The Vanquished Christ of Modern Passion Drama.

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THE VANQUISHED CHRIST OF MODERN PASSION DRAMA

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col.  Ph.D.  1984

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THE VANQUISHED CHRIST
IN MODERN PASSION DRAMA

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Speech
Communication, Theatre and
Communication Disorders

by
Lynda Scott Donaldson
B.A., St. Andrews Presbyterian College, 1967
M.A., Florida State University, 1971

May 1984
Dear children of God . . . . I wish only that you should meditate in your hearts the deep meaning and mystery of our masses of Christmas Day. For whenever Mass is said, we reenact the Passion and Death of our Lord; and on this Christmas Day we do celebration of His birth. So that at the same moment we rejoice in His coming for the salvation of men, and offer again to God His Body and Blood in sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the world . . . . Beloved, as the world sees, this is to behave in a strange fashion. For who in the world will both mourn and rejoice at once for the same reason? For either joy will be overborne by mourning, or mourning will be cast out by joy; so it is only in these our Christian mysteries that we can rejoice and mourn at once for the same reason.

Thomas à Becket's sermon on Christmas morning 1170 quoted by Thomas Becket in Murder in the Cathedral by T. S. Eliot.
DEDICATION

To Lloyd and Virginia Scott, my dear parents who share each challenge with me and provide supportive love, encouragement and generous reinforcements with every needy call, I wish to dedicate the completion of this study.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In recognition of a distinguished committee, I wish to thank Professor Joe Bova, Dr. Gresdna Doty, Dr. Fabian Gudas, Dr. John R. May and Dr. Gerilyn Tandberg. To the chairman of the committee and director of my dissertation, Dr. Bill Harbin, I am indebted for his scholarship, sensitive guidance and inspiration. He has served as both mentor and friend. In addition, I would like to express appreciation to the several members of the Louisiana State University faculty who responded kindly and thoughtfully to questions regarding the development of this study: Dr. Dewey Carpenter, Dr. Bainard Cowan, Dr. Lester Roubey and Dr. Mary Sirridge.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUOTATION</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. THE SHADOW OF HIS DEATH</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Passion Dialectic</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ammergau Pageant</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Radical Vision</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THREE PASSION PARADIGMS</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ the Victim</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ the Victor</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ the Vanquished</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE LITERARY VISION: THEATRE POSITIVISM'S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THREE PASSION PERSONAS</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Passion Persona</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Passion Persona of Literary Passion Plays</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

v
ABSTRACT

The study of "The Vanquished Christ in Modern Passion Drama" selects from the anthropocentric passion imagery in over fifty modern plays written in English between 1864 and 1980. By focusing on the modern passion dramas which appeared during the 1920s and in the postmodern period coinciding with the conflict in Vietnam of 1957 through 1973, the main thrust of this research reveals the modern poetic vision of the Christ figure or passion persona who, like mankind at war, is threatened with extinction.

The modern, radical poetic vision differs from the traditional view of the passion demonstrated in pageants such as The Oberammergau Passion Play in that it replaces the theistic world view and typological interpretation of the Bible with the playwright's personal world view that reflects the death of God theology. In effect, the radical vision departs from two theistic paradigms, Christus victim, represented by the Oberammergau pageant, and Christus victor which is modeled after the dialogue between God and Job in the book of Job. In contrast, the vanquished paradigm illustrates the Oedipal experience of suffering that constitutes the tragic theology of an impersonal, malevolent power which tyrannizes mankind.
The radical vision stems from three dramatic movements influenced by aestheticism, poetic anarchism and theatrical positivism. In the 1920s, these trends resulted in the literary and historical visions of the Christic passion. Three verse dramas in this study manifest the traits of aestheticism in their treatment of the passion. The historical view reveals the anarchism in three dramas as well. Theatrical positivism in the postmodern passion plays has produced modern creations of passion rituals and protests by which the playwrights, through theatrical means, aim to transform society's complacent attitude about militarism, mediocrity and other forms of tyranny.
INTRODUCTION

Via Passional
December 1979 to December 1983

In December 1979, I submitted an initial prospectus, "Toward a Passion Poetic," which indicated my intention to explore the recurrence of passion imagery in modern drama. The proposal aimed to discover criteria for a sacramental aesthetic which would reconcile the alienation existing between traditional religious understanding and modern theatre's interpretation of the Christic passion. In a second plan six months later, these ideas changed to reflect my perception of a pattern in the treatment of the Christ figure that related to aesthetic and cultural values. "The Playwright and the Passion: Patterns of the Transcendental in Modern Drama" proposed an examination of the means by which modern playwrights portrayed the spirit through images interpreting the Christic passion, a theopoiesis of modern theatrical icons. A year later, a third title, "Patterns of Redemptive Suffering in Modern Passion Drama, 1860--1980," focused on the central figure of the passion presented by the playwright as victim or victor of a hostile society. With this theme, I pursued my study of Christ figures beginning with the minister in Ibsen's Brand (1866). The principal problem gradually emerged.
Modern passion drama neither expects a reconciliation between traditional belief and the arts, nor offers redemption. It projects instead an anthropocentric passion for a world which has lost its consensus of Christian traditions. The study of December 1983, "The Vanquished Christ in Modern Passion Drama," describes a defeated Christ figure and degraded humanity.

In an attempt to understand the attraction which the passion holds for modern playwrights, my research plunged into the origins of Christic passion symbols and the roots of drama. Both were traced to piacular ceremonies. The Hebraic celebration of the Day of Atonement instituted by the Mosaic covenant which included the ceremonial transference of the peoples' sins onto the head of a scapegoat parallels the Greek purification rites that culminated in the death of a pharmakos or human scapegoat. In the New Testament passion, the unblemished scapegoat who is banished to the wilderness of Azazel represents a type of Christic redemption. The symbolism in the stoning of the pharmakos that developed into tragic festivals also purged the community of undesirable qualities. One purposes to effect conversion, the other catharsis. Searching for a common piacular structure, I compared the figure of Jesus Christ portrayed in The Oberammergau Passion Play with Oedipus in Sophocles' Oedipus Tyrannus. This venture provided the material for an increased awareness of the influence of Greek
imagery and philosophy on modern passion plays.

Playwrights of modern passions dramatize the enactment of a crime, like the murder of one of the despised members of Greek society, the pharmakos victim; whereas, the celebration of the Christian mass in memory of the passion of Christ enacts redemption and renewal. The blend of Greek symbols and Christic passion structure in two plays that deal with the crimes committed by the Christian church under the guise of missionary evangelism illustrate the temper of modern passion plays. Gerhart Hauptmann's White Savior (1920) and Peter Shaffer's Royal Hunt of the Sun (1964) share the common theme of ruthless conquest and a power clash between paganism and Christianity conveyed in the apocalyptic images of the sun, fire and birds. The white savior, Cortez, represents the world of eagles and condors, birds of prey. Shaffer's poetic vision concentrates on the sentimental world of victims symbolized by the helpless goldfinch. Edward Bond has captured the reality in these two contrasting bird images with his poem "Bird" (1971) in which the tanoi, a traditional Christ-bird, flies on with charred wings, smashed claws and cracked beak, the victim of violent crimes.

The modern playwright's vision of the passion confronts the grim reality of human oppression and entrenches itself in a theatrical world through which the Christic passion becomes interchangeable with sexual passions, the passion of the actor and the passion of war. In this
world the playwright, the actor and audience can console one another in communion with an ironic spirit that destroys everything and rises again from the conflagration. The modern vision refracts into three treatments of the Christic passion which are categorized as the literary, historical and theatrical views. In each perspective, the modern or postmodern playwright elicits the dramatic techniques of aestheticism, poetic anarchism and theatrical positivism to communicate his view of humanity without God and tyrannized by its own self-destructive powers.

In December 1983, "The Vanquished Christ of Modern Passion Drama" mourns the loss of God from the Christic passion and the declining worth of human beings. The modern Christ figure symbolizes both in his depiction as a passion persona. The historical development of passion plays from early mystery cycles foreshadowed this pattern. The Quem Queritis trope of the tenth-century and the appearance of nativity plays in the eleventh-century preceded the formation of passion plays in the latter part of the twelfth-century; therefore, the origins of passion cycles began with the representation of hopeful Christian mysteries. In the beginning, the passion play usually was attached as a prelude to the more well-developed resurrection play. And until the sixteenth-century, the passion play was not separated from the larger pageant cycles such as the feast of Corpus Christi which presented
all the mysteries from Genesis to the book of Revelation. The modern passion play is heir to the isolated passion play which soon became more popular than the resurrection or nativity plays. Alienated from the larger pageant tradition, the modern passion persona has forgotten the angelic annunciation and despairingly awaits resurrection. He suffers in his tomb interminably like the pharmakos.
Webber and Rice's rock opera, Jesus Christ Superstar (1970), introduced American audiences to a popularized passion play. Its prolonged commercial success attests to the fact that the public continues to be intrigued by the Jesus who prays in the garden of Gethsemane on the night of his betrayal:

But if I die
See the saga through and do the
   things you ask of me
Let them hate me hit me hurt me
   and nail me to their tree
I'd wanna know . . . .
Why I should die
Show me there's a reason for
   your wanting me to die
You're far too keen on where and
   how and not so hot on why
Alright I'll die!
Just watch me die!
See how I die!
In the following year, "the red-nosed Jesus dressed in a Super-man sweatshirt" of Godspell sings from his "crucifixion" on a fence: "Oh, God, I'm dying! ... Oh, God, I'm dead!" Ten years later, in Peter Nichols' Passion Play, James Croxley, whose "passion" for adultery is a parody of Christ's passion, confesses to Eleanor, his betrayed wife: "I'd had enough of that insipid eunuch. We still live in the shadow of his death. And his birth too, for that matter. A virgin birth. A conception and a birth without carnal love. It flies in the face of all we know and people like us don't believe it any more. But we can't forget two thousand years of it in a hurry." Indeed, vestiges of its memory, the "shadow of His death," are at work in the film E. T., according to theologian-film critic Robert Short in The Gospel from Outer Space (1983).

The "updaters," so called by James Fitzpatrick in Jesus Christ Before He became a Superstar, are not the only ones gaining attention through popular entertainment. Traditional passion plays tour yearly in the United States: I Am the Way with Jerome Hines was first performed at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1968. London's National Theatre staged a revival of the passion drawn from portions of the York cycle in 1977. Directed by Bill Bryden and Sebastian Graham-Jones, The Passion was staged inside the Cottesloe auditorium at the National Theatre, in a market square atmosphere, with modern costuming, folk-rock music, and a mingling of performers and audience. Other modern
productions of the passion such as the revival of the thirteenth-century German manuscript known as "Carmina Burana," restored by musicologists from Indiana University for performances at the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art in 1982, contribute to its renaissance.\(^\text{10}\)

Also, the success of the passion story as outdoor drama is another example of its timeliness. In the southern states, three outdoor passion plays perform every summer: one in Arkansas (The Great Passion Play), Tennessee (Smoky Mountain Passion Play) and Virginia (Passion Play). Utilizing community resources and non-professional talent in many instances, these passion pageants are reminders of the medieval plays. Accommodations to modern tastes, however, have not been omitted. The colorful brochure for the passion play at Eureka Springs, Arkansas, noted for the statue of Christ of the Ozarks, promotes group plans and family tour packages amid photographs which juxtapose a night scene of three figures on crosses and the blue, sunlit waters of the Inn of the Ozarks' swimming pool.

Although periodically attacked by criticism, ranging from objections to its alleged anti-semitism to excessive commercialism, The Oberammergau Passion Play, originally titled The Great Sacrifice and Reconciliation on Golgotha, is preparing to celebrate its three hundred and fiftieth anniversary in 1984. The Oberammergau community has refused offers for filming rights and other commercial
enterprises choosing to continue live performances only. Over five hundred thousand people saw the passion enacted during the ninety-two performances scheduled in 1980, and one hundred thousand were turned away. The anniversary season in 1984, follows one previous commemoration in 1934 when an additional play by Leo Weismantel was performed in honor of the first passion play performances organized by the community in 1634. Vernon Heaton, modern chronicler of the passion play at Oberammergau, has recorded the steady increases in the number of performances and visitors, from six performances in 1811 to the eighty-four performances in 1934 for that season's four hundred thousand visitors. These performances were abruptly halted by the Nazi blood purge. In spite of wars, purges and the alarms of our nuclear age, the Oberammergau community is planning in 1984 for one hundred performances of an eight-hour show. The playing time is evidently a reversion to the script of the 1900/1910/1922 productions which played for eight hours but was cut to seven in 1960 through the 1980 seasons. Writing about the tercentenary performances of 1934, Elisabeth Corathiel forecast that they would be the last of The Oberammergau Passion Play since the "highly praised" prologue play by Weismantle called The Pest and Passion Vow of the Year 1634 would succeed it in the 1940 season. World War II prevented the 1940 season, and the traditional Oberammergau text returned for the 1950 season;
the play, with some modifications, continues to attract international audiences.

The responses of literary critics to the popular trend of the passion in novels and plays may be noted in studies such as F.W. Dillistone's *The Novelist and the Passion Story* (1960); Edwin Mosely's *Pseudonyms of Christ in the Modern Novel: Motifs and Methods* (1962); Theodore Ziolkowski's *Fictional Transfigurations of Jesus* (1972); John Ditsky's *The Onstage Christ: Studies in the Persistence of a Theme* (1980); and David Miller's *Christs* (1981). In addition to these, other critics, including Frank Bowman, Ursula Braumm, Robert Detweiller and Neil Hurley, S.J., have observed certain tendencies in the treatment of the passion story. Ziolkowski remarks that we have reached a "new peak of alienation" with regard to modernized Jesus figures. On the basis of his analysis of some twenty novels, he has formulated five categories of fictional transfiguration: the Christian socialist Jesus, the Christomaniacs, the mythic Jesus, comrade Jesus and the fifth gospels. The pattern of the transfigurations, modern heroes whose lives reflect the historical accounts of Jesus' life in the Gospels, has grown increasingly more alienated from *The True History of Joshua Davidson* (1872) to *The Latecomers* (1970). One characteristic of this trend focuses on the "criminalized nature of Christ's death" with which Father Hurley finds "a curious psychological resonance in the persecution or death of certain rebels and
deviants" portrayed in a meta-genre of films he calls "Christomorphetic."

While apparently fewer comprehensive studies of the Christ figure have been conducted by critics of dramatic literature, John Ditsky and Nelvin Vos have established some precedents. The thirteen plays discussed by Ditsky, beginning with Ibsen's The Wild Duck and ending with Whiting's The Devils, are arranged by chapters with slogan titles: "Brecht's Judging Jesus" (The Caucasian Chalk Circle); "O'Neill's Evangel of Peace" (The Iceman Cometh); "Williams' Sweet Singer of Sex" (Orpheus Descending); "Pinter's Christ of Complicity" (The Birthday Party). Ditsky's approach may seem intent on "christianizing" at all costs; nevertheless, scholars have developed expertise in searching for Christ figures which David Miller labels "christopoesis." Noting a direction pursued by modern playwrights employing the passion narrative, Vos ascertains that "theatre of Passion" manifests three criteria. First, Vos suggests that these plays entail suffering which leads to insight. The second criterion "leads to awareness that no human action is wholly self-determined" and to a state of victimization. And finally, Vos names the ultimate suffering, a "purgatorio" or waiting. Obviously, Vos had Beckett's Waiting for Godot in mind when he arrived at these elements, but from 1864 to 1973, over fifty professionally produced plays in English have been written which could be called "theatre of Passion." Of interest is
the fact that the last twenty years have seen the greatest outpouring of Christ figures in modern drama since the 1920s.

The proliferation of modernizations of the passion testify to two crises within man's understanding of God and his own identity and the awareness of global catastrophe. The image of Jesus Christ is the mirror to whom the apostle Paul refers in I Corinthians, chapter thirteen: "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also have been fully known." William V. Dych suggests that the changing modes of the passion have developed because the images of Jesus Christ, the glass or mirror, have changed. The erosion of meaning which was once part of the traditional identification of the Christ story as a result of secularization, according to Detweiller, introduces a "dichotomy between Christ and meaning." As Father Hurley and Ziolkowski have pointed out, the Christ figure is not the Christ of faith. Thus, at the heart of these metamorphoses is the creative imagination and world vision of the playwright recreating a Jesus after his or her own image. Theatre artists of each new era wrestle with their visions of reality in that period in terms of man's nature and relationship with his gods: "What is admitted as historic is just what the Spirit of the time can take out of the records in order to assimilate it to itself and bring out of it a living form." The identity of the God-man is in
a unique way simultaneously the identities of God and man via the incarnation. To ferret out these identities, we will no longer be able to accept the traditional externals provided for us by the passion pageants, but we must draw "on the universal cultural symbolic figure of the Jesus persona (an existential)." The new tradition confirms the realities of two world wars which in a sense have never ended.

The death of Jesus Christ is recreated in modern drama in the shadow of another "death." The Madman from Nietzsche's *Gay Science* (1882) exclaiming that "God is dead" is the lantern-bearer for many voices before him and many to follow. Albert Schweitzer discusses the effects of historical rationalism on the life of Jesus in the works of liberal theologians published during the period of the 1770s to 1901. The liberalistic attempt to reconcile the thesis of the supernaturalists with the antithesis of the rationalists is demonstrated in the *Life of Jesus* (1835) by David Friedrich Strauss who synthesized a mythic interpretation. Ernest Renan popularized the mythic Jesus with the publication of his *Life of Jesus* (1863). Georg Hegel (1707-1831), the primary influence on Strauss and other rationalists, reasoned that God was in the human consciousness and on this premise he founded a total philosophy, in imitation of Aristotle, which he expounds in the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1830). Bruno Bauer (1809-1883), praised by Schweitzer for his critique
of the life of Jesus, was a disciple of Hegel's ideas on the absolute spirit of self-consciousness, God as the infinite self, and the inevitable defeat of Christianity.

Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) owe many of their ideas to Bauer. For example, Bauer's analogy of religion as the opiate of the people became Marx's byword: "Religion is the product of a situation in which man is deprived of the possibility of realizing his essence. As long as the suitable conditions for radical change are lacking, man cannot develop his authentic human qualities and is in need of consolation, of an imaginary picture of the world, or mystification." To Marx, thinking about God only means that the self-consciousness exists.

Prior to Bauer, however, Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) established a formula for deducing a power principle from Greek philosophy which benefited Bauer and after him, Marx and Nietzsche. Marx's unfinished dissertation (1841) on the Epicurean, Stoic and Sceptic post-Aristotelian philosophies furnished him with an understanding of their thought as a "struggle of self-consciousness for liberation." The power of self-consciousness, then, "actualizes the philosophy." With this power, distilled from the consciousness of the proletariat, Marx aspired to establish a new society. Like Marx, Nietzsche responded to Schopenhauer's idea of the "absolute reality, the furious, ceaseless energy behind all forms and phenomena,
the will itself." In contrast to Marx's philosophy, however, both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche envisioned an aesthetic as the chief purpose for the power of the self. *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* (1870–1871) expounds Nietzsche's apprehension of the will through "Dionysiac rapture." He describes the new transcendent state of man in which "Man now expresses himself through song and dance as the member of a higher community; he has forgotten how to walk, how to speak, and is on the brink of taking wing as he dances. Each of his gestures betokens enchantment; through him sounds a supernatural power . . . He feels himself to be godlike and strides with the same elation and ecstasy as the gods he has seen in his dreams." The iconoclastic spirit of Marx directed itself toward society; the Nietzschean spirit which aimed to remake the world "on the ruins of the old" centered on the image of the new man, the "titanic artist." These two themes of self-consciousness power recur in modern passion plays.

An examination of critical commentaries on the works and thought of Hegel, Bauer, Marx, Nietzsche and an evaluation of the conclusions reached by Schweitzer in *The Quest for the Historical Jesus* (1909) results in five factors which have universally affected the portrayal of the Christ figure in modern drama. Ziolkowski names two of these which are pertinent to the present study. They comprise
the literary perspective which interprets the life of Jesus by modern values and concerns; and the shift from the spiritual message of Christ to the contingencies of the human condition. Three further points can be derived from Ziolkowski's conclusions. The individual world view or poetic vision of the writer supersedes the unique, divine revelation of Jesus Christ; consequently, acting upon the rationalist belief that God is in the mind, human intelligence perceives itself as capable of reconstructing a better world system. For the playwright, the modern passion play becomes his vehicle for commenting upon the future of human culture.

Underlying the development of these factors is the loss of the historical reality of the life of Jesus Christ. Schweitzer announced that the Jesus who "is . . . clothed by modern theology in an historical garb" never existed. Instead, Schweitzer anticipated the new quest of the radical theologians of the death of God: an "existentialistic interpretation and the hermeneutic that has grown out of it." William Hamilton identifies the death of God theology as a secular theology which began to appear in print in the mid-1950s. While not the atheism which flourished at the turn of the century, it carries in it many of those seeds. Consequently, the new quest views the human experience without God; man has no "God-shaped blank within" him that seeks God or Gods. This view is similar to the God rejecting, world-affirming tenets of
conventional atheism, but in the death of God theology human beings experience the absence of God. Rather than a complete ignorance, man senses "that there once was a God to whom adoration, praise and trust were appropriate . . . but that now there is no such God." Unlike conventional atheism, it is not about "the absence of the experience of God, but about the experience of the absence of God." The portrayal of the Christ figure in modern passion drama conveys this sense of loss.

In the movement of a new Marxism initiated by Milan Machověc who organized a meeting between Christians and Marxists at Marienbad in 1967, we can see the common ground in death of God theology and Marxism. The theme of the meeting was summed up in a collection of articles published in 1973, under the title, God Is Not Yet Dead. From Schweitzer to the radical theologians and Marxists, Jesus is deemed to appear in the world as a "stranger to our time." In the words of Hamilton, Jesus is "concealed in the world, in the neighbor, in this struggle for justice, in that struggle for beauty, clarity, order;" Jesus is the "passive man," the victim and the man who disdains cultural "power structures." The new Marxism of Machověc offers further evidence of this trend in the view of the Christ-figure. By re-evaluating the use of "criminal force," the new Marxist concludes that there are times when one must "suffer injustice rather than contribute to it." At this point, he identifies with Jesus,
recognizing "that Jesus' victory was one of the greatest moments in the history of mankind and humanity... even though there was no apocalyptic miracle on Calvary, no _deus ex machina_, only a tormented dying on the cross -- and that Jesus is still the victor." 53

The Marxian view of the death of Jesus as the rallying cry for a new society corresponds to the radical theologian's call for a movement from an "Oedipal to Orestian" theology. Hamilton states in his article, "The Death of God Theologies Today" (1963), that American thought has been in an Oedipal phase which he hopes to see pass into an Orestian phase. In the Oedipal phase, personhood is viewed as lonely and a "crying out to the enemy-God." He describes it as a "psychological bondage of the individual." It is the experience of Jesus on the cross when he, as humanity, perceives that God is dead and cries out: "My God why have you forsaken me?" Hamilton proposes that man move out of the mourning stage and, like Orestes, take up his individual responsibility in the world without the security of father or mother. Hamilton advises that "we are in a new world beyond the Oedipal state, and religiously we are in a new world as well. Out of loyalty to both gods and to the memory of the murdered father, the mother must be destroyed, the mother who represents security, warmth, religion, authority, but who has become corrupt and an evil bearer of all that she is supposed to
represent." For the modern playwrights such as Yeats and Beckett (and the other playwrights in this study as well), the choice between the Oedipal and Orestian phases presents a dilemma. Each has refused to affirm the acceptability of the modern, technological world; therefore, the plays with the Christ figure in modern drama are fixed in the Oedipal state.

