

WIZARD OF OZ

DECODING AND DECIPHERING AN ARCHETYPAL MASTERPIECE

by

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Starring: Judy Garland, Frank Morgan, Ray Bolger, Bert Lahr, Jack Haley, Billie Burke, Margaret Hamilton, Charley Grapewin, Clara Blandick.

Directed by Victor Fleming. Produced by Mervyn LeRoy. Screenplay Noel Langley, John Lee Mahin, Florence Ryerson and Edgar Allan Woolf from the novel by L. Frank Baum, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz. Photographed by Harold Rosson. Music by Harold Arlen. Lyrics by E. Y. Harberg. Edited by Blanche Sewell. Distributed by MGM, 1939.

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INTRODUCTION

“If future archaeologists had only one artifact from which to reconstruct this country’s character, they couldn’t do better than this movie. Yet its appeal doesn’t have much to do with the art of film; a case could be made that, except for composer Harold Arlen and lyricist E. Y. Harburg, no one involved is quite at his or her peak. The abiding beauty of *The Wizard of Oz* is the way, over the years, it’s become the primary folk tale for Americans of this century – and our common attachment to it, which borders on the mystical, is a phenomenon every bit as wondrous as the story on the screen. As hauled down the yellow brick road by director Victor Fleming, the reliable MGM shop foreman who took over *Gone With the Wind*’s logistics the same year, the movie itself isn’t mystical; one advantage it has over artier filmed fantasies, with their sickly air of universal betterment, is the same Hollywood-mindedness that probably helped make it a flop in 1939. The studio’s hard-sell production values, the grown-up cast’s burlesque-flavored performances and the Depression edge of the wisecracks keep everything down-to-earth – inexplicably recognizable. That could be why no one feels let down by Judy Garland’s return from Oz to Kansas at the end; perhaps what touches even the most wishfully hard-boiled among us is the knowledge that both places are in America” – Tom Carson *LA Weekly*, January 3, 1993.

The Wizard of Oz [1939] is one of the most beloved of American movies; it is also one of the most intricate pieces of Hollywood cinema ever made. It is unquestionably a masterpiece of filmic art! The film has not only the complexity of L. Frank Baum's turn-of-the-century stories, but also a variety of interpolations added and appended by the filmmakers, writers, producers, and myriad other inspired artists who worked on the film. The result is a film that, despite ourselves, takes root in our hearts and souls. It demands a permanent place in our memories; it reverberates not only in our conscious minds, but our individual and collective unconscious.

The Wizard of Oz is also one of the most mysterious films ever made. I don't mean this in the sense that it is a detective film or that it deals with Witches and Wizards, but that it leaves us with so many puzzling questions unanswered. Why does water melt the Wicked Witch? Why do poppies put Dorothy to sleep and why does snow wake her up? Why are so many people from Kansas reproduced in altered forms in Oz? What does the Wicked Witch want with the Ruby Slippers? What will happen to Toto the day after Dorothy returns from Oz? Questions like these seem almost endless. And yet, they do not interfere with the enjoyment of the film. Few people complain about "disturbing plot holes."

In the following pages, I postulate answers to these questions (please be aware that I never claim that these are *the* answers – many alternates are possible). What I also attempt is to give the film a consistent theme, one that gives coherence to a rather scattered tale. But most importantly, I try to share

what I have found within *The Wizard of Oz*, hoping it will make the film an even more rewarding experience and even more fun to watch.

The Wizard of Oz is a tapestry woven of several themes. There is, of course, the surface story of Dorothy transported to the wonderful Land of Oz, her experiences there, and her ultimate return. Below this text, however, are major and minor subtexts. There are the social/economic/political circumstances in which the film was made (the years just preceding 1939). There is a rite of passage of a young woman from childhood into the beginnings of adolescence. Concomitant with this, there is the story of how Dorothy must deal with changes in her perception of the Mother image, the Father image, and her own image as a sexual being. In addition, woven in are occasional political, literary and religious references.

The Oz books are indeed wonderful children's stories of adventure and fantasy. However, most adults now recognize that they also contain only slightly hidden turn-of-the-century economic and political issues. In turn, the 1939 film version of the story speaks volumes about the sociology and politics of late-Depression America. For instance, the film's economics is a strange blend of late-19th century gold versus silver standard arguments and mid-20th century New Dealism. These and other time-bound complexities of economics and sociology, however, cannot account for its seemingly permanent popularity. For a film to become so popular, it must strike deeper into our souls than just an economic/political commentary.

Indeed, at the heart of *The Wizard of Oz* is a study of the psychological growth of a single individual. Since psychological growth is so important to both the individual and to the culture, it is little wonder that, combined with outstanding production values, excellent writing, inspired casting, and intelligent direction, the film has become a classic.

I will focus on the psychology and the psychological symbolism used to power the film's emotional engine. I will take minor excursions into politics, economics, religion, and sociology when these affect or allude to the psychology. The discussions of the more pop culture aspects and trivia (Dorothy's hair keeps changing length and curliness, Toto was a female dog, Buddy Ebson was allergic to aluminum paint, and so on) are easily found elsewhere. What has always struck me about the *Wizard of Oz*, after several viewings, is the elegance of its psychological consistency, which, I believe is no small part of the film's enduring popularity. And I believe it deserves an extended analytical look.

I assume that everyone has seen *The Wizard of Oz* (at least once). This essay was originally prompted by the recent – and popular – re-release of the film on DVD with restored colors and a fancy soundtrack. So, since I assume everyone is familiar with the story, I will dispense with the plot summary and plunge directly into the film itself.

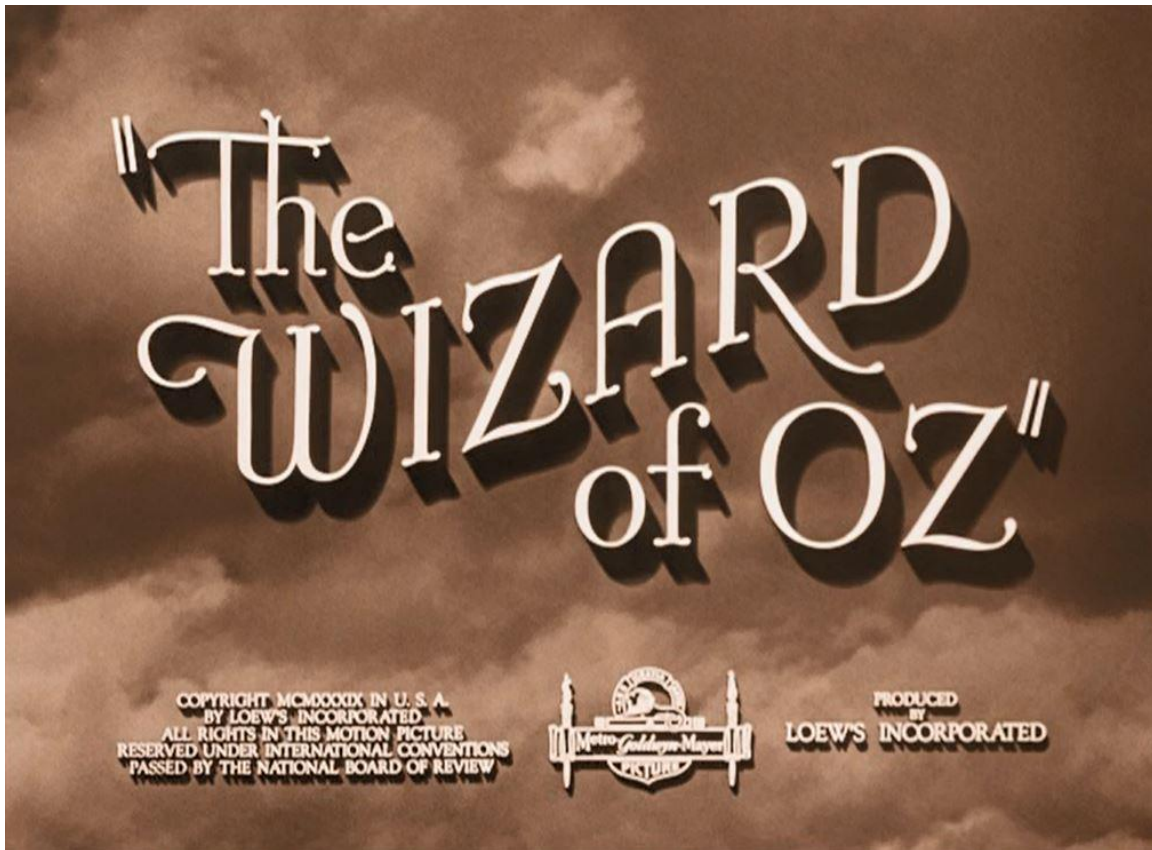
1. THE TITLES

The film opens with a dedication and titles. Like the rest of the film, even this seemingly routine and simple opening sequence is layered with meanings. And, like the rest of the film, it is necessary to look beneath the obvious surface, at the various “subtexts,” to understand the complexity of *The Wizard of Oz*.

For example, storm clouds appear under the film’s titles. These dark, brooding clouds are a common symbol, an obvious shorthand for the message, “There is a storm brewing.” This “storm” will make itself manifest in many ways. Literally – a tornado transports Dorothy to Oz. Psychologically – Dorothy begins the film as a seemingly terminally dependent brat almost literally hanging on her surrogate mother’s apron strings. Over the length of the film, she matures, slowly and with great difficulty, into a young woman. In addition, the storm clouds are a direct reference to Dorothy herself: Her last name is Gale.

Yet under the rolling titles, with those rankling storm clouds angrily passing beneath, we hear the film’s famous theme song, “Somewhere Over the Rainbow.” This hopeful note (pardon the pun) cleverly balances any threat the dark clouds may imply.

That these roiling clouds march across the screen from right to left adds to their meaning. In the tradition of medieval (and some more recent) theater, the characters entering stage left are the villains and those entering from stage right are the heroes. While Miss Gulch (see below) conforms strictly to this scheme (as do many of Alfred Hitchcock's villains and heroes – see *Shadow of a Doubt* [1943] for several examples), these introductory clouds seem to be moving steadily toward an area of threat (screen left) from a safer region psychologically (screen right). A clear indication that an adventure is to ensue.



These clouds pose two questions. First, are the storm clouds themselves a threatening influence entering, as they do, from the villainous stage left? Or are they cousins of the dark clouds of the forthcoming tornado and thus a means of transport that moves Dorothy from the negativity of the left to the hopefulness of stage-right? Both interpretations describe the storm quite well: it is full of doom, disaster, and terror, but without it Dorothy would not go on her adventure to Oz and remain a whiney little girl for the rest of her life.

II – DOROTHY AND TOTO ON THE ROAD



The film's action opens with Dorothy running down a rough dirt road looking worriedly over her shoulder at the camera . . . at the audience, at us. She seems to be trying to escape the audience watching the film. Normally, the screen forms a barrier between the audience and the film. Breaking it is often considered something very modern, indeed, post-Modern. However, it has occurred throughout the history of film – the Marx Brothers' asides to the audience are a case in point as are the early Warner Brothers cartoons in which Daffy Duck or Bugs Bunny address the audience directly. Perhaps the earliest popular occurrence of the breaking of the cinematic proscenium arch is in the conclusion of the 1906 *Great Train Robbery* when one of the masked bandits turns his gaze and his gun directly toward the audience and fires.

If indeed this opening scene of *The Wizard of Oz* has a post-Modern flavor to it and reaches out through the screen into the audience, then we must consider who *we* are in the context of the film. My assumption is that the MGM studio executives assumed the average audience will be comprised of children and their parents. The children are consciously fascinated by the text of the film – Dorothy's fantastic adventure in Oz – while unconsciously responding to the film's various subtexts. More sophisticated adults, while also enjoying the text, may also respond to the social, political, and psychological metaphors, the cleverly written lyrics, the music, and, on later viewings, the nostalgia for Judy Garland, Bert Lahr and the others.

Since today's media-savvy children are far more sophisticated than those the film was originally aimed at, I see the audience as an overall fairly

sophisticated one. Therefore, I see Dorothy fleeing from the audience as a visual metaphor for running away from whatever the audience symbolizes – in this case, maturity and sophistication.

Children of Dorothy's age, on the cusp between childhood and adolescence are drawn simultaneously in two opposing directions. One force, a conservative one, pulls them back into the comforts of childhood where all is familiar, where they are insulated and isolated, and where they are fully protected. This is exemplified by Dorothy's immediate response to her problem, "Let's go tell Uncle Henry and Auntie Em."

Opposing this regressive, conservative force is the natural, inevitable drive to grow and mature. Adolescence is a goal many youngsters are fixated upon. The beginning of the "teen" years offers a new life, new relationships, a new independence, a new world, and a new body.

Throughout the film, Dorothy is at the center of this tug-of-war. Given the choice, she often regresses back into childhood. Yet she is drawn inevitably toward maturity. This conflict provides much of the psychological tension of the film's subtexts.

Dorothy's first words are, "She isn't coming yet . . ." We learn two important things from this hurried statement. First, it is a "she" that Dorothy fears and, second, whatever the "she" represents has not yet come but is looming on Dorothy's horizon. Thus, Dorothy fears something feminine – "she" – and its coming is inevitable – "yet."

As will be demonstrated throughout the film, this “feminine” is Dorothy’s own nascent female maturity. In the real world, it is only the specifics of that road from childhood to maturity that varies greatly from person to person. And *The Wizard of Oz* is about Dorothy’s particular road to maturity (Yellow Brick) and what we as individuals can learn as exemplars from her experiences.

To continue our inspection of the film’s opening scene, we see Dorothy surrounded by a sepia-toned Kansas. Dry and sere, it is a clear representation of the Midwest of the Great Depression beset by the double plagues of economic disasters and drought.

This landscape is full of messages. There is the real Kansas – a landscape renowned for its vast, undisturbed monotony – and the film’s Kansas: hard, geometric, jutting and angular. This Kansas contrasts sharply with Oz whose spirals and meanders seem to invite exploration and movement while the regular geometry of Kansas seems to resist them.

Accompanying Dorothy is Toto – the real driving force of the film. At the level of the film’s text, he is a very realistic representation of the symbiotic, almost magical relationship most children have with their pets. But Toto is more. In myths and fairy tales, animals are symbolic. There is hardly an animal that doesn’t have some bit of folklore, wisdom, myth, fable, or allegory associated with it. “A leopard can’t change its spots.” “The wise

owl.” “As slippery as an eel.” “As sly as a fox.” Disney built a whole industry on anthropomorphized animals.

So, Toto: The most common proverb about dogs is that they are “man’s best friend.” And certainly Toto – warm, fluffy, fuzzy – spends a good portion of the film clutched to Dorothy’s breast. There is a difference in what animals mean as manifestations of proverbs and. On the other hand, as extensions of an internal state, as projections of the psyche. We come here to the symbolic crux of this film: what aspect of Dorothy’s psyche does Toto represent?

Animals often symbolize the internal, “animalistic” aspects of the psyche, those below consciousness, below the outward “human-ness.” They represent our most basic drives. It is the central thesis of this essay – and I hope that it will be justified as we progress analytically through the film – that Toto represents Dorothy’s instinct toward maturation. Dorothy’s psychological transformation is, as I shall show, under the direction and control of Toto! Whenever Dorothy starts to slide back toward childhood, Toto does something that sparks her down the path toward maturity.

Additional insights into the film are often gained from comparing the film’s story to the original L. Frank Baum book. The Toto we see, the driving force behind Dorothy’s journey, is an invention of the filmmakers! In the book, Toto is much more a passive pet and his contributions are occasional and most often accidental.

In addition, many of the names in *The Wizard of Oz* are rife with meaning. For instance, in Latin, Toto's name means "all." (Toto was a popular dog's name in Victorian times – much like Spot or Fido would be later. In France at the time, it was also a popular name for children. This, and the Oz reference, may explain the Toto character, who speaks no known earthly language, in Preston Sturges' comic masterpiece *The Palm Beach Story* [1942].) Certainly, Toto doesn't represent Dorothy's totality in any cosmic sense. Yet Toto does represent "all" of Dorothy's (and any preteen's) most pressing unconscious (and occasionally conscious) concern: growing up. (In Greek, "Dorothy" means "gift of God.")

As we will see, Toto gets Dorothy into various types of trouble – and always the right kind of trouble at exactly the right moment to help guide her down the road of her quest for maturity. Toto's timing is always impeccable. For instance, he doesn't reveal the Wizard's true nature during their first interview, when it would have prevented Dorothy from facing the Wicked Witch, but only during the second meeting when she is ready to reassess her projections of the Father Archetype.

Toto's current mischief is getting into Miss Gulch's garden and chasing her cat. The garden image is immediately associated with the Biblical paradise of Eden. Toto's influence is parallel to that of the Biblical serpent. Certain Gnostic sects reject the orthodox view of the snake's villainy and believe that it is the Serpent who forced Adam and Eve from a state of obedient and passive unconsciousness in the Garden into an active and self-actualizing consciousness that allowed them to mature into human beings. This is clearly

the model of Dorothy's journey from dependence (and regressive unconsciousness, as I shall show) to independence and consciousness. (This scene will be repeated later in Oz with a different set of characters.)

Toto's goal in invading Miss Gulch's garden is to chase her cat. The cat is a symbol of the feminine. (Another, and only slightly less germane interpretation of the cat – especially in that we know that Miss Gulch will transform into the Wicked Witch – is that the cat is a witch's familiar.)

Dorothy points out that Toto couldn't catch the cat, anyway. This statement contains an interesting psychological truth: Instinct alone cannot lead to growth – that is, Toto/Instinct cannot obtain for Dorothy feminine maturity/cat. Other undeveloped or repressed aspects of the personality must be drawn out of the Shadow – that aspect of the psyche where dwell all the unrecognized, often unpleasant, aspect of the personality – into consciousness where they can be empowered and integrated into the personality. These “other aspects,” as we shall see, are the companions that Dorothy gathers about her on the Yellow Brick road. But before she encounters them in Oz, she meets them in another form on the Kansas farm.

III – THE FARM

After Dorothy's conversation with Toto outlining their current difficulties, she runs home to a dry farm surrounded by leafless trees. The farm is made up primarily of lines and angles: the farm machinery, the farm buildings, and the organization of the land into arable units. In comparison, Oz will not be ordered geometrically at all, but will exhibit an organic architecture at a much more primitive level. The plants of Oz, whether organized and tended or wild and natural, tend to dominate the geometry instead of victims of their caretakers'-imposed geometry as on the farm. Dorothy finds herself stuck in



the psychological geometry of the farm.

Dorothy, Toto in hand, runs up to her Aunt Em and Uncle Henry and tries to explain her dilemma. These two are obvious surrogates for the role of mother and father. It is interesting how many tales of maturation – myths, legends, fairy tales – have the young hero deal with close relatives, aunts, uncles, and the classic stepmother, instead of the parents for whom they are obvious stand-ins. And here's why:

Since almost all these tales of maturation involve separation from the family so that independent growth can take place, parental “stand-ins” are needed. Contemplating separation from someone as close and important as a mother or a father is a prospect too traumatic to consider and could quite possibly deter the young person from the path of psychological maturation. A child leaving a parent would be giving up all comfort, all security, and all possibility of forgiveness so easily given by parents – the metaphor of burning bridges becomes frighteningly real.

