MYTHIC THEMES AND LITERARY ANALOGUES
IN LOWELL'S *PROMETHEUS BOUND*

APPROVED:

Lloyd N. Jeffrey
Major Professor

George D. Hendricks
Minor Professor

E. S. Clifton
Director of the Department of English

Robert B. Toulouse
Dean of the Graduate School

MYTHIC THEMES AND LITERARY ANALOGUES

IN LOWELL'S *PROMETHEUS BOUND*

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the

North Texas State University in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

Carolyn Holford

Denton, Texas

June, 1970

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	LOWELL'S DEVELOPMENT AS A MAN OF LETTERS . . .	8
III.	ROMANTICISM AND REBELLION IN LOWELL'S PROMETHEUS	28
IV.	THE PROMETHEAN MYTHOLOGEM	40
V.	THREE PROMETHEAN DRAMAS	47
VI.	FINAL SPECULATIONS ON THE MEANING OF PROMETHEUS BOUND	75
BIBLIOGRAPHY		86

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

To present a complete portrait of Robert Lowell and his literary art would be to investigate a lifetime of reading and scholarship encompassing an immense scope of world literature, philosophy, religion, and languages--areas of information which may be recalled with facility by Lowell and which are channeled through his historical perspective into his poetry and plays. Because that type of study would exceed limitations of space and time allotted to a thesis, the present study will be concerned primarily with an interpretation of Lowell's derivation of Prometheus Bound as he adapted that play from the Greek playwright Aeschylus' version, with a study of the development of his themes in that play, and with consideration of some of the sources upon which those themes are dependent. Because Lowell's play was produced during a year of extreme, active interest in the forthcoming presidential election, several of the reviewers interpreted that production in the light of the author's own political and personal activities. Later revisions in the book indicate the author's intention to contemplate

universal meanings rather than merely to write a contemporary play.[1]

The first of two specific purposes herein will be to establish that Robert Lowell, having once achieved his reputation as a poet, purposely adapted the Aeschylean play in order to reveal likenesses between ancient and modern man.[2] The method by which he portrayed that similarity was the utilization of a cyclical motif, which is also similar to a Heracleitan flux noted in earlier poetic themes.[3] Secondly, the development of the heroic figure of Prometheus will be considered as one of the poet's archetypal images, representing universal meaning, and briefly traced from the ancient mythologem observable throughout worldwide cultures, reflecting a radical

---

[1]The word "eagle," which had re-inforced an implication of United States' policy, was revised to "vulture," a more traditional translation from the Aeschylean play. See Robert Lowell, Prometheus Bound (New York, 1969), p. 63.

[2]That aspect of Lowell's work was earlier observable by a writer who was among those to compare Lowell's writing to Ezra Pound's. See Donald Carne-Ross, "The Two Voices of Translation," cited in Thomas Parkinson, Robert Lowell: A Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, 1968), p. 158.

[3]Jerome Mazzaro, The Poetic Themes of Robert Lowell (Ann Arbor, 1965), p. 121.

change during the early nineteenth century, and culminating in a quixotic figure in Lowell's twentieth-century derivation of that play originally written by Aeschylus during the fifth century before Christ.

Two other aspects of the role of Prometheus as a hero in literature as it has emerged since the Golden Age of Grecian literature--the role of trickster and that of creator--will be briefly considered, since Lowell's sources very likely include not only those to which Shelley had access when he wrote a lyrical drama about Prometheus, but also a cumulative amount of information discovered through specialized studies during the past century. Consideration has not been given to those aspects of the Promethean figure which have been compared with Satan or with Job,[4] in favor of the earlier, more primitive aspect which Lowell appears to have fused with other characteristic representations. Within this thesis, investigation has focused upon Lowell's classical influences, particularly those derived from the Greek dramatist Aeschylus through Hesiod, and upon Lowell's debt to the younger British Romanticists, Byron and Shelley.

---

[4]Moses Hadas, A History of Greek Literature (New York, 1950), p. 81. Cf. Gilbert Murray, Aeschylus: The Creator of Tragedy (Oxford, 1940), pp. 92-95.

Another problem presented by the present endeavor, in addition to the separation of Lowell's personal and political activities from his artistic ability, has been the task of isolating controversial assessments by popular writers who composed hasty evaluations and who possibly overlooked the merit of his art; consequently, the literary interpretation has necessarily required independent analysis through appraisal of a number of critical opinions based upon the poet's work through the first two decades of writing and through critical reading of his latest works which appear to reflect a modification of tone.[5] The consensus is that he has moved away from his early poetic mode which emphasized Catholic imagery, has returned to traditional forms, but has also experimented successfully with free verse. Marius Bewley, an author who probably has written the most definitive account of Lowell's Catholic viewpoint, sometimes called apocalyptic, describes that early poetry as a "head-on collision between the Catholic tradition and an Apocalyptic Protestant sensibility."[6] Bewley states that in this collision, he sees a "metaphorical impact

---

[5]Lowell's work has received labels of determinist, rationalist, and surrealist, the latter two terms being supported by the poet's own statements.

[6]Marius Bewley, The Complex Fate (London, 1952), pp. 159-160.

of staunchly opposed opposites."[7] Lowell's use of free verse was apparent within his distinctive form of confessional poetry. M. L. Rosenthal, an author who has placed Lowell foremost in a compilation of the British and American poets of renown since World War II, has explicated Lowell's discovery of the confessional mode.[8] Rosenthal concludes that Lowell's use of confessional poetry represents an evolution, or a strengthening period, and that this evolution "suggests that 'confessional' poetry was an impermanent but indispensable phase of Lowell's development."[9] Rosenthal's earlier discussion of Lowell[10] ascribes that trend of the poetry of confession to the influence of the Symbolists, Eliot, and Pound. The selected comments within the next chapter are intended to reflect the trend and the magnitude of the canon of an artist whose work appears to be evolving and whose conscience will not

---

[7] _Ibid_., p. 160.

[8] M. L. Rosenthal, _The New Poets: American and British Poetry Since World War II_ (New York, 1967), pp. 25-78.

[9] _Ibid_., p. 78.

[10] M. L. Rosenthal, _The Modern Poets: A Critical Introduction_ (New York, 1960), p. 226.

allow him to appeal to commercial markets.[11]

Any evaluation within this thesis has necessarily been confined to a minor purpose in correlation with the major premises, which are centered upon an investigation of the possible influences which are suggested by the imagery in Lowell's play Prometheus Bound. Because a study of the organic structure of the play revealed that poetic imagery and themes have been intertwined and that perhaps that organism[12] reflects an undertone of reconciliation of a conflict, rather than despair of modern civilization, the position of this thesis will be that through the medium of drama and the interpolation of Jungian symbolism, Lowell has subordinated his use of an apocalyptic, fire-breathing tone in his earliest poetry.[13] While his sensitivity still voices concern and his vision often appears to foreshadow a prophetic warning, his later writing

---

[11] New York Times, May 21, 1967, Sec. 2, p. 1.

[12] Allen Tate had anticipated Lowell's further development, analyzed his organic method at that time, and observed the nature of his use of Christian symbolism in 1944. See Allen Tate, "Introduction of Land of Unlikeness," cited in Robert Lowell Essays, p. 36.

[13] Neville Braybrooke, "The Poetry of Robert Lowell," Catholic World, CLXXXXVIII (January 7, 1964), 230-237. Cf. John Hollander, Modern Poetry: Essays in Criticism (New York, 1968), pp. 257-258.

does offer vindication and resolution rather than condemnation and pre-occupation with guilt for an American society. To evaluate or explicate the work of a mature writer on the basis of his earlier poetic endeavors seems neither fair nor adequate. A thorough, if not final, investigation of Lowell's canon at present would probably reveal a modification of his social consciousness; consequently, one section of this thesis will include a brief study of Lowell's themes.

CHAPTER II

LOWELL'S DEVELOPMENT AS A MAN OF LETTERS

Robert Lowell's poetry, from its inception, has attracted not only the attention of contemporary writers in America but also a worldwide audience, because of his cosmopolitan interests. One volume of poems entitled Poesie has been compiled and translated into Italian, and other volumes have been published in Great Britain and Canada and have received commentary abroad. Lowell received the signal honor, for an American poet, of being nominated in 1966 for professor of poetry at Oxford.[1] The choice lay between Robert Lowell and Edmund Blunden, and the latter was elected. Stephen Spender has written, "Robert Lowell is an outstanding pioneer extending the frontiers of language, making notable conquests of material which often seems too eccentric for poetry and consolidating it in very strong and compact form."[2]

---

[1] "Electing a Poet," Encounter, XXVI (April, 1966), 51-52.

[2] Stephen Spender, "Robert Lowell's Family Album," New Republic, CXL (June 8, 1959), 17.

Lowell's strong penchant for imagery with diverse possibilities for interpretation probably reflects the influence of Ezra Pound, because of Pound's wide-ranging and sometimes peculiar interests. Hyatt H. Waggoner has credited Robert Lowell with being one of four poets who are responsible for a trend from "modernism" to "modern" poetry, ultimately having been derived from Pound.[3] The last word has not been written about either Eliot's or Pound's influence, although it is generally conceded that Eliot was indebted to Pound[4] and some contemporary scholars have traced all modern poetic influence to Pound,

> the man of whom Carl Sandburg could once say that he was "the best man writing poetry today" while T. S. Eliot, whose direction was so thoroughly different from Sandburg's, could echo Dante's praise of Arnaut Daniel by calling Pound "_il miglior fabbro_," the finest craftsman.[5]

Lowell's and Pound's poetics have been compared in one respect because of the theory of complex imagery, which approaches a

---

[3]Hyatt H. Waggoner, _American Poets: From the Puritans to the Present_ (New York, 1968), p. 563.

[4]Evidence came to light, as noted in 1951, that Pound acted as a critic and editor upon the manuscript of _The Waste Land_. Louise Bogan, _Achievement in American Poetry 1900-1950_ (Chicago, 1951), p. 73.

[5]M. L. Rosenthal, _A Primer of Ezra Pound_ (New York, 1960), p. 563.

definition used by psychologists.[6] Another similarity to Pound's work has been noted more often since Lowell has moved away from Catholic imagery. G. S. Fraser has adequately described Pound's poetic theory, as it is relevant at this point:

> It is because of the "scientific," the anthropological function of poetry that the exceptions play in it a significant part, not unlike that played in medicine by pathology. . . it is a special function of the arts, of poetry, to render what is unique and unrepeatable about the individual: "No science save the arts will give us the requisite data for learning in what ways men differ."[7]

Since the outlook of varied cultures has been stimulated by Pound's direction of other modern poets--namely Eliot and Yeats--that influence is one of the facets of Lowell's writing which will be explored within this study. Lowell's use of the "conflict of opposites" in his early poetry also appears to reveal a similarity to Pound's complex imagery, although it could also reflect his reading of William Empson's Seven Types of Ambiguity,[8] in which the seventh type of ambiguity "involves both the anthropological idea of opposite and the psychological idea of context, so that it must be approached warily." Irvin Ehrenpreis quoted

---

[6]Waggoner, p. 335.

[7]G. S. Fraser, Ezra Pound (Edinburgh and London, 1960), pp. 33-34.

[8]William Empson, Seven Types of Ambiguity (London, 1947), p. 197.

Lowell as stating that "it was hard for him to find a subject and a language of his own,"[9] having developed a formal style under the training of Tate, Hart Crane, Ransom, and Eliot. However, Ehrenpreis, who has compiled the most comprehensive biography written about Robert Lowell through the year 1965, believed that by 1959 Lowell "took a line less reminiscent of those masters than of Pound. At last he had discovered his language and subject."[10] Hugh B. Staples, who comments on Lowell's use of paradox in Land of Unlikeness, also notes a correlation between his work and Pound, as he states, "Like Eliot and Pound, Lowell is preoccupied with a sense of loss that results from contrasting the promise of the past to the futility of the present."[11] That observation of Lowell's first volume of poems has been made by other critics, who usually comment about his adaptability toward writing other forms and his growth and development in writing more objectively. Among those who perceive the growth between Land of Unlikeness and Lowell's Pulitzer-Prize winning volume, Lord Weary's Castle, is Ehrenpreis,

---

[9]Irvin Ehrenpreis, American Poetry, Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies, VII (London, 1965), p. 88.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Hugh B. Staples, Robert Lowell: The First Twenty Years (New York, 1962), p. 28.

who has commented further on the prize-winning volume:

> His sense of the past justifies ironically the calmness of tone. . . . Lowell also made good use of a set of influences that he had earlier felt only at some remove, as they were present in the work of Tate, Eliot and Ransom. These influences emanate from the great line of French Symbolists and post-Symbolists, to whom the "modern" experimental movement in poetry owes its origin. When Lowell turned to Rimbaud, Valéry and Rilke for models, he was accepting the cosmopolitan conception of literature that American poets as diverse as Whitman and Pound have worked with.[12]

The link between Whitman and Pound may be confusing to some students who perhaps recall that Pound had once been critical of his poetry; however, an updated article describing Pound's politics in general explains that he learned to respect Whitman, after having criticized his poetry earlier.[13] That article alludes to Pound's early idea that "usury spoiled the Republic," and to his nostalgia for the "ideal American age of Jefferson," but it goes on to say that in later years, he has expressed a fondness for the American society and its accomplishments. Jerome Mazzaro's study of Lowell's themes again links the younger poet to the precepts of Pound, while he also illustrates that Lowell's Imitations reflects a thematic change, moving away

---

[12]Ehrenpreis, p. 77.