Vincent Vycinas has called the present stage a "cultural agony." He sees its roots in the absolute spirit of Hegel's philosophy which "reveals itself . . . by estrangement from itself in nature and then reacquires itself throughout the history of mankind . . . . Such an attitude is inherited throughout by technological man, except with the by current that 'God is dead' and only man is developing . . . towards his self-completion in the technological phase of the cultural world." The modern playwrights have rejected this unironic view of the world. To them, the technological man, the man in the machine, is searching for gods unawares. The god he finds manifests his own "man-made superstructure" whom he serves "like a tiny wheel in a complex mechanical device or like a cell in a complex living organism." The end of the technological revolution predicted by Marx resembles the deadening religious relationship which he insisted was the "opiate" of the people. The man of faith, once the victim of the God he had made has become the slave to a technological god. After producing the machine, man "acts, dances and thinks
in the rhythmics of the machine." Some see this as a disturbing sign within our culture.\textsuperscript{58} Hans Rookmaaker deciphers the message in modern art: "God is dead and man, ... what makes him man, is dying."\textsuperscript{59}

The corporate vision of the Christ figure presented by modern playwrights is a persona, who is in reality an image of "mythic man" attempting to survive in a technological world. The twelve plays chosen for analysis in this study each depict a clue to the identity of the passion persona. As the central character in each play, the passion persona reveals his identity through his relationship to his "mission," to the sequence of events in the New Testament passion narrative and to his intimates and antagonists. In the dramatic world of the passion persona, God the Father is being replaced by new technological gods. This process moves through the literary and historical preoccupations with the passion person in the 1920s, to the theatricalized passion plays in the postmodern period of 1957 to 1973. The overall trend demonstrates an increasingly alienated persona and, therefore, view of personhood. In order to verify these developing images, this study will refer to the writings and theories of each playwright, and compare the patterns and images in the plays with directions in other disciplines such as theology, literary criticism, psychology and political science.
A Passion Dialectic

The passion persona stands at the intersection of two forces, the infinite self and the finite self: a "coincidence of opposites." The dynamic within the modern passion plays arises from the effort of the playwright "to close the gap between the finite and the infinite.... He strives against every condition of his finitude." On one side is the absolute spirit of self-consciousness whether expressed in the Nietzschean titanic artist or the Marxian collective; on the other side is the Christic incarnation. A distillation of the struggle indicates the opposition of essence and diversity in divine creation. In contrast to the search for essences which motivates the titanic artist, Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973) finds inspiration in the "knowledge of concrete, individual things and persons." While recognizing that essences or abstractions are necessary for thought, Marcel warns that the spirit of abstraction leads to reductionism. In fact, the Christ figure in modern passion plays becomes reductive. In the 1920s, the literary and historical passion treatments diminished the Christ figure to an essential "other-worldliness" which is then rejected by the playwright. In the years 1957-1973, the theatricalized passion has de-humanized the Christ figure to a caricature, who also is rejected by the playwright. The warring opposites, the infinite self of the artist and the finite persona are synthesized in the modern passion play by a
third power, "technolatry." Displacing both God and man, the absolute artist creates a frame of reference similar to the technological mentality that assumes it is the only "valid knowledge without reality." Thus, the spirit of "art is life" overwhelms the passion persona to the point that he becomes an image of modern society's disintegration. The drive for infinite power in art or society results in a mode of non-being. In the view of Vycinas, "Contemporary 'godless' man is subordinate to his complicated anthropocentric machine. Serving it, he is no master."

In order to illustrate the two opposing sides of the passion dialectic, we will survey the playwrights' interpretations of the passion from two contrasting perspectives of dramatic approaches, the pageant view and the private view of the radical modern playwright. In effect, the relationships of the dramatists to the passion differ from one another in three dominant ways: commemoration of the historical event; commitment to the Christ figure; and the commentary on the problem of evil. Representing the pageant view are the nine texts published in English of The Oberammergau Passion Play. The private view of the passion will be determined by defining the common factors in the poetic visions of the radical playwrights whose works are featured in this study. The modern playwrights are distinguished from the pageant playwrights by the term "radical" which refers to the death of God movement.
The Ammergau Pageant

The Oberammergau Passion Play is a unique paradigm of the pageant perspective commemorating the history of a vow made a year earlier when the plague which accompanied the Thirty Years War in Germany threatened to ravage the Oberammergau community. In a fervent effort to obtain divine intervention, the parish council vowed to perform the Passions-Tragedie every ten years in gratitude. Johann Lang at the dedication of a new theatre in 1899, recalled the original vow as he laid the cornerstone: "May the day never come on which Ammergau breaks faith with its traditions." The community remains faithful to its vow. The history of Ammergau's deliverance from the plague has become part of the pageant which commemorates the history of Christ's death recounted in the New Testament. Today, in the publicity and books which appear at each decennium, mention is made of the plague and vow in tribute to "how God can use evil for good." The preface to the playtext of 1950, when performances were reinstated for the first time after World War II, reflects on the continuing relationship between suffering in human history and the Christic passion. The Oberammergau message "is a religious one, calling mankind to pause and consider, pointing to a way leading through the labyrinth of life, a way that starts from prayer and contemplation of the Passion and death of our Lord. It is a sermon in the form of a play that brings vividly before us events which proved a turning
point in human history . . . . Because of its religious nature, of its prayer-like character, the Oberammergau play is far removed from all secular drama."\textsuperscript{78}

The text of the Oberammergau play descends from the medieval tradition.\textsuperscript{71} The original text of 1662, is based on a Tyrolese work of 1461 from the monastery of St. Ulrich in Augsburg.\textsuperscript{72} A second text, the \textit{Fine Tragical Text drawn from Holy Writ} (1565), by Sebastian Wild was merged with the Tyrolese text.\textsuperscript{73} This early script is now owned by a firm representing Georg Lang.\textsuperscript{82} A first-hand examiner of the text reports that it has "many passages of extreme beauty and deep feeling, although not unalloyed perhaps with ingredients which bear witness to the less refined taste of those times."\textsuperscript{75} This undoubtedly refers to some of the allegorical characters such as the devil and his demons, who scampered on the stage to devour the entrails of the disembowelled Judas.\textsuperscript{76} A series of priest-playwrights beginning with Father Rosner, librarian of the Ettal Monastery near Ammergau, began to revise the text. Rosner's reputation as a dramatist of eighteenth-century German drama made him a likely choice,\textsuperscript{77} and in 1750 the community rehearsed and performed his version of the passion text.\textsuperscript{78} After a second season of his version in 1760, however, the church authorities, players, and public all agreed that the text was too filled with "unrelieved doom."\textsuperscript{79} More revisions began, but the improvements at
first simply consisted of assigning the "doom" passages to the chorus "sermons."

In 1810, upon the threat of a permanent ban of the text by officials in Munich, Father Othmar Weis remodelled the play to suit modern tastes. The criticism of religious plays in general at that time assumed that it was better to let the priests "'preach the life of the Saviour to you, than to spend your time dragging about on the stage of your theatre.'" Dr. Weis was the Head of the Monastery at Ettal; his collaboration with the composer-music teacher, Rochus Dedler, produced a new script excluding the "infernal paraphernalia," but retaining the form which Rosner had arranged in prologues, tableaux and choral interludes. This version had eighteen acts and twenty-six tableaux of Old Testament scenes. These tableaux were meant to foreshadow or suggest a type of Christ figure in the passion scenes to follow. Typology is characteristic of the pageant view which places Christ at the "sacred center" of cosmology. Weis' text includes Jonah and the whale, the passage through the Red Sea, Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, Job on his dunghill and several tableaux of the sacrifice of Isaac.

The movement toward realism, begun when Father Weis substituted prose for the original poetry, was continued by Father Daisenberger in 1850 and 1860. Daisenberger pleased the community with his "dignified" and realistic portrayal of the bibilical characters. This text remained
basically unchanged until 1962, except for minor scene rearrangements, some changes in the portrayal of Judas, omission of certain tableaux in order to shorten the play, and revisions in the passion music. By 1970 the script had been shortened to sixteen acts and twenty tableaux (a playing time of seven hours) but the significant changes were made as a result of Vatican II: the Declaration of the Church's position on non-Christian religions. It stated that "the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ; still, what happened in His passion cannot be charged against all Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today." In consequence of this statement, much of the language of the Oberammergau was modernized and many of the objectionable references to the Jews as a people were deleted. For example, one major cut excised the infamous prologue which describes the Jewish religious council as a "serpent brood," an "impious race," "devils of deepest hell" and assigns their origins to "nethermost hell" from which they "for ever have discord sowed against the Divine." In general, the text retained fewer references to evil, either by the Jews, Beelzebub or Satan, as well as fewer of Judas' long speeches of evil intentions, guilt, and curses.

The German writer Bernt Englemann, six American biblical scholars from prestigious schools of theology, and the American Jewish Congress continued to support the
claims of anti-semitism. "Following a line-by-line comparison of the 1960 and 1970 versions, the American Jewish Committee declared that the play remains basically hostile to Jews even though there has been some 'toning down' of emotionally charged sections." Fundamental to the dramatic action is the role of the Sanhedrin and the Jewish traders in the temple who instigate the plot to condemn Jesus. One critic observed that "one could almost call it the Passion of the Sanhedrin." For this reason, a movement developed in the Oberammergau community led by Herr Hans Schwaighofer (the Judas of 1950 and 1960) to return to the old Rosner text. This idea was defeated in 1978, just prior to the 1980 season; therefore, Father Gregor Rummelein and the director, Herr Hans Maier, worked diligently to make further revisions. Although the American Jewish Committee still withholds its approval, critic-historian Paul Maier asserts that any further debate must revert to a discussion of the gospels themselves. The preface to the 1980 text admonishes "Every individual, and mankind as a whole" to be vigilant "against the temptation to shift the blame on to others. The Passion play is not concerned to seek the guilty ones in the trial of Jesus."

The Oberammergau Passion Play commemorates the passion event of the New Testament narrative beginning with the entry into Jerusalem and ending with a triumphant resurrection scene and ascension. Characterized by diversity, the
production commemorates a four-fold dimensionality of time. The Old Testament typology represents prefigurative time and suggests the idea of time being fulfilled. Secondly, the passion is enacted in the present tense depicting the conflicts of human motives. Next, the play instills a sense of apocalyptic time or future time especially in the final chorus: "Overcome! -- Overcome! The Hero hath conquered the might of the foe! Few hours only in the gloom of the grave hath he slept! Sing to Him holy psalms! Strew before Him victory palms! The Lord is risen! Rejoice, ye heavens! Sing, earth, to the victor!" A fourth dimension of time treats the festival event at Oberammergau itself. The community believes that it bears a universal message or mission. The chorus of forty-eight, the cast of eight hundred and forty-five men, one hundred and eighty-eight women, and two hundred and fifty children, along with five hundred thousand visitors participate in the passion festival as they would a sacred communion. This tradition is based on the conviction and theistic world view which presupposes the supernatural purposes of Jesus' human life, teachings and sacrifice. The message of Oberammergau is a hope for universal brotherhood. Beginning with the preface to the 1922 text, the first text after World War I, Oberammergau's support of peace took shape: "Thus has it come that Oberammergau ... is again the scene of a new Jerusalem, with an added meaning, typifying a new sacrificial offering and burdened
with prayers for a new reconciliation with God from His sin-laden creatures in a war-stricken world."  

The Radical Vision

Whereas the "sacred center" of the pageant poetic vision is the Christ figure, the center of the radical playwright's vision Maurice Valency titles "the agony of the poets." The "agony" of those who survived World War I is most poignantly immortalized in the works of Karl Kraus (1874-1936). His tragedy *The Last Days of Mankind* (1922), written during the war, is a unique work in many respects: the phenomenal length of the play would require ten evenings of performances; its condemnation of war is unequaled in world literature; and a third of the text is composed of factual accounts of the war. In the fifth act, scene fifty four, the Grumbler writing in his diary voices the suffering of the poet:

This is the world war. This is my manifesto. I have thought it all over carefully. I have taken upon myself the tragedy which falls apart in the scenes of collapsing humanity so that it would be heard by the spirit who is merciful to victims -- even if He has renounced for all time any connection with the human ear. May He receive the keynote of this time, the echo of my bloody madness,
Kraus courageously opposed the war at a time when few publicly did so. His criticism of warmongering included public readings from his works satirizing government leaders and especially the press. For Kraus, the distinction between art and life did not apply. For him and for the symbolists who excluded the documentary from their works, art and life mingled in the poetic manifestation of the subconscious. To them, "Giving immediate expression to the subconscious was a means toward achieving what may perhaps be regarded as the single common goal of all the avant garde movements: reducing the distance between art and life ...." But whether through document or dream, the titanic artist, the theatre priest, abstracts from life the essence of his own despair. Tom Driver identifies as theatrical positivism the trend in which the theatre "has ... embraced its own alienation, in a perhaps desperate effort to absorb the world into its own mode of being."

C. G. Jung (1875-1961) offers a psychological explanation for the affinity between the radical poets of the avant garde and the passion persona: "Christ personifies the collective expectations of the unconscious because he lived the concrete, personal life which in all essential features had at the same time archetypal character." The alienation, suffering and neuroses of the poet is
projected onto the essential archetypal figure of Christ and he in turn becomes in the modern passion play the fragmented, neurotic, reductive persona or mask of the biblical Jesus Christ. Committed only to the essences which he can wrench from his personal nightmare, the radical poet disregards the living qualities of Christ; and instead, projects the image of the vanquished Christ whose passion is "the end of the world."  

The passion lives in the shadow of the deaths of God, man and the world. The pageant vision which once presented the passion of Christ as a resurrection play, has become, in the hands of radical poets, a rejection of life. Three parallel factors have determined the transformation from the pageant to radical vision. Coincident with the impact of global war, modern thought, which redefined the nature of man by isolating humanistic essences and the nature of God in terms of death, was realized in the power of dramatic art. The modern passion play has attained popularity through a passion persona cloned from the poet's existential despair. The iconoclastic power of art, like the destroying powers of technological aggression, produces conditions of non-being or a purgatorio in which death plays the shepherd.
Endnotes

Chapter I


Ziolkowski, p. 298.

Ziolkowski, p. 29.


Vos, p. 109.

Vos, p. 109.

I Corinthians 13:12, NAS.

25 Robert Detweiller, "Christ and the Christ Figure in American Fiction," *The Christian Scholar*, 47, No. 2 (Summer 1964), 300.


27 Hurley, 428.

28 Ziolkowski, p. 35.

29 Ziolkowski, p. 38.

30 Schweitzer, p. 9.


32 Rosen, p. 140.

33 Rosen, p. 141.

34 Rosen, p. 152.


36 Machovec, p. 159.

37 Machovec, p. 157.


40 Nietzsche, p. 301.

41 Nietzsche, p. 302.

42 Ziolkowski, pp. 40-41.

43 Schweitzer, p. 398.

44 Schweitzer, p. xxv.


46 Hamilton, p. 40.

47 Altizer and Hamilton, *Radical Theology and the Death of God* p. x.

48 Hamilton, p. 23.


50 Machovec, p. 13.

51 Schweitzer, p. 401.

52 Hamilton, p. 49-50.

53 Machovec, pp. 33-34.

54 Hamilton, pp. 43-45.

56 Vycinas, p. 2.
57 Vycinas, p. 25.
58 Vycinas, p. 8.
61 Vos, p. 12.
63 Keen, p. 14.
64 Keen, p. 11.
65 Keen, p. 11.
66 Vycinas, p. 4.
69 Goldner, n. pag.
71 Short, p. 13.
72 Goldner, n. pag.
73 Goldner, n. pag.
75 Diemer, p. 21.
76 Corathiel, p. 73.
78 Heaton, p. 54.
79 Heaton, p. 54.
80 Corathiel, p. 56.
81 Corathiel, p. 56.
82 Goldner, no. pag.
84 Coratheil, p. 74.
88 "Bad Scene at Oberammergau," 651.

91 Maier, 1017.


94 Maier, 1015.


98 Kraus, p. xvi.

99 Kraus, p. 244.

100 Kraus, pp. 204-205.

101 Kraus, p. xix.


Chapter II

Three Passion Paradigms

An understanding of the poetic vision that animates the passion persona may be facilitated by referring to three dramatic paradigms: The Oberammergau Passion Play which represents Christ the victim; the biblical book of Job, which prefigures Christus victor; and the Oedipus Tyrannus by Sophocles, as a harbinger of Christ vanquished. The problem of suffering in each model is placed within the context of persistent dualities by which human beings interpret the cause of suffering. This has been the theme of modern and post-modern passion plays: the questing for a cause of suffering, rather than a declaration of atonement. The Oberammergau play locates the cause in diabolical possession and the "evil that is within" the human heart; Job transcends causes and attains a personal relationship with God; and the Sophoclean vision submits to the irrationalities of chance. The Oberammergau Passion Play and Oedipus Tyrannus focus on a form of retributive justice as the cause of suffering which results in designating an evil source in opposition to the suffering of the passion figure. In the Oberammergau text, the evil is humanized in a melodramatic portrayal of Judas and the
Jews. For Oedipus, the "scandalous" cause of his suffering stems from Tyche, the Janus-faced goddess who is the common source of good and bad fortune. The innocent suffering of Job avoids the presentation of a corresponding cause in order to affirm the divine prerogative to establish a relationship with man through suffering. The duality in *The Oberammergau Passion Play* resides in the gnostic view of the double nature of human beings. It attributes to man a higher and lower self, a spirit and body which are in conflict with one another; and this is dramatized in the Oberammergau play by the antagonism between the Jews and Jesus. Oedipus experiences duality in the form of his daimon or double assigned to him by Tyche since his birth. For this reason, cause is less of an issue in *Oedipus Tyrannus* and the tragedy is similar to Job's suffering. Both Job and Oedipus suffer as a consequence of divine intervention, or absence. The radical playwrights, in response to the "death of God," explore the possibilities of fated doubles as a means of dealing with the dualities of the passion and their own alienated perception of the world. The dualities of the modern and postmodern passion plays summon a passion persona whose "mask" symbolizes not a Christic victim or victor, but vanquished man.

**Christ the Victim Paradigm**

The medieval origin of the Oberammergau playtext and pageant vision are seminal factors which have contributed
to the portrayal of the Christ figure as Christus Immolator. Reverend William Andrew Snively, upon his return from viewing the passion play of the 1880 season, compared the Oberammergau pageant to the Mystery and Miracle plays which were "a kind of rude but sacred hieroglyph" or sermon with pictures. He describes the play as a "solemn relic of the religious drama of the Middle Ages" and the sole survivor of these dramas. Of course, other medieval passion plays have survived in text form such as The Montecassino Passion Play (c. 1150) and others which have been revived for professional performances; nevertheless, no other pageant of its date has continued in the popular, medieval practice. For example, the community of Oberammergau considered themselves a "living cross" when they made the vow to perform the passion play. At the time of Snively's visit, the performers were still receiving communion before each performance. The amateur status of the pageant endures as well, i.e., the community members who perform in the passion and in the practice plays which go on during the interim between seasons are unpaid, and in fact, leave their regular jobs to participate in the pageant.

In 1926, M. J. Landa also attributed the effect of the Oberammergau play to its medieval origins: the ancient practice of slandering Jews. He criticizes the play with these words: "Oberammergau has given the modern world a flashback into the medieval play which was the foul
crucible of the stage Jew. It is but a shadow glance, with the grossness and banalities heavily diluted and the whole sentimentalized by the glamour of up-to-date artistry . . . ."7 Landa notes that the medieval play made every effort to vilify the Jews even to staging a "grotesque dance by Jews at the foot of the cross on which Jesus is hanged."8 The 1910 text of the Oberammergau play does include such a dance in a scene which is later cut along with this line by Annas: "It would delight my eyes to see his body torn by wild beasts."9 The traditional portrayal of the priests and the commemoration of the community vow are but of two of several traits by which the Oberammergau play reflects the dominate religious thought of the Middle Ages during the transition from the classic to the Latin view of the Christic atonement.

The view of the atonement as the victory of Christ is called classic; and according to Gustaf Aulen, it was generally accepted by the Church "for the first thousand years of Christian history."10 Stephen Reynolds traces the dynamics of the Christus victor view to apocalyptic Judaism which anticipated a future age in which the malevolent rule of Satan, "Prince of this world,"11 would be "overcome."12 A distinctive aspect of the classic view is Christ's victory over the objective powers of darkness that are "hostile to God."13 Although Aulen indicates that the context of the classic view is dualistic, he cautions that it is not an absolute dualism since, as we previously
mentioned, God initiates the reconciliation which will establish a new relationship between God and the world. Reynolds summarizes the action of the classic atonement as "communal" and "initiatory." Church Father Iranaeus, bishop of Lyons in A.D. 177, described Christ's victory as a "ransom . . . paid to the powers of evil, to death, or to the devil; by its means they are overcome, and their power over men is brought to an end." Further development of the classic view delegated the diabolical powers "executants of God's judgment" which makes Christ's triumph an incomparable gift surpassing the agonies of Christ's human suffering, and the demands for retributive justice. This was the accepted view of the patristic theologians, notably St. Augustine (354-430), who thought of God as being "reconciled by his own act in reconciling the world to Himself."  

The Latin view of the atonement which emerged in the Middle Ages effected a transition which Reynolds describes as "individualistic and introspective." The model of Christ the victim was proposed by St. Anselm (1033-1109) who rationalized that atonement overcomes a "moral defect" in individuals and is accomplished by Christ's martyrdom, "the highest gift that man can make to God ...." The Latin view replaces the classic idea with an emphasis on penance and legalism. Aulen suggests that this era in the formation of Christian doctrine has not been sufficiently researched, and that the impact of
the "devotion to the passion or passion-mysticism" merits further analysis. 24 Important aspects of this view are 1) man's suffering or martyrdom modeled after Christ the victim; 2) the satisfaction of God's justice by the punishment endured by Christ; 3) the fact of flawed, sinful human nature; and 4) the multitude of demons ready to inflict tortures and sufferings on aspiring saints. These factors constitute a dualistic world view which characterize God as the angry Judge to whom man must make an offering or payment to satisfy God's justice, an idea "essentially legalistic; and, that, in speaking of Christ's work, the emphasis is all laid on that which is done by Christ as man in relation to God." 25 Confirming the influence of Greek philosophy on the Latin view, David Miller observes that from the second century to the twentieth, Christian theologians have utilized Greek thought to express the Gospel. 26 Embodying the spirit of the period in which the Latin view became popular, Gregory Nazianzen composed a passion play called Christ's Sufferings 27 which plagiarized seven of Euripides' tragedies. In addition, Otto Rank records a Judas legend which must have been current during the Middle ages that compares Judas to Oedipus. 28 The Oberammergau Passion Play dramatizes the Latin view, and demonstrates the additional perspective which became the mode during the Renaissance, the interpretation of Greek tragedy which attributed cause to an opposition of fate and free will. 29
The performances begin with an adoration of the cross on which is hung an extremely large carving of the crucified Christ wearing a crown of thorns instead of a king's crown emblematic of the resurrection. The four elements of passion mysticism subsequently follow. Each scene of the passion is introduced by a tableau depicting an Old Testament figure who illustrates a theological type of Christ. Fourteen of the twenty-four tableaux in the 1900 playtext present figures who were victims and includes Joseph, Amasa, Daniel, Samson and Isaac. The prologue accompanying the tableau of the Judaic sacrificial lamb submits a plea for the Eternal God to "take the victim's blood, Be reconciled to your people." The passion portrays Jesus Christ's journey of suffering: "Oh give Him sympathy, when you see Him standing, Humbled before you In deepest shame, the man of pain! See, what a man!" God is named the "invisible Judge," whose only purpose is justice. The miserable condition of mankind is illustrated by the tableaux of Adam and Eve representing their temptation and expulsion from the Garden of Eden. References to curse, sins, evil and demonic powers occur over sixty times in the 1910 text.