This has been true not only in storytelling, but throughout the history of film. One example from a film as popular as this one will suffice: in *Star Wars* [1977], young Skywalker leaves his . . . you guessed it, aunt and uncle.

Unfortunately for Dorothy, Aunt Em and Uncle Henry are busy with a broken-down incubator and are trying to save the chicks. The film seems to distinguish between vegetative and animal life in a strange way. The plants seem to have all died, while biological life is threatened by a faulty incubator. In a way, this is in direct opposition to the Progressive ideology popular at the

time Baum was writing in which the simplicity and idealism of the past was the solution to all urban problems. In the film's world, the farm has its problems, too.

Aunt Em and Uncle Henry are taking the chicks out of the incubator and returning them to the hen, presumably trying to keep them warm. (An interesting side note is that they are counting the chicks and find this quite important when Dorothy disturbs the process. This is another reflection of the “geometry” of the world of Kansas where everything must be ordered and accounted for. I cannot imagine anyone counting anything in Oz.)



Here Dorothy's impending psychological journey is summarized: she will learn that there is no place like home, i.e., personal contact with those who love you. Of course, these parental figures not only demonstrate a clear understanding of that value (they know exactly what to do when the incubator breaks down), but by carefully counting each chick, they also demonstrate the extent of their care by not losing a single young life in the shuffle.

Of course, Dorothy is insensitive to all that is going on around her because she has not yet become sufficiently mature and insists on interjecting her personal problems into Em and Henry's activities.

There is also a fascinating bit of irony here. What Dorothy is interfering with is the very maturation process she will herself soon undergo. I believe that the film's response to this paradox lies in the nature of the animals involved. The chicks are being placed into the warm presence of their mother, there to passively mature into chickens. (Here we get a preview of the film's final message, "There's no place like home.") No such easy path is the way of the Hero of myriad myths.

In a strange but a very deliberate gesture, Henry carefully removes his hat and Aunt Em fills it with chicks. Many of the issues in *The Wizard of Oz* are introduced both obscurely and symbolically, and this is one of them. If we look at the pieces, interpret each, and then add them up, we see that this is the first exposure of a theme that will run through the entire film.

A man tipping his hat is a sign of respect. On the farm, there can be only one object of regard for Uncle Henry: Aunt Em. However, she reacts to his diffidence in a very odd way; she fills his hat with chicks! Henry's hat becomes a receptacle to be filled with fledglings. In the previous scene, the chicks are on their way back to their mother; Henry's hat has become a stop on the way. Thus, Henry's hat has been turned into a temporary, surrogate mother.

What was originally masculine has been turned into the feminine! Henry's hat becomes a womb-like holder for chicks. This is the first we see of the conflict between the masculine and the feminine. Over the course of the film, we will see this conflict played out many times (and mostly decided in favor of the feminine). Not only does the farm turn out to be essentially a matriarchy, so does Oz. Women there are powerful both for good and for evil; men are uniformly weak. And all will have impact on Dorothy and her journey.

As is the road of the multitude of heroes before her, Dorothy's road is strewn with difficulties and hurdles that must be overcome. If maturation comes too easily, is unearned, it will lead to physical maturity, but not to a psychological one. Dorothy must not follow the gentle mother hen-supplied warmth that will ultimately lead to a passive, caged existence, but she must tread the road following the obstreperous, mischievous, trouble-making dog/instinct to an independent, self-actualizing maturity.



Unable to get the attention she demands from her primary care figures, young Dorothy approaches the next tier down in the farm's power structure, the hired help. Each of the three quickly and efficiently introduces those character traits the Dorothy will reproduce in Oz in her three companions: Zeke (who will become the Cowardly Lion) exhibits perseverance, Huck (who will become the Scarecrow) shows intelligence, and Hickory (who will become the Tin Man) exhibits compassion.

(In the book there are no farm hands and thus the story lacks many of the psychological issues the film tenders. The filmmaker's idea of transforming the farm hands [and Miss Gulch] into characters in Oz provides an irresistible

link between Dorothy's external world of Kansas and the internal, psychic world of Oz.)

This encounter clearly demonstrates the power of the unconscious. This passing interchange, one that under other circumstances we would barely note, becomes embedded in Dorothy's unconscious only to become activated and materialized at a later time. (Another film that has a similar scene is *Shakespeare in Love* [1998], where young Will walks down the street and, while concentrating on something else, unconsciously registers snatches of conversation that will ultimately show up in his plays.)

Zeke is too busy. So, she turns to Huck.

Huck gives reasonable advice, but she accuses him of not listening. Actually, Huck exhibits inordinate psychological intelligence. He listens and offers a practical solution to the textual question she asks. When she ignores his sensible answer, he quickly becomes aware that, like many children, she's not vocalizing the question she really wants answered and returns to work.

Nevertheless, we can deduce the answer to Dorothy's unasked question from the symbolism of the scene. The broken wagon, like the failing incubator, represents the general psychic state of the farm – and Dorothy. The broken wagon means that movement is not possible; this, of course, is Dorothy's psychic movement. But together, the three hired hands are repairing the wagon. Later in Oz, the three hired hands, transformed into the Scarecrow, the Lion, and the Tin Man, will simultaneously repair themselves in an

external, visible way while at the same time healing what they symbolize within Dorothy's psyche, thus helping Dorothy to move down the road to maturation.

IV – THE PIGSTY

Dorothy, in a sudden fit of boredom, does a tightrope act between the pigsties while Zeke gives her some more realistic advice that she also rejects out of hand. Zeke's words are fascinating, "Are you going let that Gulch heifer buffalo you? She ain't nothin' to be afraid of." Along with Yip Harburg, the author to the deliciously pun-filled lyrics, the four screenwriters take every opportunity to turn a pun or two. The "heifer – buffalo" combination is certainly a pun, but it also has other meanings.

First, a "heifer-buffalo" is an impossible combination of youth and maturity. Dorothy represents dynamic youth and Miss Gulch senile maturity. Like oil and water, they don't get along. The combination term, applied to Dorothy's interaction with Miss Gulch, indicates the internal conflict and an external one between older and newer values, both psychological and sociological – a conflict that will be worked out during the course of the film.

The second meaning of the term is its reference to the Chimera of ancient mythology, an unnatural combination of animals that symbolizes a complex evil. Thus, Miss Gulch herself is described as a Chimera. In addition, the idea

of looking to ancient Greco-Roman mythology for interpretation of the symbolic level of the film has been neatly introduced. And it continues in the very next scene.



With a scream, Dorothy pitches headlong into the pigsty on her right. Her fall is unusual in that no matter which way she teeters, she will wind up with the pigs. These balancing acts usually symbolize choices; falling one way indicates one possible course of action while falling the other way a different course. (A fall to Dorothy's left would, for example, symbolically bode evil.) (We need only think of the scene in *It's a Wonderful Life* [1946] where George Bailey chooses between running off to the hills with modern girl Violet (not quite a "scarlet woman" but the association is too easy to ignore)

or returning to the traditional Mary – a decision he makes on a narrow island of soil in the middle of Bedford Falls’ biggest boulevard.)

Dorothy, however, has few options, her choices severely restricted. Destiny seems to have an unyielding hold on her at this point. Thus, it is not which way she falls that is important, but into what she falls that is paramount.

Dorothy falls into the world’s cleanest pigsty. She comes out without a trace of dirt on her white dress. This is, *a priori*, a clear signal that none of this film to be taken literally, all is symbolic. This “fall” downward into the psychic world is an inversion for the fall upward she will shortly experience with the coming of the tornado. The cleanliness indicates that this normally psychically dangerous journey will do her no damage – she will come out “clean.”

The pig, especially the sow, has long been a symbol of the Mother Goddess. By tumbling into the pigsty, Dorothy is about to enter the fantastic realm of the great feminine and come out unscathed. That is, her growth will be positive and in the direction of adult womanhood (at least as defined in a 1939 film). That she interacts with the Mother Goddess (again symbolically) reconfirms the strongly matriarchal nature of the film.

Zeke now rescues Dorothy from the pigsty. Almost without hesitation, adrenalin-powered, he bravely plunges in, pulls her foot from an entangling wire, carries her out, and almost collapses in the fear that has caught up with him. Dorothy’s foot getting entangled in the pigsty is a potential sign of the

danger of getting stuck in the realm of the Mother Goddess. (A parallel situation occurs later when Dorothy wants to leave Oz. By then, however, her growth will be complete. It will be the Great Feminine herself, in the form of a cat, that will release her from the balloon so that she can consciously recognize her growth. But at this initial point in Dorothy's journey, the Great Feminine can be either a destructive or a healing power.)

Immediately after Dorothy's rescue from the pigsty, we get a confirmation of what has been so far symbolically hinted at – the power of the patriarchy. Aunt Em comes by to complain that the workers are shiftless: apparently, she compulsively cares for the farm to the point that she is unaware of the danger Dorothy has just escaped.

(Aunt Em accuses the farm hands of being shiftless and “Jabberwalking around. With this word, the film's writers have inserted a nice homage to the other great story of a young woman's maturation journey – Lewis Carroll's 1871 *Through the Looking Glass*.)

Bossing the hired help in no uncertain terms, Aunt Em immediately makes it clear that the farm is a patriarchy and that Uncle Henry, like the farm hands, is under her thumb. But while exerting her political power, Aunt Em also exerts another, typically feminine power: the power to nurture. She offers the workers and Dorothy freshly baked crullers. She unsuccessfully disguises her kindness and caring under the pretext of efficiency, “you can't work on an empty stomach.”



Aunt Em, like Miss Gulch, is a woman who through necessity has adopted some characteristics of the traditional masculine world surrounding her. In 1939, and especially during the Great Depression, both Aunt Em's insistence on the hired hands not shirking their work and hiding anything that could, in that day, be weakness was probably necessary for both physical and psychic survival.

However, there is a difference between Miss Gulch and Aunt Em's partial adoption of traditional masculine values. While Miss Gulch is monolithically masculinized in terms of her avarice and vindictiveness, Aunt Em can easily switch back and forth between allowing masculine and feminine elements to

temporarily express themselves through her Persona – that outer most aspect of the personality we present to the exterior world. An appropriately mobile Persona is a sign of psychic health while an ossified one – like Miss Gulch’s – is a sign of disease.

Dorothy again tries to tell her troubles about Toto and Miss Gulch to Aunt Em and, despite her persistence, is once again rebuffed. She is told to find a place where she won’t get into trouble. This leads to one of the great moments in film, Judy Garland’s rendition of “Somewhere Over the Rainbow.” As in many myths and stories, while the hero searches for an escape from trouble, perception is flooded by emanations from the unconscious which blind the hero and turn her path directly into trouble’s center – Oz. But the various troubles Dorothy gets into, just as in the classic myths, is just the right kind of trouble that will solve her problems.

V – OVER THE RAINBOW

Before beginning her song, Dorothy tosses Toto a bit of the cruller prepared by Aunt Em. We never see Dorothy take a bite herself (even though there seems to be a bite gone), she feeds Toto before herself. She is unconsciously giving energy to her instinctive drive toward maturation and that energy is passed through the seemingly insignificant cruller from her major mother

figure. In a sense, she is feeding her desire, not to go somewhere over the rainbow, but to become a whole person right there in Kansas.



Despite Dorothy's protestations of escape, it is her return – as with most of the classical Hero's Journeys – that is paramount. What alters society is what the Hero brings *back* from her journey into the unconscious to share with the rest of the culture. In this context, it is ironic that the most famous song of the film, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," gives false information and false hope. (This is also true of many Disney animated films: the most memorable song gives the wrong advice. From "Pink Elephants on Parade" in *Dumbo* [1941], a paean to the joys of alcohol, to "Under the Sea" in "Little Mermaid" which

advises a watery regression and avoidance of any self-actualized responsibility or growth. These songs are just dead wrong.)

Dorothy now sings of the differences between this world of concrete reality and another, more ideal realm. This is our first introduction of the conflict between home and “elsewhere,” which is in many ways parallel to the internal conflict between self and other. If we accept this parallelism, we are led to the end of the film where the home/self is accepted as the ideal locus for the psyche.

That a rainbow should be the bridge between the two worlds seems symbolically apt – it is a clear parallel to Wagner’s Rainbow Bridge in his opera *Götterdämmerung* which links the world of the gods and the world of the mortals, one which the hero Siegfried longs to cross.

On a more mundane level, for children of a certain age, home represents comfort, safety and security. Over the Rainbow is fraught with the unfamiliar. Thus, it is a place of simultaneous attraction and dread, a place we must all inevitably go. (Of course, it will be another weather phenomenon, one not so idealized and pacific as a rainbow, the tornado, that will transport Dorothy to a place “over the rainbow.”)

When we consider these two worlds, Kansas and “somewhere over the rainbow,” we must remember that *The Wizard of Oz* is a late 19th century story adapted to the ideologies of mid-20th century to form a tale that in part reflects the social changes of both times. This strange mix includes, of course,

women's roles in society, changing rapidly both at the end of the 19th and again in the middle of the 20th centuries. Here we see a young woman musing about a fantasy world where everything is possible for young women. This is in stark contrast to the social world of Depression Era Kansas, mundane and constrained, in which she mired.

In 1939, after a decade of Depression, the rainbow image also had economic implications. In Europe, popular tradition has the rainbow as an omen of future wealth or finding treasure. The proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow must have seemed, in 1939, a lot like the winning of the lottery today. Indeed, the dreamland of Oz is rife with images of wealth: gold, emeralds, and rubies in the form of bricks, cities, and slippers.

The song "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" has become a commonplace in our national social consciousness. The dream of escaping the mundane seems to be universal and this song embodies that dream like no other. It appears not only in a variety of popular song collections, but also in other films. One of the most unexpected places this haunting melody is found is in the badly underrated 1941 film noir *I Wake Up Screaming*. Despite a title that immediately repulses any potential viewer of even middling taste, the film cleverly uses "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" as a commentary when the heroine (unexpectedly played by Betty Grable) wants to run off with the man the police believe killed her sister.

(The influences of the film itself, of course, have been many. Aside from insipid sequels and tepid musicals, the film's shadow has cast in many often

unexpected places, from John Boorman, who named his film *Zardoz* [1974] directly from “The WiZARD of OZ,” to Ray Bradbury, who concludes his story “The Exiles” in *The Illustrated Man* [1951] with the fall of the Emerald City of Oz. Keith Laumer’s *The Otherside of Time* [1968] goes much further in postulating a parallel universe (in parallel to the parallel Oz/Kansas worlds?) in which a book entitled “The Sorceress of Oz” was written by a Lyman F. Baum. The Sorceress lives in a Sapphire City, and so on.)



Dorothy begins her song by a giant haystack – grass that was once green but now is dry, much like the rest of the Kansas, the farm, and her hopes. She then moves to a large piece of farm machinery. Here lies to potential of

growth in the form of cultivating and caring for the land. She rocks back and forth on a large wheel – is this the great “wheel of karma” of Hindu mythology indicating a cyclic journey?



During Judy Garland’s languid rendition of the song, Toto suddenly jumps onto the seat of the farm machinery behind her. (Actually, it looks like he was thrown – Toto’s legs seem far too short to make that kind of leap.) The symbolism is revealing. Toto, who represents Dorothy’s instinctual functions, is now placed quite literally in the driver’s seat. Toto will drive the rest of the film as the active, functional projection of Dorothy’s instinct.



While I generally try to avoid the overwhelming avalanche of trivia attached to this film, some of it provides psychological insight. While a female dog plays Toto, we all intuitively perceive Toto as male. Just at the physically female Toto projects an external masculine image, so he is also the internal masculine projection of Dorothy's internal feminine. Toto is thus an even stronger psychological symbol: he's not only her instinctive drive to grow up, but he is also the representation of Dorothy's internal masculine, her Animus. In Jungian psychology, it is from the Animus that many women derive their psychological motive power just as Toto drives Dorothy through the film's adventure. Thus, in addition to Toto, the other great driving force of

Dorothy's psychological journey is Miss Gulch (a.k.a. The Wicked Witch of the West).

VI – MISS GULCH AND TOTO

With an abrupt change from the languorous melody of “Somewhere Over the Rainbow,” to a pulsing, jumping musical theme, Miss Gulch, amazingly erect, enters riding a bicycle from screen (stage) left – clearly a villain. To add further to her negativity, she is seen behind barbed wire as if injury could derive from getting too close. Even her physiognomy reflects the negative aspects of both Kansas and the farm. The geometry of Kansas is hard and angular, and Miss Gulch's claw-like hands, face and chin feel as if they were born from the blasted soil. (Physiognomy is also the most visible difference between the good and the bad witches.) It is through Miss Gulch, later transformed into the Wicked Witch, that the highly suggestive geometric aspects of Kansas are carried over into Oz – a geometry that must be conquered before Dorothy can mature and return.



While Dorothy represents the female Hero Archetype, Miss Gulch is closer to the negative aspect of the Senex than the Crone Archetype we might expect, the “old woman” archetype. The positive side of the Senex is the wise old man or woman, the one to whom we turn for advice (Obi Wan Kanobi of *Star Wars* [1977] or the Weird Sisters in *Macbeth* are paradigms of this archetype) ; it is from this aspect of the Senex that we get our word “senator.” From the negative side of the Senex, we have the word “senile” and an archetypal figure (usually male) who is closed-minded, reads everything literally, is unable to grow, narrow of mind, cruel and extreme – in a word, Miss Gulch. Both the film *The Wizard of Oz* and the *Land of Oz* are strongly matriarchal;

thus, it makes sense that we find female manifestations of the traditionally male archetypes.

We will soon learn that Miss Gulch is reputed to be the richest woman in the county. This may be true, since she, at best, manipulates and, at worst, bribes the sheriff to destroy Toto. The question arises as to why this woman, owning half the county and being able to influence powerful officials, rides a bicycle? There are several possibilities. First, a bicycle allows her to go almost everywhere. She can snoop where a car couldn't take her or would be too obvious. Second, we can assume she's too cheap to buy a car. Finally, she resists change: she grew up on a bicycle and there is great comfort in that relationship. All of these illustrate typical Senex conservatism.

The conservatism of Miss Gulch's Senex drive includes her attempt to prevent Dorothy from reaching maturity. She wants to take Toto away from Dorothy and destroy him. At the level of the text, anyone who would threaten a cute little mutt must be nothing less than an ogre. But at the level of subtext, destroying Toto means that she is trying to deprive Dorothy of her instinct to grow from a child into a young woman. If Dorothy's instinct is removed, Dorothy will remain unchanged for the rest of her life and perhaps wind up like Miss Gulch. The female Senex not only wants to perpetuate itself, but she sees Dorothy's youth and impending maturation as an imminent threat.

Miss Gulch also represents the repressive aspects of the dominant patriarchy. From a retrospective view of more than a half century, many parts of *The Wizard of Oz* seem divided between enforcing the patriarchal domination of

women and criticizing it. Certainly, Dorothy's journey is initiated, controlled, and accompanied by men. Her goal in Oz is to seek a male boon. However, there is also a devaluing of male power throughout the film: from Uncle Henry being under Aunt Em's thumb to the Wizard turning out to be a powerless fraud. Women, in the form of good and bad witches, ultimately empower Dorothy.

Miss Gulch gets off her bicycle and approaches the house in a huff. At the gate, she has a conversation with Uncle Henry. His response is a wonderful example of passive/aggressive behavior. Feigning innocence, he lets go of the gate and allows it whack Miss Gulch on the rear. While the well-deserved physical assault is an enjoyable portion of the text, there are other, deeper implications.