[13]Benjamin T. Spencer, "Pound: The American Strain," Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, LXXXI (December, 1966), 457-466.

"from a willed poetry to a poetry of impressions."[14]

> Lowell prepares for this reversal in Imitations (1961), a collection of translations from the works of other poets. These translations, in essence form the permanent products of past forms of the state against which, according to Ezra Pound, modern society must be judged.[15]

In consideration of Pound as a preceptor of Lowell, it should be noted that they were personally acquainted and that Lowell had served on the committee in 1949 which awarded the controversial Bollingen Prize to Pound for The Pisan Cantos.[16] Other members of the committee were T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, Conrad Aiken, Louise Bogan, Katherine Garrison Chapin, Paul Green, Katherine Anne Porter, Karl Shapiro, Allen Tate, Willard Thorp, Robert Penn Warren, Theodore Spencer, and Leonie Adams, the Library's Consultant in Poetry in English for that year, who took the news to Pound. Aiken, Lowell, and Tate visited Pound at Saint Elizabeth's Hospital when he was incarcerated there.[17]

---

[14]Jerome Mazzaro, The Poetic Themes of Robert Lowell (Ann Arbor, 1965), p. 120.

[15]Ibid., pp. 120-121.

[16]Charles Norman, Ezra Pound (New York, 1960), p. 432.

[17]Ibid., p. 442. One of Lowell's poems in his newest volume commemorates that visit. See Robert Lowell, Notebook 1967-68 (New York, 1969), p. 71.

To estimate exactly to what extent Robert Lowell may have been influenced by Pound would be difficult, if not impossible, although comments by authors who have studied Lowell's poetry have frequently linked the two because of their common interests and their poetic style. Mazzaro compares the two poets' economic views, referring to Lowell's Land of Unlikeness:

> With Pound, for whom he had great admiration, Lowell feels the failure of America is basically tied to her economic structure. This failure, both poets root in the government's continual protection of the manufacturer and financier at the cost of the public. They trace support for their ideas to President Martin Van Buren.[18]

From the economic viewpoint, a transition may be easily accomplished to the political viewpoint, if indeed, they can ever be separated. For one thing, Lowell's political activities[19] may be said to parallel those of Pound to a large extent; that is, they both have served penalties under accusations of being non-patriots. Lowell wrote Land of Unlikeness while he was serving five months in a federal prison because of an action which he probably considered one of personal integrity. Another non-conformist action of Lowell was his refusal to

---

[18]Mazzaro, Poetic Themes, p. 27.

[19]When he refused a Selective Service call, Lowell had already tried twice in 1943 to enlist in the Navy but had been rejected because of poor eyesight. See Ehrenpreis, p. 72.

attend a White House banquet during one term of President Lyndon B. Johnson.[20] Although the latter action brought wide-spread publicity, the young poet remained unresponsive to the resulting pleas for his cooperation with protesting groups, thus implying that his protest was strictly a personal action. Basically his attitude of opposition to military action (during World War II and in Vietnam) has been consistent in both his poetry and speaking appearances. Louis J. Untermeyer considered him a "Puritan Lowell in revolt" in 1962, stating, "Like James Russell Lowell, his great-grandfather's brother, and Amy Lowell, a distant cousin, Robert Lowell was a consistent nonconformer."[21]

Robert Lowell has been deeply impressed with the New England heritage, which is intermingled with his own family heritage. Among the hereditary factors which have shaped his distinctive Weltanschauung and his poetic themes is the fact that he was reared in a locale "where the Cabots speak only to the Lowells and the Lowells speak only to God." Included in his ancestral

---

[20]Contemporary reviews and other poets' reaction to Lowell's protest may be compared in "The Occasion for Protest," The Nation, CC (June 21, 1965), 658-629 or "The Festival Guest Here Beat His Breast," Time, LXXXV (June 11, 1956), 29.

[21]Louis Untermeyer, Modern American Poetry (New York, 1962), p. 662.

heritage, among other members of distinction, is Edward Winslow, one of the Pilgrim fathers.[22] Members of his family have been depicted frequently in his poetry;[23] however, the fact that he is a great grand-nephew of James Russell Lowell and a distant cousin of Amy Lowell apparently did not influence his decision to become a poet.[24] According to the younger Lowell, the reputation of his uncle, within the conversations of the Boston family, had been that of a statesman rather than a poet. Not until he traveled south to enter college did the young poet realize the reputation of his predecessor; by that time his own literary career was well underway.

Young Bob Lowell's interests in classical languages and poetry began early. He recalls that he "battled with figures of speech and Greek terminology,"[25] before he was graduated from

---

[22]Ehrenpreis, p. 69. Also see Hugh B. Staples, Robert Lowell: The First Twenty Years (New York, 1962), p. 11.

[23]For examples of poems in which he fuses his respect for his grandfather and for history, see Robert Lowell, Life Studies (New York, 1959), pp. 59-69.

[24]Frederick Seidel, "Robert Lowell," The Paris Review, VII (Winter-Spring, 1961), 56-95. An interesting discussion about Amy Lowell is found in Robert Lowell's autobiographical sketch, "91 Revere Street," in Life Studies (New York, 1956), pp. 38-39.

[25]Robert Lowell, Life Studies, p. 26.

the fourth grade at Brimmer Street School in Boston, after the family had bought the Revere Street house, which remained their permanent home after 1924. Under the tutelage of Richard Eberhart at Saint Mark's School at Southborough, Massachusetts, the thirteen-year-old student had exhibited interest in Latin and Greek and submitted a book of thirty poems to Eberhart, who later said that the poems "showed the young poet heavily influenced by Latin models, but true strokes of imagination came through."[26] Among his scholarly accomplishments at that time Lowell could also list the reading of Homer's Iliad and Dante's Inferno and the composition of an essay on the Iliad. After Lowell's poetry had been published, Richard Eberhart evaluated that work as conventional, employing a "nicely devised nine-line stanza," but offering freshness, seriousness and intense concentration.[27]

During the brief period of Lowell's attendance at Harvard, another school which like Saint Mark's[28] retained the

---

[26]"Second Chance," Time, LXXXIX (June 2, 1967), 67-74.

[27]Richard Eberhart, "Four Poets," The Sewanee Review, LV (1947), 324-336.

[28]Robert Lowell's grandfather, also named R. T. S. Lowell, had been headmaster at that Episcopal school, and, of course, the Lowell tradition at Harvard is well known.

respect and devotion of the Lowells, the enthusiastic young poet took the opportunity to visit a fellow New-Englander, Robert Frost, and to present him with a "huge epic" of his poetry.[29] Frost advised him that he should practice "compression," and "read him Collins's 'How Sleep the Brave' as an example of something 'not too long.'"[30] After perceiving that such a large institution as Harvard hampered his creative instincts, or as Ehrenpreis phrases it, after finding that "the university around him seemed less than a nest of singing birds,"[31] Lowell left the university. The departure from Harvard may have provoked a family argument, but apparently, according to Ehrenpreis, the breach was not as sensational as it appears in Time magazine.[32] Young Lowell had visited with Allen Tate during the summer preceding his entrance in Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, to which college John Crowe Ransom had moved from Vanderbilt University. Being both a classical scholar and an advocate of the "New Criticism," Ransom inspired the poetic

---

[29] Time, June 2, 1967.

[30] Seidel, p. 82.

[31] Ehrenpreis, p. 70.

[32] Ibid.

atmosphere which afforded twofold opportunity; in addition, Lowell became acquainted with other contemporary poets and lived for awhile in Ransom's home. Ehrenpreis does comment that the poet's move offered "a welcome substitute for blood relations who felt small sympathy with his talent."[33] Lowell was advised to continue his study of classics and to study philosophy, rather than to study English courses exclusively as he had at Harvard. Through the teaching of Ransom, he may have learned to disagree with Platonic idealism and to distrust abstractions, although the latter tendency would coincide also with the views of Ezra Pound.[34] At Kenyon, Lowell began writing poetry for the _Kenyon Review_. He was graduated _summa cum laude_, Phi Beta Kappa, and class valedictorian from Kenyon College in 1940. His other literary achievements by that time had included publication of poems in _The Chimera_, _The Partisan_, and _The Sewanee Review_. In 1941-1942 Lowell began working as an editorial assistant for Sheed and Ward in New York City. During 1947 and 1948 he served as a consultant in poetry for the Library of Congress; predominantly his career has been centered upon

---

[33]Ehrenpreis, p. 70.

[34]Either Ransom or Pound may have stimulated his interest in Prometheus through their own poems. See "John Crowe Ransom's Poetic Revisions," _Publications of the Modern Language Association_, LXXXIII (March, 1968), 18.

the writing of poetry and drama and lecturing at colleges and universities, including Harvard University, Boston University, Kenyon College, and the State University of Iowa.

Lowell's early poetic career embodied the use of imagery partially induced by the fact of his becoming a Roman Catholic in 1940, as even a cursory glance at two volumes, Land of Unlikeness (1944) and the Pulitzer Prize-winner, Lord Weary's Castle (1946), will indicate.[35] Several years intervened before he wrote any new poetry, and then in 1950 he published some of the earlier poems which he had written during his collegiate years, entitled Poems (1938-1939).

The publication of Lowell's next volume of poems, The Mills of the Kavanaughs (1951), provided more diversification of plot and character,[36] and, at the same time, perplexed reviewers who were surveying Lowell's entire canon, since it marked a change in style with the "abandonment of Catholic symbolism in

---

[35]For a discussion of his Catholicism in these volumes and a comparison of Land of Unlikeness with The Waste Land by T. S. Eliot, see Hugh B. Staples, Robert Lowell: The First Twenty Years (New York, 1962), pp. 15, 40-41. The most thorough study of this subject which has been located during the present period of research is that of Jerome Mazzaro, The Poetic Themes of Robert Lowell (Ann Arbor, 1965), pp. 48-60.

[36]Mazzaro, p. 74.

favour of classical mythology."[37] Staples believes that it deserves more attention than it has been given and that, as a whole, the poems reflect a change in Lowell's outlook. Life Studies (1959) was written after a studied transformation in style from traditional verse to free verse, Staples observes.[38] Thematically, that volume represents a beginning of his "confessional poetry," for which he has received acclaim. One author considers it extremely personal--"sometimes embarrassingly so."[39]

Lowell's venture into the dramatic genre includes three books at present, the first one being a free translation of Racine's Phaedra (1961). In that same year, he published his poetic translations, Imitations (1961). He has been criticized for his freedom in translation by one reviewer who thought that he abused the privilege,[40] even though Lowell makes no pretension that they are exact translations. On the contrary, he states his intention to use the poetry and plays of other cultures in

---

[37]Staples, Lowell: First Twenty Years, p. 55.

[38]Ibid., p.

[39]Waggoner, American Poets, p. 564.

[40]John Simon, "Abuse of Privilege: Lowell as Translator," Hudson Review, XX (Winter, 1967), 553-562.

juxtaposition with the contemporary American milieu. An interesting review of his use of Juvenal's satires in Imitations observes a comparison with Dryden and Samuel Johnson.[41]

Before publishing his other two books of plays, Lowell wrote Near the Ocean (1963), a book of original poems, and For the Union Dead (1964), a poetic volume reverting to his earlier war themes. His first trilogy and first unique endeavor to interweave themes based on other sources into an original play which effectively superimposed the past upon the present was The Old Glory (1964).[42] That play was presented on stage at Yale University, as was his derivation of Prometheus Bound (1967) from the Greek playwright Aeschylus, a play in which Lowell has managed to assimilate his classical background and his developing art in this new prosaic genre. Nevertheless, no one could predict the trend of his future writing, since

---

[41] Patricia Meyer Spacks, "From Satire to Description," Yale Review, LVIII (Winter, 1968), 232-248.

[42] One reviewer describes Lowell's gift "of being past and present, self and other, here and there, all at once." See Baruch Hochman, "Robert Lowell's The Old Glory," Tulane Drama Review, XI (Summer 1967), 127-138. A summary of the trilogy was written by Katherine J. Worth, "The Poets in the American Theatre," cited in American Theatre, Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies, X (New York, 1967), pp. 96-97.

