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PARADISE LOST AND RETRIEVED BY DISOBEDIENCE TO GOD

*And they were both naked, the man
and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

Genesis 2:25

Though Jehovah's warning came true and paradisiacal innocence, as reflected in the *Genesis*, was lost when the Biblical couple tasted the forbidden fruit, the fact that Adam and Eve were so cruelly punished, not for any criminal or evil act but for an act of disobedience, continues to puzzle reasonable people. The cause of the Fall has been a question that has given rise to much controversy, for our Christian progenitors and their progeny were doomed to a short life of pain and suffering, because they had disobeyed the Hebrew God for knowledge: «And the eyes of them were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked» (*Genesis* 3:7).

The myth of the Fall attempted to rationalize man's mortality and, at the same time, to demand loyalty to the God of the Chosen people by illustrating how severely Jehovah could punish disobedience. But in this attempt, it also appropriated and distorted pagan symbols: for instance, the Hebrew mind captured its God as a patriarch bristling warlord, who succeeded in hurling the Great Goddess of the Mediterranean to the sea of oblivion after divesting her of her power. Thus, though the apple had been given, until that time, to the sacred king before his killing as a passport to paradise and immortality (*TGM* 1: 19, 52, 187; 2: 151, 277), in Biblical myth eating the innocent fruit caused loss of Paradise and immortality. Besides, the serpent used to disguise Satan who had been hurled down to Hell for his own rebellion, had originally been the emblem of the third part in the Triple goddess's sacred year that stood for her aspect of death (*TGM* 1: 72, 258): in other words, the hateful Satan appropriated the scorned goddess's epiphany. Obviously, the identification of evil

with serpent, experience, woman, and body had existed in patriarchal societies prior to and, certainly, influenced the writing of the Bible.

It is a historical fact that in the second millenium B.C. Aryan patriarchal tribes and worshippers of Father-gods started moving from Arabian deserts westward, and eventually conquered the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean, Asia Minor, and Greece. They imposed a patriarchal social system over an earlier matriarchal order, and succeeded in suppressing the cults of the Mother-goddess and her Son in all countries but Greece: in the latter, they survived in the Greek Mysteries though they had been transformed to suit patriarchal values, institutions, and ethics. As a result, the predominance of patriarchy over matriarchy at the roots of Western civilization ousted the Goddess from religion, deplorably degraded woman in society, and fatally scorned the balance of body and spirit which had been the ancient man's concept of an intimate relationship between himself and the cosmos. Discussing the great event, Joseph Campbell explains its very significant impact on the West: «The light and rational, divisive functions under the sign of the Heroic Male, overcame [for the Western branch of the world] the fascination of the dark mystery of the deeper levels of the soul... which had been so beautifully termed as «the mysterious Female» (*MOG* 3: 80).

After the disturbance of the existing balance, man gradually lost his oneness with the cosmos by functioning, predominantly, with his intellect. By abnegating his body, and by having faith only in his spirit, he spiritualized all his great religions. His attitude in social life became predominantly empirical and materialistic; and his relation to the cosmos was forgotten. Moreover, his earthbound body, unable to follow the heights of his soaring spirit, betrayed him. Thus, «limping,» intellect-ruled societies cropped up, founded on illusions of reality and hypocrisy. In the West, the sense of guilt arising from failure to conform with Christian ethics has transformed living into dead people, inhabiting T.S. Eliot's waste lands, James Joyce's Dublin, and regions waiting for Godot, or the fertilizing rain of regeneration. The body as a source of shame and guilt had been the cause of founding innumerable monasteries in the Middle Ages, in which monks and nuns struggled, in vain for centuries, to spiritualize their carnal desires through celibacy and various forms of atonement. The regenerating spirit of the Renaissance did in some countries shed the hypocritical layers of clothes to show the truth of a naked body in the arts, but was not able to withstand

for a long period such powerful opponents as religious fanaticism and ignorance.