Gates are age-old symbols of the vagina – for instance, there are enough English and Scottish folk ballads about young women inviting young men into and through their “gates” to make this connection undeniable. By letting the gate smack Miss Gulch on the rear, Henry is commenting on her sexuality or lack thereof. Fear of mature sexuality is an important drive in preventing maturation. Miss Gulch’s difficulty with the gate is nothing more than a symbolization of her difficulty with sexuality, its implications and its functions (this will become even more manifest when, later in the film, when she must deal with the ruby slippers).

Henry unconsciously understands Miss Gulch's inner conflict with sexuality as demonstrated with his attack with (and on her) gate. Henry controls the gate, the equivalent of sexuality. He also attacks her with it. Thus, he attacks her with her own sexuality. As we shall see in Oz, one of Miss Gulch's goals (after being transformed into the Wicked Witch) is to erase Dorothy's sexual maturation. Perhaps she is transferring her own fear of sexuality onto Dorothy. (One can only wonder about a would-be Mr. Gulch in this context.)

At the gate, Henry taunts Miss Gulch by apparently naively, but really quite intentionally, misinterpreting everything she says – another example of passive/aggressive behavior. However, his “misunderstandings” have some interesting meanings. Henry plays with words: Dorothy bites Toto and Dorothy bites Miss Gulch. Actually, this refers to another aspect of Dorothy's immaturity – oral aggression. In both cases, we have Dorothy expressing infantile oral aggression. Later, inside the house, Dorothy even says to Miss Gulch, “I will bite you myself.” One of the purposes of the trip to Oz is for Dorothy to learn more mature ways to attack Miss Gulch and the regressive tendencies she symbolizes.

We now learn that Toto got Dorothy into trouble by chasing Miss Gulch's cat but somehow wound up biting Miss Gulch herself. That Toto should chase a cat, the symbol of the active feminine, makes perfect sense at the symbolic level. Dorothy needs what the cat represents – active femininity – and her instinct to go after it. Further, that he should see the regressive Miss Gulch as the enemy of that instinct also makes sense at the symbolic level.

Once inside the house, we see the film's first demonstration of the powerlessness of adults – Aunt Em and Uncle Henry cannot prevent Miss Gulch from taking Toto. Children often have the (obviously mistaken) impression that adults are all-powerful (Wizard-like, as we shall see). A large part of the instruction *The Wizard of Oz* provides children is to prepare them for the rude awakening that adults are just as flawed and often as powerless as are children. In the real world, power, even – or especially – adult power, is often severely limited.

Aunt Em and Uncle Henry are not only powerless in general but are powerless specifically in the face of corruption. We are led to assume that Miss Gulch manipulated the Sheriff into writing his order to destroy Toto. This may have been accomplished through influence or threat, or even direct bribery (after all, Miss Gulch owns half the county). Having survived a decade of the Depression, many Americans in 1939 felt powerless in the face of a government comprised of (what they saw as) useless bureaucracies, some of which they undoubtedly felt were corrupt. They probably identified strongly with Aunt Em and Uncle Henry's position of being under the thumb of a legal system that was both unjust and corrupt.

It is at this point that Dorothy begins to see Aunt Em and Uncle Henry as ambiguous figures. It is a sign that her maturation is beginning: her unquestioning love for Aunt Em and Uncle Henry is beginning to show minor flaws in its perfection. This introduces one of the central dilemmas of maturation – resolving the “split parent.”

When a child is very young, he or she is totally dependent on adults for survival. This naturally leads to a primitive form of love. This child expects the loved parent to be a perfect, all-wise and all-giving demigod while at the same time being totally attentive to the child's every need and whim. As soon as one of these concepts breaks down (as when Dorothy is ignored because of the failing incubator or when they cannot save Toto from Miss Gulch's clutches), the child faces a serious problem.

The direct facing of this reality – the parent is not as perfect or as loving as the child had assumed – is too painful. And yet love for the parent continues unabated. The psychological solution of this untenable and painful ambivalence toward the parent is for the child to generate fantasies in which the parent is split into two figures, one good and one bad. It is then safe to love the good figure and equally safe to hate the bad one. This need is reflected in the split parent image in innumerable fairy tales and children's stories.

One important aspect of growing up is to integrate the two imaginary figures into a single entity that reflects reality in a healthier and more functional way. Thus, Dorothy must recognize and deal with the perceived weaknesses in Aunt Em and Uncle Henry. She must resolve the split between the Good Mother image – Aunt Em in Kansas, Glinda in Oz – and the Bad Mother image – Miss Gulch in Kansas and the Wicked Witch in Oz – into a single, rational, and functional whole.

What needs to be resolved goes further than the psychology of the situation. When we look more closely at Aunt Em as an ambiguous figure in terms of Dorothy's growth, we find political implications. Aunt Em acquiesces to Miss Gulch's demand to destroy Toto. She couches this in a respect for the law – obviously a reference, especially in 1939, to the patriarchal domination of both the law and the family. The latter is clearly implied as Aunt Em hands the sheriff's paper to Uncle Henry for his approval. They both agree that the rule of the patriarchal law must be maintained even if it means destroying Toto. At the level of the film's subtext, this act would prevent Dorothy from entering adulthood by taking away her instinct to mature. Is the film implying here that the very roots of our society are formulated to prevent women from growing up?



Continuing the idea that various aspects of Dorothy's Kansas reality will reappear transformed into the unconscious of Oz, Dorothy calls Miss Gulch "you wicked old witch." Unable to face the situation – her loss of Toto and the loss of her unquestioning confidence in adult power – Dorothy decamps and retreats (regresses?) to her room (womb?) leaving the previously powerful adults to deal with a situation.

Powerless, Aunt Em and Uncle Henry allow Toto, with a pitiful groan, to be bundled off into Miss Gulch's basket. Confinement in tight spaces is often a sign of regression. At this point, Toto might comfortably curl up and go to sleep in the basket, perhaps to later enter a more permanent "sleep." Thus

Toto, representing Dorothy's instinct to mature, is given the opportunity to regress back into the safety of the womb and avoid the difficulties of maturation. Unfortunately, in this case for Toto the temptation to regress also means death.

This cannot happen, for at the level of the psyche, there is no permanent "sleep" and Toto's repression could be only momentary since maturation is an instinct that can be only temporarily impeded (as any parent knows). Denying it is to risk serious psychic damage (a good example is Norman Bates in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* [1960]).

Of course, Toto doesn't acquiesce to Miss Gulch's attempts at the repression of instinct. Toto's first act of rebellion against the status quo was to bite Miss Gulch while chasing her cat. His second is to escape from his basket and return home ("There's no place like home"). With this, he almost single-handedly sets into motion the adventure that will send Dorothy off to Oz.

VII – LEAVING HOME AND PROFESSOR MARVEL

Toto runs home on the same road we saw before and jumps into Dorothy's bedroom through the window. In a film, passing through narrow spaces often signals a basic change in the film's progress. This is a "birth image." This is especially fitting here because we have just seen Dorothy retreat from living room to her bedroom in a regressive act that is a symbolic return to the comforts of the womb.

In the lower right-hand corner, we see Toto's bed. It resembles a covered wagon! The image this generates is consistent with Toto's psychological role: to break new ground, to explore, to establish a new home.



Toto's experience with Miss Gulch and Dorothy's experience with her home-bound authority figures has now generated a new relationship between Dorothy and Toto, between Dorothy and her maturation drive. The adventure toward maturity now begins. This is the beginning of the birth of the new Dorothy. At the level of the text, when Toto returns to Dorothy, she makes plans to save her dog. But unconsciously she undertakes a much greater task. Unconsciously realizing that she must protect her most valuable possession – her instinct to mature – she bundles up a few belongings and leaves home with Toto in tow.

In this first step, she has abandoned the blind, child-like confidence in the infinity of parental power. She realizes that she must become proactive in running her own life – a significant first step on the road to maturation. Indeed, we almost immediately see her on a road, not yet the Yellow Brick Road, but a significant precursor.

Walking rather oddly (like a tired old woman), Dorothy wanders down the same dusty road we saw her on at the beginning of the film, now leaving footprints for the first time. Is this the weight she now bears or is it that for the first time she has become a “real” person?



Psychologically, little has changed. At the film's opening, we saw Dorothy running away from the audience watching the film, presumably mature adults. Now, moving the other way down the road, she is still running away from us (and maturity). In this way, the film portrays Dorothy's ambiguity about growing up – she's protecting Toto so that she can grow up while at the same time she is running away from maturity. This ambivalence is realistic, for maturity's path is neither straight nor an all or nothing event.



On their attempted escape from Miss Gulch's power, Dorothy and Toto cross a bridge. Like birth image, bridges are age-old symbols of the transition from the area of the known and comfortable to the unknown and dangerous (just

imagine the knight beginning his adventure by crossing the drawbridge over the moat). These symbolic (and literal) bridges usually appear a short way into a story, after the introduction, marking where the adventure begins in earnest. (Surprisingly, more than half the films ever made use a bridge or some variant to mark this important transition in the story line. As one example out of thousands, think, for instance, of the bridge from Brooklyn to Manhattan in *Saturday Night Fever* [1977].)



Even beyond the usual symbolism, there is something remarkable about *The Wizard of Oz*'s bridge – there is water flowing beneath it. This is odd given the almost desert-like dryness of the rest of the Kansas countryside. The water

symbolizes the flow of life that is in store for Dorothy. Like the cleanliness of the pigsty, this bridge bodes well for Dorothy's adventure in the long term. In the short term, she is crossing into her first mini-adventure, one in which the various aspects and possibilities of the masculine is introduced (just as the feminine was introduced through Miss Gulch).

To the musical strains of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," once over the bridge, the Oz adventure begins in earnest. And, like many psychological adventures, it begins quietly and innocently, with an almost unnoticed perturbation in the order of the universe. Dorothy happens upon Professor Marvel, a down-and-out faker trying to make a buck, deluding others with his mind reading act. In many ways a charlatan and a fool, Professor Marvel inadvertently sets Dorothy on the path to maturation by doing just the opposite: he advises regression, "go back home" (again, "There's no place like home").

While he may be a faker and a charlatan, we immediately know that Professor Marvel will be a positive influence in Dorothy's life (in addition to the obvious meaning of his name). Unlike Miss Gulch, the Professor enters from screen right – the direction of the good influences.



He takes three guesses to “figure out” that Dorothy is running away from home. The number three – especially three guesses – emphasizes his fairy tale roots. Of course, he could have easily guessed that on the first try, but then he would not have conformed to the magical fairy tale number three. To reiterate the fairy tale numerology, he describes to her three reasons she is running away.

Emblazoned on the side of Professor Marvel’s wagon are the words, “Past, Present, and Future.” Could this be a reference to the three cities of Oz, the paradisiacal rural American past of Munchkin City, the present depression and turmoil of the Witches Castle, and the future technological paradise of the

Emerald City? Or could it be a reference to Dorothy's journey itself, moving through the stages of maturation. And perhaps Dorothy's desire to see the "Crown Heads of Europe" is a prediction of her drive to see the all-powerful Wizard once in Oz.



The idea that Dorothy already has what she is seeking is also introduced here. Once in Oz, a good portion of Dorothy's energy is directed toward finding the Wizard. Character actor Frank Morgan plays Professor Marvel, and, we will find, he also plays the Wizard. (And, while the Wizard may be frightening to the very young watching this film, the inherent friendliness exhibited by Frank Morgan dilutes any possible threat.) Thus, through some clever casting,

that what Dorothy will so desperately seek, the Wizard, is within her grasp at the very beginning of her adventure in the form of Professor Marvel.

The parallel between Marvel and the Wizard is further brought home by the similarity of their advice – go home. And both journeys do not turn out as planned. Professor Marvel's advised return home is interrupted by the tornado that ultimately takes Dorothy to Oz. Later, the Wizard's attempt to return Dorothy to Kansas physically is interrupted (by Toto, of course) so that her psychological journey can be completed.

We first see Professor Marvel roasting hot dogs over an open fire in a caricature of the Depression Era bum. He, too, is suffering economically from the Depression. He makes an immediate connection with the audience since he has obviously not surrendered his good-hearted nature and his humanity to the depredations of the economic woes. These are personality traits anyone in 1939 could easily admire. While to Dorothy he may appear as perfect and all-knowing, as she would any father figure at this early stage of her development, we can clearly see his feet of clay.

Professor Marvel's hot dogs are the first of a great number of phallic symbols that occur throughout the film, the most prominent is the witch's broom that Dorothy must later recover. Toto steals one of the hot dogs from the Professor. We can interpret this as Dorothy's instinctual function, Toto, trying to gather male, phallic power. This is what Dorothy needs: traditional masculine power that will help her exert herself and not constantly whine and put herself in the position of the continual victim. In Jungian psychology, the

internal, unconscious masculine element within a woman's psyche is called the Animus (within men the contra-gender function is called the Anima) and it is one of the major sources of energy that drives the female psyche forward toward maturation.



It is interesting to note that Toto steals the hot dog at the exact moment Dorothy says, "It's as if you could read what is inside of me." Inside of Dorothy, of course, is the drive to acquire Animus power that will propel her down the road of maturation. The Professor voices no objections to Toto filching his meal. He thus contributes to Dorothy's male power (as later does the Wizard with his desire for the broomstick). Professor Marvel even

identifies himself with Toto as Dorothy's instinctive drive and sets himself up for that role in Oz when he says, "From one dog to another."

However, at this early stage in her adventure, nothing comes of Dorothy's glancing encounter with her Animus figure. Later, after she has appropriately moved down the road of adventure and growth, the broomstick will become almost a magnet for the gathering of her Animus energy. With broomstick and its attendant Animus energy in her possession, Dorothy will, for the first time (again with the help of Toto), be able to stand up to the Wizard.

But all that is in the future. Now, by warning Toto off the hot dog, Dorothy quickly disempowers herself and puts herself completely in the manipulative hands of the masculine. While Animus energy remains unconscious it can take over the psyche and become a negative influence. Growth can only be achieved by bringing these unconscious elements into the light of consciousness where they can be confronted, evaluated and understood. Only in this way can they be integrated into the whole personality. But at this early stage of Dorothy's development, the unconscious Animus only leads to dependency on others (fortunately these others mostly have Dorothy's interests at heart).

Indeed, Professor Marvel hoodwinks her into thinking that he has both insight and wisdom by either stating the obvious or by the subterfuge of looking into her basket while her eyes are closed. Women who have not integrated their Animus are often in the same situation: they have their eyes closed to the way the patriarchal world – and men – manipulate them.



This incident also represents the very attitude Dorothy (and most children) hold toward the perceived omniscience and omnipotence of parental figures. All this will, of course, change. This is in sharp contrast to the phallic power she acquires later after having obtained the witch's broom where she talks back to and faces down the impostor Wizard in Oz. She will then no longer be the naive, easy to manipulate little girl we see now.

Professor Marvel's crystal ball introduces another motif that will be repeated throughout the film. Typically, spheres are symbolic of wholeness. Later we will see that the Wicked Witch also has a crystal ball. Many of the

decorations in the Emerald City are also spherical. Here it predicts Dorothy's return to her Aunt and Uncle's home where she will eventually find wholeness.



With Professor Marvel's encouragement, Dorothy heads for home. At this point the love/hate conflict with the parental figure sways in the direction of love – a love that never really goes away (except in psychosis) no matter how much temporary loathing the child feels. Dorothy clearly loves and cares deeply for Aunt Em.

Dorothy's attempt to return home is doomed from the outset. Once the archetypal forces have been summoned and activated with an injection of psychic energy, their course must be played out – after all, Dorothy has glimpsed the negative Feminine, crossed a bridge, encountered the Animus, looked into the sphere of wholeness and glimpsed the totality of the psyche, the Self.

Dorothy cannot return “home” without first making the cyclic journey that has been documented so many times in our mythological/psychological history: Aneas, Odysseus, Dante, Jason, Achilles, and so many others. The archetypal forces that are summoned here to prevent Dorothy's safe regression back to home, hearth, and Aunt Em are materialized in the form of a tornado.

VIII. RETURNING HOME & THE TORNADO

By running away from home, Dorothy embarks on her first active effort to change her psychological status quo. The precariousness of this decision is seen almost immediately. With one glance at the coming storm, Dorothy attempts to regress to her previous state of safety – she runs back home. By running away from home, she runs home; by starting to change, she opts of no change. But it is too late. Once these complex forces are activated, they are not easily placated.

Along with the farm hands, Aunt Em and Uncle Henry retreat into an underground storm shelter (of course, the storm they are hiding from is the storm of Dorothy's coming puberty – there must be millions of parents out there wishing to have a storm cellar to hide in). But there is more to this act than simply seeking safety from the storm. The image of an ostrich sticking its head in the ground to avoid seeing what is going on around it comes to mind. When they start searching for Dorothy, we are horrified to discover that Aunt Em and Uncle Henry don't even realize Dorothy has run away! Like adults do occasionally, they have shut their eyes to the deep psychological needs of the children around them.

Thus, by ducking into the storm cellar, they avoid the physical storm, but also Dorothy's emotional storm. At the same time, they escape from the failing of their own responsibilities. The storm cellar is clearly a metaphor for regression and a place of no growth.

Had Dorothy been able to hide from the storm in the shelter, she would not have had a chance to undergo her rite of passage into adulthood. Thus, the archetypal energies demand that she faces the coming storm (literal and metaphorical). Yet she doesn't do this willingly – she attempts to regress; like all the heroes of classical myth, she attempts to reject what Joseph Campbell terms the, "Hero's call to adventure."

Sensuous and twisting, full of dark, brooding energy, the approaching storm (of puberty) is the first break in the severe geometry of Kansas. It is clearly an element of a new geometry, one that is plainly non-Kansas. The spinning

vortex geometry of the tornado is directly related to the spiral beginning of the Yellow Brick Road we will soon see in Oz.



Doors, windows and gateways are highly symbolic as both barriers and openings on the road to maturation. Consider all the doors in the next few scenes: Dorothy arrives at the farm and stops to look at it over a fence with the boards shaped into an X as if warning her not to enter. Em, Henry and the hired hands struggle with the door to the storm shelter. A gate refuses to allow Dorothy to enter the yard and only yields when kicked down. The screen door, when touched, flies away in the wind predicting the window that concludes this sequence of portals. Dorothy struggles to open the front door

while the farm hands struggle to close the doors of the storm shelter. Dorothy opens several doors inside the house looking for Aunt Em (the book's farmhouse has but a single room). She tries the storm shelter doors by kicking at them. Whereas the gate yielded, these doors to regression are barred to her. And finally, the window (to the future) plunges Dorothy into her own unconscious.

Dorothy finishes her panicked search for a place of safety by running into her bedroom – a place of sleep and thus a symbol for regression, the same place she retreated to after her powerless encounter with Miss Gulch. But once the (internal, emotional) storm has been activated, there is no escaping it.

In her bedroom, lying on her bed, she is hit in the head with a window. The window is a transparent barrier with a meaning like the bridge that she crossed to see Professor Marvel. Through a window, one can look from a known place of safety into the place of otherness; in this case the window is an opening from Kansas to Oz, from Dorothy's ossified, vegetative status quo into the realm of infinite possibilities – her own unconscious.