The explicit representation of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, Mary the mother and Judas enhance the view of Christ the victim. The actual crucifixion scene, including the scourging, placing of the crown of thorns and brutal mockery produced a devastating effect on audiences. The
The scene is described as "harrowing and horrible to the feelings of a modern audience." Reverend Snively recalls the scene:

The scourging was bad enough... but the crown of thorns was almost intolerable, as, seated upon a pedestal from which he was presently to be hurled headlong to the floor by the buffeting of soldiers with his hands tied behind him, the fangs of the thorns were pressed into the temples by iron rods bent at right angles... by four brutal soldiers, whose malicious enjoyment of their part was complete when the blood trickled in streams down the victim's face.

In the season of 1900, the crucifixion with the actor-Christ on the cross lasted for eighteen minutes. Eight seasons later, the time of suspension has been reduced by only four minutes. Similarly, the exclamations of Mary's vicarious sufferings in the 1910 text, which referred over thirty-nine times to the sword that pierces her heart were little diminished for later versions.

The cause of suffering is further amplified in the soliloquies of Judas and the motives of the priests. Judas the most dramatic character in the passion play, delivers
in the 1900 text, eleven interior monologues, which by 1980, have been edited to seven. Through monologue, the audience sees into the introspective experience of Judas' torment to a greater degree than in any other character. In addition, his character has varied in textual interpretation. The early versions of the play featured Judas as the initiator of the complaints to the Jewish traders which ultimately leads him to betray Jesus. In the 1934 text, Judas is pressured by the traders and is thus, more of a victim of their avarice. Perhaps as part of the procedure to exorcise the anti-semitism from the text for the 1970 season, this scene reverted back to the 1910 version. Judas' point of view in the 1980 text poses a moral dilemma in that obedience to the lawful authorities means committing disloyalty. The internal cause of Judas' despair is evident in the lines of the chorus:

You cannot flee from yourself! In yourself you carry hell's tortures.
And though you hurry from place to place, they swing their scourges steadily. Wherever you are, there they are also, you can never escape the pain. Let this be a warning to sinners. For if punishment does not come today, Heaven will borrow more, and the double weight fall on their heads tomorrow.37
Judas' crime is further humanized by changes in his lines accounting for his motives. In the 1910 through 1970 texts, Judas protests Satan's seduction by "Accursed avarice -- thou only hast led me astray, thou hast made me blind and deaf. Thou wast the ring that Satan fastened on me to drag me to the abyss."\(^{38}\) By 1980, the line in the text is altered to read "through my own fault."\(^{39}\) The portrayal of the Jewish priesthood, as already mentioned, has been subjected to a similar editing process, but primarily to cut out slanderous motives. For example, the challenge issued by Caiaphas to his fellow priests assures them a victory for their "multitudes filled with hate and revenge" over Christ and his followers who preach love of "publicans and sinners, and even Gentiles . . . ."\(^{40}\) These lines were edited in 1980 to read: "May the Lord guide and bless your steps. Now we shall see who will win, he and his followers -- or we and our loyal supporters who obey the law."\(^{41}\)

The Latin, juristic view of the atonement provides a multitude of causes in the enactment of the passion. They range from grim displays of physical abuse, to human greed, demon possession and misguided authority. In many instances the suffering of Judas and Mary, as well as the hatred espoused by the Jews, appears to be fated or destined as a result of God's curse. The opening prologue to the 1900 text addresses the audience: "Race bowed down by curse of God!"\(^{42}\) Characterizing God as a vindictive
judge as a means of heightening the sense of tragedy illustrates the Renaissance pattern of blending Christian theology and Greek philosophy. The description of Job's tableau in the Oberammergau text epitomizes the manner in which the classic view is transformed into the Latin view through attention to cause either internal or external. Goldner describes the tableau in an official guidebook to the passion play of "The patient man, ... the Man of Sorrows, ... a prototype of the suffering Saviour. He too was scored, mocked and spat upon. Silently he endured all the reproaches, all the score, all the shameless behaviour of his enemies. Job -- like Christ -- turns to those who look on and implores the mercy which is not granted him." 43

**Christ the Victor Paradigm**

Many modern writers have been attracted to the book of Job; and they have rationalized the cause of his sufferings in terms of double relationships which culminate in a psychologically colored transfiguration of human nature. William Blake (1757-1827) produced *Illustrations of the Book of Job* (1820-1825) under the conviction that God is Satan who succumbs to "self-annihilation" 44 in the passion of Jesus and resurrects himself in cosmic, divine humanity. 45 Job, in the drawings created by Blake, has the identical face of God. 46 The satanic God and Job never encounter one another; therefore, "Blake posits a duality within the realm of divinity: the divine justice on the
one hand, and the divine imagination (Jesus), a better God, on the other.\textsuperscript{47} Paul Claudel (1868-1958) spent a lifetime contemplating the meaning of the book of Job and finally, in 1946 wrote \textit{Le Livre de Job}. He inherited Blake's fascination with Satan and interpreted the "parade of animals" described in God's answer to Job as satanic powers. Blake believed that God is Satan; Claudel believed that God and Satan are coexistent opposites; C. G. Jung (1875-1961) believed that Satan should be added to the Trinity creating a "Quarternity."\textsuperscript{48} Jung first published \textit{Antwort auf Hiob} in 1952. His analysis expounds the view of doubles which juxtaposes Christ and Satan as the two sons of God.\textsuperscript{49} God is represented as a "totality of inner opposites" incensed by Job's superiority. Job has the power of self-reflection; whereas God, who is both good and evil, must be unconscious "so that good and evil can exist in Him." By becoming man in Jesus, God "regenerates" himself\textsuperscript{50} signifying that man completes the personality of God.

The fascination with polarities, doubles and shadows within the divine and human natures derives from a concern with essences rather than existence.\textsuperscript{51} One outcome of the concentration on divine essence is a corresponding double who is transfigured in an infinite self. The theme that the essence of God's nature must be completed by self-conscious man emerges in the theology of Archibald MacLeish (1892- ) and in his drama \textit{J. B.} (1958). MacLeish proposes that Satan is the opposite of God: an opposite ruler
who cannot be subjugated "except by man's persistence in
the love of God in spite of every reason to withhold his
love, every suffering." \(^{52}\) J. B. (Job) is a victim of an
incomplete God; J. B. answers by loving in the face of the
world's irrational opposites. MacLeish's solution to the
problem of suffering is "to learn through suffering to love
... to love even that which lets us suffer." \(^{53}\)

Nahum Glatzer has collected thirty-two essays dealing
with the issues of the book of Job which are arranged in
six "dimensions." Many of these reflect the influences of
the Latin view and the search for essences which stems from
the influence of Greek philosophy. Other contributors,
theologians such as H. Wheeler Robinson, William Barrett
and Walter Kaufman interpret the book of Job as a statement
of theism which claims that the atonement is God's gift.
God is not a "juristic scheme of moral government;" \(^{54}\) and
biblical man does not extend himself into a realm of
essences becoming God's victim. \(^{55}\) Barrett defines the
Hebraic world view as containing "no eternal realm of
essences, which Greek philosophy was to fabricate, through
Plato, as affording the intellectual deliverance from the
evil of time. Such a realm of eternal essences is possible
only for a detached intellect, one who, in Plato's phrase,
becomes a 'spectator of all time and all existence.' The
ideal of the philosopher as the highest human type ... is altogether foreign to the ... man of faith who is
passionately committed to his own mortal being." \(^{56}\) Arthur
Holmes further explains the theistic view of God and man which avoids the dualities resultant from essences. In the discussion from *Contours of A World View* (1983), Holmes declines to ascribe any essential pairing of good and evil in God or in two natures of man. He states that "God allows evil to occur, but for good purpose;" and "We are involved in evil, but have hope in a living God who acts to vindicate the good."\(^57\) Concurring with the theistic view, textual scholar Marvin Pope interprets Job as prefigurative of Christus victor.

The origins of the book of Job date from a folktale that circulated as early as 2000 B.C. A Sumerian "poetic essay" from that era bears a remarkable similarity to the epilogue of the book of Job.\(^58\) The folktale, according to Pope, was used "as the framework and point of departure for [the author's] poetic treatment of the problem of suffering." Thus, the twelve-part dialogue between Job and his friends and God's response to Job are bound by a prologue and epilogue from the ancient folktale. The structure has been compared to Greek tragedy by Theodore of Mopsuestia (fourth-century) and H.M. Kallen who sees in it evidence of a Greek chorus, denouement and *deus ex machina*. Milton thought of it as an epic, but in actuality, it cannot be defined exclusively as any one form.\(^59\) Job and the book of Job are very ancient. The unknown author of the book may have written it sometime between 700 and 300 B.C. Most critics seem to place it between 500 and 400
B.C. which would make the work chronologically parallel to *Oedipus Tyrannus* (430-425 B.C.).

As a result of thorough historical research and textual analysis, Pope is convinced that the book does not support the doctrine of retribution, i.e., God feared as an angry Judge who must be appeased. Pope's explanation for the ending which seems to imply a "reward" following Job's punishment finds the restoration of Job's family and estate simply an "unavoidable" solution to the story. Paul Ricouer reiterates these conclusions, saying that the "book of Job is the upsetting document that records this shattering of the moral vision of the world." Job's friends attempt to reinstate God as judge and history as a "tribunal," but Job rejects this ethical view of the world for what Ricouer names the tragic view. Job's lament in chapter three is an example of tragic suffering:

Why is light given to him who suffers.
And life to the bitter of soul;
Who long for death, but there is none.
And dig for it more than for hidden treasures;
Who rejoice greatly,
They exult when they find the grave?
Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden,
And who God has hedged in?
For my groaning comes at the sight of my food,
And my cries pour out like water.
For what I fear comes upon me. And what I
dread befalls me. I am not at ease, nor
am I quiet, and I am not at rest, but
turmoil comes.64

In the hermeneutics of Ricouer, Job and the Greek hero
experience suffering which cannot be punishment. In God's
answer to Job, Ricouer asserts, "a way is marked out
between agnosticism and the penal view of history and life
-- the way of unverifiable faith."65 In contrast, Oedipus
suffers innocently in the sense that he is an unknowing
criminal, but chooses agnosticism: "I have no god now.
I'm son to a fouled mother, I fathered children in the bed
where my father gave me deadly life. If ever an evil rules
all other evils it is my evil, it is the life god gave to
Oedipus."66

Job's suffering becomes a gift, inexplicable and at
the same time, meaningful. The image of Job in dialogue
with God, "Homo cum Deo implies the highest conceivable
freedom, the freedom to step into the very fabric of the
universe, a new formula for man's collaboration with the
creative process and the only one which is able to protect
man from the terror of existence."67 Job's vision of God,
like the classic view, does not dwell on dualities, but
rather focuses on the "initiatory" and "communal" nature of
God's relationship with man. This relationship most
clearly represents the God of Christus victor who is both
agent and object of reconciliation. The non-rationalized God of Job rebukes the four "comforters" for attempting to explain the cause of Job's suffering and addresses Job with the words, "Gird up thy loins like a man." Job replies that before he had heard or known about God only from a distance, that is, without understanding, but now, he exclaims, "My eyes seeth thee; therefore will I repent." The mystery of Christus victor and Job rests in personhood ultimately manifest in the presence of God; therefore, "the final solution for Job lies not in the rational resolution of the problem, any more that it ever does in life, but in change and conversion between an I and a Thou, to use Martin Buber's terms." An examination of Oedipus Tyrannus will delineate further the tragic view which stops short of the Joban, Christus victor paradigm.

Christ the Vanquished Paradigm

Oedipus and Job were linked together in Sir James Frazer's study of myth and archetypes, The Golden Bough (1980). This work inspired Meyer Fortes to discuss Oedipus and Job as paradigms of two contrary "cosmological doctrines about the universe, and different conceptions of the nature of man and his relation to supernatural powers." Having done this, and conducted a comparison of Christus victor with Job, we can now turn our attention to the differences between Oedipus and Christus victim in order more fully to define the hermeneutic by which we can trace
the passion persona in modern passion plays. In the following comparison of the seven last words of Christ as dramatized in The Oberammergau Passion Play with the seven "last words" of Oedipus, we will search for the nature of the vanquished persona. The parallel final statements of Christus victim and Oedipus serve to summarize the experience of suffering which changes from victim to vanquished in contrast with Job who made the transition from victim to victor.

Oedipus is an appropriate model for several reasons. Sophocles (496-406 B.C.) was one of the most important moral and spiritual leaders of his time. A priest of Asklepios, god of healing, he welcomed the cult to Athens in 420 B.C. Centered upon body distress and sickness, the cult became very popular and eventually led to Sophistry, advocating that religion is a "human invention." Sophocles was rumored to have entertained Asklepios in his home; consequently, after Sophocles' death, he was worshipped as "The Entertainer." Since Sophocles lived to see the coming collapse of Athens due to the Peloponnesian War and the ravages of the plagues which accompanied the war, it is inevitable that Oedipus Tyrannus would reflect his impressions of these disasters. A theme perhaps drawn from his personal observation of the plague is vividly presented in the opening scene of Oedipus Tyrannus. Thucydides' description of the plague in The Peloponnesian War is similar to the opening words of the priest who
recounts to Oedipus the sight of corpses lying in the streets. Thucydides' expression of futility in treating the plague may have lingered in the mind of Sophocles as he wrote that scene. Thucydides reports that "while physicians, in ignorance of the nature of the disease, sought to apply remedies . . . it was in vain, and they themselves were among the first victims, because they oftenest came into contact with it. No human art was of any avail, and as to supplications in the temples, enquiries of oracles, and the like, they were utterly useless, and at last men were overpowered by the calamity and gave them up." In view of this scepticism, the choral line in Oedipus Tyrannus which inquires into the purpose of religious worship is more meaningful: "Why should I dance to this holy song?"

In his study of the religion in the archaic period, Nilsson defines the nature of the deity to which Sophocles has alluded in Oedipus Tyrannus. Because the Greek could not assign the destiny of events to one god or goddess or even to a group of divinities, they developed the general expression of fate or fortune that was "a generic expression" lacking in "personality, life, and vividness." Tyche was the name of the goddess who represented the impersonal forces of fortune; she was not a divine power herself, but the sign of the final stage toward the Greek secularization of religion. This is the power Oedipus blames for his fate.
In Sophocles' play, "the nature of man, and his various passions and struggles, becomes for the first time the main object of attention in tragic drama." Thus, in his last words, Oedipus omits any reference to his promise to the gods at the beginning of the drama, the promise to save the city from the plague. Perhaps this indicates that Sophocles began the play in an atmosphere of retribution, but this intention became overshadowed by a larger vision. Contributing to the reality of Sophocles' vision, Oedipus requests exile not death. Exile will free him from the traditional religious boundaries beyond which he can escape the god who has abandoned him. Fustel de Coulanges explains the meaning of exile as "the interdiction to worship. To exile a man was . . . to cut him off from both fire and water. By fire we are to understand the sacred fire of the hearth; by water the lustral water which served for the sacrifice. Exile, therefore, placed man beyond the reach of religion." Charles Segal conjectures that Oedipus stands at the midpoint of two extremes in Greek civilization between the god and the beast. Mt. Cithaeron, Oedipus' destination, symbolizes all that is savage and bestial. Two causes are at work in Oedipus' fate, intermingled in Sophocles' vision, which make Oedipus Tyrannus one of the most difficult tragedies to understand for modern audiences. Oedipus' suffering arises from both external, "numinous powers," and internal causes: philosophical and psychological. The Oedipal experience of the
god who is and is not there prevails in the modern passion play.

The impersonal powers of Tyche whose presence is manifest in the talion which rules that whoever acts must suffer, overshadow the tragedy of Oedipus. Northrop Frye recreates the Oedipal world view as a "primitive image of the universe . . . narrowly bounded and compactly joined. Earth was a flat disk, circular like the horizon, with water (Ocean) flowing around it while the vault of heaven curved above and beneath the underworld, the dark dreary abode of the dead. This world had a low ceiling, for the heaven was the place of the clouds, from which lightnings come down and the rain descends." Man and god occupied the same space; therefore, the distinctions between good and evil were ambiguous like the causes of Odeipus' reversal of fortune. Ricouer also notes that Sophocles has gone beyond the moralistic understanding of cause into "tragic theology," that is, the recognition of a "wicked god who blinds men and leads them astray." To Oedipus, God is the source of both good and evil, divine and diabolical counsel; therefore, the distinctions or polarities of god and beast are fused in Oedipus. Aristotle was the first to perceive the pattern of opposites; and he also reasoned that "like is attracted to like." Oedipus blinded incarnates the blind power of Tyche; he is indeed the son of fortune: Oedipus abandoned. For Sophocles, Oedipus embodies tragic knowledge; the
"scandalous" perception of the hostile god who can be worshipped only through the tragic spectacle. Otto concludes that the Greek "endured the reality and worshipped it as divine." The contrast between the Joban and Oedipal paradigms demonstrates the differences of Christus victor and vanquished man. Our arrival at these conclusions may be facilitated by juxtaposing the last words of Jesus Christ from the Oberammergau play with Oedipus' final words to the chorus after his self-inflicted mutilation. The first words of Jesus are, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Oedipus curses: "May the man die who found me in the pasture, who cut the thongs from my feet, who saved me from that death for a worse life, a life I cannot thank him for. Had I died then, I would have caused no great grief to my people and myself." The second response of Jesus addresses the thief on his right: "Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." Oedipus discloses the desolate future that awaits his daughters: "I imagine how bitter your lives will be. I know how men will force you to live...." Jesus, seeing his mother and disciple standing nearby, speaks to each one: "Mother, see your son! Son, see your mother! After requesting that Kreon bury Jocasta, Oedipus asks for the death that his parents wished for him: "Let me live out my life on the mountain, on Cithairon, my own famous mountain, which my father and mother while they lived had
chosen as my rightful tomb. Let me die out there, just as my parents decreed I die."92 Indicating his physical agony, Jesus says, "I am thirsty." Oedipus reveals pain as a darkness which "buries me in her hate, she takes me in her black hold. It's unspeakable blackness, it can't be fought off, it keeps coming, blowing evil all over me. Ahhh. Two things together strike deep in me: the pins plunged in my eyes, those crimes driving through my mind."93 Jesus cries out in Aramaic asking God why He has forsaken him: "Eloil Eloil Lama sabachtani!" And Oedipus exclaims: "Ahhh! My whole life, my whole being is wretched. Where am I? Where does my misery lead? Is my voice fluttering lost out there like a stunned bird's? Where has my god thrown me down?"94 Jesus announces: "It is accomplished!" Oedipus intimates that he knows of an impending fate for which he was saved from that death to face an evil awesome and unknown: "Let my fate take me now, where it will."95 And breathing his last breath, Jesus prays: "Father into your hands I commend my spirit." Oedipus confesses to the chorus: "the hand that struck these eyes was my hand. It was I in my wretchedness who struck, no one else."96

The vanquished persona endures the passion of Oedipus, a sparagmos. In the Dionysian rites which celebrated the tearing apart of the god's body and ingesting of the raw flesh, the revelers on Mt. Cithaeron, birthplace of Dionysian worship in Greece, participate in an
individuation of body and spirit which transforms them. Otto describes the fury which compels their passions as the spirit of Dionysus, a "self-destroying madness." Dionysus represents "life which, when it overflows, grows mad and in its profoundest passion is intimately associated with death." The suffering in the modern passion play is a consequence of this madness which divides, destroys and embraces death. It accounts for the experience of the absence of God, the preoccupation with double essences, the human being's search for his own answers and the eventual despair of his futility. The vanquished persona and modern man are confronted by the specter of Tyche who is chaotic, obscure, impenetrable, unknown and Ever-hidden, the holy abyss.

The three paradigms, Christus victim, Christus victor and Christus vanquished represented by The Oberammergau Passion Play, the book of Job and Oedipus Tyrannus relate to the cause of suffering. In the juristic view of suffering, causes are rationalized and humanized in the context of guilt, judgment and punishment, but in the tragic and Joban views, the cause of suffering comes from an external, supernatural source. Job accepts his suffering from God as a gift sealing their personal relationship forever like Christus victor; Oedipus rejects meaningful suffering and chooses alienation. The cause of suffering in modern passion unfolds in the portrayal of the passion persona's double who, though at first disguised in human
form, eventually reveals himself as the incarnation of Dionysus.

In the Oedipal passion, all humanity endures the macabre ecstasy of Dionysian suffering. Recognizing this spirit in modern sensibilities, Gustav Holst (1874-1934) composed "Hymn of Jesus" (1917) during the turmoil of the first world war. He succeeded through his music in combining the madness, excessive energy, and exotic fancy which was characteristic of the era between the wars with a heightened awareness of suffering. Holst interpreted the passion as a dance of suffering based on his own translation of the original hymn from the Apocryphal Gospels. He has given us a musical metaphor for the anthropocentric passions. Rubbra describes the "Hymn of Jesus" as a "great Gnostic initiation ceremony." From the modern initiates, Holst's mystic Jesus requires "heed unto my dancing: in me who speak, behold yourselves. And beholding what I do, keep silence on my mysteries. Divine ye in dancing what I shall do; for yours is the passion of man that I go to endure." The passion dance, free from theistic pageant traditions, modulates with the orchestration of universalized suffering and captivates the imaginations of the radical playwrights.
Endnotes

Chapter II


2 Snively, p. 11.

3 Snively, p. 15.


5 Snively, p. 30.


8 Landa, p. 39.


12 Reynolds, p. 40.

13 Aulen, p. 27.

14 Aulen p. 21.

15 Reynolds, p. 107.
16 Aulen, p. 47.
17 Aulen p. 72.
18 Aulen, p. 75.
19 Aulen p. 111.
20 Reynolds, p. 107.
22 Aulen, p. 104.
23 Aulen p. 111.
24 Aulen, p. 113.
25 Aulen p. 98.
26 Miller, p. xviii.
27 Martin Jarret-Kerr, "The Condition of Tragedy,"
29 Martin Mueller, "Children of Oedipus,"
34 Snively, p. 54.
35 Snively, p. 54.
36 Snively, p. 58.
43 Goldner, n. pag.
45 Altizer, p. 183.
47 Glatzer, p. 41.
48 Glatzer, pp. 44-46.