Notebook, 1967-68 is a collection of sonnets.[43] Jerome Mazzaro, as an interpreter of Lowell's entire canon, believes that the recent poetic volume continues "the dualistic view of the world" which Lowell shares with many classic American writers. He refers to its "tensions of light and darkness, liberal and conservative, self and shadow."[44]

One perceptive reviewer who may be closer than other critics to Lowell, both in proximity of the poet's early education and in apperception of his response to that education, has summarized the essence of his canon through the year 1963 by stating that the "desire for personal catharisis," the poetry of confession, is "pitted against the desire for universality."[45] He believes that "Lowell's special talent would seem to be his ability to achieve artistic universality through meticulous, often merciless examination of his own experiences,"[46] and he ranks him as a major American poet:

---

[43]That volume, revised in 1969, contains an introductory statement by Lowell, who describes himself as a "surrealist" in this instance.

[44]Jerome Mazzaro, "Sojourner of the Self," The Nation, CCIX (July 7, 1969), 22-24. This article contains an enlightening discussion of the poet's changing style.

[45]O. B. Hardison, Jr., "Robert Lowell: The Poet and The World's Body," Shenandoah: The Washington and Lee University Review, XIV (Winter, 1963), 24-32.

[46]Ibid.

Having acquired since 1947 almost every distinction which American culture bestows on its highbrow artists, Robert Lowell has at least a claim to being considered the major American poet to emerge in the post-war period.[47]

Randall Jarrell observed soon after Lowell had published

Lord Weary's Castle:

> The poems understand the world as a sort of conflict of opposites. In this struggle one opposite is that cake of custom in which all of us lie embedded like lung-fish--the stasis or inertia of the stubborn self, the obstinate persistence in evil that is damnation. Into this realm of necessity the poems push everything that is closed, turned inward, incestuous, that blinds or binds: the Old Law, imperialism, militarism, capitalism, Calvinism, Authority, the Father, the "proper Bostonians," the rich who will "do everything for the poor except get off their backs."[48]

Jarrell also demonstrated that "normally the poems move into liberation."[49] Staples had paid special tribute to that trend in Lowell's poetry in Lord Weary's Castle, when he stated, "Thus in 'The Exile's Return', the initial poem in Lord Weary's Castle, he chronicles the death of a tradition and a way of life,

---

[47] Ibid.

[48] Randall Jarrell, "From the Kingdom of Necessity," cited in Poetry and the Age (New York, 1955), p. 188.

[49] Ibid., p. 189. Themes of "war, trade, and Jehovah" were those which Jarrell delineated in Lowell's early work. Richard Wilbur believes that Lowell's later poetry has an objectivity which "renders Lowell's vision of the world more probable and more readily shared." See Anthony Ostroff, The Contemporary Poet as Artist and Critic: Eight Symposia (Boston and Toronto, 1964), p. 87.

but at the same time suggests the possibilities of rebirth, not unattended by danger."[50] Staples is among those who have compared Lowell with Yeats in that respect. Having entered his third decade of writing, Lowell's early evaluations by those who have observed a similitude between his art and that of Pound, Eliot, and Yeats, are substantiated throughout his career. One fellow poet and close friend of Lowell also noted an analogy between Lowell and James Joyce.

Randall Jarrell could visualize Robert Lowell as a dramatic poet even though he did not live to see his student's later work. Observation of Lowell's use of "stream-of-consciousness, dream or dramatic-monologue types of structure"[51] caused Jarrell to state that Lowell "does not present themes or generalizations but a world," and even though he considered the structure of Lowell's early poetry difficult for the reader, it seemed "worth the price."[52] Jarrell also commented that Lowell's poems resemble traditional English poetry in comparison with "semi-imagist modern organization." One critic, commenting after the

---

[50]Staples, p. 33. Cf. Ehrenpreis, pp. 76-77, for another example of a comment on the "spring of rebirth" in that poem.

[51]Jarrell, pp. 195-197.

[52]*Ibid*.

first decade of Lowell's career, compiled a study of the poet's sources, and made the observation that Robert Lowell

> is viewed by a number of contemporary critics as the present best hope of American poetry; and since critical interest in his work has been high for more than ten years, he warrants consideration by the serious student.[53]

As Jarrell had noticed the stream-of-consciousness technique, so Jerome Mazzaro foresaw a likeness in the trend of artistic development between Lowell and Joyce, specifically in relation to the three basic positions of aesthetic involvement defined by Joyce in his _Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man_, the three positions being lyrical, epical, and dramatic. The latter two are somewhat more apparent during Lowell's writing of the 1960's than they were during his first decade of writing, and some of his later work may be considered as truly epical, if one accepts Mazzaro's definition of an epical event as one "comparable to that described by the psychologist Carl Jung as a primordial image or archetype."[54] The fact that the younger poet's former teacher John Crowe Ransom "once played with the idea of Lowell's becoming the Ovid or Virgil of America"[55] is

---

[53]Will C. Jumper, "Whom Seek Ye?: A Note on Robert Lowell's Poetry," _The Hudson Review_, IX (Spring, 1956), 117-125.

[54]Mazzaro, _Poetic Themes_, p. 2.

[55]Ehrenpreis, pp. 69-95.

mentioned by an author who describes the twentieth century as "The Age of Lowell."

CHAPTER III

ROMANTICISM AND REBELLION IN LOWELL'S PROMETHEUS

When critics consider the present age as "the Age of Lowell," the average reader may feel "uneasy," as Thomas Parkinson states that he does,[1] since the ambiguous nature of the term must naturally evoke a chain reaction of mixed impressions, depending upon which of Lowell's poems a reader may have read previously. One reviewer of Lowell's Prometheus Bound considered that Lowell and the play were "made for each other."[2] Evaluation of a poetic view which was radical in the beginning and which has undergone some modification appears extremely difficult during the period in which the poet is living; nevertheless, at least a partial indication of that changing tone can be seen in the comments from authoritative critics and poets within the second chapter of this thesis.

---

[1]Thomas Parkinson, "For the Union Dead," cited in Robert Lowell: A Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, 1968), p. 143.

[2]Gerald Weales, "New Haven Bound," The Reporter, XXXVI (June 15, 1967), 44-46.

If the reader should find that the appellation "Age of Lowell" suggests an image of a rebel who evades a draft call, who appears at a university rally as a speaker before an activist group, or who supports Eugene McCarthy during a presidential campaign and refuses an invitation to a White House banquet for the arts, then the reader may be well informed in current events concerning Robert Lowell; but he may, at the same time, be overlooking the poet's historical perspective and the poetic nature of his mind. Furthermore, if the reader thinks only of a newspaper picture of an unkempt rebel, then the term rebel requires further definition, particularly because of a pejorative sense which that word has acquired during the 1960's. Albert Camus presents a lengthy discussion of the term rebel, as well as the distinction between rebellion and revolution, which definitions are especially useful because of his own historical survey of those terms. The opening sentences of his study[3] provide a key for later interpretation of Lowell's Prometheus Bound, as Camus answers his own question: "What is a rebel? A man who says no, but whose refusal does not imply a renunciation. He is also a man who says yes, from the moment he makes his first gesture of rebellion."

---

[3]Albert Camus, The Rebel (New York, 1956), p. 13.

Camus explains the spirit of rebellion as capable of existence only within Western society, where there exists a theoretical equality,[4] which, as he observes, "conceals great factual inequalities." In societies where tradition is upheld as sacred, the problem of rebellion does not exist; therefore, Camus states that "for the Inca and the pariah the problem never arises."[5] Definitions which are perhaps even more relevant to the contemporary study are those of <u>revolution</u> and <u>rebellion</u> utilized by Camus, who construes the word <u>revolution</u> from the meaning that it has in astronomy--"a movement that describes a complete circle, that leads from one form of government to another after a complete transition."[6] While rebellion is limited in scope, Camus proves that revolution originates in the realm of ideas and ends by destruction of men and principles. (Rebellion may be purposeless, involving neither methods nor reasons.) No revolution has ever been completed in history, he states; nevertheless, he notes that the "society born of the 1917 revolution is fighting for universal dominion."[7] According to Camus' definition, there could be only one complete revolution.

---

[4]Camus, p. 20.

[5]<u>Ibid</u>.

[6]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 106

[7]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 107.

> In fact, if there had ever been one real revolution, there would be no more history. Unity would have been achieved, and death would have been satiated. That is why all revolutionaries finally aspire to world unity and act as though they believed that history was concluded.[8]

Camus explains that just as each rebellion implies some kind of unity, the "rebellion of 1789 demands the unity of the whole country."[9] The historical aspect of rebellion which Camus presents could be compared with Lowell's symbols for unity, as they are to be interpreted in the last chapter of this thesis, even though specific tenets of Camus' philosophy are irrelevant to this study. Camus' historical perspective, however, is pertinent to this study in order to envision the spirit of the past and to secure a basis on which to study Lowell's plays against the background of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Whereas Camus observed that the nineteenth century opened to "the crash of falling ramparts," Alfred North Whitehead, the noted English philosopher, delineated three main currents of thought from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries, each of those currents having its origin in the previous period, the French Revolution. The three sources of faith during the nineteenth century, he states, were (1) the Romantic Movement,

---

[8] _Ibid._, p. 107.

[9] _Ibid._, p. 125.

(2) the gathering advance of science, and (3) the advance in technology.[10] After describing the dichotomy of mechanization and organic features of nature within the present culture, Whitehead also proposes a hope of unification of the forces which have been separated because of rapid advances made through science.

> It should be the task of the philosophical schools of this century to bring together the two streams into an expression of the world-picture derived from science, and thereby end the divorce of science from the affirmations of our aesthetic and ethical experiences.[11]

That optimistic outlook coincides with Jacques Barzun's observation, concerning the poetic motive of the Romanticists, that "the problem was to create a new world on the ruins of the old."[12]

That certain facets of Romanticism still survive in such a sophisticated culture as that of twentieth-century America can be observed only if distinctive features of Romanticism are defined and exemplified. Jacques Barzun has written an

---

[10]Alfred North Whitehead, Science and the Modern World (New York, 1967), p. 95.

[11]*Ibid*., p. 156.

[12]Jacques Barzun, Classic, Romantic and Modern (Boston, 1961), p. 14.

interpretation of Romanticism which is basic to more specific consideration of the individual writers and their separate contributions. Since the term Romantic has frequently been abused, he states clearly the reasons that the poets of the early nineteenth century "cannot be made into a romantic school," although "they equally clearly partake of a romanticist temper."[13] For the purposes of the present study, the statements of certain critics who have observed the continuous trend of Romanticism will be pertinent in comparing nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Romantic attitudes. First the question of Romanticism versus anti-Romanticism should be considered.

Since Robert Lowell has been established as a poet who modeled his writing after Ezra Pound, and since some observers of Pound's work have thought it to be anti-Romantic, that point of difference must be established in view of recent studies. Humbert Wolfe, in taking up that question, has explained that Ezra Pound and his followers were not concerned with substance but with form, which they wished to destroy.[14] The argument that Eliot and Pound and those who followed their poetic mode

---

[13]Barzun, p. 15.

[14]Humbert Wolfe, Romantic and Unromantic Poetry (London, 1933), p. 18.

were anti-Romantics has been countered by G. S. Fraser, whose view is generally supported by Sir Herbert Read, John Bayley, and John Frank Kermode. Fraser believes that modern poetry, which "at one time was considered as marking a reaction against the romantic tradition, can be considered, in fact, as continuing and perhaps completing that tradition."[15] According to Fraser,

> The Romantic Revival can be seen as the grand formative influence upon the greater poetry of the Victorian age: even though Arnold consciously reacted against it, and even though, in Browning and Tennyson, the new Victorian themes--in a sense 'outer' and 'social' themes--of faith and doubt complicated the early Romantic mood of self-exploring aspiration and of direct response to the deep life of nature and of the mind. Similarly, at a certain distance, and with a certain complication, the greatest poet of our own age, Yeats, can be seen as coming out of the Romantic Revival.[16]

Robert Lowell's modern tone may be explained as Romantic irony, according to John Crowe Ransom, who states concerning Platonic poetry that it is

> positive when the poet believes in the efficacy of the ideas. It is negative when he despairs of their efficacy, because they have conspicuously failed to take care of him, and utters his personal wail:
>
> "I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!"

---

[15]G. S. Fraser, Vision and Rhetoric (New York, 1960), p. 254.

[16]*Ibid*., p. 23.

> This is "Romantic Irony," which comes at occasional periods to interrupt the march of scientific optimism. But it still falls under the category of Platonism; it generally proposes some other ideas to take the place of those which are in vogue.[17]

Although Ransom may have misrepresented Shelley's line by selecting it out of context, his concept of "Romantic Irony" should be useful in the interpretation of Lowell's play.