In a more mundane way, home to the child is the center of his or her universe – a place of comfort and safety. And there is always the fearful question of what would happen if home were damaged or inaccessible. *The Wizard of Oz* gives a comforting and positive answer – the resulting adventure may be strange and even dangerous or discomfiting, but all will be well in the end.

One of the great divergences between the film and Baum's book is that the collapsing window knocks Dorothy unconscious. In the book, it is clear that Dorothy remains conscious throughout the trip from Kansas to Oz. While many purists decry this change in the movie, one author calls it "unforgivable," I feel it is a stroke of brilliance on the part of the filmmakers.

That Dorothy leaves conscious reality behind and enters the unconscious realm transforms the story from an adventurous fairy tale intended to entertain children into a stunning psychological parable (that has no less power to entertain the young with the additional benefit of imparting considerable wisdom). Amazingly, the film up to this point, with all its psychological and archetypal meaning, has been an invention of the screenwriters. None of this – Miss Gulch, the farm hands, Professor Marvel – is in the original Baum book.

Another very important change the filmmakers made is one, which, I believe, has added considerably to the classic status the film has achieved: Dorothy's age. In *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, author Baum doesn't specify her age. However, the fabulous Denslow illustrations accompanying the book clearly show a girl of about five or six, dressed in a Victorian costume appropriate of a girl of that age. While not completely free of problems, girls of five or six are not confronted with the same problems as girls on the verge of puberty. By changing Dorothy's age, the filmmakers have not only forced her to confront far more difficult and important problems than would be facing a much younger child, but they have also universalized Dorothy's struggle. The problems attendant to puberty are never fully resolved and the remaining unresolved threads plague us throughout our lives. (The fact that this is true for men as much as it is for women further universalizes the film.)

The tornado that transports Dorothy and her house (not her home) has many historical and mythological references. It is upside down vortex – like the whirlpools avoided by Ulysses and many other classical heroes. It is also an

inverted version of the rabbit hole that Alice uses as an entrance to Wonderland. All these are gateways to other worlds and Dorothy's whirling tornado is no less.

As the tornado lifts the house into the sky, Dorothy looks out the window to see a catalog of her Kansas world passing by. A tree – vegetation and farming. The chickens – the animal life that stole Aunt Em and Uncle Henry's affection from her. And old woman knitting – Dorothy's future should she fail on her road to independence. A mooing cow – the symbol of nourishment (this cow will appear later in the film *Twister* [1996] where the transformative power of the tornado is reduced to being a marriage counselor). Two men rowing a boat going nowhere – just as Dorothy would be were it not for her journey. A cat for Toto to bark at (which symmetrically reflects the past – this is how Dorothy's adventure began with Toto chasing Miss Gulch's cat – and it presages the final return trip from Oz to Kansas made possible by Toto once again chasing a cat).

But the tornado not only transports, it transforms. Next, we see Miss Gulch riding her bicycle and slowly changing into the far more alliterative and no longer upright Wicked Witch of the West riding her broom. At this, Dorothy turns from the window in terror and hides her head in the bed. Dorothy has glimpsed her nemesis for the first time – the powerful female Senex figure, representing all that is negative in feminine power, now visible for the first time in her true, horrifying nature.



It is thus appropriate at this point for Dorothy to be frightened of the task before her; while the challenge to mature may be universal, some will succeed while others will fail. Those who fail are sentenced to a life lacking richness and autonomy, a life of emotional poverty, life-long immaturity, repetition, boredom, and being powerlessly subject to the will of others. Those of succeed have undertaken that task which C. G. Jung calls Individuation. This process is the goal toward which all conscious beings strive, both consciously and unconsciously. It is the acceptance – indeed the glorification and exultation – of the uniqueness of the individual while at the same time being totally and comfortably submerged into the whole – the Collective Unconscious.

Dorothy has now been appropriately, that is, symbolically, prepared for her rites of passage into adulthood. She has seen the powerlessness of the adults (Aunt Em, Uncle Henry, and Professor Marvel) to whom she previously gave all the power of her life. Her innate drive to mature (Toto) has challenged the negative Feminine (Miss Gulch) to a psychic duel. The battle, however, cannot take place in the all too concrete reality of Kansas. A psychic duel must take place on a psychic battlefield. So, it is off to the magical Land of Oz.

IX. THE LAND OF OZ

Once we reach Oz, we are faced with a double-layered psychological dilemma. In the real world, internal psychic states – Archetypes – are projected outward either to be placed on other people or on other objects; alternately they may become manifest as independent entities as mythological or other transcendental figures. These are what we see when we watch a film – what we are watching, if you will excuse the following plethora of puns, are projections on the silver screen which comprise a “reel” world. In this sense, the relation of the film to reality is parallel to the relation between our unconscious and our conscious minds. But once we have entered, this “reel” world envelopes us and becomes our “real” world. The characters on the screen, while still projections (both physical and psychological), become internalized and “real.” It is at this point that *The Wizard of Oz* presents layer upon layer of difficulty.

In a strange psychological syllogism, we must ask, if Kansas is to our “real” world as our conscious is to our unconscious, then what is the relation between Oz to Kansas? Instead of dealing with wheels within wheels, let me propose that following simple, yet hopefully useful, solution/syllogism. As our world is to Kansas, so Kansas is to Oz. In this way we can treat the objects and people in Oz as the psychological projections and manifestations of the characters in Kansas (of course keeping in mind at all times that these people aren’t real and are themselves projections and manifestations of our world).

The most striking thing about the film’s Oz is that it is photographed in bright, vivid Technicolor. In 1939, only a small number of films were being made in color – typically major, big budget films were given this deluxe treatment. A good example is *Gone with the Wind* [1939]. The only previous children’s film in color was Disney’s 1937 *Snow White*. Perhaps trying to follow Disney’s success was part of the studio’s decision to use the very expensive color process (unbelievably, Oz cost a mere ½ million dollars less than did the gargantuan *Gone with the Wind*).

However, from our point of view there is a much better reason for Oz to be in color: reality is drab while the richness and complexity of the unconscious are most aptly portrayed in shockingly rich colors. Everything is exaggerated: the size of the flowers, the glossiness of the plants, and the cleanliness, especially when compared to the dust of Kansas. This becomes even more true when we realize that Dorothy’s fantasy world now becomes her psychic reality, one

that, if her rite of passage is successful, she will take with her back to Kansas and keep its essence alive through the rest of her life. She will be a Technicolor woman in a sepia world.



When we see Dorothy in color for the first time, we realize that she's been dressed in blue and white. The soon-to-come red shoes will complete America's national colors indicating that Dorothy represents all of America and, hopefully, the opportunity for all American women to take the road to personal maturation.

Dorothy opens the door . . . now not onto a harsh Kansas landscape, but to view a colorful, lush paradise of greenery and flowers. Just outside the door are a path and a bridge. These two symbols are echoes of Dorothy's experiences in Kansas and predict what is to come in Oz. Munchkinland is the first small step on Dorothy's journey toward maturity. She is at the crossroads of decision. However, it seems reasonable, therefore, that adventure here should start by treating the most childlike concepts.

Much of the Land of Oz – especially Munchkinland – reflects a child's interpretation of the adult world in terms of a child's most basic needs. It is a universe of childlike concepts mixed with aspects of the adult world, a world every child must deal with in order to grow into functional adulthood. Oz, especially Munchkinland, exhibits considerable confusion about many psychological, physical, and sexual issues. Some of these will be resolved while others will be ignored (after all, a film must entertain and not become a treatise on child psychology). Dorothy's growth involves understanding and integrating (or ignoring and repressing) many of these issues.

Yet contained in the characters, the environment, and in the actions that take place here in Oz, there is a flood of psychological wisdom, help, and healing. Indeed Dorothy has arrived in Oz well equipped to deal with the challenge ahead. She is accompanied by Toto and her house. As I pointed out above, Toto is the driving force behind the psychological action of the film. Without Toto, there would be no growth journey. That Toto is a projection of Dorothy's psyche is made clear by his very presence. This is Dorothy's dream and thus Toto's presence shows that he and all he represents figure

prominently in her psychic makeup. We will learn the house's significance shortly.

As Dorothy steps out from her house, she sees before her the Yellow Brick Road and a bridge. The music tells us she is “somewhere over the rainbow” and shortly after introduces the theme “the witch is dead.” In Kansas, she passed over the bridge to meet Professor Marvel and learned the strength of her attachment to her relatives and her home. However, here in Oz, Dorothy never crosses over this second bridge (a second bridge crossing is reserved for the Witch's Castle, late in the story).

She doesn't cross the bridge in Munchkinland for two reasons. On the small scale, she is not yet ready to leave the place where she has just arrived because she still has much to learn— about evil witches, Glinda, the Munchkins, Oz, and the slippers. This leads to the larger reason why she is not yet ready to cross this second bridge: she is not yet sufficiently prepared to take a large, significant step from childhood to maturity that this second bridge represents.

Furthermore, she blatantly ignores the Yellow Brick Road because she, once again, is not yet ready to begin her journey. There are several preliminary tasks to be accomplished before she can take even her first step.

X. GLINDA AND THE MUNCHKINS

The magical Land of Oz confronts Dorothy's problems in an interesting order; it begins with the most obvious and progresses through more and more subtle layers. The first is to distinguish all the differences between Kansas/consciousness and Oz/unconscious: The Munchkins, Glinda, the Wicked Witch, and the Yellow Brick Road.

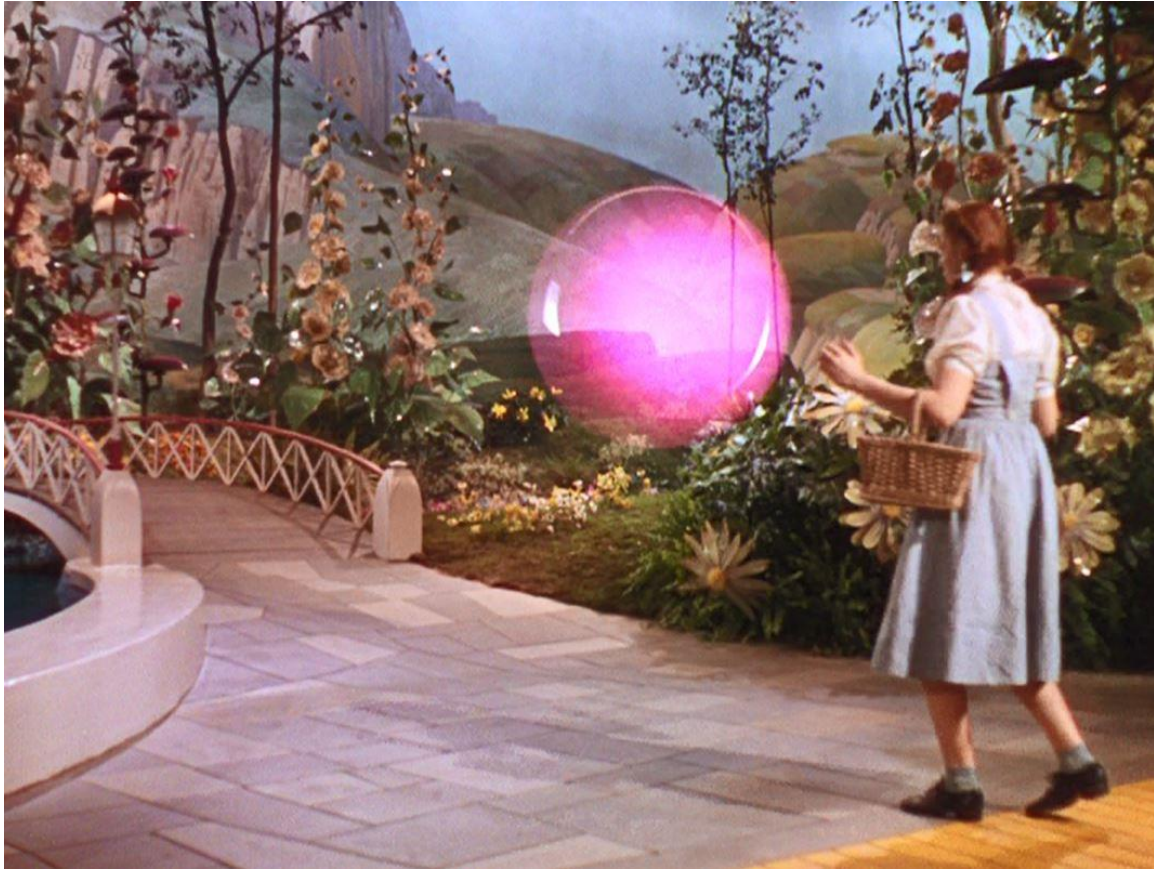
When Dorothy makes her famous observation, "Toto, I don't think we're in Kansas anymore," behind her back the shrubbery comes alive with Munchkins (framed by very phallic carrots growing, not rooted in the ground, but erect in the air). This is, of course, the proof that she is no longer in Kansas: There was little life in the vegetation of the farm and certainly nothing so fecund as to produce anything like the Munchkins.



The next order of business is to materialize various aspects of Dorothy's psyche (after all, Oz is a trip into Dorothy's unconscious). The first Archetype introduced is the type of female figure that was missing in Dorothy's Kansas: feminine yet powerful – Glinda, the Good Witch of the North. Dowdy Dorothy now has an ideal to aspire to, not only physically (our collective smirks at Glinda's excess of saccharine confirms that our tastes in the "ideal woman" have changed considerably since 1939), but also in terms of self-determination, knowledge and power.

Glinda arrives in a pink sphere – an echo of Professor Marvel's all-seeing crystal ball – a symbol of wholeness and self-containment. The sphere,

according to C. G. Jung, is a symbol of the Self, the totality of the psyche and its driving force toward individuation.



Yet the pink color of Glinda's sphere is a sign of traditional femininity. Glinda thus embodies both the power of individuation and traditional feminine values. How different the powerful and wise Glinda is in comparison to the helpless Aunt Em, Glinda's pink sphere in comparison to the broken and colorless geometry of the Kansas farm.

One can see from the still above, that Glinda's sphere blocks Dorothy's access to the second bridge. In essence, Glinda prevents Dorothy from

crossing the second bridge. Come from deep in Dorothy's unconscious, Glinda knows that Dorothy is not yet ready to cross that bridge.

Once out of her bubble, Glinda asks Dorothy if she is a good or bad witch. This exchange reflects Baum's desire to invent a new, American mythology for children instead of continuing in the European tradition (the inclusion of machinery into mythology – the Tin Man – also reflects this urge). In the European folk tradition, there are no “good” witches – these are called fairy godmothers (or, rarely, godfathers). In this context we can see that Glinda functions for Dorothy much in the same way as the Fairy Godmother does for, say, Cinderella except that Glinda is much more standoffish, allowing Dorothy far more autonomy than was granted to Cinderella.

Under Glinda's questioning, Dorothy denies being a witch at all. She is obviously unaware of the power being a “witch” entail. Her denial cuts her off from the ancient feminine powers associated with witchcraft, both black and white. Yet Dorothy will soon perform magic in aiding the development of her companions and in the psychological work she does on herself to say nothing of her eventual disempowering of both the Wizard and of the Wicked Witch.

Dorothy also denies that Toto is a witch. Since Toto is an aspect of Dorothy's unconscious, her denial cuts her off from her internal witch's power. Ironically, Dorothy, who yearns so desperately for power, cannot recognize it is being offered to her. But we cannot be too harsh on her, for the nature of power in Kansas and that inside the unconscious are (literally) worlds apart.

Another piece of evidence that many of the characters are simply aspects of Dorothy's own psyche is in their names. The Good Witch is named Glinda; the Wicked Witch is the transformed Miss Gulch. All begin with the letter G! And Dorothy's last name is Gale.

Glinda now explains that she was summoned by the Munchkins – how is never explained. Perhaps because of her strong feminine aspects, Glinda is directly in touch with nature (remember the pigsty). The prayers or other supplications offered by these natural people (the green people) may have summoned a supernatural being like Glinda. (Neither is it explained in the film why Glinda herself didn't free the Munchkins from the Wicked Witch of the East's despotic rule – in the book, Baum explains that good witches are not as powerful as the bad witches but we certainly don't see that in the film.)



Dorothy is shocked to learn that she has inadvertently killed with Wicked Witch of the East. In fact, it is Dorothy's house that has killed her. Dorothy distances herself from her "house's" actions. That, as we have seen, may not be quite correct – her house is an extension of her psyche.

The message here is that taking that first difficult step into exploring the unconscious has already had consequences. Indeed, as Glinda sings, "When she fell out of Kansas, a miracle occurred." By simply looking into her unconscious, Dorothy has already dealt with half of the "evil" there. One witch down, one to go.



Dorothy's feelings of powerlessness are next addressed through the appearance of the Munchkins. The adults in Kansas lord their power over poor Dorothy by belittling her problems and thus her. In Oz, the situation is both transformed and reversed: she has earned immediate status among them for killing the Wicked Witch of the East.

On a more primitive, childlike level, Dorothy can now belittle the adult Munchkins by simply standing there. She is now the biggest thing around. This recalls when Alice lords it over the cards once she has eaten the mushroom to grow large in *Through the Looking Glass*, or Snow White's power over her dwarves, except she was restricted to only seven little men

whereas Dorothy has apparently hundreds. But this type of gain in physical statue is no substitute for real power, the psychological power of maturity – where Dorothy is fated to go. Still, a taste of power, no matter how hollow, whets Dorothy’s appetite for more.

As the Munchkins come out of hiding, notice that some of them come out of the forest while others come out of a manhole in the sidewalk. The forest and the sewer are two good representations of the unconscious – the forest is the traditional symbol used in innumerable fairy tales for an unknown area that contains all possibilities, from ogres to great fortunes, and corresponds well to Jung’s conception of the unconscious. The sewer works well as a metaphor for Freud’s notion of the Id.



Thus, the Munchkins represent a variety of aspects of Dorothy's unconscious. (While it is pure speculation, I cannot but wonder if Frank Baum named these people in homage to Baron Münchhausen, the 18th century fictional baron whose name is synonymous with fantasy.) They represent the immature, simplistic, and undifferentiated unconscious elements that are first to emerge. They are Dorothy's drive for physical power and a need to escape the physical and emotional dryness of Kansas. Later more mature and complex manifestations will appear.

As Dorothy musically recounts her journey to Oz (in one of the many songs where we wonder how long a delightfully absurd rhyming scheme can go on,

“pitch, switch, witch, rich,” and so on) and the Munchkins pick up the song and begin elaborating on it, thus further confirming the idea that they are manifestations of Dorothy’s unconscious. Beginning to deal with unconscious material in this way, Dorothy’s psychic movement has begun. The Munchkins soon provide her with a carriage to emphasize that they, elements Dorothy’s unconscious, are now energizing Dorothy’s movement at the beginning of her great adventure.



One of the most fascinating aspects of symbols is their mutability. This is clear when, again, Dorothy reiterates that she was not responsible for the death of the Wicked Witch of the East. In Kansas, as we saw, the house was a

place of regression – immediately on her return from Professor Marvel, she heads for the bedroom, the place of sleep. But now in Oz, the house is transformed significantly. The tornado has forcibly pushed Dorothy out of attempts at regression into the beginning of an active search for maturity. The turn-around is so great, that the previously regressive house now serves to eliminate one of the new forces of regression (as we will see later) that Dorothy must face.