Then, a new era dawned, first in the New World which was just emerging from the innocence of wilderness, the America of Walt Whitman (1819- 1892). The call of love to his countrymen in *Song of Myself* (1855) was the first voice since humanity's pagan past to reject Christian prejudice and to consider the human body and woman equal with the human spirit and man: «I have no chair, no church, no philosophy,» sings Whitman (WW 71) and adds lower down, «I have said that the soul is not more than the body, /And I have said that the body is not more than the soul» (WW 74). About three quarters of a century later, the voice of D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930), in Europe this time, rose passionately in a hymn to love and sexual passion between a man and a woman. In this cult of love, Lawrence was the priest: «I shall always be a Priest of Love. Once you've known what love can do, there's no disappointment any more, and no despair». And in *Apocalypse*, written when he was a dying man and published posthumously (1931), he «protests against the dehumanizing of men and women by Christianity which promises them an imaginary heaven after they are dead (if they are good)» (*Apocalypse* xxiii). And right after the hell of a devastating world war which had revealed horrifying, dark folds of the human nature in acts of extreme cruelty in Nazi concentration camps, Nagasaki, and Hiroshima, a third voice was faintly heard from the antipodes. This time, the Australian Patrick White (1912-1990) indirectly announced in *The Aunt's Story* (1946) his «odyssey,» or the quest of Odysseus. That is, the male, conscious part of the human «dichotomy» searched for the unconscious, and for full knowledge of its twin, Penelope, or the female. At the end of his odyssey of writing eight more novels over thirty-three years to convey his experience, he delivered his message to humanity: «Only love redeems. I don't mean love in the Christian sense [which] is in the end as ineffectual and destructive as violence and hatred» (*Flaws in the Glass* 251). He further suggested that he had imposed on himself acceptance of his «two irreconcilable halves» (*TAS* 277) implicitly through love and recognition of the «dark» female Shadow inherent in the human psyche.

The time had come when experience and knowledge of evil were to be considered not a sin, but a feat. According to White, contemporary man like the bright, heroic Odysseus in the *Iliad*, had to get acquainted with his dark, immortal female part, that of the goddess/Nymph in the *Odyssey*: and the dissociated Christian had to know the

wholeness of his pagan ancestor who was the prototype of a balance between body and spirit. Christians were, at last, to realize that their scorned body was an inspirited particle of the feminine principle of life. There is a blood relation between man and the universe, for both are carriers of matter and energy, the two equally important, though opposite, components of life: the impregnating masculine and the conceiving feminine which are engaged in an eternal dance of birth-death-rebirth. Enduring reality is a matter of balance in the two components, and so is man's wholeness which results in a clear vision of reality and in creativity. Yet it was difficult to persuade Christians to overcome religious prejudice, and learn to love their body, in order to be led to a new relationship with the cosmos. In the history of the literature of the English-speaking nations, each one of the three visionaries in his own historical, religious, socio-cultural, and personal background has partaken in a quest of love for the re-union of the obliterated feminine with the flourishing masculine principle, of the rejected body with the worshipped spirit, and of man with the universe.

The most important common characteristic of the three writers is their rejection of organized religion. Thus, Whitman sees «all religious ecstasy equally valid,» claims that «the churches are one vast lie,» (*NAAL* 1: 584), and is more pantheistic than Christian:

Taking myself the exact dimensions of Jehovah,
Lithographing Kronos, Zeus...

Buying drafts of Osiris, Isis, Belus, Brahma,
Buddha (*WW* 64).

In a similar manner, Richard Aldington holds that Lawrence's «rejection of organized religion offended the enormous number of people who were still enthralled by it» (*Apocalypse* vi). For he considered religion to be an example of the ephemeral reality created by man which like «everything human degenerates, from religion downwards, and must be renewed and revived» (*Apocalypse* 109). Additionally, Lawrence rejected Jesus as a teacher in *The Man Who Died* (1929), but accepted him as a mortal and a lover (*Apocalypse* xxi).

