphosed into this flower when he was killed by a boar on Mount Lebanon. The anemone, in another version of the legend, is said to have sprung from his blood, or been stained by it. The red rose also was said to owe its hue to this same sad occasion, for Aphrodite, hastening to her wounded lover, trod on a bush of the white rose, and the cruel thorns tore her tender flesh, causing her sacred blood to dye the white roses for ever red.<sup>88</sup> Purple and red are the colours of blood, of course, and the hero is also quite simply saying.

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<sup>88</sup> Frazer, p. 336.

that Maud has the power to revive even a heart that has been dead for a century.

Mount Lebanon is referred to in the poem "I have led her home" (l. XVIII), when the hero imagines that the cedar tree in Maud's garden is "sighing for Lebanon," its former home. The hero thinks of Maud's garden also as the garden of Eden, symbolizing the purity of an unfallen world:

To the woody hollows in which we meet  
And the valleys of Paradise.  
(XXII. 892-93)

He fancies that the ancestors of Maud's Cedar of Lebanon tree had provided shade for "the snow-limb'd Eve," and that Maud herself "came from" Eve (l. XVIII. 615-26).

In contrast to Maud's garden which is rich in colour and perfume, the hero describes his own garden as "my own dark garden ground" (l. III. 97), where the only flower is the daffodil which is no longer "shining" but "dead." The daffodil is of the genus Narcissus, a flower which is symbolic of self-love, and golden when blooming. So this image of the dead daffodil is similar to the "flying gold" of the "ruin'd woodlands" which expresses the hero's sense of his own worthlessness at the beginning of the poem. In the next poem he sees Maud in her garden, and although he has not yet started to love her, he sees her "pass like a light" and it is at this

moment that the seed of the idea of Maud as the agent of his own salvation is planted in his mind. The image is reminiscent of the light of God which illuminates the New Jerusalem in Revelation:

And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

(Revelation. 22:5)

Maud's radiance is mentioned several times: she has feet like "sunny" gems and a head "sunning over with curls." Her lover imagines her coming to him in the garden "Like a beam of the seventh heaven," and on the night of the Ball he waits for her to come into her garden "in all her glory," "Queen Maud in all her splendor."

Beyond Maud's estate lies the menacing "blood-red heath" and the place of horror, the "dreadful hollow behind the little wood" of the opening passage of the poem. This passage is full of powerfully "demonic" imagery and, according to Northrop Frye, heath is an archetypal demonic image associated with tragic destiny.<sup>89</sup>

To a post-Freudian reader, this passage is likely to suggest the female sexual organ. Jonathan Wordsworth suggests,

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<sup>89</sup> Frye, p. 149.

however, that the lines would have shocked Tennyson to the core had he seen their now obvious sexual implications. But Wordsworth makes the following interesting observation about the passage:

And yet one does not see the horror of sex to which it gives place as belonging, or belonging solely, to the author. Though clearly not intended by him as part of the monomaniac narrator's motivation, it fits very well. On this level one understands the intensity of the hatred because one sees that in the narrator's fantasy, sex - the act of giving him life - has brought about his father's death.<sup>90</sup>

There is one more pattern of imagery in the poem which should be considered because it refers to a tradition of spiritual transformation: that of the alchemical opus. Admittedly the allusions are more subtly hinted at and less distinct, though, like the others, they appear always to function effectively and appropriately on the more obvious levels of the poem. However, they do not seem so obscure that their demonstration would appear particularly arduous.

The "science" of alchemy had fallen into disuse long before Tennyson's time; and I am not aware of any direct proof that he was familiar with the ideas behind the alchemical

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<sup>90</sup> Jonathan Wordsworth, "What is it that has been done?": The Central Problem of Maud," Essays in Criticism, vol. 24 (1974), pp. 356-62; 358.

practices. It would seem very likely that he was, however, for he had read widely and he was keenly interested in both mystical experience and scientific knowledge.

Carl G. Jung, the Swiss psychologist, studied old alchemical texts for many years, and after his death over two hundred books and manuscripts on the subject were catalogued in his library.<sup>91</sup> This library included European texts from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.<sup>92</sup>

Jung's findings were later published in one of his key works, Psychology and Alchemy (1944),<sup>93</sup> and a summary of the main ideas from this aspect of Jung's research, in Aniela Jaffé's From The Life and Works of C. G. Jung, provides a convenient reference for our present purpose.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Aniela Jaffé, From the Life and Works of C. G. Jung, R. F. C. Hull, translator (New York: Harper and Row, 1968).