The continuing trend of Romantic influence and the manner in which it has been misunderstood has been observed by a noted biographer of Byron, Leslie A. Marchand:

> In a world of scientific thinking and critical realism, is there a place for the romantic impulse, a seat where romantic literature may repose unapologetically? Is Romance necessarily an "illusioned view of the universe," as it has been called by one modern critic? Must one who sees value in Romanticism cling to a foggy imaginative fusion of the real and the ideal? Further, must romantic literature and the response to it disappear with the advance of scientific knowledge?[18]

Marchand expresses the belief that despite disillusioning skepticism today, there is a "universal psychological demand" for belief in the "creative power of the imagination."[19] Of all the

---

[17] John Crowe Ransom, _The World's Body_ (Baton Rouge, 1968), p. 122.

[18] Leslie A. Marchand, "Byron and the Modern Spirit," _The Major English Romantic Poets: A Symposium in Reappraisal_ (Carbondale, 1957), p. 162.

[19] _Ibid_.

Romantic writers, he notes that "Byron came the nearest to expressing the modern temper which willingly or perforce is ready to face any of the facts that science can present."[20]

According to Ransom's definition of Romantic irony, the full impact of which can be seen more clearly through the work of Byron, it could be said that Byron is the link between the tone of literature from the nineteenth century into the twentieth century. Recent scholars have found that the ironic tone of Byron set the pattern for modern writers. Ernest Lovell has commented on the "elements of unity, irony, and imagery in Don Juan, a work of great originality and undeniable excellence, essentially unlike anything before it,"[21] although he also pays notice to Byron's two other great satires, Beppo and The Vision of Judgment. Byron's seemingly frivolous attitude may have caused his satirical works to be undervalued during his lifetime but has now become a subject of serious study because of his unique contributions to style. One example of his irony, which also points up his modernism, is shown in the First Canto of Don Juan, beginning in Stanza CXXVIII:

---

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ernest J. Lovell, Jr., "Irony and Image in Byron's Don Juan," The Major English Romantic Poets: A Symposium in Reappraisal (Carbondale, 1957), p. 131.

> Man's a strange animal, and makes strange use
> Of his own nature, and the various arts, . . .
> This is the age of oddities let loose,
> . . . .

and continuing through Stanza CXXXII:

> This is the patent-age of new inventions
> For killing bodies, and for saving souls,[23]
> . . . .

Another author who sees modern poetry as a continuation of the Romantic tradition, Stephen Spender, discusses nostalgia as one of the aspects of a literary movement[24] which began in the 1890's and later became modified by Eliot and Pound in the form of irony. Spender considers nostalgia as "one of the most productive and even progressive forces in modern literature."[25] Lowell's contribution to that trend could be seen in the statement that "Pound and Eliot provided their own nostalgia with the most powerful defence of all: elaborate irony directed at a persona in the poetry which could be identified with the poet

---

[22]George Gordon Lord Byron, The Complete Poetical Works of Byron (Boston, 1933), p. 762.

[23]Ibid., p. 763.

[24]Stephen Spender, The Struggle of the Modern (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1963), p. 210.

[25]Ibid., p. 212.

himself."[26] One primary distinction between the tone of Lowell's modern play and Eliot's The Waste Land becomes evident in the light of Spender's explication[27] in which he describes The Waste Land and Orwell's 1984 as reflections of anti-vision or despair. Spender considers that the attitude of despair is characteristic of the necessity of being modern among twentieth-century writers.

The apocalyptic vision through which Shelley could foresee a rise in the individual status of men and a rising growth of democratic forms of government has become for modern writers "anti-vision," Spender explains. Contemporary writers in the United States may share that feeling of anti-vision; nevertheless, in Lowell's works and in some others, a note of hope has been found through his consistent return to the cyclical motif. Basic differences arise necessarily between the vision of Shelley and Lowell because of the influence of their respective environments. Lowell, nevertheless, shares Shelley's belief that poetry can be a vehicle for the author's political convictions while believing at the same time that the meaning of poetry should not be restricted by a specific historical milieu.

---

[26] Ibid., p. 213.

[27] Stephen Spender, The Creative Element (London, 1953), p. 27.

The primary difference between the apocalyptic vision of Lowell and that of Shelley is the difference between Lowell's Christian faith, tinged with Puritanical doctrine, and Shelley's world view of a moral and social evolutionary movement on earth.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROMETHEAN MYTHOLOGEM

Although in some ways a very independent work, Robert Lowell's _Prometheus Bound_ is to be seen as essentially a continuation of the major dramas which were written about the mythical figure. Discussion of particular variations among all these major dramas on Prometheus would entail a much more extensive study than is proposed in this thesis; however, some of the notable innovations which Lowell made on the basis of his predecessors' works should be helpful in understanding the character of Lowell's Prometheus. Both Shelley and Lowell are known to have studied the _Prometheus Vinctus_ by Aeschylus, and apparently Lowell, like Shelley, studied everything concerning the Promethean mythologem which was available to him.

Myths which are inherent in our Western civilization and literary heritage have recurred in the minds of men in many primitive cultures, and when they represent universal truths, anthropologists have found significant analogies between the thoughts of primitive man and those of civilized man. Prometheus, the Greek benefactor to mankind who rebelled against

Zeus, an anthropomorphic representation of a tyrant in the Greek hierarchy of polytheistic worship, is among those mythological figures which can be considered archetypal images. The story of the Fire-Bringer[1] prevails among many primitive tribes as a representation of one who brought the secret of the beneficial use of fire; sometimes he is also symbolic of knowledge or power. Parallel myths which have been observed in primitive cultures by anthropologists are thought to have preceded the names given them; that is, they antedate any mythologem which includes those names,[2] and they probably represent an even more primitive form of nature-worship. On the basis of that worldwide observation of parallel myths, myths which represent universal truths have come to be considered by Carl G. Jung as products of the "collective unconscious."[3] Jung's archetypes are not "inherited ready-made images," although Jolande Jacobi, author of a book which explains Jung's symbols,

---

[1]The Navajo Indians conceived of the Fire-Bringer as a coyote or trickster figure. See Carl B. Jung, Man and His Symbols (New York, 1968), p. 114.

[2]Andrew Lang, Custom and Myth (London, 1885), p. 6.

[3]Jung, Symbols, p. 107.

finds that they have frequently been misinterpreted.[4] Jacobi, answering the argument that acquired characters or memories cannot be inherited, states that those who have raised that argument

> have refused to understand that these "primordial images," which are similar only in their underlying pattern, are based on a principle of form that has always been inherent in the psyche; they are "inherited" only in the sense that the structure of the psyche, as it is today, embodies a universally human heritage and bears within it the faculty of manifesting itself in definite and specific forms.[5]

The archetypes may be best understood as "primordial forms that arose at a time when the conscious mind did not yet think but only perceived. . . ."[6] Applying Jung's concepts to mythology, Jacobi observes that

> mythology, as a living reflection of world creation, is the form of manifestation, the "primordial guise" assumed by the archetypes in the process of becoming symbols. Since the basic forms of the archetypes are common to all nations and times, it should not surprise us to find amazing parallels in the myths that have arisen autochthonously in every corner of the earth.[7]

Historically, the myth of Prometheus is as ancient as

---

[4]Jolande Jacobi, Complex/ Archetype/ Symbol: in the Psychology of C. G. Jung (New York, 1959), p. 51.

[5]Ibid., pp. 51-52. [6]Ibid., p. 50.

[7]Ibid., p. 109.

primitive societies, perhaps because, as Jung suggests, man's mind will postulate a higher being through its a priori reasoning, but Lowell has made Prometheus and Zeus appear as modern figures, a little less than the gods of Olympian beliefs. Whereas Aeschylus had elevated the trickster figure and had added dignity to the character, Lowell has reverted to some of the more primitive characteristics of Prometheus from ancient mythology.[8] The evolution of the figure of Prometheus through poetry and drama of Western literature has been traced for specific purposes in separate studies. Lawrence Zillman categorizes the four major representations of that figure as follows: (1) humanity, (2) the mind or soul of man, (3) a religious manifestation, and (4) a political manifestation.[9] Douglas Bush sketches the use of the Prometheus myth in English literature through the early twentieth century, while indicating that the eighteenth-century writers found the myth of Prometheus "too vast and explosive."[10] Thus the turning point in this

---

[8]Significantly for the later interpretation, Lowell relied more on the Hesiodic version of mythology, whereas most English poets have alluded to the Orphic mythology, which Shelley had utilized.

[9]Lawrence J. Zillman, Shelley's Prometheus Unbound: A Variorum Edition (Seattle, 1959), p. 309.

[10]Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry (Cambridge, 1937), p. 78.

literary strain falls in the early nineteenth century, particularly among the Romanticists, since Victorian writers generally considered it only a pagan myth.[11]

Thorslev has traced some of the influence of the Prometheus story on English Romanticists to the Spanish allegorist Calderon,[12] while Zillman stresses the influence of Boccaccio's work in this connection. One other interesting speculation which Thorslev makes is that "Prometheus owes his first Romantic treatment to the period of the German _Sturm und Drang_," and that "the Germans' interest in the legend came from their reading of that ubiquitous English pre-Romantic philosopher, the Earl of Shaftesbury."[13] Thorslev explains that it was the novel treatment of the story of Prometheus as an ideal artist, a second maker, and "a just Prometheus under Jove," that the young Germans seized.[14] Referring specifically to Goethe's

---

[11]Elizabeth Barrett Browning had been unable to blend Hellenism with Christianity although she admired Aeschylus. _Ibid_., p. 267.

[12]Peter L. Thorslev, Jr., _The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes_ (Minneapolis, 1962), p. 114.

[13]_Ibid_., pp. 114-115.

[14]_Ibid_. It should also be noted that the origin for this conception of Prometheus is also classical, as Ovid had adapted that version, probably from the Greek poet Apollodorus (fl. 140 B. C.). See Zillman, p. 727.

fragmentary play about Prometheus, Ronald Peacock considers it one of the playwright's examples of "intense Life and Creativeness combating what is fossilized and dead and making a human glory against the vast background of all nature and all history."[15] The monologue of Prometheus, he believes, is comparable with a speech from Egmont, another one of Goethe's plays, in which he depicts the meaning of freedom--"the romantic idea of self-fulfillment behind the politics, here affirmed as an absolute and splendid challenge of the individual."[16] Dorothy Schlegel further describes the influence which Shaftesbury may have wielded on both German and British Romanticists. After explaining Shaftesbury's portrayal of Prometheus,[17] she states an opinion that Shelley was influenced by an idea of Shaftesbury "that the moral sense can be nurtured. . . Man is therefore perfectible."[18]

When Shelley wrote his Prometheus Unbound, he chose a

---

[15]Ronald Peacock, Goethe's Major Plays: An Essay (New York, 1959), p. 23.

[16]Ibid., p. 41

[17]Dorothy B. Schlegel, Shaftesbury and the French Deists (Chapel Hill, 1956), p. 27.

[18]Ibid., p. 32.

point of view similar to that of Goethe to exalt the concept of the poetic imagination, and he took exception to any supposition that Aeschylus had intended Zeus and Prometheus to be reconciled in the final play of the trilogy. Within his preface, Shelley described the Titan as "the type of the highest perfection of moral and intellectual nature,"[19] which statement led Lawrence Zillman, an editor of Shelley's Prometheus Unbound, to conclude, "Prometheus as the Mind or Soul of Man was suggested by Shelley himself."[20] Byron's Prometheus, on the other hand, seems to anticipate somewhat the modern concept of the anti-hero, as he speaks of a

> sad unallied existence:
> To which his Spirit may oppose
> Itself--and equal to all woes,
> And a firm will . . .
> Triumphant where it dares defy,
> And making Death a Victory.[21]

Lowell has adapted the concept of the "mind of man" from Shelley, but he perhaps derives the spirit of alienation and the ironic style from Byron.

---

[19]Percy Bysshe Shelley, The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley (London, 1927), p. 201.

[20]Zillman, p. 310.

[21]Byron, p. 191.

CHAPTER V

THREE PROMETHEAN DRAMAS

Each of the several great dramas of Prometheus, written during separate periods of history, should be considered against its environmental circumstances in order to gain a clear perspective, since the attitude of each of the specified poets, Aeschylus, Shelley, and Lowell, would necessarily have been affected to some degree by political and personal events within his own lifetime. Therefore, in discussing specific examples from the works of the individual writers, some consideration should be given to attitudes and influences within the three periods concerned--the fifth century before the Christian era in Greece, the early nineteenth century in England, and the twentieth century in the United States, specifically, the years since 1960.

---

[1]Two other short works, Goethe's fragmentary drama and Byron's short poem, "Prometheus," could also be seen as influential on the modern play. Thorslev notes, with reference to Byron's dramas, _Manfred_ and _Cain_, that the Promethean vision becomes one of "man not fated, but free; defending his essential dignity and his chosen values in a naturalistic and alien universe." See Thorslev, p. 116.