50 Jung, pp. 28, 39, 206, 88.


53 MacLeish, p. 286.


56 Barrett, p. 275.


59 Pope, pp. xxv, xxix, xxx.


61 Pope, p. xxviii.
63 Ricoeur, p. 314.
64 Job 3:2-26, NAS.
65 Ricoeur, pp. 321, 322.
67 Ricoeur, p. 361.
68 Job 38:3, NAS.
69 Job 42:5-6, NAS.
70 Barrett, p. 273.
76 Sophocles, p. 47.
77 Nilsson, p. 64.
78 Nilsson, p. 86.
79 Haigh, p. 114.
82 Segal, p. 7.
83 Nilsson, p. 151.
85 Ricouer, pp. 121, 214.
88 Ricouer, p. 225.
89 Otto, p. 141.
90 Sophocles, p. 61.
91 Sophocles, p. 65.
92 Sophocles, p. 64.
93 Sophocles, p. 60.
94 Sophocles, p. 60.
95 Sophocles, p. 64.
96 Sophocles, p. 61.
97 Nietzsche, p. 300.
98 Otto, pp. 141, 144.
99 Vycinas, p. 162.
Theatre Positivism's Three Passion Personas

The "quest for" the reality of Christ becomes a "query about" in modern and postmodern plays. Experiencing the disintegration of a "unified field of knowledge," the radical playwrights probe the material of mind and myth for an answer to the meaning of Christ. Psychology, anthropology and the visual, auditory and ritualistic elements of theatre itself are the essentials from which the playwrights create a new passion. Two strains, aestheticism and anarchism, the first represented by W. B. Yeats (1865-1939) and the latter influenced by both Alfred Jarry (1873-1907) and Antonin Artaud (1896-1948), vitalized the avant garde of twentieth-century drama, particularly during the years 1896-1938. The Autobiography of William Butler Yeats (1914) provides a fascinating view of the poet-playwright's inquiry into his subconscious: evenings of hashish, consultations with mystics, dream analysis, clairvoyant trances, alchemy and initiation into the Kabbala society. In 1900 Sigmund Freud published The Interpretation of Dreams, a confirmation of the importance of dream imagery and structure to many symbolists like Yeats. Two of the symbolist playwrights have written significant works of
passion theatre demonstrating the influence of dreams: August Strindberg composed *Easter* (1900), *To Damascus* (1897-1904) and *The Lamb and The Beast* (1903); Hugo von Hofmannsthal, inspired by Calderon's *Life Is a Dream*, wrote two versions of his play *The Tower* (1925 and 1927). In addition, Yeats researched Celtic legend and myth for hidden knowledge of the inner life. With his findings, Yeats endeavored to found a ritual order in Ireland that combined Christianity with Druidic truths. Naming it the "Order of Celtic Mysteries," Yeats hoped that it would offer purification rituals for Irish artists and leaders, similar to the Eleusinian mysteries. Primitivism which explored the basis for Jung's concepts of the collective consciousness, archetypes and rituals in ancient myths was practiced by Yeats and other playwrights of the avant garde to discredit the religious institutions of their day.

Eastern arts, especially *Noh* dramas, were the vogue at the beginning of the century and literary circles devoted themselves to discussions of Japanese works. This aspect of aestheticism culminated in a "holy theatre" and has been the most lasting trait of the avant garde. The aesthetic artist aspired toward spiritual transcendence in his works, although he rejected the conventional religious traditions of Christianity; therefore, his "faith" most often appeared "sacrilegious."

The anarchist avant garde turned atavism and psychologism on the fundamental elements of theatre itself,
primarily the spoken word, ceremony and connotative values of color. Abstractionism, one of the three currents in early German Expression (1910-1923), was pursued by the Sturm circle of poet-playwrights. The Expressionists aimed for the "disruption and dissolution of the habitual . . . and conventional texture of thought and feeling, and the expression of a 'translogical' reality . . . ." Influenced by August Stramm, they developed a style of compression involving stripped language and associative meanings which communicated directly to the audience's consciousness. Two plays from passion theatre, Lothar Schreyer's Crucifixion (1920) and Walter Hasenclever's Humanity (1918), exhibit these qualities. In his theories and essays on theatre published in Der Sturm magazine, Schreyer explains that language should move away from rational communication and produce meaning on an "intuitive level." The passion drama Crucifixion is an example of exquisite linguistic experimentation and invention. The connotative qualities of color for the stage are noted by Schreyer in his description of Wassily Kandinsky's (1866-1944) passion pantomime The Yellow Cord (1912). The stage directions exceed the dialogue; Schreyer recounts the actions of a giant yellow puppet who balloons into a posture resembling the cross. This visual image signifies an act of crucifixion which "takes place when the world of light gives form to the world of matter." Kandinsky theorizes in On the Spiritual in Art (1914) that yellow and red are
colors of vitality, both "restrained and unrestrained." Staging itself was affected by abstractionism. Hasenclever's **Humanity** models the stations of the cross and Schreyer, like Yeats, experimented with masks and ceremonial movement. Fundamentally, the Expressionist experimentation is part of a religious query, a spiritual movement, searching out the essences and universals in the human condition.

Along with the revival of myth and utilization of psychological data, the development of theatrical arts advanced a theatre cult which projected a "new view of the world." The **avant garde** "mindscape" endeavored to formulate efficacious rituals centered around their "belief in the divinity of man and the realization of God in every individual . . . ." The "dream dramas" and other dramatized subliminal expressions were funneled through the consciousness of a single artist who aspired to transfigure his audiences. All of them seemed possessed by the "firm belief that a turning-point in the evolution of mankind was near at hand." Critics of this period, Amedee Ozenfant and Richard Gilman, interpret their obsessions as a "cult of self."

Like the Aestheticists, the Anarchists focused on the nature of man which determined "every product of the mind, however realized in concrete form, was a valid artifact . . . ." To them, the individual artist's expression was sacred and, in reality, superior to life. Thus, the many
avant garde declarations beginning with Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's "Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism" (1909), emphasized the oneness of art and life; therefore, proposing the means for a "new man-made nature." The theatre of the future would be "synthetic;" autonomous, a brief but violent assault on the nerves. The goal of the Surrealists, according to David Zinder, involves "the total liberation of the human spirit from the carapace of so-called bourgeois sensibility that has ossified around it. . . so that man could discover his true potential." Three implications derived from these statements epitomize Alfred Jarry's "science of self" which he cynically titled "pataphysics." First, the production of Jarry's *Ubu Roi* (1896) not only marked the beginning of the avant garde movement, but it also theatricalized the cult of self. Evident by this performance in Paris were Jarry's theories about his own apotheosis. Jarry believed that he was God; therefore, like any other man, he could shape his life as one would a work of art. Consequently, "pataphysics" entails the reduction of human nature to its biological parts and then, its recreation into the mechanical, surreal man. In the irrational, unpredictable and meaningless universe of "exceptions," this is the only creature possible and yet, for Jarry, he is worthy of worship. Second, the theatrical event is consolidated in and conformed to the consciousness of this single self-made artist. And third, the artist scorns the public, finding their values
and institutions repugnant and in need of a similar process of re-creation.

Rejecting the aesthetic avant garde and siding with the Anarchists, Antonin Artaud (1896-1948) announced that poetry is "profound anarchy." Artaud was anti-abstractionist, anti-literary and anti-psychologist. He worshipped instead the "savage force." Appearing to be mystical in his allusions to the Egyptian Ka, the Greek law of talion, rituals, and the mysterious violence which spurs from the brain of the artists and spectators, he is nevertheless, anti-spirit. By spirit, he means not only the spirit of "romanticism, symbolism, dadaism, surrealism, lettrism, and marxism," but the spirit of Christianity as well. While confined in the asylum at Rodez, Artaud made a confession of faith which he later recanted: "I was fool enough to say I had accepted conversion to Jesus Christ, while in fact Christ is that which I have always most of all abominated, and this conversion was merely a result of a frightful spell which ... had me swallow ... a frightful number of wafers destined to preserve me for as long as possible ... in a being that is not my own." The alien being Artaud describes as spiritual "gases." Essentially, Artaud's theories propose that the theatre has a body: a "shadow" which is not limited by words. This body, like a plague, is diseased; and by an indiscriminating, amoral fever, it destroys and purifies human culture. Like the body of the "athletic actor," it thrives
on the good that is evil; it is conditioned by the talion and the pain; it accepts the challenge of the "dissociative" powers of the universe with a "superior attitude." The traditional masterpieces are not suitable for this theatre. No script is necessary, but by improvisation and collaboration among artists the theatre body will evolve.

The image of the human being which Artaud presents emerges most clearly from his letters and journals. He confided to Jacques Riviere in a letter dated June 5, 1923 that he suffers "from a frightful disease of the mind. My thought abandons me at all stages.... I am in constant pursuit of my intellectual being." In entries, Artaud alludes to this contradiction of beings as a "torment" which is killing him. In a vision of his tormentor, Artaud sees the crucifixion as "a certain thing above all human activity: it is the example of this monotonous crucifixion, this crucifixion wherein the soul is forever being lost." Against this enemy, Artaud launches the ceremonies of cruelty that he hopes will vanquish its memory from the "skin" of the audience. Then, "disguised as a choice of a body I say shit to everything and I go to sleep." Davind Zinder concludes that the "Artaudian ideal" resides not in the "oversoul" image that he has of the spirit of Jesus Christ, but in the "incarnation of real flesh and blood of quintessential human existence. Divested of the trivialities of daily life by the selective nature of a play's text, the actor becomes a living paradox, a
"concrete spirit." Clearly, Artaud, although he despises the aestheticism, bases his theories on a similar query into essences. In contrast with them, however, he refuses to transcend into a superhuman divine realm; he prefers the tragic solution which embraces the nightmare existence.

Artaud's personal vision expresses a phenomenon which Jarry had discovered, that is, the theatre is its own reality. Luigi Pirandello (1867-1936) conveyed this view in his philosophical play *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (1921). The theatre "instead of being the recreation of the world and of experience through a language and an imaginative mode ready at hand . . . is to find the language, the literary means, for a new creation." Tom Driver identifies this philosophy as "theatrical positivism," which "refers to the theatre's strategy of regarding itself as its one, sure, positive reality . . . . It has thus embraced its own alienation, in a perhaps desperate effort to absorb the world into its own mode of being." Within this vision the ideas of Yeats, Jarry and Artaud are manifest: the solipsistic, self-consciousness of the solitary artist-creator; theatricality as a self-sufficient, artistic language; hostility toward human culture; and the romantic "fascination with the dark side of nature." The positivism of Auguste Comte (1798-1857) and Ludwig Wittgenstein (d.1951) admits only factual or logical data, but the theatre, due to its inescapable dependency
on human ideas and creativity, will always be metaphysical. The presence of the Christ figure in modern passion plays is, therefore, a theatrical "mystery" which, in the absence of God and "confessional experience," provides its own vanquished world view.

The vanquished Christ figure defined in terms of theatrical positivism experiences diminishment or reduction as a result of the theatre's own "concrete spirit." The role of Christ in the plays to follow is, first of all, de-dramatized. Two views of Christ in the 1920s have been distanced from the action. The historical plays, ones which have retained the historical sequence of passion events, portray Jesus as either mute, offstage or only peripherally involved in the action. At these times, the character of Jesus speaks from the King James translation of the New Testament. Among the last modernized passion plays written with a historical setting are Dorothy Sayers' *The Man Born to Be King* (1943) and Mercer Green Johnston's *First Among the Unafraid* (1947). In contrast to the plays of the 1920s, they attempt to colloquialize the King James quality. The response to Miss Sayers' cycle drama, a radio play written to be broadcast on the BBC every four weeks until the drama's completion, prompted controversy over the "irreverent" language. Although unproduced professionally, Johnston's play also reflects the difficulty of style of language for the Jesus figure. The lines delivered by the Jesus character to the disciples after an incendiary speech
in the Jewish synagogue demonstrate this point: "Keep cool, boys. Be careful. Don't start anything. This isn't too serious. We'll come out of it all right . . . . When I give the word let's start straight for the door."  

For the plays of the twenties which attempt to dramatize the sacred dimension of Jesus Christ, physicalizing the character is a dilemma. W.H. Auden recognized the problem as "The contradiction between the profane appearance and the sacred assertion" that is "impassable to the imagination. It is impossible to represent Christ on stage." The choice of language for the historical becomes, as we have seen, problematic; the choice must be either too biblical or mundane, or too poetic and rhetorical. In addition, the verse passion dramas de-dramatize the Christ figure by allegorical treatment. Speaking as a symbolic figure, he is generally portrayed as stationary. Henri Gheon's *The Way of the Cross* (1938) and P.W. Turner's *Christ in the Concrete City* (1956) typify this approach. In summary, the roles of Jesus or the Christ figure in the historical and verse dramas of the 1920s are abstractions; therefore, their dramatic portrayals suffer from the one-dimensionality that is evidenced particularly by the playwright's choice of language.

A second method by which the playwrights of the 1920s have dealt with the Christ figure pairs that character with single or multiple antagonists who actually voice the views of the playwrights themselves. The influence of the Greek
concept of daimōn as well as the romantic preoccupation with the ugly side of life are factors which make the portrayal of Satan, Judas and Barabbas more intriguing to the playwright than the figure of Christ. The psychological theories of Jung related to a double are a major influence in both the historical and verse passion plays. Jung believed that every being has its "shadow," its dark, negative side which must be recognized and assimilated. The archetype of the double Jung calls "absolute evil." As we have noted previously, William Blake personified evil in his literary works creating a double to God. In addition, the character of Lucifer in Osborn Laughton's Calvary (1864) anticipates the ideas of Jung. Lucifer confides to the other evil spirits with him in hell that "Were I not what I am, I would be He."

The Christ figures in the twenties, however, do not meet a personified essence of evil. They are "divided" or countered by doubles who question their purposes, advocate other means of redemption, or imply that the Christic atonement is futile. In each case, the double is drawn more sympathetically and forcefully than the Christ figure. In this respect, these passion plays are associated with the numerous passions of Judas. The double of the Christ figure is evidence of the playwright's mind at work to compensate for the loss of the passion figure's relationship with either his divine or human nature by creating dualities. Intellectualism and psychologies are components
of theatre positivism which the alienated artist adopts. In lieu of a unified perception of the world, the playwright succumbs to manichean character dichotomies in the polarities of the spiritual and physical illustrated by the dramatic relationships of the Jesus or Christ figure with Judas, Barabbas, Satan, Herod and other "opposites." The effect of the cult of self on the Christ figure has been to reduce or diminish his significance by splitting him in half. Walter Reed in Meditations on the Hero (1974) notes that this is the end of the heroic.\textsuperscript{44} In Hero with a Thousand Faces (1968), Joseph Campbell states that this phenomenon simply mirrors the modern "problem of mankind." He presents the view of the loss of the "co-ordinated soul" in relationship with the loss of the heroic in the secular state because "today no meaning is in the group -- none in the world: all is in the individual. But there the meaning is absolutely unconscious. One does not know toward what one moves. One does not know by what one is propelled. The lines of communication between the consciousness and the unconsciousness zones of the human psyche have all been cut in two."\textsuperscript{45} The outcome of this trend leads to the desacramentalizing and eventual discarding of the Christ figure in postmodern passion plays. The state of unconsciousness that characterizes mankind, according to Campbell, and God, according to Jung, is theatricalized in amoral and absurd caricatures of the Christ figure.
The anarchist theatrical positivism which admits neither innocence nor suffering other than its own has recreated the Christ figure remodelled on itself, that is, a parody of itself. Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1953) distills the suffering spirit of the theatre with elegance. For the first time, watching a play is equated with "waiting" and "waiting for Godot," in Beckett's theatre is Godot. Richard Gilman's analysis of the play insists that the meaning of "Godot" is accessible only through the play itself. He states that "The theatre in Beckett's hands has abandoned events, direct clashes, inquiries, representations. What remains is the theatrical impulse itself, this thrust toward the truth about our condition: that it consists in enactment, presence, the painful necessity to remain visible . . . to be seen, heard, by a Godot, by each other, and, in the darkness, ourselves . . . ."

Absurd saviors like Lucky leave oblique "gospels" and fail altogether at resurrection. Kay Baxter and Anselm Atkins have attempted to decipher Lucky's "Scapegoat's Agony" speech and have arrived at similar conclusions. In the absence of God, "man . . . in spite of the studies of alimentation and defecation, wastes and pines . . . and . . . in spite of the strides of physical culture . . . fades away . . . ."

By negating the meaning of suffering, the theatre has not only created an anti-heroic Christ figure, but an anti-passion as well.
The message of postmodern passion plays is that this passion is ineffectual and should be discarded. Dedramatized, divided, desacramentalized, the Christ figure has nothing to offer. The activity of the double damages his integrity to the extent that, in his encounters with the demigods of war and oppression of the postmodern crisis, he is defeated, vanquished. Theatrical positivism's tour de force is the enactment of the "shadow." An ominous silence precedes the postmodern period. For "with Pozzo's entrance the long shadow of history falls over the stage, that is, the shadow of what has replaced God, the deus in machina, the new system... in which man is both the measure and measurer of all things."48

Definition of Passion Persona

Dedramatized, divided, desacramentalized and discarded, the Christ figure in the following plays will be referred to as the passion persona. "Persona" is significant for several reasons. Jung defines persona as a mask, recalling the ancient Greek masks. Its power embodies the collective consciousness or the archetype; therefore, it loses individuality in abstraction and generality. The mask reflects the "social order."49 Thus, persona is an appropriate term for the Christ figure who projects the poet's personal vision of his culture. The persona appears in a fragmented, abstracted passion. The splitting phenomenon which the avant garde imposes on the
persona reveals the poet's gnosticism. The passion sequence and identity of the passion persona are subjected to *sparagmos* which divides the body and spirit, and meaning from act. In the passion plays of the 1920s, the persona loses his humanity; in the postmodern period, his divinity. A symbol of loss, he becomes an ironic figure.

**The Passion Persona of Literary Passion Plays**

The literary view of the passion emerged in the early 1920s as a result of intense aestheticism which inspired poets to become playwrights in order to disseminate their philosophies: "We who care deeply about the arts find ourselves the priesthood of an almost forgotten faith, and we must . . . if we would win the people again, take upon ourselves the method and the fervour of a priesthood."\(^{50}\) W. B. Yeats, John Masefield (1878-1967) and Charles Williams (1886-1945) each found his prophetic and poetic voice in a literary passion play. They share a similar spirit (all three were at one time a member of the Order of The Golden Dawn [1890-1922]),\(^{51}\) but each poet has a different version of the same dualistic world view. After ten years of studying Greek philosophy,\(^{52}\) Yeats formulated a view of man based on the conflict between natural cycles which he expressed in *A Vision* (1925). Influenced by Nietzsche and Jung, Yeats identified his two cycles as symbols of the subjective and objective personality types, extrovert and introvert: one self-realizing, the other
In the "temple" of the theatre, Yeats visualizes a new human consciousness: the essence of the subjective personality. Masefield was an associate of Yeats, but his poetic vision aspires to a power outside of himself, beauty. In an address to members of Oxford University in 1924, entitled "Shakespeare and Spiritual Life," Masefield offers his analysis of a great poet as one who "apprehends truth by power: the truth which he apprehends cannot be denied, save by a greater power, and there is no greater power." The poet's power comes from his ability to imagine beauty like the blind Madman in Masefield's first play with the passion theme, Good Friday (1925). The Madman speaks the final lines in the play, saying that "it is over now, the passion, the sweat, the pains, only the truth remains." In his quest of that essential truth, Masefield dedicated his life and work as an "apostle of Beauty" in a world where beauty is unwelcomed. Masefield and Yeats chose a manichaen world view which divides the concrete world from a spiritual world of beauty. Williams believed that the poet actually surrenders to the power of beauty; therefore, he must, through pain and joy, strive to attain "nobility and virtue." Beauty consists of "warring opposites," Christ and his double, Satan. Because of Williams' attention to dualities, he is remembered as a "romantic theologian." And the poet-theologian, in Williams' view, is obliged to hold together the contradictions of body and spirit by adhering
to an "affirmative way," the way of "co-inherence." The dualism at the core of each of these poet-playwright's private vision materializes in his passion plays.

The dramatic conventions in each passion play are dualistic. Yeats' collection of *Four Plays for Dancers* (1921), the Noh dance-dramas of which *Calvary* is the final play, demonstrates the path which he pursued in search of a form suitable to his poetic vision. His query was always in the direction of ancient traditions. Since he believed that through an inherited "legacy" from Greece, Egypt or fifteenth-century Japan a theatre could convert the sources of one encompassing religion, Yeats collected and adapted traits from all three. His purposes, being philosophic as well as artistic, were aimed at transforming culture. The theatre of Yeats' dreams was "nothing less than the recreation of society and theatre in the image of the greatest society and theatre in the history of Western civilization; nothing less than the creation of an Irish Athens, and an Irish Theatre of Dionysus where a Unity of Being and Unity of Culture might be effected through the Unity of Image." Explicitly stated here is the aesthetic dream of essences and universals that paradoxically ends in dualities.

The "dialectic of opposites" describes the inner life of Yeats' dramas. Through dramatic images, he attempted to create a transcendent unity of spirit like the tragic ecstasy. Every convention in his theatre embodies the
struggle between the "mask and the unconscious self." The dramatic conventions of the Noh dance ritual and mask are intrinsic to Yeats' vision. Each dance-drama, including Calvary, begins with the ceremonial folding and unfolding of a cloth by three musicians who chant the prologue. The agon is also ritualized in that the actors move in deliberate, choreographed patterns imitating the Noh tradition. The stage is bare throughout the play. The masks, which all the players wear except for the soldiers whose faces are painted to resemble masks, are decorated with stark chiarascuro effects. Reflecting a deep calm, the masks completely hide the actors' faces; behind them, they chant their lines. Yeats' poem, "The Magi" (1914), seems to anticipate the image of the mask: "the pale unsatisfied ones Appear and disappear . . . With all their ancient faces like rainbeaten stones . . . And all their eyes still fixed, hoping to find once more, Being by Calvary's turbulence unsatisfied, The uncontrollable mystery on the bestial floor."

Yeats once stated that his work was not drama, but a "ritual of lost faith." Perhaps he did not realize that the faith lost was his belief in the "poetic potential" of the natural world. Yeats, through frozen stasis, endeavored to distill the secret knowledge of the supernatural world and unavoidably created dichotomies which produced undramatic works and lost an audience. The failure of all Yeats' dramas of this period is essentially
"the result of this view and the contradiction it contained: that an inherently dramatic view can be embodied effectively by an inherently nondramatic style." Leonard Nathan describes the premise of Yeats' style which suffered from dualism: "The dramatic structure . . . must subordinate action and character to the convention of metaphor-mask whose overt artificially gives personality the rich 'stillness' needed to reveal its depths, without distortions . . . of the natural world. In short, the natural world, made static, heightened by artful formalization, directly presents the spiritual order." The spiritual world, in the view of William Lynch, cannot and should not be separated from the multiplicity and diversity of life. The effect of Yeats' dramatic conventions upon the passion and persona have been de-dramatizing and divisive.