<sup>92</sup> The most important of these were: The works of Paracelsus (16th Century); Paracelsus' pupil, Gerard Dorn's Theatrum Chemicum, and Mysterium Coniunctionis (1602); Sendovigius' Musaeum Hermeticum (Frankfort, 1678); The Book of Krates (9th Century); a treatise by Abtala Jurain (Hamburg, 1732); and the anonymous Rosarium Philosophorum (Frankfort, 1550). See Aniela Jaffé, pp. 46-77.

<sup>93</sup> Carl G. Jung, Collected Works, Vol. 12, R.F.C. Hull, translator (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950).

<sup>94</sup> Jaffé, pp. 46, 47.

The alchemical texts revealed to Jung that the alchemical opus could not be regarded as a purely chemical procedure:

Although, as Jung says, the adept's preoccupation with matter may be regarded as a "serious effort to elicit the secrets of chemical transformation, it was at the same time--and often in overwhelming degree--the reflection of a parallel psychic process" (Psychology and Alchemy, par.40). . . . In the alchemical symbolism, the stages and imagery of an inner process of transformation were expressing themselves in pseudochemical language.<sup>95</sup>

Jung also reminds us that the drama of Faust has its primary sources in alchemy, for "Alchemy had long known that the mystery of transformation applies not only to chemical materials but to man as well."<sup>96</sup> The process of transformation of the hero himself and the "fallen" world which he sees, takes place in the imagination of the hero, and this process seems to strongly resemble the alchemical mysteries as Jung describes them in the following passage:

"Seeing with the eyes, of the spirit or the understanding" is a phrase used by several authors, among them Michael Sendovigius (seventeenth century) in his treatise "Novum lunem": to cause things hidden in the shadow to appear, and to

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<sup>95</sup> Jaffé, p. 57.

<sup>96</sup> C. G. Jung, "Faust and Alchemy," in The Symbolic Life, C. G. Jung, Collected Works, Vol. 18, R. F. C. Hull, translator (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950).



take away the shadow from them, this is permitted to the intelligent philosopher by God through nature. . . . All these things happen, and the eyes of the common man do not see them, but the eyes of the understanding and of the imagination perceive them with true and truest vision." In sayings like "aurum nostrum non est aurum vulgi" (our gold is not the common gold), and in the concepts "lapis invisibilatis," "lapis philosophorum," "lapis aethereus," "lapis est spiritus," and the axiom "tam ethice quam physice" (as much ethical--i.e., psychic--as physical), as well as countless other metaphors in the same vein, the spiritual side of alchemy is revealed in all its clarity.<sup>97</sup>

Among the alchemists, Jung says, there were some who did not work alone, but sought the gold or the mysterious stone with the help of a female companion, soror mystica. The gold and the stone signified wholeness.<sup>98</sup> Jung's further explanation of the alchemical concept of the imaginatio is of particular interest in connection with Maud:

So far as the laborant was concerned, one of the most important concepts in this respect was the imaginatio, the fantasy activity inseparably connected with the opus. Astonishingly enough, the alchemist conceived his imaginatio as something quasi-corporeal, a sort of "subtle body" that was half spiritual.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Jaffé, pp. 58-59.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>99</sup> Jaffé, p. 75, from Jung, Psychology in Alchemy, par. 396, where he is quoting Sendovigius' "De Sulphure" in Musaeum Hermeticum (Frankfort, 1678), pp. 610 ff.

Jung explains that by means of the imaginatio the soul is enabled to bring about "many things of the utmost profundity outside the body by imagining them."<sup>100</sup>

At the beginning of Maud, the hero talks of the "flying gold" of the woodlands, and his own lost gold, the family fortune which his father lost, and these could be seen as metaphors for the lack of "wholeness" in the alchemical sense, of the world and the hero himself. When he meets the maiden Maud, he almost immediately starts an imaginative process, which could be seen as the imaginatio of the laborant in alchemy. His imagination transforms Maud into a being strongly resembling the half-spiritual "subtle body" which Jung describes, and this subtle body exists alongside the real Maud whom the hero comes to love.