The specialization of modern industrial civilizations distinguishes their environments from the environment of the Greek period under scrutiny, a period during which philosophy included both science and worship, as well as political theory, and poetry included philosophy and rhetoric. In addition, the fact that Greek democracy did not have to cope with revolutionary change caused by rapid technological advance provides one more distinction--a distinction which marks a correlation between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the history of ideas. That distinction may be seen in the ratio of advancement during a fifty-year period in each of the two environments. Referring to the effects of the Industrial Revolution in England, Stephen Spender has stated that "Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris hated industrialism and tried to reconcile social reform and progress with a medievalist revival."[2] During the latter nineteenth century, the optimism which Shelley had shown toward scientific achievements began to fade, and poets who shared his conception that the function of a poet is to be an unacknowledged legislator of the world[3] became concerned over the

---

[2]Spender, Struggle, p. 212.

[3]Percy Bysshe Shelley, "A Defence of Poetry," The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, VII (New York, 1930), 140.

inability of sociological reforms to keep pace with industrialization. The anti-vision of modern poets has been discussed in another section of this thesis. Robert Lowell, then, maintains as one of his purposes the prophetic warning of the overdevelopment of scientific progress, if it is uncontrolled by legislation. Lowell's attitude toward science may be found within an early statement by Prometheus: "Used skillfully, fire can remake, or destroy the earth. Man's uses, however, are limited. . . "[4] and elaborated later, in a passage beginning with Lowell's Prometheus stating: "Fire will be the first absolute power and the last to rule."[5]

In consideration of the period during which Aeschylus lived, the literary historian must take into account the facts that he had been a combatant in the Persian Wars, when Greece had defeated Persia; that in his play, The Persians, he had presented the war from the Persians' point of view; that in his Oresteia he had anticipated the rising of Greek democracy and justice and a trend toward monotheism. However, those trends were not effected among the Hellenic peoples until the end of

---

[4]Robert Lowell, Prometheus Bound (New York, 1969), p. 11.

[5]Ibid., pp. 55-56.

the Persian Wars and the rise of Pericles' government in 444 B. C. Aeschylus' death occurred twelve years before the time that Pericles began to preside over the true form of democracy, as it was later to be considered, and twenty-eight years before the birth of Plato, the philosopher who was to influence the Greek spirit toward acceptance of the freedom and dignity of individual man. The manner in which Aeschylus had dramatized his message through purposeful ambiguity was particularly necessary because the Greek city-states, although they were autonomous in their independence, were less tolerant with freedom of expression than they were later to become during the age of Pericles. The reflection toward the sanctity of religion and tradition and the change of attitude toward freedom of expression may be observed in the tonal contrast between the plays of Euripides and the plays of Aeschylus.

The ritual pattern of Greek drama is a well-known fact, although scholars lament the unfortunate circumstances which have made the complete Prometheus trilogy of Aeschylus unavailable for modern readers. If the final play were accessible, the speculation is that Aeschylus would have effected a restoration of order, and the possibility is that some inference of rebirth or regeneration; in other words, a cyclical motif would be evident. The cyclical view in Greek drama is not too far

removed from the Christian belief of resurrection.[6] From the viewpoint of Jungian psychology, the sacred belief of primitive men represents an archetypal pattern of the human mind which conceived the belief in rebirth and regeneration from the observation of nature.[7] As cyclical patterns were used to explain nature and were observed to influence primitive worship, they also have become predominant in some theories of history. To say that history repeats is not to say that each event will recur in exactly the same manner but rather that, as the English historian Arnold J. Toynbee has stated, history moves in cycles or patterns. Nor was Toynbee unique in that approach to history.

Since the term "cyclic" may have more than one connotation for individual readers, the term as used herein is to be defined as "the cyclic character of phenomena--cyclic, that is because of the tendency of the final stage to curve back towards the initial stage of the process in question."[8] An explication of

---

[6]Carl G. Jung, <u>Man and His Symbols</u> (New York, 1968), p. 142. Jung explains the affinity between the religion of Orpheus and the religion of Christ, particularly in the significance of the ritual.

[7]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 143.

[8]J. E. Cirlot, <u>A Dictionary of Symbols</u> (New York, 1962), p. 72.

Lowell's methods in his derivation from Aeschylus would also reveal that his modern play projects a cyclic view in three distinct ways, other than in the socio-historical theme: first, through a structural form; secondly, by means of the repetition of words or phrases which indicate "circling" or "spiralling;" thirdly, through techniques which have also been noted in his poetic works. The use of the cyclic technique, while it may not necessarily indicate that Lowell intended his imagery to suggest the dawn of a new age, does reveal a significant analogy to classical ideas; specifically, those of Plato and Virgil. Allusions to Plato and to Virgil also reveal Lowell's reliance upon sources which are similar to those used by Shelley. A classical allusion to Virgil's _Fourth Eclogue_ re-inforces the cyclical motif, in the lines beginning "Born of Time, a great new cycle of centuries . . . " and ending ". . . yes, Apollo reigns now." (ll. 5-10).[9] Shelley's _Hellas_ recalls that similar motif, with the addition of certain imagery, on which Lowell may have drawn:

> The world's great age begins anew,
> The golden years return,
> The earth doth like a snake renew
> Her winter weeds outworn;

---

[9]Virgil, _The Eclogues and Georgics of Virgil_, translated by C. Day Lewis (Garden City, 1964), p. 25.

> Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam,
> Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.[10]
> (ll. 1060-1065)

The first and most obvious observation which might be made about Lowell's Prometheus Bound concerns his adaptation of the cyclical motif, probably patterned after the ritualistic pattern of Greek drama, as perceived in Aeschylus' extant trilogy, and as adapted by Shelley. Examples of a cyclical motif may be recalled from Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind;" in addition, at least three notable examples from Lowell's poetry are significant enough that they are becoming well-known. The last three lines of "Christmas Eve Under Hooker's Statue" will be familiar to admirers of Lowell's early work:

> "All wars are boyish," Herman Melville said;
> But we are old, our fields are running wild:
> Till Christ again turn wanderer and child.[11]

The last line of his "Our Lady of Walsingham" section of "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" also connotes the rebuilding after destruction:

> The Lord survives the rainbow of His will.[12]

A third example, one which is often quoted in explications of

---

[10]Shelley, Poetical Works, p. 472.

[11]Robert Lowell, Lord Weary's Castle (New York, 1946), p. 17.

[12]Ibid., p. 14.

Lowell's poetry may be found in "Where the Rainbow Ends": "The dove has brought an olive branch to eat."[13]

Lowell's image of Apollo is a shadowy figure, which must be associated through complex imagery, rather than being a personage as he appeared in Shelley's Prometheus Unbound or a symbol of justice as he appeared in Aeschylus' Oresteia. Each of several stages in the evolution of worship, from the ancient Ophiolatry through the worship of Apollo as a guardian of wisdom because of his triumph over the serpent, may be associated through Lowell's three distinct images of the serpent, each traceable to a classical source. The hymn to Apollo,[14] once attributed to Homer, describes the evolution of the worship of Apollo, who, as a child, was said to have slain a python (sometimes associated with Typhaon, or Typho). The hymn further explains the reason for the founding of Apollo's temple at Delphi and the association between Apollo and the dolphin through another heroic venture.[15]

On the one hand, reference to Apollo could signify, as it

---

[13]Ibid., p. 69.

[14]Homer, The Homeric Hymns: A New Prose Translation, translated by Andrew Lang (London, 1899), pp. 113-124.

[15]Ibid., p. 130. Lowell's images of the dolphin, the sea, and the serpent would all suggest the figure of Apollo.

did for Aeschylus and Virgil, a trend toward a form of government which incorporated justice and the flourishing of the arts.[16] That Apollo represents the dawn of a new age is merely one avenue of association between Lowell's knowledge of the classics and his interest in contemporary events. For Virgil, the Fourth Eclogue was an expression of optimism, as H. J. Rose recounts;[17] moreover, he observes that the time when Virgil was writing was "a time when all men of good will would naturally be anxious for the future," and historical events of the time could produce hopes of a peaceful settlement between Eastern and Western sections of the Roman Empire.[18] On the other hand, the reference to Apollo could represent wisdom, because of the oracular temple at Delphi. Although those utterances were often misinterpreted and many rulers attributed faulty leadership to the ambiguity of the interpretation, those Delphic oracles

---

[16]The evocation of Apollo as a patron of the arts could account for Lowell's projection of that figure through imagery, as a shadowy figure, rather than presenting him on stage as Shelley had done, since apparently Lowell believes that the arts have been neglected in recent years.

[17]H. J. Rose, A Handbook of Latin Literature: from the Earliest Times to the Death of St. Augustine (London, 1936), pp. 242 ff.

[18]*Ibid.*, p. 291.

shaped the course of Greek history for many centuries. In the time of Cicero, the oracle had fallen into contempt, according to Howey,[19] and soon afterward the use of the oracle by rulers ceased entirely.

The temple of Apollo at Delphi, which was established because of the slaying of the python,[20] is only one of the many stories and songs associated with Apollo. Other images in Lowell's play, especially, the sun, the sea, and the dolphin, could recall other myths associated with Apollo. Through the classical allusions to the serpent, from primitive mythology through establishment of the temple at Delphi, Lowell has unfolded the evolution of religions.

Two of Lowell's images of the serpent occur in the opening of his play; the third one is more obscure and, for that reason, perhaps more significant. Probably the first two are especially dependent upon ancient mythology. The lines of Prometheus recall the "good old days. They were never good. We come from a snake

---

[19] M. Oldfield Howey, The Encircled Serpent: A Study of Serpent Symbolism in All Countries and Ages (New York, 1955), p. 143.

[20] Apollo was said to have overcome the monster, Typho, which was responsible for the upheaval at Mount Aetna. See Howey, p. 149.

wrapped around a mud-egg."[21] The allusion to an early story of cosmogony, that the great serpent Ophion coiled about the "Universal Egg," will be familiar to readers of Robert Graves' account of an early creation myth which credits two early sources, Apollonius Rhodius and Ovid. (Another reference to the same story may be found in Homer's Iliad, Book XX).[22] Lowell's second image of the serpent, while still primitive, may be an advanced concept. The "cruel wisdom of the serpent"[23] recalls the fact that ancient people believed that the serpent possessed a daemon, capable of revealing prophetic wisdom; moreover, the serpent, because it shed its skin and gained a new one each year, was believed to possess the secret of immortality.

One archetypal image of the serpent described by M. Oldfield Howey, a serpent of bronze, is suggested by Lowell's "gnashing river, coiling back on itself, like a snake. . . its mouth, bronze-colored, spade-shaped. . ."[24] Howey recalls the "brazen

---

[21]Lowell, Prometheus Bound, p. 8.

[22]Robert Graves, The Greek Myths, I (Maryland, 1955), 27.

[23]Lowell, Prometheus Bound, p. 8.

[24]Ibid., p. 47.

serpent of Moses"[25] used as a charm against living serpents. The serpent, as he explains it, was a symbol from God that the people should respect Moses' word;[26] at the same time, Howey explains the relationship between that brazen serpent and Christ,[27] each being symbolic of eternal life. One analogy may be discerned, then, between the serpent and eternity; another parallel could be observed between the serpent and wisdom, maintaining the metaphorical imagery of Apollo. Lowell's reference to the snake-shaped river is located within a passage which has described the "purifying sun," a frequent symbol for Apollo.

The serpent symbolizes materialism in several of Lowell's poems; among them are "Where the Rainbow Ends,"[28] "Christmas Eve Under Hooker's Statue,"[29] and "Snake."[30] From its inception,

---

[25]Howey, pp. 80, 147.

[26]See Numbers: XXI:9.

[27]See John III: 14. Cf. Maud Bodkin, Archetypal Patterns in Poetry (London, 1934), pp. 276-277. Also see Jacobi, p. 157.

[28]Robert Lowell, Lord Weary's Castle (New York, 1946), p. 69. Lowell's utilization of the serpent and the dove may recall the warning from Matthew 10: 16.

[29]*Ibid*., p. 17. This poem also includes the "ancient speckled serpent."

[30]Robert Lowell, Notebook, 1967-68 (New York, 1969), p. 54.

his poetry has been filled with strong warnings against attempting to worship both God and Mammon. In his ambivalent use of the snake as a symbol, Lowell exemplifies the dual archetype of the serpent as explained by Harold Bayley:

> No beast of the field has had so many lessons exemplified by its attributes as the serpent. The sloughing of its worn-out skin led to its adoption as a symbol of the spiritual re-birth, but there was also seen to be a close analogy between the serpent's crawl in the dust and the earth-creeping attitude of materialism. Thus the same object served sometimes as the symbol of two diametrically opposed ideas, and in allegory one meets as constantly with the Evil as with the Good Serpent. It was the serpent of materialism--more subtle than any beast of the field--that seduced Eve in Eden. During the wanderings of the Israelites the dual symbolism is brought into juxtaposition in the story that the children of Israel were mortally bitten by serpents, and that those only who looked upon the Serpent uplifted by Moses were healed.[31]

Bayley states that it has been the mission of poets to attack materialism and to remarry the sundered Earth and Heaven, which were severed by a serpent, according to a primitive belief. Lowell's references to serpents may allude to that separation of Heaven and Earth, or a millennium, or again, a cosmogonical occurrence.