Last, White is heavily sarcastic of «Christians» who have transformed the Christian God of love and forgiveness into the «HOLY HOLY HOLY LORD OF HOSTS,» as «a riband on which was inscribed in letters of gold» reveals. On Christmas Eve, «the commodious, though rather cold and forbidding church» is presented as a place of class dis-

scrimination and social injustice with the «prisoners,» or the caught criminals, seated «at the rear.» In contrast, Garnet Roxburgh, the uncaught murderer of his wife «was ushered to the most prominent pews,» where pretty soon his sister-in-law, Ellen, «felt his thigh pressed inescapably into her skirt.» Listening to the convicts «belt[ing] out the psalms and hymns,» pagan Ellen felt that «the hosts swept onwards against the foe» (*AFOL* 94-95).

In contrast to organized religion, all three writers feel religious ecstasy in nature. White expresses such feelings when he writes:

And yet, even the most exasperated and temporarily scornful pilgrim can be raised from the slough of his cynicism by the silence of a pine forest, or when, under the blue and gold crag of the mountain itself, an icon in its details of jagged rock, tufts of grass, the floret of a stubborn plan... all contribute to blot out the impression of contaminating luxury in the cell of the hierarchy (*FITG* 161).

In his «Introduction» to *Apocalypse*, Aldington says that «the conception of life and consciousness in [Lawrence's] book is a purely mystic one» (*Apocalypse* xxiii). More than in any of his other books, except perhaps in *Mornings in Mexico*, this life of man he was always talking about is expressed:

We and the cosmos are one. The cosmos is a vast living body of which we are still parts. The sun is a great heart whose tremors run through our smallest veins. The moon is a great gleaming nerve-centre from which we quiver for ever (*Apocalypse* xxii).

And Whitman «feels an intensity of communion with nature that warrants [his] being called 'a nature mystic'» (*NAAL* 1: 584-85). He has a passion for uniting with nature:

I will go to the bank by the wood and become undisguised and naked
I am mad for it to be in contact with me (*NAAL* 1: 19-20).

The Judaic and Christian concept of a linear movement of history and life in time betrays the illusion that has established the fallacious pedestal on which the intellect, or the «spirit» has enthroned itself. This is the very reason why the «intellect» is rejected by the three visionaries who return with Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) and Arnold



Toynbee (1889-1975) to J.B. Vico's (1668-1744) thought. The latter accepted the classical concept of a cyclical movement of history and civilizations in time in accordance with the existing pattern of life in nature.

Indeed, since the beginning of life on earth as we know it from Darwin's theory, in contrast to the writings of the Bible, «there is no stoppage and never can be stoppage,» (*WW* 71), as Whitman expresses in literature. For the energy in the universe pushes everything creatively for eternity «Urge and urge and urge,/Always the procreant urge of the world (*WW* 25). Death does not exist, not even for the mortal body, since the earth which receives the corpse recreates it in new forms, such as grass: «If you want me again look for me under your boot-soles» (*WW* 75, 77). Whitman believes that the dead, «They are alive and well somewhere, /The smallest sprout shows there is really no death» (*WW* 28).

Lawrence is more specific when he straightforwardly expresses his opinion: «This is a piece of very old wisdom, and it will always be true. Time still moves in cycles, not in a straight line. And we are at the end of the Christian cycle» (*Apocalypse* 93). In order to appreciate pagan thought, Lawrence claims, «we have to allow our mind to move in cycles... Our idea of time as a continuity in an eternal straight line has crippled our consciousness cruelly. The pagan concept of time as moving in cycles is much freer, it allows movement upwards and downwards, and allows for a complete change of the state of mind» (*Apocalypse* 54).

Symbolist White, on the other hand, uses two most ancient symbols, one of imperfection (a linear square arrangement suggesting the finite) and another one of perfection (a circular arrangement suggesting the infinite). A square within a circle represents above all the union of all opposites in nature. Likewise, in man it means «the union of the personal world of the ego with the non-personal, timeless world of the non-ego» (*MHS* 267; *MMSL* vi, vii).

Another common characteristic of importance in all three writers is their faith in, or search for, a new way of living. In the case of Whitman, this faith arose naturally from the innocence of the young American nation, who could still hear the call of the wild: the American bard was so close to his roots and to the universe, that he had only to stretch his hand to touch them:

I open my scuttle at night and see the farsprinkled systems, (*WW* 70).