Further, the death of the first Witch is “by house.” This is the same “home” that Dorothy will later swear unfailing allegiance to. Thus, it may be interpreted that it is the love for family and friends that slays the witch – the same drive that slays the second Witch. The difference is that the Witch of the East was slain while Dorothy was unconscious – it was an “accidental” act of her unconscious. The Wicked Witch of the West will be slain by a direct act that, while still “accidental,” is nonetheless a more personal and connected act than the death by a falling house. This act of consciousness will be a measure of Dorothy’s growth from being ruled by the unconscious to a more mature self-awareness.

However, a problem arises when we realize the Munchkins thank her for killing the Wicked Witch of the East. Psychologically speaking, nothing can ever be killed – it is either dealt with and integrated into the broader personality, or it is not dealt with and repressed. Indeed, the Munchkins sing, “She’s gone below, below” – a nice metaphor for repression.

At this early stage of Dorothy's journey, we can only assume that what this Wicked Witch represents has only been repressed and will soon return in a more powerful form – a common psychological occurrence when repression is involved. This psychological law, “the return of the repressed,” is the basis of most horror films. Indeed, the repressed evil feminine will remain repressed for no more than a few minutes. It quickly reappears in an even more powerful form – the Wicked Witch of the West. But for the moment, Dorothy is preoccupied with the Munchkins.

The marching of the Munchkins – goose-stepping with oddly swinging arms – is reminiscent of marching Nazis. This reference may be intentional (and would be quickly recognized in 1939). We must recall that until Dorothy's arrival, Munchkinland was under the rule of the Wicked Witch of the East. If she ran Munchkinland like the Wicked Witch of the West runs her domain (as we shall see), it was probably a military dictatorship and the Nazi metaphor might be an apt one.

At the end of Dorothy's short journey in the Munchkin's carriage, the Mayor of the Munchkin City greets her. But before any progress can be made, the Munchkins must be assured that the Witch is “really dead.” When the coroner presents a death certificate, all are satisfied. This is the first bureaucracy that Dorothy must deal with (a little more straightforward here in Munchkinland than it will be at the gates of the Emerald City). And this stands in stark contrast to the corruption back in Kansas with the sheriff handing out papers to destroy dogs at the prompting of influential people. There follows a celebration of the Witch's death.

XI. DING, DONG, THE WITCH IS DEAD

As the camera sweeps over the town square, we learn more about the Munchkins (and their psychological function). We previously saw Munchkins emerging from the bushes. Now we see little Munchkins hatching from eggs. These illustrate the two most common myths given to children to explain “where babies come from” – the stork (eggs) and the cabbage patch (vegetation). Thus, in addition to her simple drive for elementary power over the adult world, the Munchkins also represent Dorothy’s immature understanding of sexuality. The Munchkins are born from eggs and bushes – an appropriate fantasy for a young girl who does not yet understand adult sexuality.



Dorothy is then honored by a variety of representatives from Munchkin society. With a few “chaîné” turns, ballerinas from the Lullaby League greet her. Then three oddly twitching men from the Lollipop Guild present her with a lollipop (one can only wonder that their jerking movements are caused by overdoses of sugar). Dorothy’s gifts are bridges between her current childhood state and her future adolescent state. Some of these items point toward the past while others to the future. For instance, the lollipop she receives is a typical childhood treat, while the ballet is a taste more adult.

In addition, the two gifts represent consumption (the lollipop) and production (ballet), two aspects of the world that an adult must balance. We note that

Dorothy, like the typical child, is more concerned with consumption than production in that she happily takes the lollipop. During her journey, Dorothy will learn to balance the two; for instance, she will produce psychological change in those around her and will return the Emerald City to its rightful rulers.

XII. THE WICKED WITCH

During the Munchkin's celebration, the Wicked Witch of the West suddenly appears in a frightening puff of red smoke. In the world political situation in 1939, associating wickedness with both the East and the West made sense. West of America (which we call the East), Japan was on the warpath in China. East of America, in Europe, Hitler was on the march. In addition, the puff of red smoke may have been related to a fear of Communism rampant at the end of the Depression Era.



While Glinda arrives in a pink sphere, the Wicked Witch of the West appears in a puff of smoke. Glinda's sphere, as we have mentioned, is a symbol of wholeness and femininity. In comparison, the Wicked Witch represents a more diffuse, a more tenuous evil. Thus, in the Land of Oz, goodness is restricted to small locations and hard boundaries while evil is diffuse and all pervasive. Our concepts of good and evil have changed little since 1939.

Dorothy has just inadvertently "killed" the Witch of the East thus repressing the negative energy she represents. Buried in the unconscious, this energy has grown and now returns in the form of the Wicked Witch of the West. Glinda,

apparently schooled archetypal psychology, explains to Dorothy that this witch is even worse than the other one.

Glinda and the Wicked Witch represent the split feminine of many fairy tales – the wicked stepmother and the fairy godmother, and so on. The Wicked Witch is dressed in black, the traditional symbol of evil, especially when compared to Glinda’s pink, “wedding cake” dress.

When questioned about the Wicked Witch of the East’s death, Dorothy claims 1) it was an accident and 2) “I didn’t mean to kill anybody.” Now, that sounds like a confession to me. However, when the two statements are combined, we can see that the “accident” was an unconscious act on Dorothy’s part – as was pointed out before. But now Dorothy has added something new to her story: in her confession she is – minimally – taking grudging responsibility. This is the first, albeit subtle and minor sign of Dorothy’s growth – taking responsibility for all of her psyche, unconscious Shadow and all.

XIII. THE RUBY SLIPPERS

To deflect the Wicked Witch of the West’s rage away from Dorothy, Glinda reminds her of the Ruby Slippers on the feet of the now dead Wicked Witch of the East. But when she approaches the shoes prominently displayed on the legs sticking out from under Dorothy’s house, the slippers disappear while the Wicked Witch of the East’s legs curl up and disappear too. I suppose that this

is also happening to the rest of her body, too. This is, we must assume, what happens to all the witches in Oz when they die, they shrivel up and disappear striped socks and all (the Wicked Witch of the West will do the same at the end of the film).

Instead of simply dying and being interred in the Earth to participate in the cycle of death, decay, molecular transformation and rebirth in the form of nutrition for plants and animals, these witches seem more to be drained of their power in death. What happens to this witchy power? It seems that Dorothy assumes it, transferred by the slippers. Thus, immediately after assuming a little responsibility for the actions of her unconscious, Dorothy now actually gathers energy from the evil part of her unconscious, that part of the Shadow represented by the Wicked Witch of the East.

Her connection to the great and powerful feminine is established through the slippers – once the property of the Wicked Witch of the East, they now belong to Dorothy by right of possession (apparently Glinda has broken the normal mode of inheritance). Dorothy has thus made a connection to a great, new (to her, at least) source of power. (Think of how many fairy tales and Greco/Roman myths contain the trope of the young Hero who slays the owner of some object to obtain it as a magic talisman.) What remains is for Dorothy to learn how to turn its power in the direction of growth, both personal and collective.

The Ruby Slippers are themselves complex symbols; they have sociological and psychological meanings. What appears on Dorothy's feet are ruby

encrusted low heel shoes. The transition from “children’s shoes” to “adult shoes” in a young woman’s life is marked by the appearance of heels. Having glimpsed Dorothy’s background, we can safely assume that these are her first heels. So even at this mundane level, Dorothy is on the way to growing up. The heels also physically elevate Dorothy so that she now stands even taller over the Munchkins. But real growth must go much deeper than just the social implications of her shoe’s heels and the physical elevation they supply. .



In Jungian psychology, shoes are often symbolize orientation or point of view. (Perhaps the Wicked Witch of the West wants her sister’s shoes – so she can rule not only her castle, but also Munchkinland.) Quite simply, a

change of shoes is a change of psychic alignment. Considering the changes Dorothy has experienced in the past few moments, this symbolic change of orientation seems fitting. And these are the shoes that will lead Dorothy down the road of psychological maturity.

Freud believed that shoes are symbols of female genitals. (This idea accounts nicely for the many appearances of shoes in myths and fairy tales. In *Cinderella*, for instance, the too-small shoes symbolize virginity.) In this context, red is a not-so-subtle reference to blood and menstruation (Baum's shoes were silver).

While Judy Garland was about 17 at the time of the filming and Baum's Dorothy was about six, the film's Dorothy seems about 12 or 13, just at the age of first menstruation. In many cultures, first menstruation is a sign of a girl's transition into womanhood, a time when a youngster is recognized and welcomed into the adult feminine community. And this is what is taking place in *The Wizard of Oz*.

We have seen that Miss Gulch, by trying to destroy Toto back in Kansas, was symbolically attempting to prevent Dorothy's maturation. Since the Wicked Witch is Oz's version of Kansas-bound Miss Gulch, it is not farfetched to postulate that the Wicked Witch's agenda in Oz is the same as was Miss Gulch's in Kansas. Here in Oz, the witch's wickedness is displaced into trying to take Dorothy's red shoes away from her and thus prevent her menstruation. Her goal is to keep Dorothy in perpetual childhood. The

symbolic parallels between Kansas and Oz are striking and demonstrate how important this rite of passage is to the psychic health of a young woman.

In the book, young Dorothy puts on the silver slippers for a practical reason – they won't wear out on the long journey to the Emerald City, her leather shoes being quite worn. However, the film's older Dorothy, a Dorothy on the verge of adolescence, has the Ruby Slippers magically transferred to her feet. That she has no choice in donning them is parallel to the fact the no young woman has a choice about the onset of menstruation.

In addition to Dorothy's slippers being red, we're told that they are made of rubies. The specific selection of rubies is interesting. Among the commentaries on rubies, the alchemist Leonhard Thumeysser wrote in 1583: "The ruby brings joy and strengthens the heart." Even more to our point, Hildegard von Bingen (1098 – 1179) wrote that "whenever there is a carbuncle [ruby], the demons of the air [the Wicked Witch?] cannot carry out their diabolical mission." Fascinating!

It is also interesting that these shoes, despite all appearances, are called, "slippers." Slippers they are not – except, perhaps, in the most poetic use of the word. Slippers are not shoes. Slippers are worn around the house, especially just before going to bed and just after getting up. Thus, slippers are associated with sleep and dreams and thus the unconscious and the fantastic (as Cinderella's Glass Slippers magically manufactured by her fairy godmother). The shoes worn in ballet are also called slippers and many ballets

portray the fantastic or imaginary (for all other dances – tap, ballroom, flamenco – dancers wear “shoes”).

Shoes, on the other hand, are associated with the waking state, consciousness and conscious movement (as in *The Seven League Boots* or *Puss in Boots*). Thus, Dorothy’s Ruby Slippers are a set of complex symbols all leading in one direction – Dorothy’s moving from unconsciousness to conscious control of her life while at the same time dealing with the emotional impact of physical maturation.

When the Wicked Witch threatens Glinda, the Good Witch retorts that she “has no power here.” Apparently once freed from a witch’s rule, a principality like Munchkinland, is now free from occupation. This, like so much of the film, may also be a comment on the world political situation in 1939 when the film was made.

After the Wicked Witch of the West leaves, Dorothy expresses her desire to return to Kansas. Glinda points her toward the “very good and very mysterious” Wizard of Oz ensconced in the Emerald City. It is not unreasonable to postulate that Glinda knows the Wizard is a fraud; after all, she is a very knowledgeable good witch. But rather than sending Dorothy on a wild goose chase, perhaps she is sending her, intentionally, on a journey of maturation and initiation into the world of adulthood.

Glinda, now clearly a positive mother figure, gives sage advice, useful warnings, and a kiss on the forehead. Her instructions are to start at the beginning and follow the Yellow Brick Road.

XIV. THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD

In the book, the Yellow Brick Road was composed of yellow bricks, a common building material in America at the turn of the century. The film has brightened this color considerably from the earth tones of, say, the Metropolitan Opera building, known then as the yellow barn, in New York City. And, in the context of the Depression in 1939, the association between the Yellow Bricks comprising the Road and gold bricks must have been obvious. The film is full of references to wealth – rubies, gold, and emeralds – that its fantasy nature would have been quickly confirmed to an impoverished audience. However, there is much more to the Yellow Brick Road than mundane economic references.



Even the color yellow has a complex symbolic history. In alchemy, a yellow coloration (citrinitas) represents a transitional state between “blackening” (negrido) and “whitening” (albedo) in the progress of matter toward becoming the philosopher’s stone. The alchemical parallel to Dorothy’s journey is obvious.

According to Aeppli in his *Dreams and their Meaning*, yellow is “the color of easily triggered intuition and suspicion, in which there is a peculiar solar power, penetrating and illuminating.” Considering that Dorothy’s road is filled primarily with male guiding and caring figures, the “solar,” that is, male element is predicted by the road’s color.

Furthermore, in ancient China, blue, red, white, black, and yellow represent East, South, West, North and “Center,” respectively. In this system, Dorothy’s journey leads her to the “Center,” that is, into Dorothy’s own psyche.

The Yellow Brick Road has many precedents in classical mythology, perhaps the strongest is Theseus’ solution to the Cretan Labyrinth. His lover, Ariadne, gave him a thread with which he could find his way to safety after slaying the Minotaur at the Labyrinth’s center. Oz, like any dream world (or the unconscious itself for that matter) is a labyrinth – a place from which one might escape only with great difficulty. Beginning at the center of the labyrinth, Dorothy has slain the Wicked Witch of the East and now must find her way through the labyrinth of Oz following the thread of the Yellow Brick Road to the Wizard who can, she assumes, provide her with a return ticket to Kansas.

Dorothy’s Yellow Brick Road begins as a spiral, in many ways the opposite and inverse of the tornado that brought her to Oz. It retains and echoes the tornado’s spiraling, circling, and swallowing qualities. Dorothy’s journey begins by being sucked up into the tornado and, after a hiatus, resumes its whirling, spiral journey on the Yellow Brick Road.

In the time between spirals, between the tornado and the Yellow Brick Road, Dorothy has learned quite a bit. She has gathered the seeds of what she will need on her quest for maturity: she has tasted power by becoming tall enough

to lord it over the Munchkins, she has been introduced to the concept of good and evil by the various witches, and she has seen the power of her own unconscious at work in killing a witch. She has also realized that the power of the unconscious can be trusted to move her in the right direction. At a more mundane level, she has garnered the recognition of the adult, though diminutive community of the Munchkins, and she has come face to face with her infantile sexuality. And she now has a clearly defined goal to replace her previously undirected whining about her problems.

At the center of the spiral beginning the Yellow Brick road is a blue dot. Blue, of course, is the color of the sky, the way Dorothy entered Oz. In the ancient Chinese system mentioned above, blue is the color of East, and until recently the Wicked Witch of the East ruled Munchkinland. Thus, blue is of no interest to Dorothy currently. She quickly steps on the blue dot and just as quickly steps off unto the Yellow Brick Road.

Interleaving the spirals of the Yellow Brick Road is a pavement of the red bricks. This is more difficult. One possibility is that in the Chinese system, red represents South. Glinda is the Good Witch of the North and presumably there is a symmetrically Good Witch of the South, but, again, she is unnecessary to Dorothy who has already made contact with Glinda.

Dorothy leaves Munchkinland to the cheering encouragement of its citizenry. She skips down the Yellow Brick Road into an obvious wall painted to resemble a landscape. But, never mind. *The Wizard of Oz* isn't about special effects or fancy sets. Like television's *Star Trek* of the 1960s, which also had

obviously cardboard sets, it is the story telling that matters. The basis of all good story telling is psychology, which, as we have seen, permeates all aspects of *The Wizard of Oz*.

Dorothy now begins her adventure in earnest. And, like all good adventures, Dorothy encounters problems.

XV. THE SCARECROW

Shortly after leaving the Munchkin City, Dorothy comes to a crossroads. The Yellow Brick Road splits into three directions! We, like Dorothy, had assumed that the road would be a single, easy-to-follow path. How naive. Our personal experiences should have warned us that life is never that simple. We all come to crossroads in our lives, the more fortunate of us have trusty family and friends to give valuable guidance and advice. What Dorothy finds is a Scarecrow, at first glance a most unlikely source of wisdom.



The Scarecrow at a crossroads has resonances of both Eastern and Western mythology. In ancient Greece, a Herm was constructed at intersections of roads as an altar to the god Hermes – responsible for the welfare of travelers, in this case Dorothy. The solitary Scarecrow protecting the field is also reminiscent of Chinese tomb guardians.

Dorothy, unused to talking Scarecrows, assumes she hears a voice from the cornfield, but can't identify its source. But the signs are immediately positive, for the cornfield is a green one, unlike those in Kansas, and thus bodes bounty and fertility. Significantly, she steps off the Yellow Brick Road for the first time.

The Scarecrow is the first of the friends Dorothy meets and gathers about her. They are all externalizations of Dorothy's internal doubts cleverly and conveniently projected on radically transformed images of the farm hands back in Kansas, Zeke, Huck and Hickory. Dorothy's unconscious has picked up bits of conversation back in Kansas, and as in a dream, has elaborated these scraps into complete manifestations.

At one level the three companions represent childhood insecurities about intelligence ("am I smart enough?"), empathy ("why can't I understand other people?"), and bravery ("can I really do this?"). By projecting these questions outward and, in this case, generating actual characterizations of perceived internal flaws, the child can better tolerate these flaws (in addition to things like foolishness, ugliness, egotism, bluster, introversion, acne, and so on) in him- or herself and in others. At another level, they represent three aspects of Dorothy that she must develop to become an adult: the intellectual, the emotional, and the spiritual. Still further, they also embody the three states of nature: animal, vegetable, and mineral.

Questioning the Scarecrow as to his indecision which way she should go, he claims not to have a brain. When she asks how he can talk, he solopsistically claims that because he doesn't have a brain, he doesn't know. He further mentions, with delightfully sarcastic innocence, that many people who don't have brains do a lot of talking. Obviously, this is a social and/or political comment as valid and wise today as it was in 1939.

Dorothy's Kansas background and upbringing quickly come through as she politely introduces herself as she asks about the Scarecrow's health. And she immediately offers to help him off the pole – and despite the lack of a brain, of course, he tells her how to do it.

Once down, he tells her of his failure to scare crows, and thus do his job. In one sense, he is symbolic of Depression Era farm failures and mass unemployment. This would have great meaning during the 1930s – a scarecrow who cannot prevent the crows from eating the crops clearly represents the non-functional agriculture of America in general, plagued by the double threat of economic woes and a record drought.

The Scarecrow and the cornfield have another meaning. Corn is a fertility symbol. Dorothy's journey is one of leaving the dry, infertile desolation of Kansas, overcoming the obstacles to maturity and thus approaching the age of fertility. As long as the Scarecrow is convinced he has no brain, Dorothy's internal, symbolic cornfield cannot be fertile and healthy (the Scarecrow clearly demonstrates this threat when a crow arrives to pick at him). In parallel, as long as Dorothy is convinced she is inadequate, she cannot reach adulthood. This is not only the Scarecrow's function, but also the function of all her companions. Each offers growth and maturity, each in his specialty – intelligence, emotion, and spirituality.

It is fascinating that the Scarecrow's conception of "brain," as expressed in his delightful song, is to "confer with the flowers and consult with the rain." These hardly seem like the common Western idea of "using one's brain."

These activities work much better as descriptions of being actively in touch with the unconscious, specifically transcendent aspects of the Collective Unconscious. He then goes on to say that he would relieve others of their pain. When he says his goal is to explain, “why the ocean is near the shore,” it sounds very much like he’d like to solve a Zen Koan. All these uses for his “brain” seem suspiciously like descriptions of traditional Eastern mystical paths to spiritual enlightenment!