Lowell's latest poem, "Snake," discloses again the poet's use of the multiple imagery of the snake, uniting the ancient concepts of mythology and the Biblical concepts from both Testaments. Significantly, the short poem is placed foremost in

---

[31]Harold Bayley, _The Lost Language of Symbolism_, I (New York, 1951), 88.

a section entitled "Christmas and the New Year" and begins "One of God's creatures, just as much as you, / or God; what other bends its back in crooks / and curves so gracefully, or yields a point." Lowell's admiration for the snake is apparent in the following lines, and the central point of the sonnet is concentrated within the last line: "my little lamb in wolfskin, whip of wisdom," which succinctly evokes both the ancient view and the prophetic visions of Christ in the Old Testament.[32] Lowell's use of the serpent image in "Children of Light," a poem from his Pulitzer Prize-winning volume, has been explicated by one reviewer who observes that Lowell has employed irony through the use of that symbol, and that, "Paradoxically, the light proves to be darkness, since 'the seeds of light' are shown to be those of the Serpent."[33]

Finally, in the multiple imagery of the serpent in Lowell's description of the "river coiling back on itself," the figure recalls the encircled serpent, with its tail in its mouth, which represents a poetic image because of its ancient concept

---

[32] Isaiah XI: 6, 9.

[33] Neville Braybrooke, "The Poetry of Robert Lowell," Catholic World, CLXXXXVIII (January 7, 1964), 230-237.

of eternity. In Catholic symbolism,[34] the Eucharistic wafer is circular, representing the spirit of eternal life. According to Jung, the spheres or circles (of which there are many examples in Lowell's play) represent unity, based on Eastern religion and the concept of the Mandala.[35] In that respect, Lowell's apocalyptic view could be interpreted as being similar to that of Yeats. John Frank Kermode has explained that "Yeats is certainly an apocalyptic poet, but he does not take it literally, and this, I think, is characteristic of the attitude . . . of modern poets."[36] Kermode's explanation of Yeats' gyres points up a possible similarity to Lowell's spheres and circular concepts, particularly of unity.

> They [the gyres] are a figure for the co-existence of the past and future at the time of transition. . . . Actually, on Yeat's view of the historical cycle, there were transient moments of perfection, or what he called Unity of Being, but there was no way of making these permanent. . . .[37]

Bayley explains a theory that conforms to the ancient opinion of Origen that the Millennium would consist of a gradual

---

[34]Howey, p. 2.

[35]Jung, Symbols, pp. 213, 225.

[36]John Frank Kermode, The Sense of an Ending (New York, 1967), p. 98.

[37]Ibid., p. 100.

enlightenment, rather than a cataclysmic event.[38] Traditionally, the serpent stands in a peculiar relationship to mankind; on the one hand, as a symbol of darkness and evil through the inheritance of folklore,[39] and on the other hand, as a representation of wisdom. Rollo May states that the Biblical story of the Garden of Eden and the myth of Prometheus both speak "a classic truth."[40] He explains that the story from Genesis reveals conflict and anxiety which stem from self-awareness. The stories are comparable because they teach that there a limitation to the amount of knowledge that man may seek. It is understandable, May believes, "that primitive storytellers would be unable to distinguish between constructive self-consciousness and rebellion."[41]

The serpent, often thought to be a symbol of mystical meaning has been a favorite image of both Lowell and Shelley;[42] it also has been considered as having psychological significance.

---

[38]Bayley, p. 55. [39]Jacobi, p. 156.

[40]Rollo May, Man's Search for Himself (New York, 1953), p. 180.

[41]Ibid., p. 183.

[42]Maud Bodkin has offered a theory concerning the significance of the serpent to Shelley. See Bodkin, p. 250ff.

Jacobi describes it as an archetypal symbol:

> Thus the snake not only signifies instinct, but also has another, magical, mystical-religious meaning. It is the expression of a particular state, a "libido analogue," or reflection of the dynamism of the psyche, representing the ceaseless flow of the psychic process. It is the quicksilver of the alchemists, the "serpens Mercurii" in man, whose psychic life drives forward, never resting.[43]

Throughout Lowell's play, the naturalistic images are diametrically opposed to those of the Aeschylean version, and instead of Shelley's brilliant color imagery, Lowell has substituted dull colors, such as yellow, gray, or bronze. Those deliberate innovations could symbolize the death of a civilization, or they could imply the alienation of man from nature. The model which Lowell may have used for the concept of alienation may have been Goethe's or Byron's short works on Prometheus; the idea was not Greek. As noted by Károly Kerényi, "Isolation as a common fate--this modern contradiction--was not part of the Greek image of man."[44] Kerényi perceives Goethe's Prometheus as a being who is alienated from God; thus his theory is somewhat different from that of Thorslev, who thought that Byron's and Goethe's Prometheus reflected humanistic traits and divinity of mankind as well. Kerényi makes one other observation

---

[43]Jacobi, p. 157.

[44]Kerényi, <u>Prometheus</u>, p. 6.

which could be seen to some extent in Lowell's alienated Prometheus:

> Goethe's Prometheus is no God, no Titan, no man, but the immortal prototype of man as the original rebel and affirmer of his fate . . . He belongs rather to the more recent history of ideas and anticipates the Nietzschean or Existentialist view of man.[45]

Other allusions to Greek mythology might also be suggestive; for example, Lowell has Prometheus say that he heard the "unintelligible weeping of chaos,"[46] which apparently connotes Χάος, the beginning of the world for the Greeks--chaos meaning nothingness. Within that episode with Ocean, Prometheus speaks of the "tropical sea washing over me from sun to sun--many bright fish there, many valuable weeds,"[47] but he adds that "now that ocean is dry." He is recalling the "aimless and earlier days."[48] Lowell's images of the sea in that passage and in a statement by a choral voice,

> Each wave tears itself apart, when it hits the shore. The waters under the earth are black. The waters above the earth will never stop weeping, descending and breaking.[49]

---

[45]*Ibid.*, p. 17.

[46]Lowell, *Prometheus Bound*, p. 16.

[47]*Ibid.*

[48]*Ibid.*

[49]*Ibid.*, p. 20.

has a precedent in Shelley's Act Four of Prometheus Unbound:

> And fishes which were isles of living scale,
> And serpents, bony chains, twisted around
> The iron crags, or within heaps of dust
> To which the tortuous strength of their last pangs
> Had crushed the iron crags; and over these
> The jaggèd alligator, and the might
> Of earth-convulsing behemoth, which once
> Were monarch beasts, and on the slimy shores,
> And weed-overgrown continents of earth,
> Increased and multiplied like summer worms . . .[50]
> (ll. 304-313)

For Shelley, those lines represented a visionary idea of evolutionary change, based upon the theory of Cuvier, but for Lowell similar images reflect his nostalgic backward glance and possibly his influence from Pound. Lowell's purposeful description of a natural world which is hostile to man could be suggestive either of an attitude toward nature which primitive man supposedly held or of a cataclysmic change from a prehistoric world which scientists might perceive. One especially symbolic line is that "the sky is about to crack," and others are found in the opening monologue of Prometheus, who, in the Aeschylean drama, was chained on the top of the mountain to suffer alone. Other lines reflecting alienation from nature are "waterfalls foaming down the mountain drops," the "gnashing laughter of the waves dying out on the sand," the "inescapable sky," the "sun

---

[50]Shelley, Poetical Works, p. 257.

on its stiff rounds," and the "blank sky."[51] Even the birds who had been friendly sea nymphs in the Aeschylean version have become three gulls with harsh voices in Lowell's modernized derivation. The only pleasing image of nature may be found in Prometheus' tripartite apostrophe, "Bright sky, bright sky, bright sky!" and this line could also represent an address to the Zeus of Homer's Iliad, who was known by that epithet. Another warlike image from Homer could be seen in the substitution made by Lowell of a hawk instead of an eagle during the first choral ode. Prometheus inquires about his wife but asks the chorus to "warn her she mustn't come yet. . . The wings of the hawk are too freshly smashed, his eye is frightened and starved."[52]

The naming of Alcyone as Prometheus' wife and the idea that Zeus gave her an island to rule are significant departures from the Aeschylean version, in which there is no wife, and from Shelley's version, in which Asia is Prometheus' wife. Alcyone could represent cataclysmic upheaval, particularly when coupled with the reference to Typho,[53] since both were condemned

---

[51]Lowell, Prometheus Bound, p. 5.

[52]Ibid., p. 6.

[53]Ibid., p. 18.

to the underworld, and both usually connote earthquakes or volcanoes. (In Aeschylus' version, some reference may be traced to the eruption of Mount Aetna.) The name Alcyone is a variation on the name of a formidable giant Alkyoneus, about whom the earliest account was given by Pindar. H. J. Rose describes three cosmic catastrophes[54] which are represented in mythologems of the Greeks and other peoples. Alkyoneus was one of the giants in the Gigantomachy, a revolt by the giants against the Olympian gods. Three distinct attempts were believed to have been made by Earth to avenge Heaven (the Gigantomachy, the assault by Typhoeus, and the Aloadae); hence, Lowell's monster is named Typho to follow the Aeschylean version and to represent cosmic upheaval. Lowell uses the name, Typho, five times in rather rapid succession (one time as a symbol of rebellion)[55] Probably through the rapid repetition of the name, he intends to suggest cosmic upheaval, according to the traditional association.

Suggestion of cosmic upheaval, a theme of all three Promethean plays under consideration, suggests Plato's Politicus myth, which is generally considered as one source for Shelley's

---

[54] H. J. Rose, A Handbook of Greek Mythology (New York, 1929), pp. 57-59.

[55] Lowell, Prometheus Bound, p. 17.

concept of perfectibility. Plato's myth represented a reversal of the declining order of the ages which had been envisioned by the poet Hesiod, writing in the eighth century before the birth of Christ. The myth of Plato contains the revelation: "In due time he will close the present period--that of Zeus--by again taking the helm of the Cosmos. Then will be the resurrection of the Dead."[56] Lowell's return to the more ancient concept of the decline of the ages coincides with his pessimistic view expressed in his early poetry. His evolutionary view of modern man projects an interesting contrast to Shelley's concept of perfectibility, because Lowell coördinates the declining of the ages with a decline of the gods which man might have worshipped and an ironic view of individual man who may have conceived of himself as his own god.

As Lowell ponders the inscrutability of God (for example, in the choral voice's statement that "God may get used to man and lose interest, but gods never believe they have proved themselves. I am afraid of the blind ambition and helplessness of God"),[57] the play's motif often approaches Carl Jung's

---

[56]Plato, The Myths of Plato, translated by J. A. Stewart (Carbondale, 1960), p. 179.

[57]Lowell, Prometheus Bound, p. 12.

theory in Answer to Job[58] that man has produced his own concept of God throughout the centuries and that this concept has continually evolved through the nature of man's own mind. That theory is also expressed by Shelley in Prometheus Unbound when he implies that Prometheus created Jupiter. Thorslev states, "The fact that Prometheus calls himself the creator of Jupiter can be explained if the reader views Jupiter as man's conception of the gods of traditional religions."[59] While Shelley's Jupiter has been said to recall the jealous Old Testament God of vengeance, Lowell's Zeus may recall that view at one time, but his historical mind recalls all of the primitive concepts throughout the history of religion, as he recalls the primitive man's conception of God in nature and polytheism.

Lowell's Prometheus suggests the ancient worship of serpents and the Pelasgian creation myth, as has been mentioned in another section of this thesis, when the Titan says, "We come from a snake wrapped around a mud-egg. . . . Each ended when the cruel wisdom of the serpent had been broken by the formless mud."[60]

---

[58]Carl G. Jung, Answer to Job (New York, 1960), p. 15.

[59]Thorslev, p. 116.

[60]Lowell, Prometheus Bound, p. 8.

Within that episode, he refers to the succession of gods from Hesiod's Theogony[61] as he describes the overthrow of Uranus by Cronus and of Cronus by Zeus. The reversal of that succession of gods may be noted again in a later passage:

> Before Zeus, the lesser order of Cronus; before Cronus, the still lesser order of Uranus. Still less, still less, still less! An infinite whittling away. The nothingness of our beginning is hard at work to bury us.[62]

A nostalgic tone may be noted in another passage in Lowell's play:

> Third Voice: But the peoples of the earth cry out in sorrow at the downfall of those old powers and their long-held honors. The Titans are gone.[63]

The nature of Zeus is revealed as an evolving concept in Lowell's play, just as the power of Jupiter was overcome in Shelley's play. One passage, which could be compared with a similar discussion in the Aeschylean version of this drama, presents a brief dialogue between the choral voice and

---

[61] Hesiod, Hesiod, translated by Richard Lattimore (Ann Arbor, 1959), pp. 133, 134, 150.