Neither books nor thoughts of dead writers are necessary for a direct

communion with nature to which Whitman invites his fellow-countrymen to share with him: partaking in the soul of the cosmos is sufficient wisdom for spiritually independent people, like those Whitman was trying to mould:

You shall no longer take things at second or third hand, nor look through the eyes of the dead, nor feed on the spectres in books, Creeds and schools in abeyance (*WW* 24-25).

The living man is the sole agent who can participate in the soul of the cosmos; and that invites him every moment to comprehend it, as he expresses in «When I Heard the Learned Astronomer» (*NAAL* 1: 1940). The poet expresses here a new consciousness: man should not reject his body, because it contains his soul, and it is the latter's vehicle for communication with the outer world (*NAAL* 1: 1878). Perfection is not for Whitman the prerogative of the great forebears of Western man: every man has the potential to reach perfection; for creative energy is inherent in the human body. His song is a hymn to mere existence, «I exist as I am, that is enough,» to life, «I know I am deathless, / » and to a broad brotherhood united by the human predicament, «In all people I see myself» (*WW* 40).

Lawrence, on the other hand, sensed the dissociation of Western man from nature, and his alienation from his fellow-man. But he was not able to see the «soul» as the «psyche,» in the way Jung and White did later on. Had he been able to do so, he would have discovered that «the quality of feelings, intensity of sensations and passion» which he was placing «before intellect» were but the degraded feminine principle of the psyche in a society of Christian patriarchs in which «the intellect [has] usurp[ed] the seat where once the spirit was enthroned... the spirit was no longer up above but down below, no longer fire but water» (*ACU* 16). One can readily see that Lawrence's conviction that the intellect «is a dangerous, even pernicious thing which leads only to death» was not original. Its primacy had been doubted by Bergson, Freud and Jung; moreover, the whole system of values of the European civilization had been rejected in their different ways by Tolstoy and Nietzsche and even Dostoyevsky. However, Lawrence wanted to give a different way of feeling, living, and loving, and not a new way of thinking. «With the coming of Socrates and «the spirit,» the cosmos died. For two thousand years man has been living in a dead or dying cosmos, hoping for a heaven hereafter. And all the religions have been of the dead body and the postponed reward» (*Apocalypse* 53). Besides,

he ranged pretty far both in space and time in search of other modes of living. He found bits of what he wanted in German and Italian peasants, in Mexicans and Indians. His essays on Etruscan Towns contain his belief in an intense «physical» life the world has very nearly lost. But in *Apocalypse* he has forgotten all his savages. Even the Etruscans fall into the background by being considered to be belated specimens of the Bronze Age «great Aegean civilization» (*Apocalypse* 47).

Probing into religion, White apparently observed that in the history of his religions, man had personified the dualism of opposites in nature by the sexes where there is dichotomy, and by the divine androgyne where there is wholeness. His belief that the only religion which could deify man and would never fall, that of the whole individual, led him to two most ancient concepts in the religions of nature and fertility: the androgynous figure of the Great Mother with her Son in her womb which is the synthesis of the sacred couple, that is, the Great Mother-goddess and her Son-lover who epitomized all opposites in the sexes. Thus, he created nine novels as a religious regression to the roots of Western man with a double purpose: first, to unveil the sacred couple from patriarchal prejudice and false moral values of centuries; and second, to discover in his Western psyche the missing feminine element, since the time women began being looked on as the patriarchs' chattel. Nonetheless, his psycho-religious regression precisely coincides with Jung's concept of «individuation» which is a journey from dissociation to wholeness; the result in the individual is freedom from prejudice, clear vision, creativity, Odyssean wisdom.

Thus in his first novels, White has several archetypal figures of Son-gods impersonate the prevalent conscious/Ego/intellect in Western societies. Such characters are recurrently sacrificed, until his hero is able to meet and be reconciled with his unconscious/Shadow/Mother-goddess, in the manner Odysseus was able to visit the Underworld and return to life wiser than before. Such a person ceases to have illusions by shedding all false values. Indeed, Jung claims that the unconscious is, like the mother-goddess, a source of regeneration for him who can reconcile it with his conscious (*ACU* 275). At this point, we cannot help admiring White's clear vision, evident in his choice to transpose to all his novels characters and action from the context of Greek myths. For there is an absolutely parallel idea in pre-Hellenic myth which considers the world of the dead —the realm of mother-goddess Persephone— to offer the only hope for regeneration to pre-Hellenic man (*TGM* 1:123).