Dorothy shares her naive faith in the Wizard with the Scarecrow. Dorothy’s confidence is, of course, in a father figure, one who can fix anything and do anything. Innocent Dorothy is convinced that this idealized father can provide her with easy passage home to Kansas as easily as he can provide the Scarecrow with a brain. Dorothy’s road to maturation, in addition to all the things we’ve catalogued so far, includes learning the true nature of fathers and taking back the images of perfection many children project on them.

And with the Scarecrow in tow, it’s down the Yellow Brick Road into another painted background.

XVI. THE TALKING APPLE TREES

With the Wicked Witch of the West lurking behind a tree, Dorothy and the Scarecrow stop to admire some bright red apples in what at first seems to be a replay of the Garden of Eden with the Witch assuming Serpent/Lilith role. However, nothing so straightforward is about to take place.

Above the road sits, of all things, a toucan, a tropical bird with a long, bright yellow bill. The meaning of this odd bird will become clear when we encounter other birds in a few moments.



Dorothy steps off the Yellow Brick Road for the second time in rapt admiration of the luscious apples. She picks one and promptly has her hand slapped by the tree that takes back the apple with, “What do you think you’re doing?” She naively explains that she was hungry before realizing with considerable shock that a tree has just spoken to her.

In addition to being able to speak, these apple trees are odd in other ways. Their voices are deep and gravely, obviously male while at the same time they produce fruit (much like the male voiced and child-bearing alien plant invader, voiced by Levi Stubbs, in *The Little Shop of Horrors* [1986]). These talking trees are androgynous and sexually ambiguous. In one way, they represent Dorothy's naivete about sexual and gender matters. In another way, they predict Dorothy's ultimate psychological goal to combine the masculine and feminine elements in a healthy and functional whole.

In her first venture off the Yellow Brick Road, Dorothy became friends with the Scarecrow and began facing her own perceived inadequacy regarding her intelligence. Now in her second step off the Road, she begins taking care of her own physical needs, like hunger.

Presumably back on the Kansas farm, Dorothy's every physical need was seen to by Aunt Em; indeed, we saw Aunt Em with a plate of crullers that Dorothy ate from without even a thank you. Dorothy has never had to take care of herself. And now, deciding she must deal with her own hunger, she takes a small but significant step forward. Despite the frightening encounter with the talking trees, this is another small step forward on the road to her maturation which can have, we all know from personal experience, it's frightening moments.

The apple in the Garden of Eden has become a popular symbol for forbidden knowledge, but in this case, it applies to the Scarecrow rather than Dorothy. The Scarecrow quickly intervenes and cleverly tricks the trees into providing

Dorothy their bounty. So, in a turn on the classic Garden of Eden apples, the trees of Oz are also trees of knowledge, but the knowledge is that the Scarecrow is a pretty smart character despite his protestations of lacking a brain.

At another level, the apples are just another in a long series of fertility symbols. Since the Scarecrow has grown in “brains” and now able to make the earth produce again by tricking the apple trees into throwing their apples at him, we must assume that his association with Dorothy has already been a healing one. And since he is a projection of an aspect of Dorothy’s own psyche, that healing is taking place within Dorothy herself.

Then it’s back on the Yellow Brick Road for a moment and then off again to search for an errant apple and her next encounter.

XVII. THE TIN MAN

Dorothy now discovers the Tin Man – a wonderful grafting of 20th century technology to ancient fairy tale imagery – frozen in place by a rainstorm while working (even though tin, unlike iron, does not “rust”).



By including a piece of machinery – actually a robot – in a fairy tale, Baum has posited that the essence of the Industrial Revolution and America's fascination with the mechanical world is an appropriate source of wonder and fantasy for both children and adults. (The European tradition is much more organic. Collodi's invention is parallel to Baum's, but Pinocchio is made of wood, not metal.) In the book, Baum's Tin Woodsman received his metal body as a series of prostheses to replace the limbs he chopped off himself after the Wicked Witch put a curse on his ax. This reflects a late 19th century fascination with machinery and the common hope for the Industrial Revolution that machinery would eventually replace all human labor leading to an earthly, machine-supported paradise. Baum metered this with a warning

that if “cursed,” machines can be dangerous. By the time of the Depression, all such 19th century hopes had evaporated, and the Tin Man takes on a set of quite different meanings.

In 1939, he would clearly represent the effect of the Depression on American industry – frozen. With the general economic collapse, high unemployment, low incomes, and many factories across the land shut down and slowly turning to rust, the frozen machinery of the Tin Man is a good metaphor for the country’s economic woes.

According to Henry M. Littlefield, the Tin Man may also reflect the views of the Populist Movement of the late 19th century which decried what it saw as evil Eastern business enterprises dehumanizing the common laborer into an entity that was considered nothing more than a human machine good only for the production of goods. Obviously, a robot would be the ultimate of such a worker.

With a strained voice, the Tin Man says, “Oilcan.” In one of the film’s many puns, this one harking back to the era of vaudeville, the Scarecrow, mistaking the noun for a verb, responds, “Oil can what?” I cannot but wonder if there is another reference here. Certainly, oil, fuel oil that is, could rejuvenate America’s Depression-frozen industry – as it would less than a decade later after World War II.

With the oilcan, they loosen up the Tin Man only to find he is missing a heart. As with the Scarecrow, the Tin Man is a projection of Dorothy's own doubts, this time about the emotional capacity necessary to be an adult.

He says that with a heart he could be human. He'd be "tender, gentle, and awfully sentimental regarding love and art." He'd be friends with the sparrow and with "the boy who shoots the arrows," that is, Cupid, if he "only had a heart." As with the Scarecrow, who wants to use his brains, not to make money or to impress others, the Tin Man wants to use his heart for strictly transcendental purposes. He would use his emotional capacities to connect with both nature and mythology – thus the psyche. As an aside, he claims that a full emotional life is the source of youthful vigor. Sage advice indeed.

Notice that the apple Dorothy is holding winds up resembling the "heart" that the Tin Man so desperately seeks. In this sense, we can see it is indeed a variation (perhaps even an improvement) on the apple of the Garden of Eden, now transformed from intellectual knowledge into emotional knowledge – a knowledge of the heart.

The idea of machinery looking for a "heart" is more than just irony. Especially coming from the late 19th century when the Industrial Revolution was in full swing, this is a warning that we cannot let our dependence on machinery dehumanizes us. The ultimate in this struggle between machinery and humanity is realized in the figure of Data on television's *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. He is an android constantly in search of ways to become

more human(e). Data is a modern incarnation of the Tin Man clearly echoing both his mechanical state and his dreams of humanity.

The film's (and presumably Baum's) ambiguity regarding the role of machinery in human life is illustrated by the Tin Man's dance. His dance is mechanical and, at one point, steam puffs out of his head like it would from a smokestack. However, moments later, he leans and seems to defy gravity. Thus, he is a combination of the world's physical laws of mechanics while at the same time violating and transcending them.



While the Tin Man does his dance, in the background behind Dorothy and the Scarecrow is an ostrich and a peacock. These two birds, in addition to the toucan we saw earlier – one of Australia, one from the Mideast and one from South America – represent the wild state of the whole world. This further reinforces the idea that what we are seeing is a variation on the prelapsarian Garden of Eden.

Note that while Dorothy announces that she is hungry, she never eats the apple. Perhaps this means that the knowledge the apple symbolizes is to be acquired slowly and cannot be “swallowed” in a single gulp. The film is full of such slow progressions in the acquisition of psychological knowledge.

Dorothy invites the Tin Man to join the party on their journey to the Wizard who, she is sure, can provide him with a heart. But before they can resume their journey, the cackle of the Wicked Witch is heard.

XVIII. THE WICKED WITCH’S THREATS

The Wicked Witch goes from lurking behind an apple tree to perching atop a ruined hut. I assume that were this Kansas and the Wicked Witch ruled the land, Dorothy’s neat and clean farmhouse would look more like this dilapidated shack. The contrast between the two buildings further demonstrates the Witch’s regressive powers.

She threatens the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and Dorothy herself. Her threats are remarkable: The Tin Man is to be turned into a beehive and the Scarecrow into a mattress. Considering the number of fertility symbols we have seen so far, both a mattress and a beehive easily fall into this category.

Furthermore, bees are symbols of immortality, rebirth, order, and industry. Thus, unintentionally, and perhaps ironically, the Wicked Witch's "threat" would actually grant the Tin Man's wish to return to the work he abandoned.

When the Wicked Witch throws a fireball at the group, the Tin Man puts out the fire with the funnel that forms the top of his head. A great visual pun – he demonstrates to the Scarecrow how to "use his head" to put out the fire. The intellect that the Scarecrow seeks (and already has) can be used to solve their problems.

Oddly, the Witch puts the broomstick between her legs as if to fly off, but then disappears in a puff of red smoke as before. The next time we see her, she will be flying on the broomstick. She seems to be gathering and strengthening her masculine power – symbolized by the obviously phallic broomstick-between-the-legs – in order to better fight Dorothy's gathering masculine Animus energy. Thus, we have a battle between two women, one using masculine power to regressive ends and the other to promote growth.

The result of the Witch's attack is to bring the three friends closer together. And the journey now continues.

XIX. THE COWARDLY LION

The trio now find themselves, accompanied by bits of “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” played on a bass trombone, in a dark and forbidding forest. They are frightened of wild animals, that is, the uncontrolled aspects of the psyche. As Joseph Campbell has pointed out so many times, the hero’s journey cannot be a simple, linearly upward journey. The hero must descend into the darkness to face negativity, even death. In *The Wizard of Oz*, there are three such episodes. The meeting with the Cowardly Lion is the first.

The three animals they fear so much are “lions and tigers and bears, oh my.” They chant about them as if attempting to propitiate them as in a religious ritual. These animals are both an oddly unexpected combination and a meaningful one.

For the symbolism of these three animals, let us begin in the middle of the trio, the tiger. In addition to representing fear and wonder, tigers are ambivalent figures, representing both solar (male) and lunar (female) elements; many mythologies see them as both a creator and destroyer. The tiger also symbolizes the mothering instinct. (Medieval bestiaries recommend catching tigers with a mirror placed on the ground. When the tiger sees it, she mistakes it for a tiger cub and tries to nurse it.)

Bears are equally complex. In dream symbolism, for instance, the bear is interpreted as an embodiment of the dangerous aspects of the unconscious. Jung claims the bear represents the negative aspect of the Persona, the outermost aspect of the personality. Aeppli feels that while dangerous, the bear connotes a great positive potential: it can stand for the feminine (brown, care of cubs, etc.) In addition, we can add the bear's most unique habit: hibernation – the bear sleeps through the cold winter and awakens in spring. This is clearly an allegory for psychic growth.

Despite being so descriptive of Dorothy's psychic dilemma, the tiger and the bear don't materialize. What appears is a lion – The Cowardly Lion. In astrology, the constellation of Leo the Lion is associated with the Sun and thus the masculine, solar element. We can expect that the Lion, despite his cowardice, will add the masculine element to the traditionally feminine aspects provided by the Scarecrow and the Tin Man (who want to talk to flowers and birds).

The "Cowardly Lion" is just one of the many delightful paradoxes invented by Baum. (The political symbolism of the Cowardly Lion – rhymes with Bryan, i.e., William Jennings Bryan – and why Bryan's political and economic policies would be called "cowardly" by Baum is treated elsewhere.) We have already met the "good witch," a concept the flies in the face of all European witchcraft traditions that see witches in league with Satan. In *The Patchwork Girl of Oz*, Baum introduces a Wise Donkey and a Foolish Owl. In

these inventions, Baum is perhaps prescient of Jung's concept of enantidromia – the idea that every powerful symbol contains its own opposite.

The oxymoronic nature of a “cowardly” Lion indicates that his characteristics are hidden in a potential state needing only to be awakened by the appropriate transformation (this is in no way hindered by Bert Lahr's totally incongruous Brooklyn accent). His promise is formidable. As Jung says, the lion combines effortlessly mastery, serene self-control, and tremendous energy, he is an aggressor against whom all are defenseless, and whose opponent is always destroyed.

These are the very characteristics Dorothy needs. And it is appropriate that the Cowardly Lion is the last element to be added to Dorothy's entourage. All that remains now is for Dorothy to actualize the potential hidden within the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Cowardly Lion in order to complete her own psychic maturation.

The Lion bounds from the forest onto the Yellow Brick Road (assisted by a well-hidden trampoline). Hoping to frighten Dorothy and her three companions, the Cowardly Lion resorts primarily to posturing. He intimidates them, challenges them to fight, and accuses them of being cowards. This is, of course, pure projection. He himself is a coward who projects his cowardice on others and then accuses them of being cowardly. The ruse works, for the trio cowers before him.

However, when he threatens Toto, Dorothy fights back and forces from him a confession of his cowardice. This makes sense at the level of text: every child would protect a pet. But it also works at the level of subtext. Realizing its importance, the psyche decides to protect at all cost the instinct that is driving Dorothy toward maturation. This is a repetition of the act Dorothy performed in Kansas to protect Toto from Mrs. Gulch. But because the changes that Dorothy has experienced here in Oz, what was in Kansas a protective act now becomes one of integration – her protecting Toto from the Lion reveals the Lion to be cowardly and she can now work on strengthening another aspect of her psyche.



With this act of psychological self-preservation, Dorothy discovers the cowardly nature of the Lion. Just as the Lion projects his cowardice on others, so the Lion himself is a projection of Dorothy's self-doubts. The Lion is the third aspect of Dorothy's inner masculine function that must be integrated into her personality.

Like Dorothy's other companions, the Cowardly Lion has multiple implications. Following the film's Depression Era economic symbolism, the Yellow Brick Road within the Lion's realm is cracked and full of weeds as were many of the roads in America at the time, literally and figuratively. And since most of the public blamed the government and its inability to react and rectify economic conditions, it makes sense that the Lion, representing the Government (after all, he himself later claims to be the "king of the forest"), is cowardly and his territory is in ruins.

It is noteworthy that all three of Dorothy's companions are male. In this way they represent parts of her Animus, the male aspect of her unconscious. In addition to Dorothy's need for heart, mind, and courage, each companion represents a different aspect of the internal male: the Scarecrow is the vegetative and thus concerned with growth and fruition, the Tin Man with the mineral and thus concerned with alchemical functions, and the Cowardly Lion with the spiritual.

After a song, the Cowardly Lion joins the party, and they all set out to be fixed by the Wizard.

XX. THE FIELD OF POPPIES

The journey through psychological darkness now continues. We learn that the Wicked Witch has been observing their progress all along in (another spherical) crystal and she still covets the Ruby Slippers. Once she gets them, she says, her power will be “the greatest in Oz.” Strangely, we have seen no power greater than what she already has! For this reason, we must be suspicious of her stated motivations and look to the slippers’ subtextual meaning (discussed above). To further her plan, she prepares “something with poison in it,” a field of poppies that obscures the Yellow Brick Road.



As the quartet approaches the field of poisonous poppies and once again, they leave the Yellow Brick Road. With their eyes set on the gleaming Emerald City on the far horizon, they heedlessly dash into the field of poppies only to find their energy slowly ebbing. With the continuation of the Yellow Brick Road in sight at the far end of the poppy field, exhausted, Dorothy asks to stop for a moment only to find Toto already asleep among the bright red blossoms. Dorothy is the next one down, followed by the Lion.

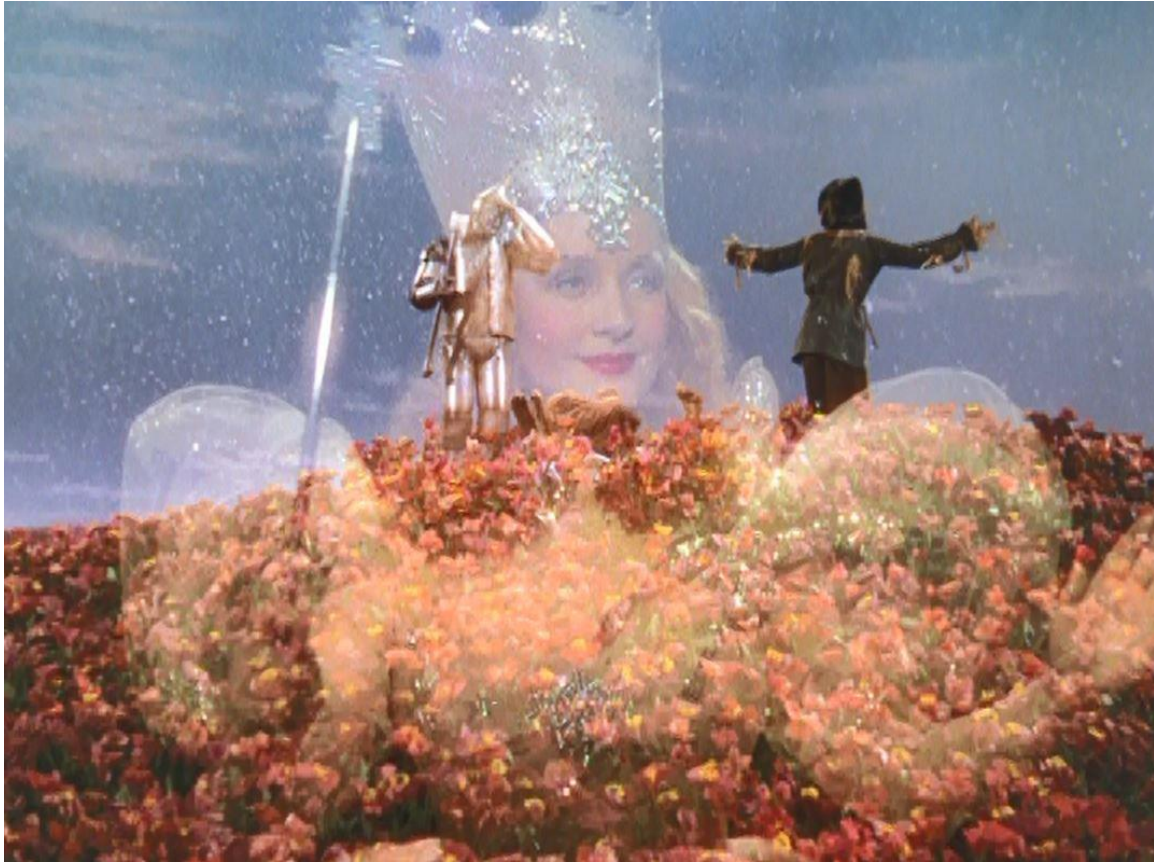


The Tin Man and the Scarecrow begin shouting for help. They say that shouting will do no good but continue screaming for help anyway. This illustrates that there are moments in life when the logical processes don't

produce results and following one's instinct, no matter how illogical, is the correct way.

And now, as if through the cooperation of the heart (Tin Man) and the brain (Scarecrow), the right and left sides of the brain, if you will, their "useless" shouting in fact summons Glinda. This is parallel to Glinda seemingly magically hearing the frightened cries of the Munchkins after Dorothy's abrupt arrival. Glinda brings about a snowstorm that irrationally wakes everyone up.

This is, without doubt, one of the oddest incidents in *The Wizard of Oz*, a film never lacking in strangeness and irrationalities. At the level of text, this event is beyond explanation. There are (at least) two levels of subtext here, one of which offers a partial explanation and the other a more satisfactory, though certainly more outrageous one.