[62] Lowell, Prometheus Bound, p. 24.

[63] Ibid., p. 20.

Prometheus.

Third Voice: No, Zeus is eternal.

Prometheus: Zeus eternal! Why he is counting his days. Perhaps he is already more than halfway through his count.[64]

The Aeschylean dialogue was ostensibly more ambiguous, just as the language was typically "embellished" in the Aeschylean style for which he was renowned. The essential thought for Lowell may follow in the remainder of the same dialogue:

Third Voice: You changed man from the highest of the animals to the lowest of the gods!

Prometheus: Man is a poor god, too intelligent to hide from his unceasing guilt, too stupid to escape. That story trails off in death.

Third Voice: This is the wisdom, Prometheus, we have learned by looking at you.[65]

Within that passage, as well as in some others, Lowell may have purposely reflected the existential element of modern Western cultures. Lowell's Prometheus voices the answer which was only implied by Aeschylus: "Zeus eternal! Why he is counting his days."[66] In a comparable scene from the Aeschylean

---

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[66] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

counterpart, Prometheus seems to question the eternal rule of Zeus, even though that skepticism was not condoned within Aeschylus' society. Although the ambiguity might have sufficiently shielded the meaning from an audience of the fifth century before Christ, a modern reader would notice the words of Prometheus at a moment of high interest in Prometheus Bound:

> Not yet hath all-ordaining Destiny
> decreed my release; but after many
> year, broken by a world of disaster
> and woe, I shall be delivered.
> The craft of the forger is weaker
> far than Necessity.[67]

The choral stasimon anticipates a speculative reconciliation similar to the conclusion of Aeschylus' Oresteia. Scholars have suggested that Aeschylus may have restored order as he had done in the Eumenides by the unity of Zeus and Moira (Destiny or Necessity).[68] The question of Zeus' eternal rule is posed by the stichomythic dialogue:

> Chorus leader: Who then holds the helm of Necessity?
> Prometheus: The Fates triform and unforgetting Furies.
> Leader: And Zeus, is he less in power than these?
> Prometheus: He may not avoid what is destined.
> Leader: What is destined for Zeus but endless rule?[69]

---

[67]Whitney J. Oates and Eugene O'Neill, Jr., The Complete Greek Drama, I (New York, 1938), 141.

[68]Harrison, Themis, pp. 385-386.

[69]Ibid.

The last question is one which Prometheus does not answer. He appears to have faith in his own foresight more than in that of Zeus, especially since he knows that his mother Themis has given him this vision. The promise by Themis would have represented to the Greek audience a more ancient wisdom than the vision of either Prometheus or Zeus; therefore, her foresight would be reliable. The multiplicity of interpretation which might be suggested by Themis will be discussed further in the next chapter.

In an overall view, three implication may be drawn from the passage cited from Aeschylus' Prometheus Vinctus: (1) Aeschylus anticipated the demise of the worship of Zeus and the Olympian gods following the enlightenment of the new philosophies of the fifth century before Christ, although he still recognized the reverence in which his audience held them; (2) the importance of the power of Themis and the contrast between Zeus' tyranny and Prometheus' love of mankind could reflect an evolutionary view of God on the part of Aeschylus, who was monotheistic; (3) the significance of the playwright's attitude toward Fate or Necessity reveals an optimistic trend among Greek thinkers, who were beginning to believe that man, who has free will, is not necessarily ruled by the Furies, or by Fate, or by punishment for the sins of their fathers. Those older

superstitions were just beginning to become obscure during Aeschylus' lifetime. Many centuries later, the nineteenth-century British poets who re-discovered the drama of *Prometheus Bound* were to amplify these three ideas.

CHAPTER VI

FINAL SPECULATIONS ON THE MEANING OF *PROMETHEUS BOUND*

That Zeus was considered omnipotent but not omniscient was a basic theme in Aeschylus' play. The power of Zeus represented authority to Greek audiences of the fifth century before Christ; consequently, the importance to early nineteenth-century writers who relied upon that traditional association was that the demise of Zeus symbolized the downfall of monarchs, and the stance of Prometheus as a rebellious figure became a symbol of man's individual free will posed against tyranny. During the nineteenth century, the meaning of freedom had to be studied, and Necessity had to be re-defined by philosophical thinkers who rejected the eighteenth-century rationalism. Since the importance of free will of the individual man has been demonstrated in the Aeschylean prototype of the play under consideration and since Shelley utilized that play to illustrate the triumph of individual will over Necessity, according to the position

taken in this study,[1] the conclusions will probably differ from both the popular and scholarly interpretations. The fact that Robert Lowell has revised his author's note may be accepted as a refutation of certain contemporary reviews which observed political implications.[2] In his revised edition, Lowell states that his characterization of Zeus represents "the laws of nature, or nature's God, as the eighteenth century might say."[3] When Lowell's Zeus is considered from that viewpoint, then the statement could mean that he is not necessarily a "prime mover" or creator, but that he is like other beings subject to the laws of nature; that is of Force and Power, Lowell's other two abstract figures who have their prototypes in Aeschylus' play. If Lowell's symbolization is accepted in that manner, then the figure of Zeus would coincide with the one which Aeschylus had portrayed, since Aeschylus had placed Zeus in a similar relation

---

[1]It should be noted that, after the thesis of the present study had been established, one scholarly study was located which opposes the opinion that Aeschylus and Shelley project a belief in free will of the individual. M. Byron Raizis, "Robert Lowell's Prometheus Bound," Papers on Language and Literature, V (Summer, 1969), 154-168.

[2]Julius Novick, "Theatre," The Nation, CCIV (June 26, 1967), 829-830.

[3]Lowell, Prometheus Bound, p. vi.

with the law of Necessity. Lowell could be leaving a somewhat equivocal concept of the nature of Zeus. Possibly this ambiguity permits the reader to ponder whether rationalism is becoming a strong force in the twentieth century as it was during the eighteenth century.

Prometheus as the mind or spirit of man has been explicated as one of the abstractions portrayed by Shelley's figure; accepting that symbol, the reader may find Lowell's Prometheus to be quixotic, ironic, or even absurd. The interpretation within this thesis follows the explanation which has been introduced in Chapter Three as Romantic Irony. Although many distortions of Shelley's imagery could be indicated in Lowell's play, the one example which appears pertinent to this discussion is found in the two respective speeches by Prometheus in which he recalls the gifts which he has presented to mankind. While Shelley's lyrical drama elicits the essence of hope, a quality also found in Aeschylus' play, Lowell's speech through Prometheus becomes an ironic mockery of the Promethean gifts. Like Aeschylus, whose Prometheus states that he gave men "blind hopes," Lowell uses the words but changes the tone with the innovations: "I gave the sufferers a drug. Now they often forget about dying" and "I gave them hope, blind hopes! . . . Men see much less surely now, but they suffer less--they can hardly draw breath

now without taking hope."[4] (The gifts are enumerated later.)[5]

Lowell's Prometheus, condemned to be devoid of his foresight, one of his qualities from Greek mythology, and endlessly chained to a rock, apparently represents the power of man's mind to judge wisely. Some readers might consider the abstraction parallel to the creative faculty of man's mind separated from the rational faculty (Zeus), as Shelley's separation between Jupiter and Prometheus has been interpreted.[6] Although that possibility is apparent in Lowell, his specific divisions are not as clear-cut as are Shelley's.[7] Lowell presents a clue to characterization through Power, who states:

> It's laughable that you are called Prometheus, the Foresee-er. As long as the rule and order of the world remain, you will foresee only what you now see: Force: this rock unchanging, yourself unchanging, Prometheus unchanged and chained to this unchanging rock.[8]

---

[4]Lowell, Prometheus Bound, pp. 10-11.

[5]Ibid., pp. 21-23.

[6]F. A. Lea, Shelley and the Romantic Revolution (London, 1945), pp. 113, 121.

[7]Prometheus, as presented by Shelley, has also been depicted as "the creative spirit of man, which builds a new world based on Christian humanitarian ethics, the Greek love of nature and beauty, and the experimental scientific research of the modern man." See Grabo, Interpretation, p. 178.

[8]Lowell, Prometheus Bound, p. 4.

The loss of foresight, or imagination, is re-inforced in passages later in the play, when Prometheus is unable to predict the name of the successor to Zeus, although that inability could be a purposeful restraint of memory, from the wisdom imparted by his mother, Themis, or Mother Earth. The loss of wisdom, however, becomes apparent in the stumbling efforts of Lowell's Prometheus to find the Truth.[9]

To gain the clearest perspective on Lowell's characterization of Zeus, one vantage point might be gained from the observations made by Coleridge during a lecture in which he explained the Aeschylean drama. Probably Coleridge's definition of the Aeschylean Zeus would be just as enlightening for Lowell's readers as it was for the Greek play:

> Nature, or Zeus. . . knows herself only, can only come to a knowledge of herself in man! And even in man, only as man is supernatural, above nature, poetic. But this knowledge man refuses to communicate: that is, the human understanding alone is at once self-conscious and conscious of nature.[10]

For Lowell, the character of Zeus is symbolic of the Necessity

---

[9] Ibid., pp. 49-50.

[10] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, The Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: With an Introductory Essay Upon His Philosophical and Theological Opinions, IV (New York, 1864), 364-365.

of modern-day scientism. His nostalgic view is seen through the words of Prometheus, who states that he "used to see unending circles of light . . . and now sees a thunderhead, a false face, blackened, crisp, all-powerful."[11] Prometheus had described the world earlier as "an infinite sphere of intelligence. . . indicating a mind in things."[12]

Zeus, for Robert Lowell, probably represents the tyranny of modern science (or Necessity), a force which, after being set in motion, continues on its own course, under its own acceleration, without regard for the will of its creators. The tyrannical force, as traditionally presented, was provoked by the action of Prometheus, who, in bringing fire to mankind, embodies a Faustian concept of knowledge in some of the poems written about Prometheus. Apparently Lowell has chosen that theme, as well as an undercurrent of thought which reflects man's struggle to know himself and to reconstruct a literary image of a God who has become obscure. Lowell's Prometheus is not defiant, but he states, "Zeus had to make nothing of me, so that he himself could be everything. That's the law and disease of tyrants. . ."[13] Then an example of Lowell's equivocation is

---

[11] Lowell, Prometheus Bound, p. 43.

[12] Ibid., p. 9.

[13] Ibid., p. 10.

observed, as Prometheus asks, "But is Zeus a tyrant? I'm not sure."[14]

Hermes is portrayed by Lowell as an extension of Zeus, a composite character patterned after Pound's style of fusion, who apparently represents the militaristic nature of Zeus' bureaucracy, or at least, the arrogance of Force. Within the episode with Io, Hermes is characterized traditionally as the messenger of Zeus who appeared to rid her of Argus, the monster with one hundred eyes, whom Hera had sent to plague Io because of her illicit relationship with Hera's husband. Lowell's Hermes also carries the feather, with which according to mythology he lulled Argus to sleep. Lowell's modern character is overbearing. His extreme arrogance is indicated in stage directions which indicate that his words "are edged with condescension and an unfeeling aloofness. He only understands authority, and is vexed at having to negotiate with Prometheus, who has none."[15] Lowell's personal aversion to military authority thus becomes quite apparent.

The words of Hermes reflect a tonal contrast with the words of Ocean, who appears to be a sincere, though ineffective, counselor representing the old order. The hope for reconciliation

---

[14]*Ibid.*

[15]*Ibid.*, p. 57.

may be found within his statement that he thinks that "we still have time to come to terms with God. You still have some mysterious value to him."[16] Lowell's prophetic, though often ominous, vision may still appear hopeful in the words that Prometheus utters when he thinks that he hears Zeus "crawling to me on his hands and knees;" if so, they might be able to "trick or at least delay the fire."[17] The trickery, of course, refers to the older role of Prometheus as trickster, but Prometheus' next sentence: "Our minds will be joined again"[18] implies the concept of the universal mind.[19] The fire is one of Lowell's more ambiguous images, varying according to the use which is made of it; but in the finale, Prometheus recognizes, "I am burning in my own fire,"[20] whereas the Aeschylean version

---

[16] Ibid., p. 15.

[17] Ibid., p. 56.

[18] Ibid.

[19] The idea of the universal mind is universal; however, that theory may be traced to Pythagoras, or to Plato, and to Shelley or Emerson during the nineteenth century.