The process of transformation which the hero undergoes from the beginning of the poem, when he and the whole world seem to be in a state of "chaos," to the climax in poem XVIII of Part 1, when he has "found a pearl," suggests a parallel in the alchemical opus which starts in chaos (nigredo--blackness) and culminates in the finding of the lapis philosophorum. Using Jung as our interpreter of the alchemical process, let us

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<sup>100</sup> Jaffé, p. 72.

now trace the hero's progress and relate it to the progressive stages of the alchemical opus. <sup>101</sup>

At the beginning of the process, he is in the massa confusa, the chaos or nigredo (blackness). In this condition, the elements are fighting each other.

As we have noted, the opening poem of Maud certainly presents a chaotic world, and a hero who is in a disintegrated and confused state. There is imagery of "flying gold" the hero's own lost gold, the blackness of "the ghastly pit" and an atmosphere of general conflict:

Is it peace or war? Civil war, as I think, and  
that of a kind  
The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the  
sword.

(l. I. 27-28)

The principal symbol of the substance that is transformed during the process is Mercurius. His portrait in the text agrees in all essentials with the characteristics of the unconscious . . . in the massa confusa Mercurius plays the role of the prima materia, the transforming substance. He corresponds to the Nous or Anthropos, sunk in Physis, of Greek Alchemy. In later days he is also called the "world soul in chains," a "system of the higher powers in the lower," etc. This depicts a dark ("unconscious") condition of the adept or of a psychic content. The procedures in the next phase have the purpose of illuminating the darkness by a union of the opposing elements.

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<sup>101</sup> See C. G. Jung, "Alchemy and Psychology," in The Symbolic Life, pp. 751-53, for all descriptions of the stages of the alchemical process which follow.

Maud arrives on the scene, and the gloom of the hero's first utterances is lightened by his reminiscences of her as a child. The images of conflict are replaced by Maud's song of Chivalry, which symbolizes a union of war with spirituality.

This leads to the albedo (whitening) which is compared to the full moon, conceived as a pure body which has been refined by the fire, but which still lacks a soul. It is considered to be feminine, and is therefore called spousa (bride), silver, or moon.

Maud at this point is called "moon-faced." She fits the description of "a pure body which has been refined by the fire but which still lacks a soul," as the hero describes her in these terms: She has a "cold and clear cut face," and is "perfectly beautiful," "pale" and:

"Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,  
Dead perfection, no more"

(l. 11)

She has a "passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on the gloom profound." In this phase also, he begins to think of her as a bride, remembering (or imagining) the betrothal which Maud's father and his own had planned when they were children. The rhythm of the following passage suggests a chemical reaction:

. . . and ever as pale as before  
 Growing and fading, and growing upon me without  
 a sound,  
 Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half  
 the night long  
 Growing and fading and growing, till I could  
 bear it no more.

(l. III. 93-96)

The reddening (rubedo) follows, and a parallel to this stage  
 is to be found in the "rosy" poem (l. XVII) in which the whole  
 world becomes "fused" in a rosy glow, and "West is East."

Go not happy day,  
 From the shining fields,  
 Go not, happy day,  
 Till the maiden yields.  
 Rosy is the West,  
 Rosy is the South,  
 Roses are her cheeks,  
 And a rose her mouth.  
 When the happy Yes  
 Falters from her lips,  
 Pass and blush the news  
 Over glowing ships;  
 Over blowing seas,  
 Over seas at rest,  
 Pass the happy news,  
 Blush it thro' the West;  
 Till the red man dance  
 By his red cedar-tree,  
 And the red man's babe  
 Leap, beyond the sea.  
 Blush from West to East,  
 Blush from East to West,  
 Till the West is East,  
 Blush it thro' the west.  
 Rosy is the West,  
 Rosy is the South,  
 Roses are her cheeks,  
 And a rose her mouth.

By means of the coniunctio, the moon is united with the sun, the silver with the gold, the female with the male. The coniunctio produces the lapis philosophorum, the central symbol of alchemy. This lapis has innumerable synonyms . . . [among them] the rebis or the hermaphroditic Anthropos who is compared to Christ. //

The love poem l. XVIII, "I have led her home," may be seen as the coniunctio state. In this poem the hero is "whole" again, and he describes Maud's garden as if it were the Garden of Eden or the fallen world restored. He has found "a pearl," the lapis philosophorum. He has "climb'd nearer to the stars" out of "lonely Hell." If, in alchemical terms, the hero's opus is completed by poem XVIII, one might wonder why he then was thrown once more into madness when he imagines he is dead. An eighth-century alchemist Morienus Romanus provides a possible answer, ". . . ultimam matationem mors dira subsequitur." ". . . after the final transformation, however, fearful death follows."<sup>102</sup> The "thread" of alchemical allusion may be broken off at poem XVII of Part I, but the images used in this pattern were at the same time being employed in several other patterns, and they continue multiple associations in other allusions after this point in the poem, as we have seen.