Poppies are associated with the Field of Flanders, a famous battlefield of World War I. Even today, on veteran's day, the wearing of artificial red poppies is traditional. In 1939, this battle was a relatively recent and well-known incident. The association between the battle and the flower is supported by the natural history of the corn poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*) also known as the Flanders Poppy. The plant remains dormant for many years and sprouts only when the soil is turned. During and after World War I, fields that had been disturbed by battles bloomed with bright red corn poppies as if the bloodshed in the war had returned and become a vast scarlet carpet of flowers. For this reason, the corn poppy has become a symbol of war and its futility. Perhaps Dorothy and her companions' going to sleep on a battlefield

is a warning against ignoring the wars brewing at the time in Europe and the east.

But there are other implications to poppies – drugs, specifically opium. Addiction to opium has been a problem throughout the world wherever the opium poppy has been cultivated. The flower has been associated with sleep and death since Roman times. However, it was early observed that opium also had significant medical uses, but the addictive side effects always disturbed the medical profession. In 1896, morphine was identified as the pain-relieving active ingredient of opium.

But morphine, it was found, was not free of the toxic and habit-forming problems associated with opium. Morphine was consequently chemically modified into heroin (named from the German *heroish*, meaning “heroic,” by its inventor, Bayer). It was hoped that heroin would produce the analgesic effects of morphine without being addictive. Indeed, about the time Baum was writing his books at the turn-of-the-century, medical writings and advertisements appeared suggesting that heroin was an effective cure for the morphine habit.

With this background, it is difficult not to see this incident in *The Wizard of Oz* as a metaphor for drugs. Heroin, even then known in the vernacular as “snow,” was invented as a cure for opium and morphine addictions. Thus, opium – the Wicked Witch’s poisonous poppies – puts the travelers into a drug-like and debilitating sleep while the arrival of the snow – heroin – generated by the graces of the Good Witch, restores them to health.

If only that naive view of curing drug addiction was true. Obviously, heroin as a cure for opium addiction was not all it was cracked up to be (pardon the pun). This scenario has been repeated many times when claims of the efficacy of various drugs was proven not only untrue, but harmful – thalidomide and fen-fen are only recent incidents. Unfortunately, the search of an easy drug-replacing-drug answer to addiction continues as naively as before: now we have methadone, itself addictive, to cure heroin addiction.

Baum, in 1900 when the book was published, was apparently unaware – or unbelieving – of the advertised advantages of heroin. In the book, the Tin Woodsman and the Scarecrow, unaffected by the aroma of the poppies because they are not made of flesh, carry Dorothy from the field of poppies. The snowstorm, which rounded out and modernized the drug reference of the original, was an invention of the 1902 musical version of *The Wizard of Oz* and was carried over into the film.



Restored from the curse of drug addiction sent by the Wicked Witch, the quartet continues down the Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City.



The Witch herself, undaunted, takes off screaming and cackling for the Emerald City to cause more mischief. In classical witch-fashion, we see her get on her broomstick and fly off. With all the other Freudian/sexual symbolism that has preceded this scene, it is not difficult to see the phallic nature of the broomstick both physically – placed next to her legs – and as a source of aggressive power. We will return to this all-important broomstick shortly.

XXI. THE EMERALD CITY AND THE GATE OF OZ

The quartet's approach to the Emerald City is a hilarious and satiric study in bureaucracy. They ring the bell; the Gate Keeper (also played by Frank Morgan) answers the bell. Upset, he tells them to read the notice on the door. When they point out there isn't one there, with only a minimum of embarrassment and nary an admission of inadequacy, he hangs the appropriate sign on a nail and slams the window shut. They read and obey the notice to knock rather than use the bell. The Gate Keeper, having exerted the power of which he is so proud, a power both trivial and meaningless, a power based on the falsehood that the perfectly operative bell doesn't work, is pleased, and asks them their business. The Gate Keeper is the perfect bureaucrat, blaming his own errors on the victims of his own ineptitude.



Anyone who has dealt with a bureaucracy can instantly identify with this scene. Petty bureaucrats, throwing up needless hurdles simply to exert their own narcissistic power are familiar figures everywhere – in business, in education, in government, and in the legal system. It is frightening to know that in 1939 when the film was made, the situation was little different than it is today. (This poke at bureaucracy doesn't appear in the book and was the filmmaker's invention. I am sure this pleased audiences in 1939 as much as it pleases us today.)

They, and we, now enter the Emerald City itself. The Emerald City is the film's final symbol of wealth – one of the many precious substances

prominent in this film, gold streets, ruby slippers, and so on. An attractive image during the poverty of the Great Depression – a whole city the color of money. It is possible that Baum modeled his Emerald City after Chicago’s spectacular White City, built of plaster, stone and cement for the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition. Indeed, S. J. Sackett holds up the Emerald City as a model of utopian fiction. Perhaps a more literary predecessor was John Bunyan’s City Beautiful in *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. If we read “jewels” as emeralds, then Bunyan’s description seems the basis of the film’s city:

“Endless chains of jewels seemed strung and wound about it. The Palace of Flowers held up a great crystal of light glowing against the dark blue of the sky, towers and domes were crowned and diademed, thousands of jewels hung among the masses of leaves, or reflected themselves, sparkling in the darkness of the lagoons, fountains of molten jewels sprung up, and flamed and changed.”

But the meaning of the Emerald City goes far beyond simple wealth. “The emerald brings reason, wisdom, and dexterity,” wrote the alchemist Lionhard Thurneysser in 1583. Christian mythology sees the emerald as a symbol of “faith and hope.” And this is certainly what Oz’s quartet has come for.

In addition, lore attributes to the emerald the power to dispel storms, which reminds us of the tornado that brought Dorothy to Oz in the first place. And certainly, what Dorothy seeks is an antidote to the tornado’s effect on bringing her to Oz; she seeks within the Emerald City a way home.

When they state their desire to see the Wizard, the Gate Keeper goes into a snit, “No one sees the Wizard, not never, not nohow.” When Dorothy catches him in a logical error, “how do you know there is a Wizard if no one has seen him,” he claims that her Midwestern, Kansas-born logic is a waste of his time and threatens to slam the door in their faces once again. Again, the perfect bureaucrat blaming the victims for his own inadequacy.

Like crying for help in the Field of Poppies, the film again claims that abandoning the intellect is occasionally necessary. While this may fly in the face of what is traditionally thought of as growing up, i.e., “use your head,” and so on, it is nonetheless true. For true adults, psychological adults and not just people who are physically mature, know when to abandon the logic of the conscious mind and trust the unconscious.

The Tin Man, apparently knowing just how to get to a bureaucrat, starts name-dropping. And like the true bureaucrat that he is, the Gate Keeper is impressed by the introduction from the Witch of the North and the proof of the Ruby Slippers. With the right connections, any bureaucracy can be pierced (today this can be seen as a satiric jab at Hollywood itself – perhaps it was then too). And they can enter the Emerald City.

XXII. THE HORSE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR

The gates of the Emerald City are thrown open to them. A 19th century horse-drawn carriage pulls up claiming to be a cab. It is shockingly anachronistic in the art deco wonderland surrounding it.

Mounting the cab, Dorothy discovers that the horse pulling the cab keeps changing colors – yellow, blue, green, pink, and so on. She is told that this is the “horse of a different color.” Of course, this is a clever visual/verbal pun on the linguistic aphorism, but, like everything else in Oz, it is also much more.



Shakespeare more or less coined the term “horse of a different color” in *Twelfth Night*, when Maria, scheming with Sir Andrew and Sir Toby against Malvolio, says, “My purpose is, indeed, a horse of that colour,” meaning, my aim is something like that. Likeness soon changed to difference in one of those inexplicable evolutions in our language. Anthony Trollope used it to mean difference in 1867 in *The Last Chronicles of Barset*, “What did you think of his wife? That’s of horse of another colour altogether.”

Within the all-green motif of the Emerald City, the only outstanding colors are those of the chameleon-like horse. This magical mutability recaps – and finalizes – what we have already seen: the mutability of the Wizard himself. At first, we saw him as the Father archetype in the form of Professor Marvel – the kindly charlatan who instantly cares about a little girl erroneously running away from home. We next encounter him as the ultimate bureaucrat at the gates of the Emerald City. Now he’s the kindly cabby who gives them free transport and takes them to where their physical needs can be seen to. We will shortly meet him as the Wizard’s majordomo, a guard with a magical staff. All these (including the Wizard himself) are all various manifestations and guises of the Father archetype – and all played by the same actor to help make the point. All these aspects of the Father are, in a sense, archetypes of a different color – different colorations of the identical animal underneath.

So, the Cabby (again played by Frank Morgan), in one of the various incarnations of the omni-present Father Archetype, like a caring father, now takes them for physical renewal – a “wash and brush up.” The Scarecrow gets some fresh straw; the Tin Man a bath and polish; the Lion a new tonsure.

Dorothy, however, asks if her eyes can be dyed to match her gown – the first signs of the vanity of young womanhood. In addition, Dorothy’s change in hairstyle from childhood pigtails to a more adult way of wearing hair longer also reflects her progress.

So it’s off with another song, “Ha, ha, ha, and a ho, ho, ho, and a couple of tra-la-las, that’s how we laugh the day away in the merry old Land of Oz.” Labor in the Emerald City must have driven quite a bargain in its last contract negotiations with the employers. They start work at noon, take an hour lunch break, and call it quits at two o’clock. Everything is free, no money is seen. For the economically stressed or unemployed of 1939, this would have been a depression-era dream. This is truly a workers’ paradise.

There are also religious aspects to this “wash and brush-up” before an audience with the Wizard. The Bible dictates cleansing before entering the Temple. This elevates the Wizard to the local god.

XXIII. “SURRENDER DOROTHY”

The Wicked Witch flies across the sky on her broom, a broom that has suddenly become a skywriter, and rudely interrupts this scene of renewal and joy: “Surrender Dorothy” is smoked across the blue heavens. The Witch’s smoke is dark, reflecting her evil intent, rather than the white smoke of real skywriting.

There are two possible interpretations of this message. First, the most obvious, is that it is a command to Dorothy to surrender to the Witch's power and, of course, surrender the Ruby Slippers. However, it can also be a command to the residents of the Emerald City to surrender Dorothy, whom they are protecting and nurturing. In this way, the Witch is challenging the Wizard's authority over the Emerald City.

The skywriting itself is interesting. This message is written in the sky, the domain of God the Father. (This is one of the film's few intimations of religion – notice that neither the witches nor the wizard is worshipped. Respected, yes, but worshipped, no.) Thus, the Wicked Witch has access to male power, perhaps symbolized by the broomstick. It is really the male broomstick that is writing the message in the sky.

The Wicked Witch now becomes not the originator, but the representative of the forces determined to keep Dorothy in perpetual youth. The Witch, then, is a proxy for forces greater than she is, forces that remain hidden from view and appear only symbolically. Oz is dream-like, indeed, with layer upon layer of meaning, symbols within symbols. But the land of Oz nevertheless reflects and comments upon the everyday social and psychological problems a young woman of Dorothy's age (and indeed women of any age) may encounter.

If we add up the ideas that, first, the message for Dorothy to surrender is written in the traditionally male domain of the sky, second, it is written by a male phallic broomstick and that, third, the Witch may be along for the ride, our conclusion is that Dorothy's real nemesis is the traditional patriarchy, one

aspect of which is commonly perceived as an agenda to keep women forever young and prevent them from growing up. Thus, the message, “Surrender Dorothy,” is a last-chance plea for Dorothy to surrender into the regressive comfort of eternal youth. These destructive male forces are counterbalanced, as we shall see, by the kind, caring, and loving masculine forces that triumph over negativity. In *The Wizard of Oz*, the positive aspects of the patriarchy triumph over its negative aspects.

Frightened by the message in the sky, Dorothy, her companions, and the citizens of the Emerald City rush off to consult the Wizard.

XXIV. THE GATE KEEPER’S REBUFF

The Wizard’s majordomo (again played by Frank Morgan) is a cousin of the ultimate bureaucrat we met at the city gates. In contemporary terms, this character would be classed as the Wizard’s spin-doctor. While obviously himself terrified and confused, he loudly proclaims all is well and the Wizard has everything under control.



What is remarkable about the majordomo is his staff: a tall wooden rod that seems to have sprouted flowers, like Tannhäuser's in the eponymous opera by Richard Wagner. In its long symbolic history, the simple, unadorned wooden rod has been variously interpreted as the club of chastisement, the scepter of rulers, and the ever-erect phallus signifying the power of the possessor. (It also appears in the Tarot suit called rods, wands, or staves, and it appears – devolved – on modern playing cards as clubs.)

The flowering rod represents the fertility and virility of its owner, as in Isaiah 11:1, “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.” Making its phallic nature clear, Moses was

elected by the male Old Testament God by causing Moses' "rod" to flower as described in Numbers 17:5, "And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom." Similarly, in the story of Jesus, Mary's husband was chosen the same way: when all the candidates laid their rods on the altar, only Joseph's burst into bloom (an odd choice of symbols considering the reputed sterility of their physical relationship).

At its deepest level, the flowering rod is the Cosmic Tree, the world axis. This is an indication that we are approaching the center of the story, in this case the wonderful and mysterious Wizard of Oz himself.

At first barred at the door by the majordomo, Dorothy is at last given a chance at an audience because of her gathering reputation. This clearly reflects her increasing personal power. And certainly, she now shows a lot more self-confidence than she did at the beginning of her journey at the origins of the Yellow Brick Road. Her self-doubts have been brought out of her unconscious and projected outward to be materialized in her three companions. This is indeed a great step forward because psychological material cannot be dealt with while hidden in the unconscious. And while projection alone may not be the best way to deal with it, recognizing and "making friends" with the projections is a good first step.

Being promised an audience, the four have full confidence that their wishes will be immediately, magically granted. They do not realize that they are not yet ready, that more psychological work has yet to be done. Indeed, Dorothy has not yet dealt with the major hurdle in the maturation process: resolving

the split parental figures that haunt this film – Glinda and the Wicked Witch, Aunt Em and Mrs. Gulch, and all the various pieces of the father/Wizard scattered through the story.

XXV. THE KING OF THE FOREST

While the majordomo consults with the Wizard, we are treated to another delightful song, this time delivered in an over-the-top pseudo-operatic style by Bert Lahr. It is another hilarious adventure into the murder of the English language. We are treated to such outrageous rhymes as “a tail would lash, I’d show compash . . .” Rhinoceros is rhymed with “imposerous,” hippopotamus with, “I’d trash him from top to bottomous,” and an elephant would be wrapped in “celephant.”

This is followed by a long recitation on the misinterpretations of courage: courage is what makes a flag wave, it is what makes the muskrat guard his musk, what makes the sphinx the seventh wonder, what puts the ape in apricot (!) – courage! Nonsense, of course. This is typical of the delusions that the Tin Man, the Scarecrow, and the Cowardly Lion have suffered under all along. What the Wizard is about to assign to them is the task of discovering the real nature of the attributes they have not only misguidedly thought they lacked, but also did not fully understand.

XXVI. THE AUDIENCE WITH THE WIZARD

“The Wizard says, ‘GO AWAY.’” With this, the door to the Wizard’s castle is literally slammed in their faces. Dorothy’s tears melt the heart (and seemingly the forehead) of the majordomo, and he allows them to enter.



The entrance to the Wizard’s chamber is telling. It is a long organic passage that signals they may be entering a womb. (It also looks a lot like the logo from a Warner Brothers Bugs Bunny cartoon.) This would mean that Dorothy is trying to return to the womb to escape her problems – and indeed, that is exactly what she is attempting by asking the Wizard for a shortcut back to Kansas.

Of course, there are no short cuts on the real road to maturity. And, as we will find out in a few minutes, the Wizard is a false one and cannot offer any quick solutions to Dorothy anyway. Thus, her attempt at regression, at having her problems solved by others doesn't work (this is what she tried to do back in Kansas as she asked for help from Aunt Em and the hired hands). Indeed, regression cannot work. It is too late. Dorothy is committed to maturation.



Visually, the Wizard – a gigantic, disembodied head floating in smoke and flame with a deep, sonorous, dominating voice – is the very image of the patriarchal god/father. Many have pointed out the phallic nature of his bald, bulbous head. This is the Oz version of the burning bush in Exodus or the

angel of the Apocalypse in John. (I am always a little surprised that the Wizard doesn't demand that they take off their shoes.) In further parallel to the God of Exodus' treatment of Moses, the Wizard assigns them a seemingly impossible task.

But the Wizard has other, more psychological aspects. Just as the mother image has been split into two, a positive and a negative, Glinda and Aunt Em versus Mrs. Gulch and the Wicked Witch, so too has the father image been split. This all-powerful Wizard appears to be the opposite of poor, submissive Uncle Henry, castrated by his respect for the law, reduced to passive/aggressive gate slamming. While the feminine is divided into good and evil figures, the masculine seems, at this point in the film, to be divided into the weak and the powerful.

The Wizard tells Dorothy and her companions to bring him the broomstick of the Wicked Witch. This is her source of phallic power – she sits on it and flies through the skies. Dreams of flying are traditionally associated with sexuality. And the shape of the broomstick itself leaves little doubt as to its true nature: a phallic symbol. Dorothy must not only learn about her inherent adult feminine nature, but also learn to capture and control masculine power within the feminine, her Animus, whose power is represented here by the broomstick.

The Wizard covets the Witch's phallic power. He purports to be a male god (whose traditional abode is in the sky), yet he cannot control the balloon that brought him to Oz. He powerlessly allows the Wicked Witch to fly through

his domain, sullyng his azure skies. Perhaps he feels that if he could harness the masculine power of the phallic broomstick, he would become a real Wizard/God, and like the Wicked Witch, would be able to navigate the sky with the other male gods (later referred to as his “fellow wizards”).

He is mistaken. The Animus power of a woman cannot help a man achieve masculine power. For a man to develop psychologically, he must harness his internal *feminine*, the Anima. The contra-gender function is one of the great sources of power that propels the psyche down the road to individuation in both men and women.

So far Dorothy has been guarded and guided by Glinda. But from now on Dorothy and her companions are on their own. Dorothy is about to learn that the best way to help others is to help yourself. And, conversely, the best way to help yourself is to help others. A paradox this may be, but that doesn't detract from the statement's truth.

XXVII. THROUGH THE HAUNTED FOREST

After an amazingly athletic leap through a window by the almost sixty-year-old Bert Lahr, the quartet find themselves on the way to the Witch's castle, passing through the Haunted Forest.



This is another animistic forest where the trees have faces and hands, but they are not fruit trees that can be tricked into offering nourishment. It is only a mile from the Witch's castle and, presumably through her negative influence, the trees are gnarled and bare of leaves. The Wicked Witch non-growth influence is seen both in trying to prevent Dorothy's maturation and in her influence on the natural world.

Each of Dorothy's companions has come prepared to do battle with the Wicked Witch. Each has chosen specific weapons. The Lion seems to be hunting for insect life – he's armed with a butterfly net and a flit can. The Tin

Man, armed with a large wrench, seems equipped to dismantle machinery.
The Scarecrow is armed with a staff and a gun.