To Lynch, the passion Calvary encloses a "private world; everything is a solipsism; all is absurd, lonely, a private hell." The play, approximately two hundred lines long, is inspired by the structure of dreams in which the passion persona, now dead, recalls in his dream significant moments from the past. Christ is the dreamer who on Good Friday "dreams His passion through." Lazarus, Judas and the three Roman soldiers enter to accuse and mock his crucifixion. In a production of Calvary directed by James Flannery at the Dublin Theatre Festival (1965), the passion persona hung upon a crucifix center stage. The passion
events have been condensed into the moments just after Christ's death. The last thing he remembers is the gambling of the soldiers. Each figure approaches the persona to flaunt the impotency of his suffering. Christ addresses Lazarus: "I gave you life." Lazarus retorts: "But death is what I ask." Judas follows with the same self-sufficiency. He taunts Christ with these words: "and now You cannot even save me." The soldiers allude to the god of chance by fatalistic remarks to the persona; they will trust in Tyche. The antagonists symbolize the subjective, creative imagination that is present in the self-absorbed white heron who haunts the passion. Christ symbolizes the old, objective cycle represented by the full moon. The play unfolds at the still point when the cycles begin to change. With the coming of the subjective cycle, the new crescent moon, the entranced heron will be saved from "imaginative sterility" by the force and "exaltation like the eagle's" which greets the new cycle. The play ends without resolution or assurance, but with two questions: "My father, why hast Thou forsaken me?" and the final chant of the First Musician, "What can a swan need but a swan?" In Yeats' view, the passion persona is one cycle in a greater cycle of the Great Wheel. Dionysus, symbolizing the subjective life of the artist, the white heron, is the other cycle which is locked into a dual, alternating pattern with Christ; the immanent god that is
in all humanity. Both then, are halves of the same narcissistic self.

The dramatic conventions chosen by Masefield for *The Trial of Jesus* (1925) reflect the influence of Greek and Elizabethan theatres. Gowda, critic of the verse drama revival, calls these "divisive influences:" a blend of the realistic and poetic styles. This defect results from Masefield's dualistic philosophy, the manichean syndrome which affects aesthetics. Masefield's passion play illustrates the combination of a Greek prologue and chorus that includes the demigods Wisdom and Jesus and an Elizabethan middle action that concludes with the appearance of the chorus again. The performance at the Boar's Hill music room (calculated to evade the Licensing Act) was produced on a small, split-level stage backed by a balcony and faced a forestage where the chorus sat on stools at each side. In the prologue, Wisdom describes the suffering of the crucifixion to Jesus in the manner of the Greek messengers. Hence, the two acts of the middle action do not include any of the passion events beyond the court scene with the high priests and the scene in Pilate's palace. In place of the crucifixion, the chorus recounts an apparently ancient tale from Greek mythology about the gods in a cave waiting for man to blow three blasts on a horn to signal the time when the gods will descend to earth. The man, a hunter, fails to blow the third blast because he was frightened, seeing the gods, and ran away.
The chorus draws the conclusion that "Man must go from doubt to despair till out of despair he sees the plan." This is the gnostic wisdom that suffering leads to insight. Included in the two acts are heroic scenes between the priests Annas and Caiaphas who plan to raise a rebellion against the Roman occupation. Bar-Abbas is their hero; therefore, the crucifixion of the passion persona is not the outcome of their deliberate schemes, but merely the heroic effort to save Bar-Abbas. Other scenes follow of an Elizabethan nature, such as the one in which a homely officer offers food and advice to Jesus. A comic interlude is made out of the scourging scene between Jesus, two silly maids and a few officers. Instead of the whip, they scourge him with a feather duster. In the second act, Pilate and a Lear-like Herod have a lengthy exchange. Both lament the disgusting way of the world. Pilate finds no beauty in the world, only "In love and art and joy; yes; but not in this world .... It is not a world of love and art and joy, but of hate, envy and snatching at your brother's bread; shuffling through the one minute and drugging yourself against the next ...." Herod has no illusions about life either; he claims that God is a madman: "In youth we are senseless and do not know it. In age we are senseless and do know it. To be nothing in death seems to me to be an advance." The play concludes with a final Greek convention, the deus ex machina speech by the passion persona: "I am the spirit of man that God's
breath made. I stand in the darkness here and cry, 'O helpless and friendless, here am I, A friend who will help you till you die, And in death not leave you afraid.'"84

The two worlds of the passion persona, the one in the courts and the other in a mythic realm of demigods, stem from Masefield's manicheanism. The play lacks unity as well. The dilemma which Masefield creates deprives the persona of his humanity and his so-called antagonists, and therefore, treats his passion and suffering as inconsequential. In addition, the other characters in the play, Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate and Herod, are equally as divine, moral and virtuous as the persona. As the chorus states, mankind by courage may attain his own salvation. Even the persona agrees that the one who seeks may not "cease from seeking until he hath found. And when he hath found, he shall be amazed. And when he hath been amazed, he shall reign. And when he hath reigned, then he shall have rest."85 The character with special knowledge in Masefield's passion is Herod, the aesthetic intellectual who senses the "madness in the air" which "blows in from the desert."86 Like the white heron in Yeats' play, he has no need of Christ's passion; thus, the persona, de-dramatized and divided, vaporizes once again into aesthetics: "Your intense life gives life and cannot die because it goes, past flesh, into All Thought, and from the great sea brings back to the world a Beauty undying that is God
eternal." He joins the other demigods like Orpheus who serve as mythic lights to man's quest for beauty and self-exaltation. Returning from the crucifixion, the kindly officer Longinus reports to Procula, "I thought he was dead by noon, and then suddenly he began to sing in a loud clear voice . . . . He died singing.  

The literary-theological style of Charles Williams, author of a third literary passion play, The Rite of the Passion (1929), complements the philosophical mold of Yeats and Masefield. Williams was a member of the Church of England all of his life; and therefore, his membership in the Order of The Golden Dawn lasted only a brief time. He quickly transferred his loyalties to more orthodox groups, the "Inklings" with C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkein, and the circle he personally founded, "The Companions of Co-inherence." Williams is recognized as an "artist in theology" and indeed, his poetic vision, like that of Yeats and Masefield, is interrelated with his theology.

While accepting the aesthetic view of the poet as the possessor of a "glorious faculty," he nevertheless disdained self-consciousness and individualism as antithetical to his views. He considered the cult of self a manifestation of "incoherence." In 1924 Williams became aware of a war between the natural and supernatural. The paradox of the book of Job challenged him to write a commentary. The conclusions which he made determined his
portrayal of Satan in The Rite of the Passion as the "shadow" of the passion persona, Love. He came to believe that the dualism he apprehended was not a cycle on the Great Wheel or the existence of two parallel worlds, one ideal beauty and the other "Caesar's domain," but rather the "co-inherence" of two opposites. Reflecting Aristotle's philosophy of polarities, Williams affirmed that "Heaven and hell define each other, but heaven can exist without hell and hell cannot exist without heaven since heaven's free love is its hell." In his passion play, however, Satan is a necessary or dramatically essential companion to Love. Herein, the ideas of Blake and Jung are readily apparent.

Williams theology is directly related to the dramatic conventions in The Rite of the Passion. Despite his professed desire to avoid abstractionism by stressing that co-inherence involved "living from others and constantly in relationship to them," his theology is revealed in a formal and "spatial" enactment of the passion that is liturgical rather than dramatic. Cavaliero notes that patterns are a significant metaphor in Williams' writings which originates in his sequential understanding of the atonement that begins at creation and progresses through nativity and resurrection. Williams wrote the passion play at the request of the Vicar of St. Martin's for the celebration of Good Friday services; hence, the liturgical form was determined at the outset. The celebration of
Easter services by a passion drama had been encouraged by Bishop Bell of Chichester who arranged for Masefield's passion play, *The Trial of Christ*, to be performed at the Canterbury Festival in 1928. These festivals apparently marked the first popular revival of church drama since the Middle Ages. Williams chose an allegorized literary style containing beautiful, compact poetic images; but the content becomes rhetorical. Each character "defines" his part in the passion rather than enacting it. This accounts for Williams "over-cryptic" verse that is often weighted with theology.

The performance presented a three hour liturgy which took place inside the cathedral on a bare platform. The characters entered from the rear of the aisle in pairs of opposites: James and Pilate, Peter and Caiaphas, John and Herod, Mary and Judas, Gabriel and Satan; Love followed last. Each of the four parts of the play begins with a Herald who announces the theological importance of the next dialogue. The first part pertains to the co-inherence mystery of Christ's immanence in humanity "whereby a new thing shall be made and presently in you displayed when nothing is that is not He, enter into this mystery." Part Two includes the betrayal and trial of the passion persona; the theme is repeated in the refrain, "but who hath believed our report?" The third section deals with the crucifixion through a discourse among Satan, Gabriel and Love. The last herald's theme is "Love dies and let
him die."104 It is a hopeless song lamenting the death of beauty and love since "all sweet conclusion is with him destroyed; there is nothing now within us but the void."105 Satan then boastfully commands, "Hear ye the word which is creation die, the Tree of Life is withered all and hoar; in that dark separation which is I Love fails from Love and shall be God no more. Through all of Being to the bounds thereof I search if aught of it may yet remain." Now comes the most dramatic moment in the liturgy because of its simplicity and directness. Love answers, "Amen." Satan asks "O Voice, who are thou?" Love shouts that "I am Love, and from destruction I arise again."106 Immediately a triumphant march begins, the fifth of the seven musical interludes dispersed throughout the liturgy along with moments of congregational meditation.

The culmination of Williams' theology is expressed in the last lines of Satan and Love. Satan acknowledges to Love: "Lord, I am thy shadow, only known as hell where any linger from thy sweet accord." Love's response summarizes the theme of co-inherence: "And I alone am utterly all in all."107 Co-inherence prompts Williams to add a confessional scene to the play in which all of the characters who denied, doubted or in some way failed to understand the passion return to ask Love to "remember" them. The implication is that they have entered into the mystery of Love. Creating a dramatic relativism,108 Williams' ideas de-dramatize the passion persona by
liturgical conventions which are formal and excessively rhetorical. The doubling effect that pairs the passion persona with Satan reduces the necessity and uniqueness of atonement. In fact, in *The Rite of the Passion*, atonement means not redemption, but harmonious reconciliation of the cosmic order.

Although the Great War seems remote from the literary vision, it nonetheless underlies the poet-playwright's desire to escape the ugly realities of life. Yeats, Masefield and Williams are aware of the calamity in the scientific and political world and offer the offices of the poet, the special seer, as a means of transforming the world through beauty. Reaching for human transcendence, the literary vision sacrifices the human reality of the passion persona and releases the power of a double in modern passion plays, the creative imagination of the playwright himself.
Endnotes
Chapter III


6 C. G. Jung, *Integration of the Personality*, was first published in English, 1940. trans. Stanley Dell (London: Routlege & K. Paul, 1952). This is Jung's major work.


16. Christopher Innes, p. 53-54.

17. C. D. Innes, p. 29.


22. Zinder, p. 35.

23. Zinder, p. 16.


26Artaud, p. 10.


34Zinder, p. 88.


36Driver, p. 348.

37Christopher Innes, p. 18.


43 Osborn Laughton, *Calvery; Virginia* (New York: Doolady: Broome-Street, 1867), p. 73.


46 Gilman, p. 266.


49 Moreno, pp. 52-53.

54Flannery, p. 55.
61Wilson, pp. 16, 24, 29.
62Flannery, p. 66.
65Zinder, p. 7.


68Nathan, p. 158.


70Lynch, p. 130.

71Gowda, p. 231.


73Yeats, Calvary, pp. 452, 455.


75Yeats, Calvary, pp. 456-457.

76Vendler, p. 178.

77Flannery, p. 52.

78Gowda, p. 106.

79Gowda, pp. 262-263.

80Gowda, p. 252.

82 Masefield, *The Trial of Jesus*, p. 60.

83 Masefield, *The Trial of Jesus*, p. 91.

84 Masefield, *The Trial of Jesus*, p. 96.

85 Masefield, *The Trial of Jesus*, p. 79.


87 Masefield, *The Trial of Jesus*, pp. 4-5.

88 Masefield, *The Trial of Jesus*, p. 94.

89 Sibley, p. 1.

90 Cavaliero, p. 5.

91 Cavaliero, p. viii.

92 Cavaliero, p. 128.


94 Cavaliero, p. 148.

95 Sibley, pp. 3, 7.

96 Williams, *Reason and Beauty in the Poetic Mind*, p. 127.

97 Sibley, p. 146.

98 Sibley, p. 4.

99 Cavaliero, p. 129.

100 Sibley, p. 6.

101 Cavaliero, pp. 172, 146.

103 Williams, *The Rite of the Passion*, p. 149.
104 Williams, *The Rite of the Passion*, p. 177.
105 Williams, *The Rite of the Passion*, p. 179.
107 Williams, *The Rite of the Passion*, p. 190.
108 Cavaliero, p. 17.
Chapter IV
The Historical Vision

The Nature of the Historical Vision

One distinction between the literary and historical passion personas stems from the contrasting dynamics and meanings of time. The literary view captured the passion in a mystical sphere outside temporal boundaries. Time occurs as either an eternal present or an ever-recurring, mythic cycle. The historical vision acknowledges a one-time date which can be represented theatrically by period settings, costumes and factual characterizations. The three plays to be studied with this view also emphasize the diachronic nature of time which means that the passion can have particular relevancy to the modern political and social crisis. Dorothy Sayers, who created one of the most scholarly dramas on the life of Jesus Christ,\(^1\) surmounted the problem of "sacred" character and action: "It is necessary for the playwright to work with a divided mind. He must be able . . . to strip off his knowledge of what is actually taking place, and present, through his characters, the events and people as they appear to themselves at the time." She concludes that "God was executed by people painfully like us, in a society very similar to our own . . . ."\(^2\) Accordingly, the historical passions claim that the "persons who founded Christianity are . . . stripped of supernatural embellishment; and they are represented as
simple, real, ardent Orientals in the throes of a great and impending tragedy."\(^3\) Regarding the treatment of the persona himself, however, Miss Sayers has a word of warning. Sincere efforts to represent Jesus Christ reverently often succumb to the docetic heresy which regarded the humanity of Christ as superficial or illusory.\(^4\)

The playwright's quandary is multifaceted. In many cases, he desires to avoid offending the sensibilities of the Christian community. British censorship attempted to insure protection from religious offences through enforcement of the Theatres Act of 1843 which prohibited the dramatic representation of Jesus Christ or any other biblical figures on the stage until the turn of the century.\(^5\) This law remained a factor to be contended with until the Theatres Act of 1968 when the Royal Court Theatre and director, William Gaskill, successfully contested the Lord Chamberlain's ban on Edward Bond's play *Early Morning*.\(^6\) American poet and playwright, Don Marquis expressed apprehensions over possible offence in his note to *Dark Hours* (1924): "I have carried my very genuine anxiety in this matter so far that I have not permitted myself, in the speeches set down for Jesus, to depart by as much as one syllable from utterances reported in one version or another of the four Gospels."\(^7\)

In addition, playwrights feel obliged to account for Jesus' divinity by suggesting that his spirit exceeds the
capacities of the body. Max Ehrmann's *Jesus: A Passion Play* (1915) includes constant references to the tired appearance, the pale face and unearthly moans of the persona. A Roman officer in the play ridicules the persona's appearance which has excited the affection of the people. In his opinion, "He is ugly to look upon... How can the people cleave to one whose face is so horrible? It is the face of a dead man, a face of ivory crowned with matted hair. I think he is underfed. When he speaks he whines like a fox who is wooing." As a result, the playwright has etherealized rather than physicalized the persona, and thus, has fallen into heresy.

Another factor is that the playwright's personal vision relating to social and political problems restricts the depiction of the humanity of the persona. Charles Rann Kennedy's passion play *The Terrible Meek* (1912) is a case in point. The theme of the play is anti-British imperialism; therefore, the two Roman soldiers discuss militarism on a "windswept hill" in unmistakable British accents. In counterpoint to the cries of the mother nearby, they deliberate over the demands of duty and the offices of war, calling themselves "builders of empire" who "know how to do... business." Dawn reveals the man on the cross, shrouded in mists, a silent witness. In sum, the passion personas in the historical vision are subject to the de-physicalizing effects of archaic language, etherealized physical appearances and minimal visibility in the dramas.
Ultimately, this phenomenon results from the playwright's profound concern for the human condition.

The human predicament foremost in the playwright's vision of the passion during this period involves the tremendous powers, psychological and militant, in peoples' causes. The ensuing issues of charismatic leadership, mass hysteria and criminal violence are prominent themes which introduce to the representation of the passion a counter-thrust, that is, man's fury. Lady Augusta Gregory (1852-1932), Don Marquis (1878-1937) and Michel de Ghelderode (1898-1962) wrote their passion plays in the wake of the Great War, as a means to express their skepticism and disenchantment. Charles Horne, editor-in-chief of Source Records of the Great War (1931) surveys the ferment of nationalism which provoked the aggressor countries and comments on the prevalent disillusionment after the war. Germany's dream of world dominion hypnotized the German people so that they submitted to government authority, even when it insisted on compliance with human atrocities. Guided only by emotion, "they were ready to follow that government anywhere, believing anything it told them. And it deceived them to the height of their folly."10 The dramatic action in each of the passion plays focuses on the peoples' response to a leader in scenes such as the entrance of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, or the moment of choice when they prefer Barabbas to Jesus. The violence of these scenes overwhelms the dramatic representation of the
passion persona, who becomes a subsidiary figure. In Lady Gregory's play, the persona appears only three times to deliver briefly ten lines in King James English. Devising another technique, Marquis cleverly stages the persona so that he is always hidden from the audience by a crowd or scenery. His passion persona declaims fifteen brief sermons in King James English completely out of view of the audience. The persona in Ghelderode's play is mute throughout except for two cries of anguish. Deliberately de-dramatized, the passion persona is no longer the center of the passion.

Three widely read novels of the 1920s treating the life of Jesus Christ are evidence of the fact that the problems confronting the dramatists were being resolved by novelists in a similar manner. James Ferreira discusses two remarkably popular and yet, very different viewpoints of the meaning of life of Christ expressed by American novelist Bruce Barton in *The Man Nobody Knows* (1925) and in Italian writer Giovanni Pappi's *The Life of Christ* (1921). Theodore Ziolkowski mentions a third variation by Austrian novelist Robert Michel, *Jesus in the Bohemian Forest* (1927). Pappini's novel was ranked one of the top five works of nonfiction during the years 1923-1925. Condemning the modern world, Pappini's Christ identifies his enemies as "commerce, capitalism, and banking and their intellectual slaves . . . ." Critics recognized in the novel a plea for a gospel of love and sacrifice despite
shortcomings of the author's style. In contrast, the Christ of *The Man Nobody Knows*, a novel also ranking in the upper five on the bestseller lists in 1925 and 1926,\(^{11}\) exemplifies the adaptation of the Christ figure to modern values. Barton's Christ, a successful positive thinking, industrious "Brother Rotarian" American hero, rises from "rags to riches." Michel's Jesus follows in the mode described by Ziolkowski as "Christomaniac,"\(^ {12}\) which was influenced by theories of Schweitzer's *The Psychiatric Study of Jesus* (1913) and other subsequent studies in the field of psychology. Pertinent to our plays is Michel's use of psychoneurotic behavior to rationalize the appearance of Jesus. The particular contrivance is the delusion of a mentally retarded peasant woman who raises her illegitimate son in a manner to conform to the events in the life of Jesus.\(^ {13}\) Psychological rationalizations provide the basis for linking the distanced passion personas with the core of action in the historical passion plays as well.

The previous discussion has focused on the methods with which the historical playwrights have attempted to modernize the passion. Another dimension to the timeliness of the historical passion is its prophetic vision of a new messiah. Having consigned the passion persona to the periphery of the dramatic action, the playwrights are communicating their interest in an historical setting not in terms of God's revelation in Jesus Christ, but for Marxist purposes. The deterministic view of history
attributes the incarnation to social and political ferment: "The origin of Christianity, therefore, does not lie in any kind of miraculous revelation, or even in a moral miracle; on the contrary, in the given social situation, it would rather have been a miracle if Christianity had not come into being." An illustration of the historical moment which produces messiahs is the flash of German expressionism in 1917-1918 (usually identified as messianic expressionism) in the plays of Walter Hasenclever and Georg Kaiser. Receiving inspiration from the Great War, Hasenclever and Kaiser, among other Expressionists, presented man united in suffering. This is the theme of Hasenclever's *Humanity* (1918) whose hero, Alexander, "rises from the grave, intent on expiating the crime committed against him. He is himself accused of the deed and is sentenced to death. When he returns to his grave, the real murderer, converted, exclaims, 'I love!'" Other plays of Hasenclever, *The Son* (1914) and *The Savior* (1915), express a similar poetic vision of the present anarchy from which "a new world, governed by love would arise." The optimistic mood diminished as the tension which led to the Nazi persecution of German writers escalated. Hasenclever was deported from Germany in 1933, and in 1940, while held in a French internment camp, he committed suicide.

Lady Gregory's *The Story Brought by Brigit* (1924), Marquis' *Dark Hours* (1924) and Ghelderode's *Barabbas* (1928) each contains a revolutionary moment when the man who
embodies the revolt emerges, the double of the passion persona. He is the same daïmôn who revealed himself in the fate of Oedipus; therefore, he brings with him apocalypse, not atonement. Our historical passion plays are not hopeful, but demonstrate a progressively cynical view of humanity's future. Thematically, they are bordered on the one side by the aesthetic view of self-sufficient human nature, and on the other by the horror of Par Lagervist's vision in The Hangman (1933). In this devastatingly prophetic play, the Hangman says in his final speech: "I, your Christ, I live! That you may have life! I get out on my high road through the world and save you every day in blood! And me you'll not crucify, not me!" Two years later in Nazi Germany, Third Reich passion plays were being performed. Alvin Goldfarb describes one example by Richard Euringer, Deutsche Passion: 1933, which "presents Hitler as a Christ figure, adorned with a crown of thorns made of barbed wire, gathering his apostles and converts to save Germany from the evil Weimar Republic. After rescuing the Fatherland, the crucified Fuhrer ascends to Heaven amid organ music and a chorus of singing angels." The passion plays of the twenties still depict orthodox believers, but they are mostly women and, in Ghelderode's play, even they capitulate to the double. Yeats' prediction after attending the performance of Ubu Roi, "after us the Savage God" is being fulfilled.
The Irish nationalistic spirit manifest in *The Story Brought by Brigit* is the initial thrust of anarchy that characterizes historical passion plays. In the twenties, Irish literature was experiencing a revival of the "Irish Mode" advocated by the three martyred poets of the Easter Rising of 1916. They were Padraic Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh and Joseph Plunkett. A peasant literature, "devoted to the expression of Irish manners, customs, traditions, and outlook as they affect social manners, religion, and morality," written in the Gaelic language, protested against English sovereignty. The new-Irish literature exhibited the same sentimental view of the peasant and nationalism that created conventions out of the idiosyncrasies of Irish culture. The loyal poet was guided by the rule that "representation of Ireland must reflect the romantic and sentimental image of the popular mind; under no circumstances should he adulterate the accepted pattern with alien ideas or alien attitudes. These ideals include adherence to the philosophy of the Rising Poets that is typical of the modern poetic vision which exalts the inner man. The effect this had on their verse resulted in the search for divine essences in mystical Christianity with which to express the glorious "soul of Ireland." Irish nationalism and Christianity were united in the works of the Rising Poets and in the Irish avant garde that followed them; therefore, Lady Gregory's passion play in which the
Holy Land is implicitly Irish suits the Irish conventions as well.