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<sup>102</sup> Marienus Romanus, "De transmutatione metallorum," Artus Auriferae (Basel, 1610), II, p. 14. Quoted by Jung in The Symbolic Life, p. 750, note 5.

In attempting, as we have done, to unravel the multiple strands with which each image in Maud is spun, the astonishing complexity of the work is revealed. The "melodrama" of the surface narrative has an admirable vigour and the beauty of the lyrics is universally acknowledged. But the real tour de force lies in the brilliant use Tennyson makes of the imagery. Each image has several strands and these are embroidered into the fabric of the poem to create the tapestry of allusion which gives Maud its rich texture.

Maud undoubtedly has always had the propensity to arouse negative responses in some readers. One may be unable to accept the idea that it is possible to find spiritual or moral renewal in war and can even perhaps feel that Tennyson himself was morally at fault for allowing his hero to express such a view. Another may believe that the solutions which the hero finds to his problems are ridiculous and therefore proof of his continued madness. Yet another may feel that the social problems articulated by the hero are not a fit subject for poetry or that they have no significance for his own time--or the reader's reaction may include in some measure several of these reservations about the value of the work. Clever parodies such as W. C. Bennett's Anti-Maud, or the efforts of singers of sentimental Victorian songs who include "Come into the garden Maud"

in their repertoire (separated from its context in the poem and therefore divested of its real meaning), have also contributed to the frequently held belief that Maud does not merit serious attention. This study shows that I differ from such views and believe that a sensitive reading can give a fascinating insight into Tennyson's virtuosity and at the same time an appreciation of his sound literary background.

Valerie Pitt has pointed out that contemporary reviewers of Tennyson's work often did not realize that the tradition on which they based their judgments, "the Augustan tradition of man based on reason," was no longer available to the younger poets of Tennyson's time, for:

Sensibility had changed, the language was changing, the very forms of reason were no longer those which would be recognized by the poets of the great era. The new poet had to create his own discipline: to make and maintain his own tradition.)

It is in the making of that tradition that some of the historical interest of Tennyson's work lies. Over nearly sixty years of a writing life he remains an experimentalist. He continually invents or modifies styles and techniques: not for the sake of technical achievement, though it is a factor in Tennyson's art that he enjoyed the actual manipulation of words and metres, but principally to articulate new ways of thinking and feeling, to turn a private intuition into a public philosophy.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Pitt, 254.



The modern reader, familiar with "stream of consciousness" novels and the freedom of expression in modern drama and poetry, should readily accept Tennyson's technique in Maud. He can then find in the dramatically presented speculation of a mind that is typically Victorian, topics of historical and philosophical interest; while at the same time the unusual sensibility of the hero will provide a fascinating character study. Above all, however, the receptive reader will find an abundance of fine poetry.

APPENDIX

The Divisions of Maud

Maud consists of 146 lyrics of different metres and line lengths. Each lyric has its own time frame. The method of numbering used by Hill differs from some editions especially with respect to Part 3. Because the editor has supplied line numbering for each part, no reference is made to the stanza number. For example, if quoting stanza 3 of poem V in Part 1, it would be referred to thus: (l. V. 180-189), i.e. (Part 1. Poem V. lines 180-89). An outline of Maud's parts, poems and stanzas and the line numbering of the parts as found in the Hill edition follows.

<u>Part 1</u> (923 lines)		<u>Part 2</u> (342 lines)	
<u>Poem</u>	<u>Stanzas</u>	<u>Poem</u>	<u>Stanzas</u>
I	1-19	I	1- 2
II		II	1- 9
III		III	
IV	1-10	IV	1-13
V	1- 3	V	1-11
VI	1-10		
VII	1- 4		
VIII			
IX			
X	1- 6		
XI	1- 3		
XII	1- 7		
XIII	1- 4		
XIV	1- 4		
XV			
XVI	1- 3		
XVII			
XVIII	1- 8		
XIX	1-10		
XX	1- 4		
XXI			
XXII	1-11		

<u>Part 3</u> ( 59 lines)	
<u>Poem</u>	<u>Stanzas</u>
<u>[1]</u>	1- 5

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