In contrast to the two visionaries, Lawrence who has not been able to reach psychological wholeness, offered the picture of his divided psyche in the following quotation by Harry T. Moore, his biographer: «Man as yet, is less than half-grown. Even his flower has not appeared yet. He is all leaves and roots, without any clue put forth... Blossoming means the establishing of a pure relationship with all the cosmos.» Nevertheless, he had a vision, Moore claims, «of the man when he knows himself royal crowned with the sun, with his feet gripping the core of the earth» (*The Priest of Love* 666).

Consequently, it is becoming evident that the historical, social, and personal background in which each one of the three writers wrote has built up the framework of each one's quest and subsequent vision. Behind Whitman was the vigorous spirit of the young American nation of farmers who had recently created the new country by giving form to the chaos of wilderness. In such a situation, the soaring spirit of the American bard justified his belief in universal brotherhood, the power of love, goodness, and acceptance of evil. In contrast, Lawrence brought into his quest the chaotic gloom of early twentieth-century-society in a Europe shaken by man's first contact with full-scale destruction after World War I. Thus, Lawrence was actually searching at the social level for what had been lost in war, that is, human values, a new faith, and new or forgotten ways of living. His situation was more difficult than that of Whitman, when he preached to isolated alienated, frustrated, and uninterested post-war Europeans that they should reject the pernicious intellect, and live an intense physical life, in order to form a healthy society. The cult of the union of the sexes in sexual passion which leads to regeneration, thus, became the center of his vision, because his very strong relationship with his wife succeeded in exorcizing the persistent mother-image in his psyche.

White brought into his quest, not only his horrifying, unbelievable experience of the extent of evil in the human psyche, as it had been revealed during World War II, but also his love for the Greek nobleman who had remained his life-long partner since 1941 (*FITG* 100). By equally tending both spirit and body, he succeeded in reconciling the opposites in himself into wholeness:

As for myself I had achieved what I had most hoped for ... a lasting relationship with a human being I can respect and trust ... I had arrived at a synthesis of the far and the near, Europe and Australia, opposing elements in myself. It was a situation I could not have

imagined in my egotistical, ambitious youth, or my emotionally chaotic middle-age (*FITG* 210).

Wholeness, then, leads an individual to the right relationship of mortal humanity to the immortal universe. It was much easier for Whitman who lived in an America of farmers mainly supported by working on their land. This and his factual homosexuality may have been the reasons he was the first to discern the importance of his body's union with what he called his «soul.» Though he was the only one who had no forerunners in his discovery, the whole group of Transcendentalists and the whole American nation spontaneously backed his own mysticism and feeling of an intimate communion with nature.

But the expatriate Lawrence never did have a chance of establishing a close relationship with his own land, though he had had the beneficial experience of growing up in a mining region. Traumatic incidents of the destructive conflict between his parents and, later on, his persecution by Church and State drove him away from Britain. He travelled a lot but never settled anywhere. Thus, he was not able to acquire roots and a clear vision. For example, he declared at one point the body to be of equal value with the spirit («Why the Novel Matters,» *NAEL* 2: 2223), but in a letter to Ernest Collings, he placed the body above the intellect by saying: «My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh as being wiser than the intellect» (*Profiles in Literature* 59). This contradiction could be taken as evidence that he had not found the balance of the two opposite components in himself. His search for «physical» modes of living ended, by a stroke of tragic irony, a year before his death, when he discovered the *Revelation* by «John of Patmos,» as he calls the writer; his crucial discovery of the Aegean civilization came at a time he was a dying man. Therefore, though he wrote *Apocalypse* to appear as the interpreter of strange old symbols, he failed in most respects, Aldington admits, except for the fact that he has given us a clue to the kind of living he had visualized for his fellowmen (*Apocalypse* xxi).