At the suggestion of Yeats, Lady Gregory decided to write a passion play, but one based on the Irish legends of St. Brigit, the foster mother to Jesus who is associated with the Virgin Mary in many folk hymns and Irish expressions. The Brigit folklore says that St. Brigit sheltered Mary and child as they came to Ireland to escape Herod's interdiction. The playtext explains that an angel opened the waves for them to cross the sea. The Irish peoples' passion play was performed at the Abbey Theatre during Holy Week celebrations in April 1924. In the three-act drama, two plots are interwoven; the passion of Christ beginning with his entry into Jerusalem, and the peoples' rebellion, with the uprising as the main thrust of the play. The passion itself is reported by the play's many commonfolk. Each act includes peasant ballads sung by three women who are the compassionate "womankind oppressed by suffering and sorrow" indigenous to Irish literature. The viewpoint of the youthful rebels hiding in the mountains is expressed by the young nationalist, Joel. Silas speaks for the priests; through his dialogue with Marcus, the Roman officer, the political situation and plot to execute the persona is revealed. St. Brigit explains her presence by a vision which she has had of the wounds of the child to whom she was a fostermother. Thus, the plot is part of a familiar pattern in which a figure at the
birth of Jesus returns to witness his crucifixion. Artaban in Hassel's *Christ's Comet* (1938) depicts the same type of character. Other examples of Irish folklore are depicted in the portrayal of Daniel, the tramp who serves the priests' purposes by bribing the crowd with liquor prior to Pilate's trial. He is traditionally cursed for his part in driving the nails into Christ's hands at the crucifixion.  

The ballads are key devices for reflecting the peoples' point of view; similarly the report of the cleansing of the temple represents an attack on the rich bankers. In a ballad which clearly blames the persona's death on the occupying enemy, the Irish nationalistic spirit is obvious: "He shows no malice, but love and pity, Forgives them all with his failing breath; The foreign soldiers that spoil our city, That flog and drag him to shameful death."  

Marcus' condescending attitude towards Silas and the general culture of the people provides another insight into the nature of Irish nationalism.

Lady Gregory's purposes for the parallels between the Roman occupation and the passion of Christ are clarified by the relationship of the passion persona to Joel. In Joel's hope that the passion persona will be the leader to mount the peoples' rebellion resides the blend of mystic Christianity and Irish nationalism that pervades the Irish literary mode. First, the persona is vanquished by removing him from the dramatic action; and second, by sentimentalizing his death in the mournful songs about a
mother's loss of her son: "We did see him, O poor Mother! We saw your white darling, Och, Och, agus Och-uch-an. A tall young man on the hillside, His enemies all around him and He on the Tree of Passion."  

Third, the whole of the original passion is canonized, keeping it at a reverential distance. St. Brigit and St. John already seem to know the history of Christianity before it happens. The Irish temperament flavors the crowd scene in front of Pilate's palace where the angry shouts are excused by the fact that the mob reacts as typically intoxicated Irishmen and not offensively bloodthirsty villains. Likewise, the scourging and crucifixion occur offstage. The persona stoically ascends the steps of Pilate's palace on his way to be crucified. Soon afterwards St. John hears a heavenly voice which grows increasingly faint, as if rising higher and higher: "To him that overcometh and keepeth my words to the end, will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God -- and I will give him the Morning Star."  

By these words, the passion persona identifies himself with the patron saints of Ireland who are committed to preserving the Irish way of life. References to a morning star occur several times in the Bible. In II Peter 1:19, the image is used by Peter to confirm their eyewitness account of Jesus Christ's divine nature: "And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star
arises in your hearts."  

The second reference may be found in Luke's Gospel as part of the prophecy of Jesus' incarnation when "the Sunrise from on high shall visit us."  

The prophet Malachi alludes to the same rising radiance in his vision of an apocalyptic day at which time the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings . . . ." And God's people will "tread down upon the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet . . . ."  

The book of Revelations contains a direct association of the morning star and Jesus Christ. The record reveals that Jesus Christ said of himself, "I am the bright morning star."  

The morning star is a metaphor for the eschatological nature of Jesus Christ. The context of the passion persona's farewell in Lady Gregory's play subverts this meaning for the Irish nationalistic cause.

Lady Gregory's passion play revolves around the Irish cause thinly disguised as the New Testament passion narrative. For this reason the play may be included in the Irish mode. An interesting parallel exists between this Irish passion play and the German Thingspiel.  

Joel's patriotism vies with the traditional sentiments related to the passion. The double of the passion persona, he dominates the action by his dynamic character with whom all Irish nationalists will identify. He never expresses belief in the passion persona, but rather a sense of disappointment. In the portrayal of Joel are the traces
of a new "messiah" foreshadowing the Führer in Euringer's Deutsche Passion.

Marquis' Dark Hours (1924) created a literary sensation, receiving more publicity than any other book by the author, even his popular archy and mehitabel. Reviewed in The New York Times as the only example of the passion dramatized by an American writer, it preceded Robinson Jeffers' Dear Judas by four years. Marquis considered Dark Hours his most sincere and skillful work. And, while Marquis never was considered orthodox in his religious views, the play was accepted by clergy everywhere as a reverent interpretation of the passion. In contrast, Dear Judas, a dramatic poem in the style of Noh plays like Yeats' Calvary, generated criticism, threats of excommunication and widespread opposition from clergymen. Most accusations which erupted after the production of 1947 in New York claimed that the drama was sacrilegious. The ironic point about the Judas-Jesus relationship in both plays is their similarity and the playwrights' world visions are mutually agreeable. And yet, the production of Dark Hours in 1932 at the New Amsterdam Theatre, directed and costumed by the playwright's wife, created no such religious controversy.

The differences between the plays are in their historical visions and the physicalizing treatments of the personas. Marquis, by interpreting the historical setting of the passion and masking the passion persona, managed to
make his deterministic, dualistic and pessimistic views unoffensive, even praiseworthy; whereas the same ideas in *Dear Judas* with a cast of three, one of whom portrayed the Jesus figure, were condemned. The primary factor in the success of *Dark Hours* stems from Marquis' emphasis on the crowds of people involved in the passion. The opening scene, an innovation in the original passion narrative, introduces many witnesses and their various opinions concerning the healings which have been attributed to the passion persona. General excitement heightens the scene as the evidence builds against the persona whom the priests accuse of practicing devilish magic. An even more intense repetition of the exchange with witnesses occurs in the third scene as well. In fact, all the scenes contain crowds of pilgrims who have come to Jerusalem for the religious festival; they display a vivid presence through songs, chants and intermittent shouts.

A powerful, psychologically unstable mass of people surrounds and infiltrates the passion. Over forty outbursts contribute to the reality of their participation in the passion. In addition, the priests view them as a significant, but dangerous element. Essentially, the high priests, Annas and his son Caiaphas, decide to execute the passion persona because he is popular with the "rabble." Annas fears that "many of them already believe that this man Jesus is born to be King of the Jews, and to reestablish the ancient monarchy . . . in Jerusalem."
Should there be a faction rise against Rome and seek to make this madman their monarch, what then of Jerusalem?" Annas persuades his son to take action against the persona by describing the people as his divinely given responsibility for whom he must carry "the burden of their souls." In the distance, the voices of the crowds chant songs reminiscent of their oppressed heritage and captivity in Babylon: "We wept when we remembered Zion! We wept by the rivers of Babylon! We hanged our harps upon the willows; by the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down." Annas reveals insight into the manipulation of mass hysteria in his final urging "to give them the thoughts to think. These multitudes, my son, will exalt a man today, and hail him king, and yet slay him tomorrow . . . It is for us to shape the crowds to our own will." Annas agrees that "it is better . . . this carpenter out of Galilee should die than that Judgment of Jehovah fall upon the whole people." 39

Marquis strives to demonstrate in the play the fickleness of the crowd and the impact of their hysteria on the passion persona. In the first crowd scene, they surround the persona crying for signs and cures: "Ask him for a sign! A sign!" 40 Blind men, lepers, cripples and even Lazarus, having been revived by the persona, are present. In a later scene, however, they return as an angry, discontent and malicious mob of witnesses eager to blame the persona for their problems, imagining that devils
accompany him. The psychological reversal in the crowd's attitude is deliberately theatricalized by Marquis. The playtext is written with the pages divided in half with two scenes transpiring simultaneously. The crowd of accusers speak on the one side and Peter and John on the other. The scenes are doubly condemning. While the witnesses deliver one complaint after another, Peter is accusing the persona of belittling his manhood by refusing to let him fight the Roman guard at the arrest in the garden. The crowds shout threateningly and Peter bitterly cries that "He denied me! ... He denied me the right to fight and be myself! ... He took my manhood from me; he would not let me strike with the sword. He did not make me a god like himself when he took away my manhood from me. He did not give me godhood to replace it." The spiraling clamour of voices is intensified by private conversations between witnesses as they leave the courtroom describing previous executions of a gruesome nature. Finally, while shouting for the crucifixion of the persona, they murder a blind man who dares to speak up against the verdict. The effect produces a contemptuous view of human nature and the horrors of mass hysteria.

Judas, comparing his mental anguish to a riotous city, and a conflict between "Spirits that come from God and spirits that come from hell," asks, "how can I tell which is which? They are all in me.... They walk through my heart as if it were a street.... they rush through me..."
like a crowd and make a turmoil in my soul. . . . How can I know what is from God and what is from Satan? I am a city full of spirits, and they riot in the streets! It is Jesus of Nazareth who has done this thing to me!"  

Further, the psychological-psychic relationship of the persona to Judas is expressed in the Jungian double; therefore, Marquis intimates that the fury of the crowd is the true revelation of the god who blinds men and, as in Peter's case, deflates their humanity. Marquis develops the double theme by devising an ingenious theatrical effect. When Judas and the passion persona meet, Marquis indicates in the stage directions that a special effect like sparks should appear "like fireflies . . . but they must also . . . seem . . . as if a line of sparks were shot out of one mind across the dark into another mind, and shot back again."  

Judas recognizes the fated link between the persona and himself. The familiar theme from Yeats, born to die each other's death, live each other's life based on the philosophy of Heraclitus, furnishes the undercurrent in all of Judas' speeches: "He and I have been . . . tied together . . . we were born to be each one the other's bane." Echoing the accusation made by Peter, Judas justifies his conspiracy to Caiaphas: "And if I betray him, it is because he has betrayed me first!"  

The betrayer in Dark Hours is the sickly, ascetic with blond hair and whiskers and "silky voice" who acted the persona in the production staged by Marquis' wife, Majorie Vonnegut.
Disregarding the wishes of her husband, she directed the actor to play his part in full view of the audience.\textsuperscript{46} The device only reinforced the already inherent docetism: the persona is in the spiritual "ether" again. Meanwhile, humanity with their "pain drawn up to the burning points and cut off, praise God after the monstrous manner of mankind."\textsuperscript{47} In his own dark hours at the end of scene two, Judas agonizes over his crime that "is done! . . . And I burn! I burn!"\textsuperscript{48}

\textit{Dark Hours} concludes without a resurrection scene, but since the passion persona was never "present," he certainly is not missed. The passion centers not on atonement, but on the guilt of mankind embodied in the double, Judas. Judas suffers from the uncontrollable emotions of the people who idolize heroes one moment and murder them the next. Marquis intentionally represents Judas as a predetermined victim thereby, equalizing the fate of Jesus with the fate of Judas. Obviously, Marquis has witnessed the hysteria that propels masses of people toward destructive actions. This is the force that he chooses to portray unleashed by the Christic passion rather than ineffectual divine love symbolized by the persona who is barely there.

Judas' psychological \textit{angst} explodes in the criminal violence of Barabbas in Ghelderode's passion play of the same name. \textit{Barabbas} was commissioned by the Flemish Popular Theatre for a celebration of Holy Week in 1928, and
at yearly festivals in Flanders, the drama is still performed. In the Ostend Interviews conducted by Radiofusion Télévision Françaises and broadcast in 1951 and 1952, Ghelderode recalled that he wished to view the passion through the eyes of the people, the rabble at "the foot of Calvary." The figure of Barabbas is an apt choice for Ghelderode who summarized his beliefs at the end of the interviews: "Am I lovely? And you? Men are not lovely, not often, and its very well that they are not even more ugly; but I believe in Man, and I think that this can be felt in my work. I don't despair of him, and I find him very interesting, capable of everything -- and its opposite." Ghelderode states that psychoanalysis, sociology, nationalism, politics or any other propaganda or analytical element holds no interest for him as an artist. Instead, after several years of inquiry, his poetic vision returned to a "timeless" theatre: one in which "the profound motive of the theatre remained man, or humanity." Ghelderode's creative genius produced the man of his time in the character of Barabbas, and "through him man eternal."

The New Testament historical setting of the passion becomes almost completely submerged in Ghelderode's recreation of the passion. Its remnants are symbolized by the figure in rags who shares the cell with Barabbas: "Christ appears in my play like a ghost, a presence: he is light and, at the same time, a nightmare. He is not the Christ we know from the religious pictures of the Munich
School, but a Gothic Christ, the Christ . . . bloody, befoiled, covered in spit, crowned with thorns, actually murdered, but still living because he has not suffered enough." This timeless persona is the essence of "grief;" therefore, Ghelderode has activated the phenomenon in theatrical positivism which creates a double for every vanquished persona. The fated doubles, Barabbas and the persona, confront one another in a crucial moment in each of the three acts. In the first act, Barabbas and the two thieves discover that a fourth victim occupies the dungeon with them, also awaiting execution. Barabbas is inspired to sing his "song of crime" at the end of which he always commits murder. Stalking the human pile of rags on the floor, he sings about a crime which "bursts out . . . like the sea -- like a rose. My nerves hurl me like a catapult. I have the prey. Crrkl . . . He's dead . . . . The earth drinks, is drunk with blood!" The two thieves urge Barabbas to kill the persona, but a "heart-rending cry" stops him. Their second meeting occurs in front of the crowd at Pilate's palace. The priests have already primed the people to call for the release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of the persona. Everyone, except Judas, chooses to free Barabbas. The significance of their compliance is parodied in Caiaphas' speech to the people: "Barabbas was the victim of his legend. He was the expiatory goat. False witnesses were not lacking at his hasty trial, and public opinion was so incensed at that
time that we condemned him in order to set the population at rest . . . . Oh, how happy I am to be able to disclose this judicial error, this denial of Justice! They meet for the final time, at Calvary. Barabbas, stabbed in the back by a showman's clown, reaches toward the man on the cross exclaiming, "Jesus . . . . My brother . . . ." The common factor in each of these three scenes is the theme of vanquishment. At first Barabbas would murder the persona and complete the vanquishment by eliminating the double relationship, but the inverted passion scene in act two in which Barabbas resembles the savior, provides the clue to Ghelderode's intentions. At the crucifixion, the truth penetrates in the messianic manifesto of all humanity reunited in suffering.

The vanquished condition of humanity is realized in the natures of Barabbas and the persona who embody them. Ghelderode categorizes his play as a "superhuman tragedy." In the last act, a cry is heard from the crucifixion to which the Watcher responds with the insight that "it was humanity itself that was being executed and that gave the death rattle." In a second reference by the Watcher this symbolism is developed; the Watcher paraphrases the words of the New Testament centurion, "Truly this was the Son of God" with the plea, "Die, man or God! God made man or man become God. No royal accession was so grand. O Crucified, panting in time, with your torrential wounds!" The other half of the "holy people"
The historical vision of the passion persona in the 1920s demonstrates the rise of anarchy and its eventual personification in Barabbas, the epitome of criminal power. Herein is the tragic counterthrust to human suffering that is perceived to be the revelation of demonic malevolence.

For this reason, Barabbas prefigures the passion plays in the postmodern period. Ghelderode's ironic vision not only leads to an increased awareness of concrete theatrical language, but maintains the play's timeliness in a cynical age. The carnival scene at the crucifixion in Barabbas is an example of these two factors functioning together. The Showman and his clown set up their booth at the edge of Calvary snubbing the "claptrap, shows like they are playing on the mountain." The scene fills with noises, fairground
music and "panic-sticken" people. The Showman entices them: "Walk up! Walk up! Come and see the men of the moment portrayed by an incomparable illusionist! Come and see celebrities, murders, and politicians! The true likeness of Barabbas! Walk up, you pay as you leave!" The people continue to pass by, pushing against each other as they go up the mountain to the crucifixion. The Showman and Barabbas decide to create another show, the passion of a "false god," to win their attention. The clown dresses like Jesus Christ in red robe and crown of branches; Barabbas threatens to nail his hands to the back of the Showman's booth for "Soon Christ will be dead and the show can begin." In the final scene of the parody, Barabbas smashes the booth and leaps onto the platform. He sneers, "Without you. Without your clown. Without anyone. I begin! . . . And now I'll light up. I like fire. I like destruction. Let the fire consume the booth and spread to the city and to Calvary. Let nothing but ruins be left. Let calcinated bones be the only things still inexistence from this tainted society."56

By consigning the persona to the fringes of the passion, the historical playwrights convey a double meaning in the passion and death of Christ. For the modern world, too, Christ will soon be dead and forgotten. In place of his memory, the Sibylline oracles through Barabbas invoke a world-wide judgement by revolutionary fire.
Endnotes

Chapter IV


2 Sayers, pp. 6-7.


4 Sayers, p. 2.


8 Ehrmann, p. 105.


13 Ziolkowski, p. 123.
14 Manchovec, p. 96.
15 Garten, p. 105.
16 Sokel, p. 143.
17 Garten, p. 106, 132-133.
19 Alvin Goldfarb, "Adolf Hitler as Portrayed in Drama and Film During His Lifetime," Journal of Popular Culture, 13, No. 1 (Summer 1979), 55.
23 Gregory, p. 7, 90.
24 Loftus, p. 127.
25 Gregory, p. 95.
26 Gregory, p. 68.
27 Gregory, p. 84.
28 Gregory, p. 88.
29 II Peter 1:19, NAS.
30 Luke 1:78, NAS.
31 Malachi 4:2-3, NAS.
32 Revelation 22:16, NAS.
33 Goldfarb, p. 55.
36 Brophy, p. 135.
37 Anthony, p. 538.
38 Brophy, p. 142.
39 Marquis, Dark Hours, pp. 11-15.
40 Marquis, p. 30.
41 Marquis, p. 98-99.
42 Marquis, p. 22.
43 Marquis, p. 42.
44 Vendler, p. 110.
45 Marquis, pp. 24, 28.
46 Anthony, p. 538.
47 Jeffers, Dear Judas and Other Poems by Robinson by Robinson Jeffers, p. 49.
48 Marquis, p. 59.
50 Ghelderode, Barabbas, in Seven Plays, pp. 61-62, 89.
51 Ghelderode, Barabbas, p. 123.
52 C. D. Innes, p. 28.
54 Ghelderode, Barabbas, p. 96.
55 Matthew 27:54, NAS.
56 Ghelderode, Barabbas, pp. 94-95, 101, 111, 116.
The Apotheosis of Tyranny

The metamorphosis of the passion persona from the 1920s to the postmodern age is separated by a span of approximately thirty years. During nearly twenty of those years, from Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) to Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1953), the frequency of appearances of the passion persona or of the passion structure in modern plays significantly diminished. In 1957, however, the passion persona enters with a new image. Three changes in the nature of the modern passion play are responsible. First, the passion persona is no longer portrayed with moral innocence. Secondly, the anarchy which is so passionately and rhetorically soliloquized in the speeches of Judas, Joel and Barabbas becomes manifest in the "concrete spirit" of the theatre art form that developed out of theatrical positivism. And third, the triumphant hope that originally distinguished the passion yields to Greek fatalism. In consequence of these transformations, the persona exchanges spiritual essences for the role of fool. Now, rather than pairing the persona with a humanized double, the playwright resurrects another "spiritualized" essence. He did not have to search long for the right spirit; after a second world war, its shadow has been inescapably apparent in the apotheosis of tyranny.
An unpublished play by Polish playwright Ireneusz Iredynski (1939- ) written in the postmodern period prior to 1973 entitled Nativity - Moderne represents the new passion play which resurrects death, not life. The prisoners of a German camp are rehearsing a nativity play written by their guard who imagines himself a god, controlling not only their lives in the camp, but their life in the play. He has two "faces:" one he wears when he dons the helmet of a guard; the other he presents when he removes the helmet and assumes the pose of an intellectual. His prisoners are the victims of war's brutality. The young boy who plays the part of Jesus in the nativity survives by homosexual prostitution. The woman who plays Mary the mother of Jesus suffers from venereal disease. Herod's part is played by a murderer. The play within the play, the nativity, also exudes a fatalism especially poignant in the "rhetoric of Death" spoken by each of the players in turn. For after each rehearsal, the guard systematically murders one character at a time; thereby forcing the remaining prisoners to double more and more parts until only Herod is left to deliver the lines of Death. A clue to the cause of the horror which Iredynski creates in this vision of the world may be found in the guard's explanation of the nativity: "I satisfied myself with a series of . . . vignettes, so as to document the whole epic of tyranny, the epic and metaphysics. I know from experience that no other system has a more highly
developed metaphysics than tyranny." Iredynski's manipulation of theatre positivism contrives a final scene in which Herod declaims the lines of Death that were meant to be spoken to himself, to the guard. The guard, during the final "rhetoric of Death," commits suicide; the player Herod, tosses his crown in the corner and delicately places the guard's helmet on his own head as shots from an approaching army sound in the distance. The lure of tyranny, symbolized in the military helmet, lives on and like the Sphinx who terrorized Thebes, devours men. Iredynski's "passion" play juxtaposes many doubles, the play within the play, and the dual parts, which are not opposites, but likes. The drama builds to a paroxysm in which cause is located in an external, supernatural daimon, tyranny.

Hovhannes I. Pilikian discusses the character of Oedipus as a revelation of likes. In Pilikian's view, Oedipus was a madman making "Sophocles" play . . . a political parable on the rise and fall of a bloody tyrant." Hence, the tragedy is a "Watergate-style coverup of the truth -- the tyrant Oedipus' attempt to conceal his murderous past." In this sense, Sophocles' Oedipus Tyrannus is not an examination of justice and retribution associated with internal causes, but an exposure of the demonic force which is always there. The just punishment of wrongs does not account for the suffering in postmodern passion plays either, since no one is innocent. The
overwhelming effect magnifies crime, violence and oppression to diabolical proportions under conditions severed from meaning, logic or purpose. Vanquished by this power, "a principle of universal mockery," the passion persona discovers that he has lost his passion. The victory goes to the great Warrior in Peter Schumann's Bread and Puppet Theatre's manifesto to the postmodern age.

Schumann's street theatre work, The Great Warrior (1967), performed at the Lincoln Memorial in October of that year, materializes the nature of theatre positivism's interpretation of postmodern tyranny. The great Warrior appears as a seven foot high people-puppet with a head attached to a long blue or purple gown covering an operator whose arms are those of the puppet. He carries a ragged sword in each hand. The most distinguishing feature is his head-helmet. The Warrior's one-piece metallic head is elongated and topped by a crest of spikes. Since 1967, he has appeared in The Cry of the People for Meat. During this piece, after his birth from the union of Mother Earth and Uranos, he kills his father. The Great Warrior is the mythic tale of his destiny to bring death. The theatre piece enacts the story of a king and kingdom who are terrorized by a dragon. Against the wishes of his people, the king engages the Warrior to dispose of the dragon. After killing the dragon, the Warrior turns on the king and kills him as well. Then, he murders everyone in the kingdom. Insatiable, "The great Warrior is all alone. He
turns front and stares at the audience." The Warrior is present at the passion of the persona, too. Sitting with both swords, on which are printed the words "hallelujah," upraised, he presides over the crucifixion.