[20] Ibid., p. 67. The immediate impression for the modern reader is that Lowell intends the ending to represent a nuclear holocaust. The cosmic disaster, however, would parallel the ancient atomic philosophy of Lucretius. See Lucretius, On the Nature of the Universe (New York, 1958), pp. 62, 63, 68, or see Henry Rushton Fairclough, Love of Nature among the Greeks and Romans (London, 1930), pp. 187-188.

had depicted the final spectacular scene as one in which Prometheus faced the wrath of Zeus, whose fire and lightning surrounded Prometheus and the sea nymphs.[21] The fire in Lowell's play could have a further suggestion of a millennium within the Christian meaning; the allusion to Christ is also a Jungian symbol. According to a Heracleitan philosophy, the fire could symbolize a change in man, or a concept of continual flux; thus, fire would be a regenerative process.

The apostrophe to Mother Earth (Gaia or Themis) follows the conclusion of the Aeschylean version, where Aeschylus had used poetic license in making Themis the mother of Prometheus rather than Klymene, the daughter of Oceanus, as recorded by Hesiod.[22] Since scholars can only speculate upon the method by which Aeschylus achieved a restoration of order, as all Greek trilogies did, Lowell's reconciliation may also be a matter of speculation, based upon his dependence upon a cyclical motif and upon the appeal to Mother Earth. While Jane Ellen Harrison has explained the evolution of worship (from Gaia, through

---

[21]Staging effects are discussed by Gilbert Murray as they might have been utilized in the Greek theater. See Murray, pp. 38-40.

[22]Hesiod, p. 153.

Themis, to Apollo, and Zeus),[23] she concludes that Themis symbolizes the basic religion. Another scholar, John H. Finley, correlates the conclusion by Aeschylus with the poetry of Pindar to arrive at his theory of reconciliation:

> Though Aeschylus could entertain the fearful suspicion that intelligence and sentience are at odds with the world and end in hatred for the world's intractability, he finally escaped the ghastly thought. . . . It is only when intellect perceives states of being beyond itself that it sees its own partiality, hence is ready to forgive. The solution of the trilogy follows from Aeschylus' sense of this wider being. The mind's harmony with the world, prefigured in the sympathy of the Oceanids, ultimately frees the mind from its isolation, returning it to the understanding of the whole.[24]

Finley's explanation, thus, is another one which transcends despair. The third scholar, who has observed the play through archaeological findings which have been made available during recent research, is Károly Kerényi. His theory may have been familiar to Lowell because of Kerényi's association with Jung. Rather than a final cosmic upheaval, the conclusion may represent a marriage between Zeus and Themis, "the earthly maternal principle,"[25] according to Kerényi. The effect of that marriage

---

[23]Harrison, Themis, p. 386.

[24]John H. Finley, Jr., Pindar and Aeschylus (Cambridge, 1955), pp. 232-233.

[25]Kerényi, Prometheus, p. 101.

would be to "consolidate the world order and bring universal contentment." The speculation is that the marriage might have been described in the <u>Titanomachia</u>, which Aeschylus would have known, although modern scholars may only wonder. Finley's conclusion agrees with that sense of harmony, as he states that "Earth, who had given him the secret that he at last willingly surrendered to Zeus, is herself in that act reconciled with Zeus, and mind and intuition, male and female, creativity and changelessness, resolve their discords."[26] Thus, Lowell's play may have once more achieved resolution of discord through the conflict of the opposites--or, as Camus would say, the revolution in Lowell's play has completed its full cycle--but only, of course, through the appeal to the ancient wisdom of the female <u>anima</u> of the universe.

---

[26]Finley, p. 228.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Alvarez, Alfred, The Shaping Spirit: Studies in Modern English and American Poets, London, Chatto and Windus, 1958.

Baker, Carlos, Shelley's Major Poetry: The Fabric of a Vision, New York, Russell and Russell, 1961.

Barzun, Jacques, Classic, Romantic and Modern, Boston and Toronto, Little, Brown and Company, 1961.

Bayley, Harold, The Lost Language of Symbolism, 2 volumes, New York, Barnes and Noble, Incorporated, 1951.

Bewley, Marius, The Complex Fate: Hawthorne, Henry James and some other American Writers, London, Chatto and Windus, 1952.

Bodkin, Maud, Archetypal Patterns in Poetry: Psychological Studies of Imagination, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

Bogan, Louise, Achievement in American Poetry, Chicago, Henry Regnery Company, 1951.

Brown, John Russell and Bernard Harris, editors, American Poetry, Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies VII, London, Edward Arnold Publishers Limited, 1965.

Brown, John Russell and Bernard Harris, editors, American Theatre, Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies X, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1967.

Bush, Douglas, Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1937.

Byron, George Gordon, The Complete Poetical Works of Byron, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933.

Camus, Albert, The Rebel, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, Incorporated, 1956.

Cirlot, J. E., A Dictionary of Symbols, New York, Philosophical Library, Incorporated, 1962.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, The Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 7 volumes, New York, Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1864.

Empson, William, Seven Types of Ambiguity, London, Chatto and Windus, 1947.

Fairclough, Henry Rushton, Love of Nature among the Greeks and Romans, London, Longmans, Green and Company, 1930.

Finley, John H., Jr., Pindar and Aeschylus, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1955.

Fraser, G. S., Ezra Pound, Edinburgh and London, Oliver and Boyd, 1960.

____________, Vision and Rhetoric: Studies in Modern Poetry, London, Faber and Faber Limited, 1959.

Grabo, Carl, Prometheus Unbound: An Interpretation, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1935.

Graves, Robert, The Greek Myths, 2 volumes, Baltimore, Penguin Books, 1955.

Greenslet, Ferris, The Lowells and Their Seven Worlds, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1946.

Hadas, Moses, A History of Greek Literature, New York, Columbia University Press, 1950.

Harrison, Jane Ellen, Epilegomena to the Study of Greek Religion and Themis, New York, University Books, Incorporated, 1962.

Hesiod, Hesiod, translated by Richard Lattimore, Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 1959.

Homer, The Homeric Hymns: A New Prose Translation, translated by Andrew Lang, London, George Allen, 1899.

Hollander, John, Modern Poetry: Essays in Criticism, London, Oxford University Press, 1968.

Howey, M. Oldfield, The Encircled Serpent: A Study of Serpent Symbolism in All Countries and Ages, New York, Arthur Richmond Company, 1955.

Jacobi, Jolande, Complex/Archetype/Symbol in the Psychology of C. G. Jung, translated from the German by Ralph Manheim, New York, Pantheon Books, Incorporated, 1959.

Jarrell, Randall, Poetry and the Age, New York, Vintage Books, Incorporated, 1955.

Jung, Carl B., Answer to Job, translated by R. F. C. Hull, Cleveland, World Publishing Company, 1968.

____________, Man and His Symbols, Garden City, Doubleday and Company, 1964.

Kerenyi, Karoly, Prometheus: Archetypal Image of Human Existence, translated from the German by Ralph Manheim, New York, Pantheon Books, Incorporated, 1963.

Kermode, John Frank, The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction, New York, Oxford University Press, 1967.

Lang, Andrew, Custom and Myth, London, Longmans, Green and Company, 1885.

Lea, F. A., Shelley and the Romantic Revolution, London, Routledge, 1945.

Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology, edited by Robert Graves, London, Batchworth Press Limited, 1959.

Lowell, Robert, For the Union Dead, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1964.

____________, Life Studies, New York, Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1959.

____________, Lord Weary's Castle, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946.

Lowell, Robert, Notebook, 1967-68, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1969.

_______________, The Old Glory, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965.

_______________, Prometheus Bound, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1969.

Lucretius, On the Nature of the Universe, translated and with an introduction by Ronald Latham, London, Penguin Books Limited, 1958.

May, Rollo, Man's Search for Himself, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, Incorporated, 1953.

Mazzaro, Jerome, The Poetic Themes of Robert Lowell, Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 1965.

_______________, The Achievement of Robert Lowell: 1939-1959, Detroit, University of Detroit Press, 1960.

Murray, Gilbert, Aeschylus: The Creator of Tragedy, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1940.

Norman, Charles, Ezra Pound, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1960.

Oates, Whitney J. and Eugene O'Neill, Jr., editors, The Complete Greek Drama, 2 volumes, New York, Random House, 1938.

O'Connor, William Van, Sense and Sensibility in Modern Poetry, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1948.

Ostroff, Anthony B., editor, The Contemporary Poet as Artist and Critic, Boston and Toronto, Little Brown and Company, 1964.

Otto, Walter F., The Homeric Gods: The Spiritual Significance of Greek Religion, New York, Pantheon Books, Incorporated, 1954.

Parkinson, Thomas Francis, editor, Robert Lowell: A Collection of Critical Essays, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall Incorporated, 1968.

Peacock, Ronald, Goethe's Major Plays: An Essay, New York, Hill and Wang, 1959.

Plato, The Myths of Plato, translated by J. A. Stewart, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1960.

Progoff, Ira, Jung's Psychology and its Social Meaning, New York, The Julian Press, Incorporated, 1953.

Ransom, John Crowe, The World's Body, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1968.

Rose, H. J., A Handbook of Greek Mythology: Including Its Extension to Rome, New York, E. P. Dutton and Company, 1929.

__________, A Handbook of Latin Literature From the Earliest Times to the Death of St. Augustine, London, Methuen and Company Limited, 1936.

Rosenthal, M. L., The Modern Poets: A Critical Introduction, New York, Oxford University Press, 1960.

__________, The New Poets: American and British Poetry Since World War II, New York, Oxford University Press, 1967.

__________, A Primer of Ezra Pound, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1960.

Schlegel, Dorothy B., Shaftesbury and the French Deists, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1956.

Shelley, Percy Bysshe, The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, London, Oxford University Press, 1927.

__________, The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, 10 volumes, London, Ernest Benn Limited, 1930.

Spender, Stephen, The Creative Element: A Study of Vision, Despair and Orthodoxy among some Modern Writers, London, Hamish Hamilton Limited, 1954.

__________, The Struggle of the Modern, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1963.

Staples, Hugh B., Robert Lowell: The First Twenty Years, New York, Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1962.

Stepanchev, Stephen, American Poetry since 1945: A Critical Survey, New York, Harper and Row Publishers, 1965.

Thorpe, Clarence D., Carlos Baker and Bennett Weaver, editors, The Major English Romantic Poets: A Symposium in Re-appraisal, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1957.

Thorslev, Peter L., Jr., The Byronic Hero: Types and Proto-types, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1962.

Untermeyer, Louis, Modern American Poetry, New York, Harcourt Brace and Company, 1950.

Virgil (Publius Vergilius Maro), The Eclogues and Georgics of Virgil, translated by C. Day Lewis, Garden City, Doubleday and Company, Incorporated, 1964.

Waggoner, Hyatt H., American Poets: From the Puritans to the Present, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968.

Whitehead, Alfred North, Science and the Modern World, New York, The Free Press, 1953.

Wolfe, Humbert, Romantic and Unromantic Poetry, London, J. W. Arrowsmith Limited, 1933.

Zillman, Lawrence John, Shelley's Prometheus Unbound: A Variorum Edition, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1959.

Articles

Braybrooke, Neville, "The Poetry of Robert Lowell," Catholic World, CLXXXXVIII (January 7, 1964), 230-237.

Eberhart, Richard, "Four Poets," The Sewanee Review, LV (1947), 324-336.

"Electing a Poet," Encounter, XXVI (April, 1966), 51-52.

"The Festival Guest Here Beat His Breast," Time, LXXXV (June 11, 1965), 29.

Hardison, O. B., Jr., "Robert Lowell: The Poet and The World's Body," Shenandoah: The Washington and Lee University Review, XIV (Winter, 1963), 24-32.

Hochman, Baruch, "Robert Lowell's The Old Glory," Tulane Drama Review, XI (Summer, 1967), 127-138.

Jumper, Will C., "Whom Seek Ye?: A Note on Robert Lowell's Poetry," The Hudson Review (Spring, 1956), 117-125.

Mazzaro, Jerome, "Sojourner of the Self," The Nation, CCIX (July 7, 1969), 22-24.

"The Occasion for Protest," The Nation, CC (June 21, 1965), 658-659.

"Prometheus in Straits," Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, LXXXIII (March, 1968), 18.

Raizis, M. Byron, "Robert Lowell's Prometheus Bound," Papers on Language and Literature, V (Supplement, Summer, 1969), 154-168.

"Second Chance," Time, LXXXIX (June 2, 1967), 67-74.

Seidel, Frederick, "Robert Lowell," The Paris Review, VII (Winter-Spring, 1961), 56-95.

Simon, John, "Abuse of Privilege: Lowell as Translator," The Hudson Review, XX (Winter, 1967), 543-562.

Spacks, Patricia Meyer, "From Satire to Description," Yale Review, LVIII (Winter, 1968), 232-248.

Spencer, Benjamin T., "Pound: The American Strain," Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, LXXXI (December, 1966), 457-466.

Spender, Stephen, "Robert Lowell's Family Album," New Republic, CXL (June 8, 1959), 17.

Weales, Gerald, "New Haven Bound," The Reporter, XXXVI (June 15, 1967), 44-46.

Newspapers

New York Times, May 21, 1967.