Indeed, the consciousness reached by contemporary man near the end of the twentieth century is that the Aegeans introduced the freest and most progressive way of living in the whole Near East. Their king was no bristling warlord, and had no great, fortified cities. All classes lived happy and prosperous lives. Women enjoyed complete equality with men in all respects of social life. Everybody delighted in games and sports, but even their favorite bull-leaping involved no cruelty.

Their artists had a remarkable feeling for nature; they did not serve ambitions of rulers, nor did they inculcate the doctrines of a religion. They simply expressed their delight in the world of beauty around them, and hoped to continue the same life in another world (*WC* 126-30).

Aldington claims that it was only in that specific culture that Lawrence observed the absence of restless intellect and hatred. This different «consciousness,» this different «sense-awareness,» this life of man «breast to breast with the cosmos» can only exist outside what Lawrence called «our cycle,» the cycle of Platonic spiritual philosophy, of Christianity, and of science. The cosmos Lawrence talks of is a «diving thing» with which man may commune and be one. But this cosmos was lost, because «the old vital religions» were rejected by «intellectuals,» like Aristotle, all who derive from him, and by Christians (*Apocalypse* xxii).

In contrast to Whitman and Lawrence who had a full knowledge of the lower classes, White, a student of expensive boarding schools in Britain—since he was born in a very well-off Australian family—perceived by the great artist's intuition the kind of intimate relationship man must have with the land that feeds him. Thus, immediately after his homecoming to Australia, he spent with his partner seventeen years on farming at «Dogwoods,» Castle Hill. Therefore, he was able to draw on the rich and virgin soil of the new continent, as the child feeds on its mother's breast. Additionally, by profiting from the wisdom of Greek myths—he considered Greece to be his second mother—and by a combination of his intellect and imagination he was able to create his work of art in the new continent. His search and vision focused on Bronze Age peasant awareness of reality in the religions of the Great Mother and her Son-lover. Accordingly, he based his vision on the individual's deification through wholeness. By becoming a creative figure of a divine androgyne, he has precisely defined the new faith in the individual. The whole man is his own begetter, and thus becomes a «god-man» (*SOT* 368) in the sense the Biblical serpent promised: «and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil» (*Genesis* 3:5).

Thus the three authors express, each one in his own way, his search for a new faith which might replace the fallen idols. But all three undertake their quest through love: Whitman's love is for all men, women, and the universe; Lawrence's love is for the body in the union of sexes; and White's homosexual love is for an individual he can respect and trust. In all three cases, it is the kind of pagan, not Christian love, which effects the feat.

In some parts of his poetry, Whitman consciously or unconsciously appears like the mythical Son yearning for a union with the Mother. One senses it, as one can visualize him wandering in the universe with all her symbols, earth, sea, moon, and night:

I am he that walks with the tender and growing night,
I call to the earth and sea half-held by the night (WW 41).

Whitman's address to the earth clearly ends with heralding an imminent, sexual union, «Smile, for your lover comes» (WW 41). This kind of poetry is interpreted by Jung as the bliss of the son's dissolution in the mother by his return to the womb (SOT 370).

Lawrence was the only one who did not develop his vision, because he was stopped short by death. Earlier in his life, though, he had placed his faith in the foundation of a utopian society, called «Rananim,» in which men would live without wars or machines. It is worth noting that it never came to being for lack of volunteers. However in *Apocalypse*, he did realize that the goddess who appears in *Revelation* is borrowed from another context, because she «is difficult to reconcile with a Jewish vision.» Indeed, Graves claims that «the goddesses were altogether ousted in Jerusalem» (TGM 1:19). Moreover, Lawrence successfully identified both the «great goddess of the east» and the «Magna Mater of the Romans» with the «Virgin Mary» of Christianity who suggests «the great cosmic Mother robed and splendid, but persecuted» (*Apocalypse* 86). His consciousness has been left over for White to assimilate, and discover the Female in history, religion, man, and the universe. White himself accepts the English author's «influence»: In an interview by Craig McGregor he said: «Which writers influenced me? Joyce and Lawrence, certainly. Lawrence I liked so much in my youth I'd be afraid to read him now» (*Patrick White Speaks* 19). Thus, it was a homosexual writer who was able to satisfy Lawrence's complaint about the disappearance of the mysterious female: «Since she fled, we have nothing but virgins and harlots, half-women: the half-women of the Christian era» (*Apocalypse* 88).