Stefan Brecht explains that the great Warrior is the excess of life force which destroys itself. In Schumann's "sacral theatre," where life and compassion faintly cling to the few female figures representing mothers of dead soldiers, the great Warrior embodies the cosmic, male tragedy of war. His presence permeates the long silences in which "Sadness is expressed at the suicide of the human race -- almost accepting this as a terrible fact." Like the guard in Nativite -- Moderne, he is more powerful than anyone else and his actions are not the result of rationalized cause and effect, but the impulses of a malevolent god.

The impact of daímôn on the postmodern passion plays affects the total theatrical production including the dramatic style and structure of the texts, view of the passion events and persona, and world view of the playwright. This total vision is prefigured by two other enactments, the piacular ceremonies of Dionysus and the Judaic scapegoat. Like these ancient purification rites, the six theatrical passions intend to be efficacious rituals. The symbolism of the great Warrior and passion persona expand by theatrical positivism's creation of another world on the stage, not by mimesis, but by
metaphysics. In this world "the symbols are transcended, the metaphoric meaning of the stage action is assimilated without question, and communion between stage and audience is complete." In this final stage of theatre positivism, the self-sufficiency of the solitary artist gives way to the collaboration among theatre artists, the playwright, director and actor; consequently, in the passions to be discussed, the visualization or production of the playtext becomes a part of the discussion.

Fernando Arrabal (1932– ), Spanish Moroccan playwright now living in Paris and writing in French, invented the term "panic theatre" in 1962. It reveals a connection with Dionysian rituals since the Greek Pan, companion to Dionysus, furnished the inspiration for Arrabal's theatre movement. This poetic vision is evident in Arrabal's theories about the creative work of the playwright. Like the Greek initiate transported by Dionysian ecstasy, Arrabal views himself as a "medium for outside forces; his dreams, and ultimately his characters as well, control him." Arrabal acquired a director, Victor García, with whom he shares these views and they collaborated in 1966 on a "panic" production of The Automobile Graveyard (1957) in Dijon. Both Arrabal and García approach the script as the basis for spectacle. García "looks upon the theatre as a ritual, a feast and as a means of furthering spectator-actor communication." Their collaboration was called a "modern passion play"
and theatrical liturgy. To Arrabal, the performance provides "a holy place" for "spiritual meditation."  

Like ritual, every action in *Automobile Graveyard* implies a repetition of the same action, a ceremonial pattern or observance. Unlike the rituals of faith, "however, it appears as if the thought . . . has been lost, what remains is the experiential impact of the images at play."  

The first act defines the world of the play. Stacks of abandoned cars locate the action in an automobile salvage yard. Five cars on the front row have burlap curtains instead of windows and in these most of the play's characters live. Each is identified simply by the number of his or her car, except for the seven primary characters who have names. Milos and Dila are the servants who attend to the daily needs of the tenants. They wake them up in the mornings, offer water and chewing gum, pass the chamber pot around and accommodate their sexual urges. The entire play extends through a long night with the passage of time marked only by the number of laps the young athlete, Tiossido, and his trainer, the old woman Lasca, make across the stage. The core of the passion structure is carried in the relationship between Emanou, the passion persona, and his two musician friends, the mute Fodère and Topé. Their business in the first act involves preparations for the nightly concert when they play music for the poor people; dancing to the music keeps the poor people warm during the cold night. Conflict arises between the musicians and the
police who have rules against playing music. When Emanou confides to Dila his birth and parentage, the parallels between their work and the mission of Jesus become apparent. Emanou learned from his mother that he was born in a cow-shed. He was a carpenter's apprentice for his father and worked with him until he was thirty years old and decided to play the trumpet for the people; then his friends joined him.\(^{18}\) The story he tells contains no allusion to the supernatural life of Jesus Christ; the actions are separated from their original meaning as they are in the "Christomaniac" novels and in the works which Ziolkowski calls "fifth Gospels."\(^{19}\)

In the second act, several recognizable events from the Christic passion occur including a betrayal to the police; Emanou's arrest; Fodère's denial and, finally, Emanou's crucifixion across the handles of a bicycle. Two clues in the action suggest Arrabal's reasons for incorporating the passion sequences. First, dramatic attention focuses on Emanou's philosophy of life that justifies goodness. It fascinates Dila and the friends, and they often beg him just to recite it. Emanou explains that "when we're good we experience a great inner joy born of peace of spirit that is revealed to us when we see that we resemble the ideal man."\(^{20}\) He expresses a closed humanistic idea similar to the Sophist's perception of "man as the measure of all things."\(^{21}\) The other insight into the nature of Emanou's "gospel" comes from two scenes
depicting an inversion of Jesus Christ's giving of the first commandment, and an inversion of the last supper with Jesus and his disciples. Instead of a commandment to love God and neighbor, Emanou explains to his friends the law of survival which governs the fascist state's governmental agents for whom crime becomes easy since it is protected by the "intelligence" of the bureaucrat who "always, always, always" knows who is right and wrong. The irony of the passion persona's truths deepens when Emanou confesses to Dila that he has forgotten his recitation on goodness. She berates him by reminding him that this is not the first thing that he has forgotten: "You forget everything. You used to know how to act in a circus, but now you've forgotten. You only know how to play the trumpet now, and we have to count ourselves lucky that you can still do that."

The parody of the last supper accomplishes Arrabal's design to celebrate a new ritual "on the ruins of the old." Emanou steals some almonds from the rich confectioner to share with his friends. He often does this and naively sees nothing wrong. Everyone goes along with the idea and they eat the almonds together with such enjoyment that they imagine they will always remember Emanou when they eat them again. Dila's plan proposes that after "the cops finally get you, every time we eat almonds we'll remember you, and that you used to steal them for us every night." Topé assents that they will "imagine we're giving you some."
Arrabal is aware of his sacrilege. He has inverted the Christian sacrament from an observation of Christ's sacrificial gifts to criminal game-playing, the new ritual. In each instance, the passion structure is transformed into the gratuitous activity of games. The betrayal and arrest project the image of a race, a game of competition.\(^{24}\) The communion of almonds is a game of make believe; the participants in the crucifixion play sadistic games of torture. For example, the car occupants without conscience beat an infant to death during the scourging of Emanou. The nature of Arrabal's passion ritual results from the dissociation between meaning and act by which "Pure play is concerned with itself, or better, is unconcerned: it is only action. The same can be said of aimless games, those games not played for reward but only out of a desire to play."\(^{25}\) The passion desacramentalized merely contributes to the structure for a game.

The idea of "play" stimulates the imagination of directors like Garcia who endeavor to create the theatre's own ritual, a spectator's "feast."\(^{26}\) For Automobile Graveyard, García created a total theatre space in which the audience, seated in swivel chairs, was surrounded by the bodies of old cars.\(^{27}\) Inspired by Artaud, he used the language of theatre, the visual metaphor, to communicate "directly to the senses and thus put the spectator in relation with the 'double' of drama:
something that is felt and cannot be explained through words." In collaboration with Arrabal, Garcia further transcended the aesthetic sanctity of the word and incorporated three other Arrabal texts into the production, Oraison, The Two Executioners, and Solemn Communion. Garcia imitates the festive atmosphere of the traditional passion pageant, but with this difference. He has "stripped . . . its sacred power," the religious meaning, and substituted theatrical qualities of "fluidity" and "undifferentiation." Out of the fragments of Arrabal's inverted rituals, Garcia shapes a theatrical answer to the world's catastrophe.

In the text, the play concludes with Emanou's body on the bicycle brought in by the police who now, along with the other characters, assume the roles of passion doubles: the police, Roman soldiers; Milos, Simon; and Dila, Veronica. Dila rings a bell calling, "It's time to get up." Lasca and Tiossodo enter in reversed roles in which the old woman becomes the athlete all out of breath and Tiossodo, "indefatigable," her trainer. They redefine the time frame -- the passion play becomes futuristic, the imminent, new age dawns. The communion with almonds for the holy elements prepared for this ending since the Hebraic word for almond traditionally announces a "hasty awakening." The characters now enact the familiar station of the cross. Emanou enters on the bicycle-cross; Milos-Simon pushes it across the stage; Dila-Veronica wipes his
face with a cloth. Emanou tries one more time to remember the litany of goodness; he has forgotten it, but it does not matter any more to Dila who kisses him and runs away like an unconcerned child.

In the new age, chance or panic governs everything. Fascist surveillance, brutality, amorality and master-slave relationships have deteriorated the meaning of life. Not even Emanou's simple recitation remains. Arrabal refuses to define even the meaning of panic, saying that it is "non-dogmatic." The meaning must be discerned in the production. In the same way the tragic theology of the wicked God could be expressed only in the tragedy. Like surrealism, panic is a "way of being." 32 The preliminary stage, panic, brings us one step closer to the apotheosis of the great Warrior.

Jerzy Grotowski (1933— ) discovered further means to create theatre rituals by drawing from Greek tragedy's reverence for the "holy actor." R. C. Flickinger deduced that the Greek convention which prohibited murders or suicides from enactment in view of the audience arose from the "sacrosanct" 33 nature of the Greek actor. Grotowski developed this concept into a meta-theatrical figure like the "metafictional" characters June Schlueter describes who are conjured from the artist's own creativity. 34 Similarly, Gabor Mihalyi finds that this ambiguity within the poet's vision dissolves the boundaries of art and thought. 35 In this region Grotowski works as a "theortician-practioner." 36
and founder of the Research Institute of Wroclaw. His energies are directed toward eliminating the "division between theatre and life." Stefan Brecht summarizes the guidelines for Grotowski's theories and work in twelve steps which essentially signify that the theatre practitioner poses human life questions and then proceeds to answer them theatrically, out of theatrical necessity, within a "theatrical mode of creditation," and "theatrical style." Apocalypsis cum figuris (1968) culminates Grotowski's research as it is the "last play by his company that will distinguish between actors and spectators."39

Grotowski employs three views of performance that contribute to his goal of theatre as life. He advocates sketches over the use of improvisation, the role of the director as "tamer" and the role of an audience as "spectator-witness." In describing the current rehearsal practices, Grotowski ridicules improvisations which focus on creating a "work atmosphere" rather than actually working. In an interview, Grotowski sarcastically comments that "Once, perhaps, [improvisation] meant something. Today it is no more than a pretentious word serving as a substitute for work." He prefers to work out of sketches from his personal "external and internal intimacy" and thereby, "make my own life entirely visible." To accomplish exposure, Grotowski searches for spontaneity, that is, the removal of alienation between body, soul, sex
flux which rises from my whole experience . . . ." This end requires a\textit{via negativa} or stripping away process for the actor who must "abandon preconceptions, cliched habits, mimetic reproductions of banal, realistic behavior, and all the 'proper' techniques of breathing, speaking, and moving taught in conventional acting schools."\textsuperscript{40} Ryszard Cieslak epitomizes Grotowski's "holy actor."\textsuperscript{41} After several encounters with Grotowski's methods and attendance at the Polish Lab Theatre workshops and performances, Peter Feldman marvels at the intensity of Cieslak's "passion and creation." In accord with Grotowski's theories, "Cieslak 'burns away' his psychic and physical obstacles and masks, and, thereby, becomes the super actor-athlete." Stefan Brecht observes in Cieslak's performance no movements that do not involve his whole physical "incarnation."\textsuperscript{42}

The director relates to the holy actor as a "tamer;" the audience as a "witness" of an "authentic act." The opposite of the director as tamer is the "fraternal" director who cultivates a "feeling of belonging to a creative community." The tamer forcefully and with authority and complete responsibility for creating, "extracts' the creative life. To this act of authenticity, Grotowski invites those who know their need of theatre. The artists should "find spectators for whom the kind of work we create is truly necessary." And since Grotowski
views the performance situation as a meeting between actors and spectators, rather than entertainment for an "undifferentiated public," he directs productions for audiences of whom "many are called but few are chosen."

The coup de theatre is **Apocalypsis cum figuris** in which the passion of Christ is relived in terms of a second coming, that of the holy actor. Northrop Frye explains the conception of apocalypse as "the whole of nature as content of an infinite and eternal living body." This is appropriate to Grotowski's idea of a mystical conflict embodied in the theatrical performance. "Cum figuris," meaning "with bodies," refers particularly to the actors who enact the Grand Inquisitor—Peter and the passion persona—Simpleton. Their story begins in act one with a voice singing: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you ..... For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." Scattered over the stage floor are the bodies of the actors wallowing in a revelry. Pantomimic actions follow involving passion imagery such as bread, wine, blood and the profanation of them. As if compelled by the images, the actors begin to distribute parts among themselves. They choose Simon Peter, Mary Magdalene, Judas, Lazarus, John and finally, a naive one, the Simpleton as the passion persona. He resists the part, but they taunt him; he improvises a horse-dance in Dionysian rhythms and accepts the role. The company
"rehearse" several scenes from the passion ending with the wake for Lazarus. The Simpleton has been entranced and joins in the play by commanding "Lazarus, I say unto thee, arise." The action is joined with quoted material from the Book Job, Revelation, Song of Songs, The Brothers Karamazov, T.S. Eliot's two poems, "Ash Wednesday" and "Gerontion," and Simone Weil's La Connaissance Surnaturelle. Part one ends in a scene of total darkness in which the audience can hear someone walking about on the stage; therefore, "One becomes aware at that moment of the meaning of the Second Coming. The audience is made to experience a great presence, august and yet available, close."

The lights come up on the setting for the Last Supper. The "meal" becomes a cannibalism, the tearing apart through verbal and physical abuse of the passion persona. Some of the company begin barking "fresh meat for sale." Peter, the Grand Inquisitor accuses the persona by reminding him that "Instead of the old stern law, man was himself to decide in the freedom of his heart what is good and what is evil, with your image and your likeness before him. But did it never occur to you that he would eventually reject your image and your truth if you laid on him so terrible a burden as freedom of choice?" The persona, alone on the stage, delivers a lengthy soliloquy: "My house is a decayed house;" therefore, one "Gives too late What's not believed in, or if still believed, In memory only,
[a] reconsidered passion... To lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition. I have lost my passion... I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch...

At the end of the play, in complete darkness, the Grand Inquisitor drives the passion persona from the stage. He tells him that "we are not with you, but with another; that is our secret. We have been not with you, but with another for a long, long time, for many centuries... Go and come no more." Considering seriously the theories of Grotowski, the Apocalypsis cum figuris must suggest a visual metaphor for the actor's passion.

Timothy Wiles' critique of the play repeatedly compares the identity of the actor to the savior role created by Grotowski for him "and suggests that the audience's complicated attitudes of admiration and rejection of the actor is like its attitude toward Christ." Associating the lines of the passion persona with the acting experience supports this conjecture. The body referred to in the opening song is an allusion to the actor's body which he, in playing his part, will "sacrifice" for the audience. The actors on the floor are, in Grotowski's view, revelling in their habits and clichés; García calls them "dirty corners." All their actions are a profanation of reality. The Dionysian ecstacy, emotional euphoria, lures the novice, the inexperienced Simpleton into taking a part. The empty stage, the darkness and the footsteps indicate the "presence of acting" which transcends the actor's body.
In part two the actor is "ingested," according to Arrabal's ideas, that is, made visible to the audience, exposed. The company begins to hawk his body like merchandise. With this image, they insinuate pandering to audience "appetites" or taste. And finally, in the passion persona-actor's final speech, he complains that acting is corrupted, being only recall or memory, a "reconsidered passion." The actor loses the truth from fear; and he loses his ability to "terrorize" by excessive introspection and talking about his work. Consequently, the actor has no depth of feeling or any of the senses with which he works. The tyranny of the audience, which Lamont calls the "reign of mediocre reality," drives the actor from the stage. Grotowski resents the power for which he "must dance like a dog around the all-powerfull opinion-makers." The passion persona, desacramentalized, is absorbed into the holy actor who, in turn is vanquished by his double, the tyranny of opinion by which "no one can impose his credo upon the others. Consequently, everyone has his own code of life, his own interpretation of everything in his world, his own religion or his own irreligion." Grotowski's theatre career demonstrates that the actor, even the artist, cannot survive. He arrived at this conclusion through a metaphysical inquiry into the nature of theatre. His holy actor, like the passion persona, sacrifices in vain for any unholy world.
Also turning away from attempts at ritual, Edward Bond (1935— ) and Amos Kenan (1939— ) advocate a different kind of efficacy. Using the power of public opinion, they instigate political protest. Bond and Kenan exemplify prophetic voices of the theatre who warn the postmodern world of an unchecked escalation of militarism. Like the cry of Judas in *Dark Hours*, their theatre protests the diversionary and escapist arts who say "Peace! Peace! And there is no peace!" Bond, disturbed by the theatre's loss of efficacy, considers political theatre a means of achieving relevancy once again since "art has lost ... that controlling function today .... It is evidence of a dangerous internal flaw in society." For this reason, Bond accepted two commissions from political groups in 1970, The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and members of an anti-Apartheid group commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre. *Black Mass* (1971) opened at the Lyceum Theatre in London with David Jones of the Royal Shakespeare Company as the director. *Passion* (1971), written for CND, was directed by William Gaskill's assistant at the Royal Shakespeare, Bill Bryden. The play was produced in 1971 for three thousand people at the Main Grandstand of the Alexander Palace Racetrack. Amos Kenan's play *Jesus, as Seen by His Friends* (1973), was produced at a small experimental theatre in Tel Aviv, performing seven nights before the Government Board of Film and Theatre Censorship forcibly closed the play and banned.
the script. Appealing to the Supreme Court that the play only reflected modern Israeli society, Kenan protested, but lost. He plans to rewrite the play and title it, *Spartacus, as Seen by His Friends.*

The passion persona in each of the three plays expresses the protest of the playwright against military abuses. In fact, Bond played the mute role of Christ in *Black Mass.* A twelve-minute piece, the play is set inside a Catholic church in South Africa. While the South African Prime Minister is attending mass, a soldier enters to report a military conflict between the population, Kaffirs, and the British "lads." Intermingled with words from the mass, the Prime Minister orders the Inspector soldier to pass out arms. The Inspector withdraws the rifles from under the altar with a request to the priest, "Could you say a prayer for the boys while you're at it, padre?" He returns shortly to announce the score, 69 - 0. The priest and Prime Minister go out and the Christ comes down from the cross. Starting to speak, but changing his mind, he drops something instead into the Prime Minister's communion wine and climbs back up on the cross. The Minister drinks the poisoned wine and dies. Hurrying in, the Inspector tracks down the murderer to the man on the cross. The priest then asks the Christ to "Go, and I hope you find somewhere you can fit it." To fill the empty space on the cross, the Inspector arranges to have a military watch mount the cross, "A young policeman . . .
dressed in a fascist-style uniform with an armband." Reassured, the priest continues with the mass. He feels much safer, since "There's someone up there watching over me and I can trust and rely on him."

**Passion** was produced at Easter for CND's Festival of Life. In four short scenes, the playlet assumes the style of a fairy tale and begins with a narrator, an old woman and her dead son. The son speaks for the mother and describes his own death: "They have killed my son. They took my only son away.... They said people will welcome you everywhere and you will be called their friend. They said you will destroy the people's foes and punish the wicked.... One morning he was lying in a ditch half mad. He heard the wind blowing and he thought it was calling his name. He lifted his head and was shot in the face." The narrator explains that the woman will go to the Queen's court and ask for her son back. The Queen, Prime Minister and Magician are discussing the invention of a bomb and the unveiling of the dead soldier's statue. Bond's anti-royalist satire depicts the Queen as a vacuous woman. She is unable even to make up her mind whether to offer the minister "a drink/tea/coffee/health beverage/cocoa/cigarette/smoke/twist/roll/wad/fix/or burn?" Military science is satirized in the line by the Magician in response to the Queen's question about his family. He replies that "they left me.... All except my son -- he was one and a half and too little to walk.... I left
him playing happily on the mat in front of the fire and I gave him a box of matches, a loaded gun, several large plastic bags and an open razor to amuse himself with. When I came back from the lecture -- which was called Science and the Responsible Citizen . . . I found the little chap had had an accident." The Queen makes a ridiculous speech and then pushes the buttons to unveil the monument; she discharges the bomb instead. She then unveils the monument as the old woman enters. The monument is a crucified pig on a cross. The Old Woman persuades herself that it is her son, though somewhat changed because of his military career. At this moment, a retaliatory bomb explodes over the city. The Narrator describes the devastation: "Everything was burned or broken and blown away." Christ and Buddha enter on their way to Christ's crucifixion. They see that the cross already has its victim. Christ cries that he is "too late. I can't be crucified for men because they've already crucified themselves, wasted their life in misery, destroyed their homes and run like madmen over the fields stamping on the animals and plants and everything that lived. They've lost their hope, destroyed their happiness, forgotten mercy and kindness and turned love into suspicion and hate . . . . How can I suffer for men when they suffer so much. What are my sufferings compared to theirs?"
Bond's comment on the human condition in each of the plays emphasizes the inaneness of human self-destruction. In particular, world power figures, whether queens, scientists or military officers, execute their duties as if playing games. In addition, religious representatives such as Christ, Buddha and Catholic priests, have no hope to offer, but seem intimidated by the tyrannous, oppressive practices of the technological "gamesters." The passion persona exits in both plays with a gesture of futility. Although stylistically different, Bond's plays reflect a similar vision to that in Arrabal's play. They present postmodern as a fearful, foolish child-adult, unaware of the consequences of his actions. The passion persona is either a losing participant in the game, as in *Automobile Graveyard*, or an outsider who does not know how to play. In both situations, the playwright ejects him from the "game."

Kenan's theatre piece, composed of nineteen vignettes, revolves around a man on the cross. The scenes change without a break and he remains onstage. The center of attention in each new setting, the man on the cross assumes a new role each time as different characters address him. Sometimes he represents a "self-portrait" in an art gallery; at other times, he interacts with different family members who speak to him as son, father or husband. The persona metamorphosizes to suit each scene in the manner of "immortal art." The play satirizes the Israeli adulation
of the army; therefore, the episodes sardonically depict mothers bragging about their war dead and soldiers ushering civilians out of their "enemy" house before blowing it up. In one of the comic scenes, a housewife praises the efficiency of the army that rehabilitated her son who "turned out to be inefficient. I called in the army and now he's really efficient. And in general, ever since the army has taken control of everything, everything is more efficient . . . . Ever since the army took control of the laundry, the sheets are white, I am happy. Happiness is more efficient, too. But what pleases me most is that the army has become a god. Now god is more efficient too." At night the persona dismounts the cross and walks among the tombs of lost symbols on the earth in order to "caress a tombstone and ... weep, . . . . He picks flowers and muses to himself, "I am seen but cannot see . . . . I am the gaping hollow of darkness, a smile hovering in the night . . . . I agonize all night and the night is endless . . . . I never was and I never will be . . . . I am immortal art, the illusion of the moral that believes it has its tale . . . .

O, Lord, Lord, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Bond's and Kenan's plays together make the statement that everyone, leaders and the people alike, worship and adore the new god of war. Producing their plays at protest rallies or in anti-government experimental theatres, the playwrights aimed at creating a theatrical protest and inflaming the audience to change certain military abuses.
Within the people's protest, Bond and Kenan believe, resides the possibility of redemption from self-annihilation. Vanquished by the sophisticated, universalized essence of tyranny, the passion persona represents an obsolete armature which must be discarded. The persona in Kenan's play repeats the cry of Jesus Christ from the cross three times during the play: once in a pun on the Hebraic word for "forsaken," so that the line can mean, "My God, God why hast thou divided me?" The Greek _sparagmos_, that is, the tearing apart of the god's body, continues to be a dynamic of the postmodern passion play. Its meaning, however, in Bond's two plays and in Kenan's series of vignettes applies not to the impotent persona, but to the earth and humanity who have put themselves on the cross. The final lines from _Passion_ spoken by the dead soldier contain Bond's argument: "I have learned that a pig is a form of lamb And power is impotence. Madmen, You are the fallen!"64 The destroyers will destroy themselves, and like the Grumbler in _The Last Days of Mankind_, Bond asks that this be a form of atonement.