Last, White's message that GOD IS LOVE is the boon brought by his own feminine principle to man. Meaningfully, it is brought by Ellen Roxburgh, an impersonation of the Greek Helen who has remained in man's collective memory as a representation of the feminine principle, or Jung's Anima. Love is the only force that can save man from the destructive inventions of his intellect. In White's last novel, *The*

Twyborn Affair, his homosexual protagonist, who lives several lives of both man and woman, is the artist-owner of a brothel, in which his «whore-nuns» are priestesses of love specialized in satisfying all human vices. One can safely compare this idea to the practice of «temple prostitution,» a vestige of the cult of the Great Mother which survived even in classical Greece. The offer of the female body to a stranger was believed to honor the Goddess as the principle of love.

However, one can realize that the oldest patriarchal religions, Judaism and Christianity, have led man astray from the core of reality in life by exorcizing the love that unites and by breeding strife that separates. So their followers remain withered flowers or individuals cut off their roots, and doomed to die. It might be appropriate to remember what Sir James Frazer said about the harm done to mankind by the great religions:

By their glorification of poverty and celibacy both these religions [Buddhism and Christianity] struck straight at the root not merely of civil society but of human existence. The blow was parried by the wisdom or the folly of the vast majority of mankind, who refused to purchase a chance of saving their souls with the certainty of extinguishing the species (*The Golden Bough* 476).

In conclusion, one can see that in two patriarchal religions, the Jewish and the Christian, there is a lost Paradise promised to their followers if they live their life on earth in conformity with the rules set by their God. A garden of bliss in heaven is the award for the good, whereas eternal torture, sulphur, and fire await the evil hurled down to Hell. Such different settings reserved for human creatures of common predicament clearly reflect the strife and dissociation of the patriarchal mind which has created those religions. Indeed, strife and fragmentation are the main characteristics of intellect-worshipping, authoritative individuals who impose on themselves too strict a moral code. As a result, members of such societies have been transgressing it for about two millenia in the occidental branch of the world: moreover, tortured by guilt of sin, they resort to hypocrisy.

In contrast, societies based on a matriarchal order which had created the mystical religions of nature and fertility reflected a different way of living: strife and love, separation and union, life and death, body and spirit were considered to be parts of the same life force. Being still close to nature and the cosmos, people of Bronze Age agricultural

societies followed the cyclical pattern of natural life in their religion, too. Thus, the separation of the Son-lover from his Mother-goddess by death was bewailed by his devotees in Autumn with the same fervour they rejoiced over his rebirth in Spring. The concept of sin did not exist, nor did they have any kind of moral obligation to their gods to regulate their happy lives. They were not promised Heaven: the Underworld was a place which bred life, since the seed of the cereal, like the son-god, sprouted in young shoots from the soil in Spring.

If Christians have lost Paradise, because of disobeying their God by tasting the fruit of knowledge, it is again by the disobedience to the same God of such writers as Whitman in America, Lawrence in Europe, and White in Australia that Paradise has been retrieved. This time, it has been precisely man's original sin of tasting knowledge that developed human consciousness to the point of discovering a paradise in an individual's union of body and spirit. Not separation, but reconciliation of the opposites can bring about the balance of wholeness is man, and make him similar to God by absolute knowledge of «both good and evil,» as the Biblical serpent has foretold. Man has, at last, rediscovered that, contrary to the doctrine of the great, spiritualized religions, body and spirit, intellect and feelings are of equal importance; this contemporary concept had been the basis of pagan religions. Whitman felt this wisdom with every particle of his body, Lawrence discovered it at the end of a life-long search, and White clearly expressed it as man's regression to old pagan wisdom: «Now as the world becomes more pagan, one has to lead people in the same direction in a different way» (*In the Making* 19). White felt his duty to create his work of art, in the manner Homer had created his, with the belief that «books *could* breed future generations» (*FITG* 202).

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