Peter Schumann's Bread and Puppet Theatre, established in 1962, represents another style in which the postmodern playwright has endeavored to create an efficacious theatre experience. The principle out of which the group performs has been to give the people something basic, "basic as bread."65 Schumann combines religious topics with political messages; war imagery recurs frequently,
especially during the Vietnam War. The company of unpaid performers has produced works internationally at demonstrations and for non-theatre audiences. In 1968 the company agreed to become a resident troupe at Goddard University in Vermont. The first performance of Stations of the Cross was given at Goddard on Easter 1972. In May of that spring, the company performed in New York at St. Clement's Church. Two works preceded this passion play with segments of a passion play: Crucifixion (1963) and The Cry of the People for Meat (1969). The structure of the Stations of the Cross follows the familiar fourteen stations of the cross observed by the Catholic Church with a few alterations. The performance lasts approximately seventy minutes with a thirty minute prologue-pantomime representing the first chapter of the Gospel of John, and forty minutes for the stations. A twelve member chorus accompanies the performance singing predominantly from the Sacred Harp, a Baptist hymnal dating back to the 1800s. Consideration for the choice of theatre material that would be easily recognized by the general public guided Schumann and the performers in their improvisations from which Stations of the Cross evolved.

Besides the text, the production style also means to identify with the working class, non-theatre going public. The performances are facilitated by signals such as ringing bells that indicate each new scene along with a narrator who displays a drawing of the scene.66
effect of a "poor" theatre, the actors make their own sound effects and the "behind the scenes" work is done in front of the audience. Schumann avoids any traditional theatre spaces, preferring to perform in parks, churches or garages. Consequently, none of the usual theatre machinery, stagelights, front curtains or constructed scenery detracts from The Bread and Puppet Theatre's intimate relationship with the audience. In fact, often the audience is served freshly baked bread after a performance. Summarizing his philosophy, Schumann compares the theatre to eating: "It is . . . like bread, more like a necessity." In Schumann's view, the "theatre arts have been separated from the stomach" too long; and they must be reunited in theatre as a "form of religion" which "preaches sermons" and "builds up a self-sufficient ritual where the actors try to raise their lives to the purity and ecstasy of the actions in which they participate." 67

Thus, the theatre language of Stations of the Cross represents a literal world. The language of puppets bypasses psychology, and characterization for essential action. 68 Through visual metaphor, Schumann expresses his desire to "work directly into and out of the interior of people. A demonic thing." 69 Although Schumann's metaphysics focus on the universal conflicts between life and non-life forces, his metaphors are simple and direct. the destructive power of tyranny that is an "excess of life force" which annihilates indiscriminately, like the plague
described by Artaud, appears in the form of the great Warrior puppet.

The Bread and Puppet Theatre's enactment of the Stations of the Cross literalizes the events of the passion for an audience it presumes has lost the memory of the original meaning; therefore, the passion play reinterprets the passion. Preparing for the new apocalyptic interpretation, the prologue to the passion play pantomimes an inverted version of the prologue to the Gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him; and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness; and the darkness did not comprehend it." A spheroid puppet, Earth, and an actress who shares the role of the passion persona with an eighteen-foot high puppet, enter for the first act in the prologue. As they spin together at the center of the playing space, an actor brings in a large face, the "face of God," which represents God's presence for "In the beginning . . . God." The persona covers the face with a white sheet, a shroud or sign of mourning. Another performer enters with a chair and places twelve pieces of paper with simple words printed on them in the chair: "the Word." A worker enters carrying a sack which he pounds with a large hammer, causing a "cloud of dust" to rise from it. His actions may
be associated with a literal but noncontextual interpretation of "nothing came into being." Accompanied by the sounds of horses, an allusion to the horses of the Apocalypse, Death enters. Death, at the reins of a death-cart pulled by two actor-horses, gathers up models of dead soldiers, women and civilians which are scattered around the area. Before exiting, he whips the chair with the words on it: "the darkness did not comprehend it." The ending of the prologue departs from the biblical imagery. Three crowd puppets enter and slowly walk by the chair, symbolizing the "throne" of the world, and make a gesture of farewell toward it; the persona's arms are raised above her head as she watches their actions. Three other men, wearing military helmets enter, and tie a white handkerchief to the chair, an image of the earth's surrender.

This prologue places the passion within the context of an inverted passion, one which prophesies the death of the world. At this point, the first station begins: "He is condemned to death." The soldiers wearing the helmets shoot the chair and push it over. When they exit, the persona attends to the chair, righting it, and another actress carrying flowers stands on it. Suddenly, they are joined by a large, grey cross lowered from the ceiling. It resembles both a prehistoric beast and military aircraft. A bell signals the second station: "He is made to bear His cross." The person pulls the cross to the ceiling with the pulley while a large, yellow puppet sits pointing at
him. The puppet represents Judas who traditionally wears yellow. The third and fourth stations introduce the Mother puppet who peeks from behind the backdrop. The bell rings for the fifth station: "Simon helps him carry his cross." A businessman character enters on a bicycle, but declines to help him carry the cross; looking at his watch, he hurries off. The sixth station begins: "Veronica wipes his tears." In this segment, a table placed in front of the chair with a bucket of fire on it, becomes a metaphor for the "last supper." The actress with the flowers sits at the table, staring into the fire. Meanwhile, the sheet is removed from the "face of God," revealing two plastic bags of water attached under the eyes: God weeps. Without changing scenes, the exit of the flower lady is followed by the entrance of a performer in head-mask and crown, a king. An actor-dog enters waving a white handkerchief which the king tears in half. These sequences with the fire, tears and the dog's surrender compose the most complex images of the passion. They reiterate the implications of the prologue; the world verges on destruction with the final meal of fire, and the destruction by world power. Schumann probably intends for the dog to represent nations, an image described in the Psalms. In all biblical references to dogs, they represent the greedy law of survival.

The seventh and eighth sequences follow the traditional stations acknowledging the second fall and Jesus' speech to the women of Jerusalem. In the eighth
scene, however, the great Warrior enters and sits at the table. The eighteen-foot Christ puppet is brought in and mounted on a ladder. The ninth station depicts a greeting between the Mother puppet and the Christ puppet. During the tenth station, "He is stripped of his garments." A performer retrieves a pair of socks and tie from the persona. The bell for the eleventh station rings: "He is nailed to the cross." The chorus sings "Thou man of grief remember me." The plane-cross is lowered so that the Christ puppet can be tied to it. An actor puts on a red cape as the chorus sings "And am I born to die?" for the twelfth station. The final stations are innovations in the traditional pattern. All the performers lay their puppets and puppet-heads on top of the cross with the Christ puppet. After a few seconds, the company stands to sing "Hallelujah." Gradually more and more noises sound until the clamorous dissonance abruptly ends.

With the visual metaphors, the pageant enactment that resembles a medieval cycle drama, and the festival atmosphere in which the performers and public "commune" together, Schumann creates a postmodern passion play in which the voice of humanity can be heard asking the question, "And am I born to die?" The Greek fatalism emerges from the images of death in Schumann's passion. The Stations of the Cross, without embellishment, finds the simplest metaphor that will communicate a warning to men that uncontrolled power represented by the king and great
Warrier destroys. The passion persona serves this purpose. Atonement comes from the voices of the people, the actors without their masks and the audiences answering their own question by singing an "hallelujah," the essence of the life-force. Schumann does not blame any one cause for the impending doom; he simply states that an excess of "hallelujah," symbolized by the two swords of the great Warrior and the singing at the end of Stations of the Cross that becomes unharmonious and too loud, inevitably changes to perversion.

The theatrical passion play manifests, through its own concrete language and visual metaphor, an apotheosis of tyranny. The passion persona represents the passion of persons who are vanquished by forms of tyranny producing panic, the terror of mediocrity, adulation of militarism, stupid misuse of military power and finally, the intrinsic quality of excessive life-force itself. Resurrecting the tragic theology of the malevolence that is always there embodied in the daímôn, the postmodern passions warn of an Other loose in the world, ravaging the earth and afflicting mankind with senselessness. The common metaphor among the theatrical passion plays visualizes the crucifixion of mankind on a cross symbolizing tyranny. Bicycles and automobiles in the panic world are the crosses that are replacing human relationships and tyrannizing by isolation, obsolescence, proliferation and demeaning machinery. What is
man crucified on a bicycle or hiding in abandoned cars? The world is unholy, Grotowski's Grand Inquisitor claims; even the "holy actor" exits, after his crucifixion stretched out on the stage floor. In futility, he admits that "my house is corrupt." Bond's blatant metaphors of the cross with the crucified destroyer-pig and the military sentry represent the tyranny of militarism. In Kenan's play, the man on the cross suffers indignation and persecution from his own family and countrymen who have capitulated to army "efficiency."

The postmodern playwrights' vision insists that theatre is the prophetic voice which can issue the warnings, transform destructive attitudes and policies and demonstrate by visual metaphor the incarnations of tyranny. Political theatre must be direct, visual, brief and break down the barriers between actor and audience. If the message is not heeded, then the fate of the vanquished persona will overtake mankind as well.
Endnotes

Chapter V


2 Hovhannes Pilikian, "Greek Tragedy in Contemporary Performance," Theatre Quarterly, 9, No. 35 (1979), 55-68.


5 Brown and Seitz, 72.

6 Brown and Seitz, 72.

7 Stefan Brecht, "Peter Schumann's Bread & Puppet Theatre," The Drama Review, 14 No. 3 (1970), 77, 80-81.

8 Styan, p. 145.


12 Podol, p. 23.
13 Arata, p. 38.
15 Arata, p. 74.
17 Arata, p. 7.6
19 Ziolkowski, pp. 227, 234.
20 Arrabal, p. 103.
22 Arrabal, 102.
23 Arrabal, pp. 146-148.
24 Arata, p. 87.
25 Arata, p. 87.
26 Donahue, p. 82.
27 Arata, p. 73.
28 Donahue, p. 40.
29 Arata, p. 38.
30 Arata, pp. 79, 81.
31 Arrabal, pp. 156-157.
32 Donahue, p. 24.


40 Fumaroli, 173-174, 177.

41 Wiles, p. 146.


43 Fumaroli, 175-177.


Piizyna, 41.

Lamont, 87.

Puzyna, pp. 44-45.

Ludwik Floszen, "Apocalypsis cum figuris," The Drama Review, 14, No. 1 (Fall, 1969), 171.

Puzyna, p. 45.

Wiles, p. 165.

Garcia, p. 76.

Lamont, 88.

Fumaroli, 173.

Vycinas, p. 19.

Marquis, p. 103.


Coult, pp. 18-19.


Edward Bond, Passion, Plays and Players, 18, No. 9 (June 1971), pp. 66-68.
63 Amos Kenan, *Jesus, As Seen by His Friends*, *Drama and Theatre, 11, No. 3* (Spring 1973), 150, 158.

64 Bond, *Passion*, p. 69.

65 Peter Schumann, "Bread and Puppets,"

*The Drama Review, 14, no. 3* (1970), p. 35.


67 Schumann, p. 35.

68 Brecht, "Peter Schumann's Bread & Puppet Theatre," p. 44.


70 Towsen, p. 58.

71 John 1:1-5, NAS.

72 Towsen, pp. 60-64.


74 Towsen, p. 65.

75 Psalm 59: 6-8, NAS.

76 Towsen, pp. 67-70.
Conclusion

The Meaning of the Vanquished Passion Persona

As a consequence of modern culture's alienation from God described by the death of God theologians as the experience of the absence of God, a pattern of loss is discernible in modern and postmodern passion plays. The examination of three modes of passion play, the literary, historical and theatrical, reveals the nature of a reductive trend in the treatment of a passion persona. During the 1920s, a dynamic double opposes the persona and effectively evicts him to a spiritualized world. In the postmodern period, the persona swings towards a profound finiteness that represents human impotence. A new double, the essence of tyranny in multiple guises, dominates the passion plays and successfully banishes the persona from the passion event. The conflict has become mankind's struggle for survival against his own tyrannous powers.

The four-fold nature of this pattern is revealed in the personal world vision of the playwright who de-dramatizes, divides, desacramentalizes and discards the Christ figure. In the literary vision of the passion persona, the loss of God is manifest by dividing the figure of Jesus Christ into two natures, the divine and human, and interpreting only his divine spirit. This procedure is implemented by de-dramatizing techniques: reduction of the
persona's visibility and viability within the dramatic action. The spirit of Christ, detached from the incarnation, and applied to all humanity affects a divinization of man that is expressed in the manifestos of the 1920s avant garde. Encountering the sheer power of absolute spirit, the historical vision of the passion persona presents anarchy gaining momentum on a self-destructive course. In an effort to regain a unified view of the world, the theatrical vision of the persona recreates the passion imagery in a humanistic theatre world. The stage is the altar on which the actor sacrifices his body for the audience-god. The director "fathers" his creation and presents it as a new world or being-in-the-world. The spirit of the playwright, the man without hope, infects this world with an obsession of death or non-being. The primary end of this reduction in the meaning of the passion reverses the understanding of salvation.

Salvation from human despair is accomplished by a redemptive gift in the Christus victor or Joban view of atonement. The essential element signifies the acceptance of suffering as a gift from a loving God. Relinquishing self-justification, the indignation that Paul Diel identifies as "the secret evil which corrodes life; the mythical monster who ravages the world and destroys souls," Job achieves personhood through a relationship with God. The literary vision represents a change from
redemption to cosmic, harmonious reconciliation as humanity evolves towards a divine status: solving his problems by his own creativity, beauty and mystery. Reconciliation changed to a hope that salvation can be achieved by reunion between men; thus, the historical view of the passion persona issues a call for the union of humanity in a universal brotherhood. By the advent of the postmodern period, the possibility of innocent suffering no longer exists because tyranny is the new universal. Since the postmodern plays have rejected innocence for amorality, the common bond among mankind disappears and with it brotherhood. Embodying the effects of personal disintegration, the passion persona suffers rejection having been vanquished by the powers of tyranny. The only hope for salvation from world calamity in the playwright's vision lies in the voice of protest from the audience; no other alternative exists but demonic apocalypse.

Jesus Christ, the mirror, usurped by theatre, the apocalyptic mirror, reflects an image of de-humanized man parodying himself. Positivistic theatre accomplishes this transformation by annoting itself an equivalent of reality, i.e., rejecting the distinctions between art and life. The theatre ultimately proposes to expand the philosophy of man as the measure of all things, to the theatre artist as the measurer, the necessity of society. At first, only the poet's words were sacred, but now the total theatrical act intends to be a sacred feast at which
the people "ingest"² the theatre's world. The playwright, director and actor reconstruct a system from their fragmented visions that does not resolve their alienation, but concretizes it in order that they may reject it again. Grotowski's holy actor, Arrabal's panic theatre, the protest tracts of Bond and Kenan and the puppets of Schumann all represent a rejection of mimetic theatre by the artist. Life is tyranny for him; therefore, the dialectic of warring opposites disintegrates before a multiplicity of tyrannous "likes." The theatre is filled with dualities that have been absorbed into the human condition: the actor and his real identity; the mutual identities of oppressor and oppressed, master and slave, man and woman, innocence and guilt, birth and murder, life and death. The sameness of the positivistic theatre presents a new dichotomy, the ceremony of act without meaning. The persona embodies the absurd man who does not know why he does the things he does.

Reminders of his humanity become ironic. The face of Cieslak which twitches in pain and grins with pleasure simultaneously suggests a possessed man rather than the "spontaneous flux"³ of life. The compulsion of the playwright to expose verbally or visually human body fluids is also ironic. Arrabal often includes scenes, like the one in Automobile Graveyard, which are communions of the chamber pot; the link between human beings is reduced to the common needs to defecate and urinate. Sex and semen,
having lost their meaning in a world where children are murdered, effects shock or parody. The motives which inspired Peter Nichols to write a drama about adultery and call it *Passion Play*, also prompted Bond and Kenan to allude to the passion persona as one who masturbates. Finally, the tears in two plastic bags hanging from the patchwork-quilt robe of the actress-Christ in *Stations of the Cross* represent the last human reservoir. Why then, should he "dance" encased in the body of an eighteen-foot tall puppet with an expression as impassive as death?

Oedipus answers "with this hand" and by the exaltation of his own self-mutilation, he experiences release from torment. The postmodern "meditation on the cross" is a reflection on man's martyrdom self-inflicted. It reflects the intolerable existence in a word made by chance which produces panic men. Garcia's resurrection scene in *Automobile Graveyard* and the resurrection of the puppeteers in *Stations of the Cross* are the signals through the flames from the messengers of misfortune who once recounted the death of Jocasta or Job's children with words like "I only am escaped alone to tell thee." Rudolph Bultman describes the passion of Jesus Christ as "a cosmic event, in which the believers participate through dying and rising again in Christ; and Christ is the head of a new humanity . . . ." The Oberammergeau Passion Play's final chorus expresses this idea, "We die to live in you."
Without the passion persona, the meaning of the resurrection scenes declines into pastiche which resembles more the proverb "Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die."

The last play by Stephen Phillips, *Armageddon* (1915), includes an epilogue in hell: "The play closes with Satan's arms spread out as in a crucifixion -- a symbol of the play's message; the victor and the vanquished perish in violence, and civilization will be destroyed by inhuman methods." The non-human images of chaos in the modern and postmodern passion plays range from the trance of the white heron, the cynicism of desert madness, the shadow of Satan, fanatic nationalism, mass hysteria, the superhuman will to destroy, wrecked cars, Grand Inquisitor, and military weapons to the great warrior. The effect of the playwrights' projection of the cause of evil onto external objects makes man himself a vanquished thing. Both Martin Buber and Reinhold Niebuhr discuss this "homelessness" of human beings. In the Christian view of man expounded by Niebuhr, the cause of evil is man's rebellion against his "creatureliness" or made in the image of God-ness. Through this denial, man negates his own human personality which is essentially the freedom to act. Without action, what kind of consummation of sacraments or "covenant of Absolute and concrete" is celebrated by the vanquished passion?

Whereas the meaning of *pati*, the Latin root for passion, signified suffering for Christ the victim and
victor, it now seals the passion with symbols of waiting. Not the kind of expectancy with which the community greeted the passion pageant, but lonely solitude. In 1920, Yeats' Christ cries from the depths of his loneliness; and in 1973, the Jesus created by Kenan mourns with the same lament that questions the Oedipal darkness, "Why have you forsaken me?" In Bond's story of the Christ who wanders and waits, the passion persona's double is the worm of death who sets out "to crawl around the earth" in search of a happy man, while Jesus waits entombed beneath the earth. From his vanquishment, we can hear him inquire with the tragic voice of Job, "If a man dies, may he live again? All my weary days I would endure, I would wait till my relief come."
Endnotes

Conclusion


2 Arata, p. 84.

3 Fumaroli, p. 174.

4 Artaud, p. 13.


6 Job 1:16, NAS.

7 Gowda, p. 42.

8 Daisenherger, Oberammergau Passion Play 1980, p. 112.


APPENDIX

The following chronological list of plays were consulted in a survey reading of modern dramas representing diverse poetic visions of the Christic passion. With two exceptions, all of the plays are in English translation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PLAYWRIGHT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Calvary</td>
<td>Laughton Osborn</td>
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<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>Brand</td>
<td>Henrik Ibsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>Caesar's Apostacy</td>
<td>Henrik Ibsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>Emperor and Galilean</td>
<td>Henrik Ibsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Passion Play (unfinished)</td>
<td>Bernard Shaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>August Strindberg</td>
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<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>The Lamb and the Beast</td>
<td>August Strindberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Passing of the Third Floor Back</td>
<td>Jerome K. Jerome</td>
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<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>Major Barbara</td>
<td>Bernard Shaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Tidings Brought to Mary</td>
<td>Paul Claudel</td>
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<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Madman or Saint</td>
<td>Jose Echecaray</td>
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<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>The Terrible Meek</td>
<td>Charles Rann Kennedy</td>
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<td>1915</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
<td>John Masefield</td>
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<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Humanity</td>
<td>Walter Hasenclever</td>
</tr>
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1920  **Calvary**  W. B. Yeats
1920  **Crucifixion (in German)**  Lothar Schreyer
1920  **White Savior**  Gerhart Hauptmann
1924  **The Story Brought by Brigit**  Lady Gregory
1924  **Dark Hours**  Don Marquis
1925  **The Tower**  Hugo von Hofmannsthal
1925  **The Trial of Jesus**  John Masefield
1927  **The Play of the Imitation of Christ**  Max Mell
1928  **Barabbas**  Michel de Ghelderode
1928  **Women at the Tomb**  Michel de Ghelderode
1928  **Dear Judas**  Robinson Jeffers
1929  **The Drama of the Passion**  Armand Godoy
1929  **The Rite of the Passion**  Charles Williams
1931  **Resurrection**  W. B. Yeats
1933  **The Hangman**  Pär Lagerkvist
1935  **Murder in the Cathedral**  T. S. Eliot
1938  **The Way of the Cross**  Henri Gheon
1939  **Joan at the Stake**  Paul Claudel
1940  **The Iceman Cometh**  Eugene O'Neill
1943  **The Man Born to Be King**  Dorothy Sayers
1946  **The Just Vengeance**  Dorothy Sayers
1947  **The First Among the Unafraid**  Mercer G. Johnston
1953  **Waiting for Godot**  Samuel Beckett
1955  **Christ on Trial**  Diego Fabbri
1956  **Christ in the Concrete City**  P. W. Turner
1957  The Automobile Graveyard  Fernando Arrabal
1958  Christ's Comet  Christopher Hassall
1959  The Window  André Obey
1962  Akropolis (an adaptation)  Jerzy Grotowski
1962  Afore Night Come  David Rudkin
1963  The Constant Prince  Jerzy Grotowski
(an adaptation)
1964  The Passion of Josef D.  Paddy Chayefsky
1965  The Royal Hunt of the Sun  Peter Shaffer
1968  Apocalypsis cum figuris  Jerzy Grotowski
1968  Passion of General Franco  Armand Gatti
(in French)
1969  Jesus Christ Superstar  Andrew Lloyd-Webber and
Tim Rice
1971  Godspell  Michael Tebelak and
Stephen Schwartz
1971  Passion  Edward Bond
1971  Black Mass  Edward Bond
1972  Stations of the Cross  Peter Schumann
1973  And They Put Handcuffs on the Flowers  Fernando Arrabal
1973  Jesus, as Seen by His Friends  Amos Kenan
1975  Cathedral of Ice  James Schevill
1978  The Transfiguration of Benno Blimpie  Albert Innaurato
1980  Passion Play  Peter Nichols
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Major Field: Speech Communication, Theatre, and Communication Disorders

Title of Thesis: The Vanquished Christ of Modern Passion Drama

Date of Examination: 19 December 1983

Approved:

Bill J. Harlow
Major Professor and Chairman

William Cole
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