The selected weapons reflect each individual personality. The Tin Man is the most obvious – he is expecting other tin men. His wrench could be effectively used on him – either to fix or dismantle (as he must dismantle his preconceptions about his heart and simultaneously fix himself). The Cowardly Lion is ready to be a coward and catch butterflies. (The Lion is trying to act brave by using the snapping growl he tried before when he first met Dorothy, the Scarecrow and the Tin Man. It didn't work well than and,

considering he has a cute little red bow in his hair, it certainly doesn't work now.)

Through their choice of weapons, each is projecting onto the Wicked Witch his own characteristics. So, like many movie soldiers (or movie detectives), what they are really fighting is themselves.

Only the Scarecrow has brought weapons of significance. His staff and his gun are both phallic symbols. Perhaps he realizes that the only way to take away the Witch's phallic power is through a greater phallic power.

Fortunately, this kind of violent movie showdown is not to be. This is the solution offered in too many children's films: conflict resolution through violence. (Personally, I feel the Scarecrow wielding a pistol is one of the few lapses of taste in *The Wizard of Oz*.)

The hesitant quartet sees two scary-looking owls with glowing eyes perched in the trees above them. The owl is an age-old death symbol – it is nocturnal, it is a silent hunter that comes out of nowhere to snatch its prey up into the darkness, and so on. Then they encounter two equally scary vultures that reinforce the death imagery. These serve to further the idea that the Wicked Witch represents regression and non-growth.

The Tin Man then declares he doesn't believe in "spooks," only to be immediately levitated into the air and dropped rudely back to the ground. This brief incident recaps much of the psychological wisdom the film has so far put forth. First, by ignoring or denying internal functions, "spooks," gives

them an opportunity to attack us. Second, if a negative energy is repressed, it will surely return with greater force than before. And, once again we have a warning that there are times that logic must be abandoned, in this case a disbelief in the spirit world. (That these themes have been repeated so often that we realize they must be of great importance to the solution of Dorothy's problem.)

XXVIII. THE FLYING MONKEYS

From her castle, the Wicked Witch has been watching all along. She commands her “army” of flying monkeys to capture Dorothy and Toto, leaving the treatment of the others to their cruel discretion. The use of the word “army” implies that the government of the Wicked Witch's castle is a military dictatorship. (Munchkinland, in contrast, while seeming to have a mayor, is under the control of the Wicked Witch of the East. Perhaps the “elected” government was simply a puppet regime like the one Nazi German would establish a few years later in Vichy from which they governed France through their pawn, Marshal Philippe Pétain. In the Emerald City, however, the Wizard was elected by acclaim – a wizardocracy?) The feeling that the Wicked Witch is a military dictator is strengthened when she sends her flying monkeys to the Haunted Forest, they look very much like a fleet of bombers in the upcoming World War II.



(The “little insect” the Witch claims she sent to take the fight out of them was the “Jitterbug.” The resulting dance number was unfortunately cut from the final version of the film.)

Now let us take a look at the Wicked Witch’s army. Monkeys, according to Cirlot, symbolize the baser forces and psychological darkness. In Chinese mythology monkeys represent cleverness and grasping greed. So, the Wicked Witch, who has these properties in spades, projects them on her animal extensions, the flying monkeys (in a psychological relationship parallel to that between Dorothy and Toto).

The monkeys swoop down like dive-bombers, like movie vampire bats seeking blood, like birds hunting prey. This is perhaps the most frightening scene in the whole film. And this seems appropriate, for the Flying Monkeys represent the raw and exposed, base and visible animalistic nature of evil (well . . . as evil as evil can get in the very mild *Wizard of Oz*). They swoop down, kidnap Dorothy and Toto, disarm the Tin Man and knock the stuffing out of the Scarecrow.

Dorothy's kidnap by the flying monkeys leaves her companions on their own. In many ways, Dorothy has assumed leadership of the band and thereby repressed each of her companions' natural but still unrecognized abilities. This is another aspect of her learning: She must learn the difference between a supportive mother and a smothering one.

Once Dorothy and her companions are separated, each of them acts with greater autonomy and determination. It is as if left to their own devices, each of Dorothy's functions suddenly begins to grow to full strength – the Lion leads, the Scarecrow plots, and the Tin Man cares. It is possible that Dorothy-as-ego inhibits the growth of her various internal aspects. Later, when the four are reunited, they will exhibit a unity of strength not seen before in the film.

XXIX. THE WITCH TRIES FOR THE RUBY SLIPPERS

After the Flying Monkeys deliver Dorothy and Toto to the Wicked Witch, she repeats Mrs. Gulch's act of putting Toto in a basket – just in case we hadn't made the connection between the two characters. She offers to trade Toto's life for the Ruby Slippers. (An unacceptable offer since what good would psychological maturation – Toto – be without physical maturation – the Ruby Slippers?)

When the Witch tries to take Dorothy's shoes, she finds it impossible. While Dorothy may be willing to give up the shoes, that is, give up her newly growing womanhood, it is impossible. She cannot go back to childhood once she has donned the shoes and walked on the road of maturation. Indeed, the Wicked Witch says as much, "Those slippers [and all they represent] will never come off as long as you're alive."



Once again Toto escapes from the basket, this time just as the Wicked Witch is planning Dorothy's demise. Toto leaves the Witch's castle by jumping from the closing drawbridge. This is the last bridge crossing. The process will now be complete. Toto as Dorothy's unconscious instinct will join with her other unconscious functions to form a functional whole . . . finally. Dorothy's three internal functions will now be driven by instinct; they will all work together, finally, to "rescue" Dorothy from the threat of eternal youth. Enough psychological work has been done so that the up-till-now unconscious healing process can be fully activated and bring about the growth Dorothy requires.

The Wicked Witch marks the length of Dorothy's life with an hourglass. The hourglass with its bright red sand reiterates several previous themes. The hourglass itself represents the inexorable passage of time – there is no going back to the childlike state even at Dorothy's most desperate hour. Like the Ruby Slippers, the womb-shaped hourglass with its blood-red-colored sand is another metaphor for menstruation.



That the Wicked Witch tells Dorothy that she will die when the “cycle” is complete implies the Witch's determination to prevent Dorothy's transition from child to adult. It also reflects the childlike confusion about the mechanics of female sexuality common to young women. Unless carefully

prepared and educated about menstruation (an important part of the rites of passage for young women), they often believe they are bleeding to death (this idea is fully exploited in Brian De Palma's *Carrie* of 2002). This is another way in which *The Wizard of Oz* cleverly reflects childhood misunderstandings of the biology of sexuality (along with the Munchkins being born from eggs and out of vegetation).

And indeed, the hourglass marks the end of Dorothy's life as a child, for while the sand falls, her internal functions – Toto, the Tin Man's heart, the Scarecrow's brain, and the Lion's courage – are constellating. The hourglass, a completely over-determined symbol, indicates the conclusion of Dorothy's youth and the beginning of her life as an adult.

XXX. AUNT EM IN THE CRYSTAL

The ending of one psychological state and the beginning of another is often a very traumatic event. The "death" of the outmoded way of functioning often feels like the death of the whole organism. Joseph Campbell marks this as a phase he calls "facing death" or "the belly of the whale." The terror at the loss of a known way of functioning can be overpowering. And this is what Dorothy now experiences.

In a last desperate attempt to hold on to the comforts of childhood, Dorothy cries out for her Aunt Em. When Dorothy pleads before the huge crystal for her Aunt Em, her last childhood wish is fulfilled, and Aunt Em magically

appears. Dorothy pours her heart out before the tragically unresponsive Aunt Em (remember she hadn't even been aware that Dorothy had run away before the tornado struck).

As if presenting one of the major problems Dorothy must solve – the resolution of the split mother image – Aunt Em slowly transforms into the Wicked Witch. What we see is the literal blending of the two aspects of the Mother image, the positive in Aunt Em and the negative in the Wicked Witch. Just as before, if we didn't see the relationship up till now, in this scene it is telegraphed loud and clear.





XXXI. THE RESCUERS

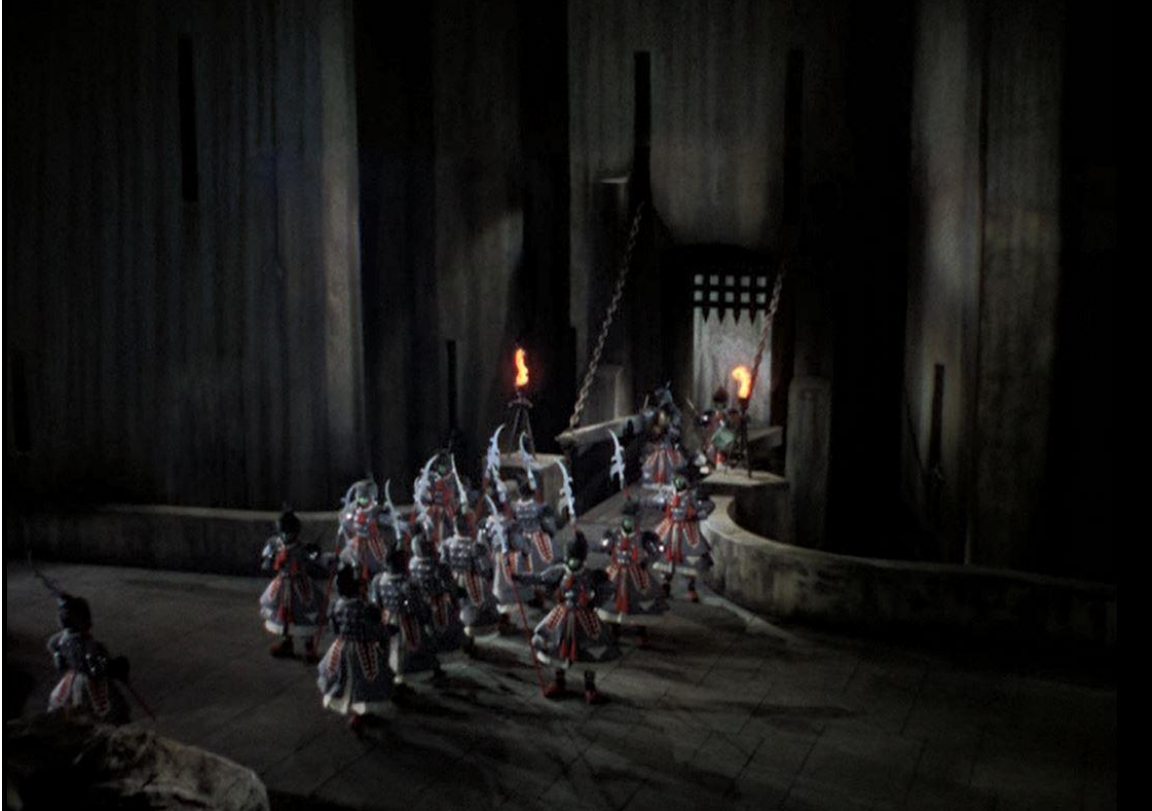
While Dorothy remains captive in the Witch's Castle, Toto rejoins the companions each of whom now displays in great abundance the exact qualities they felt themselves missing. The Scarecrow demonstrates a clear understanding of the situation – Toto has come to take them back to rescue Dorothy. The Lion, no longer a coward, leads the trio up the dark and

foreboding mountain to the evil castle. He even has the physical strength to support and care for the others.



From their hiding place behind some rocks, they first see the Witch's guard. Marching in lock step, their costumes have a slightly Russian, slightly Cossack flavor. This would reflect well America's ambivalent ideas about the Soviet Union in 1939. (The Soviets were our allies against Hitler, but they were nevertheless seen as a treat to America through Communist infiltration, especially through the trade unions and labor movements.) With their broad coats and the fur hats, we provide another association between fascism and the Wicked Witch. The fact that all the soldiers appear identical may be a

contemporary representation of “the enemy,” that is, faceless and without identity.



The Scarecrow comes up with a plan: The Lion is to lead. He faces his new role with trepidation. But, he says, for Dorothy he'll do it. However, as they approach the castle, their plans are abruptly changed by a chance encounter. Once again, logic and planning have given away to spontaneity and synchronicity.

At this point in their mutual psychological development, the trio is open to the influences of the Collective Unconscious. The almost constant plea we've heard throughout the film to give up logic and depend on the synchronistic

forces within the unconscious now comes to fruition. One who is too involved in the Ego state will reject seemingly random events as meaningless. However, a more balanced and mature psyche will be open to see the advantages offered by these synchronistic events. And this is what happens now.

XXXII. CHANGE OF COSTUMES

Their best opportunity to rescue Dorothy literally drops on them in the form of three of the Wicked Witch's guards pouncing on them. After a pitched battle, unseen behind some rocks, they emerge wearing the guards' uniforms.

We don't know if this was part of the Scarecrow's plan, but I doubt it. It feels like they took advantage of an apparently chance occurrence. They have now matured sufficiently to trust their own instincts and take advantage of synchronistic events offered them by the unconscious.



A change of clothing symbolizes a change in Persona, that outer most aspect of the personality we present to others in everyday life. Changing one's persona is something we do many times every day in the real world, but in the world of the unconscious – in dreams or free associations – the changing of clothes is much more difficult and dangerous. Without enough ego strength, the person can take on the affect of what the clothing represents and thus damage the personality.

We can be assured that that will not happen to the Lion, the Tin Man, or the Scarecrow. There is little chance that they will be tempted by the power

represented by the uniforms they now don. At this point they are powerful enough to subvert that evil power and turn it into good – Dorothy’s rescue.

So, they fall in with the long line of guards and march unmolested into the castle, the Lion no longer worrying about his bravery, but instead worrying that his tail will give them away. They do not fear being submerged into a collective and losing their individuality – their individuality has become strong enough to survive this dangerous mission. Once again, Toto leads the way, now to the strains of Mussorgsky’s *Night on Bald Mountain* giving the Witch’s Castle an appropriately ominous air.

XXXIII. RESCUE AND REUNION

Now the Tin Man, frozen in mid-chop at the beginning of the film, easily chops down the heavy door just in time to save Dorothy as the hourglass runs out of sand.

Dorothy is saved! At the level of the text, this makes no sense. How could the simple presence of her companions save her from the death ordained by the Witch? They don’t do anything! They don’t kill a threatening snake or dragon, they don’t remove a curse, and they don’t help her run away, they don’t even smash the hourglass. All they do is show up!

If we look at the psychological subtext, however, the explanation is clear. After Dorothy’s kidnap, the three companions have had to function

individually and have matured tremendously in just a few minutes. The Wicked Witch's lethal threats against Dorothy are the same as her previous attempts: to keep Dorothy in a child-like state. Here death is symbolic of regression, a return to the (ultimate) womb. Stripped of her newly acquired confidence in her own intelligence (externally projected by the Scarecrow), empathy (the Tin Man), and courage (the Lion), she is vulnerable to the temptations of regression. After all, we just saw her beg before the image of Aunt Em for the regressive comforts of home and mothering. However, united with her newly found internal qualities – and their external manifestations – Dorothy is saved from the death/regression planned by the Wicked Witch.

Reunited, Dorothy and her companion now represent a psychological whole. They are finally ready to deal with the problems Dorothy must solve before she can return to Kansas – the child's relationship with Mother and with Father.

XXXIV. TRAPPED BY THE WITCH

The Wicked Witch suddenly breaks in on the reunion and they run away in a desperate attempt to flee. But the Witch, her Cossack guards and the flying monkeys quickly trap them. The fully constellated Dorothy is now faced with a fully constellated enemy. While Dorothy is consciously trying to escape facing the Evil Mother, the unconscious forces Dorothy has activated now force the issue. There is no escape.

The Scarecrow's plan, even though it is only temporarily successful, represents an integration of the various psychological elements we have been following. In most film stories, the Scarecrow would have engineered their escape by himself (in a demonstration of the strength, and perhaps inflation, of the individual ego). However, to show how the various symbolic functions are now interdependent, the Scarecrow uses the Tin Man's ax to drop the chandelier on the guards. (Solo acts from now on will be rare.) And that the Scarecrow uses the *Tin Man's* ax, the first time in the film that any of the companions have interacted this closely, indicates their integration.

Once the chandelier has disabled the guards, the chase is on again. The Witch sends half her troops in one direction and half in the other. Since the Witch herself represents a splitting of the Mother Image, her nature is to divide – she divides her army, she tries to divide Dorothy and her companions. And as we shall shortly see, she represents the opposite of Dorothy in other ways too.

Again, the film improves on the book to make a better psychological parable. In Baum's version, the Tin Woodsman and the Scarecrow were injured by the Flying Monkeys and were stranded in a wasteland. The Cowardly Lion was imprisoned. It is Dorothy alone who conquers the Wicked Witch and rescues her friends, lionizing the role of the heroic ego. Little growth can result without the integration of the various parts of the personality and the book's Dorothy exhibits little change during her encounter with the Wicked Witch. Being rescued by the alienated portions of the personality, as in the film, shows the ego being not only rescued and reunited with these divorced

aspects of the personality, but, since Dorothy goes to great lengths to protect them, there are strong signs of integration.

XXXV. CORNERED/WATER

They are trapped again, this time on one of the high parapets of the castle. This is the highest physical point in the film, and it is simultaneously the apex of the story.

The Wicked Witch wants to kill Dorothy's friends before killing her. In other words, she wants to strip Dorothy of her newly acquired psychological skills and maturity. Again, she wants to return Dorothy to her previous state of childhood.

The Witch sets fire to the Scarecrow. In response, Dorothy does something that uses all the various skills and the self-realization she has acquired during her long journey down the Yellow Brick Road. She feels deeply about the Scarecrow and is horrified to see him on fire. She has the courage to act on her feelings. And she uses her intelligence to find a handy bucket of water to put out the fire on the Scarecrow's arm. Thus, the combination of intelligence, feeling, and courage leads her to toss the bucket of water. (In the book, Dorothy's motivations are baser – she tosses a bucket of water at the Wicked Witch in a fit of anger.)



Thus, it is by accident (again) that she kills the second witch. While in the killing of the first Witch, Dorothy was completely passive. The house simply dropped on the Witch. Indeed, it was some time until Dorothy learned she had killed a Witch. The killing of the first Witch was controlled completely by her unconscious without any intervention by Dorothy's consciousness. It was a passive act in comparison to this very active act.



Now, the killing of the second Witch has both similarities and important differences. The accidental nature of the assassination – Dorothy doesn't know that water is lethal to the Witch – indicates the strong participation by the unconscious. Perhaps to some extent the unconscious, in its connection with the vast knowledge of the Collective Unconscious, knows about the effect of the water on the Witch. However, Dorothy consciously picks up the bucket to throw the water for a completely different reason. Thus, a balance between the unconscious and the conscious minds controls this second lethal encounter with the Witch.

There are several alchemical references here, too. Dorothy did not intend to kill either of the Witches, but by using the basic alchemical elements, first air and now water, she has done so. She used of air was in opposition to earth (the house falling from the sky) in killing the first witch, and now she uses water in opposition to fire. The dispersing of the Wicked Witch's inflated ego – and we see a literal deflation – in alchemy is called *solutio*, i.e., to make liquid, to liquify.

Within the psychological and symbolic background that we have developed, we are now ready to answer one of the great mysteries of *The Wizard of Oz*, why is it specifically water that kills the Wicked Witch? Actually, there are several answers.

First, since antiquity water has been used to test for witches. Typically, a suspected witch is bound and immersed in water. Water, being a pure fluid, will reject a witch, that is, she will float. Thus identified, the witch will be executed in some other way, often by burning. If the water accepts the suspect, that is she drowns, she is then (posthumously, unfortunately) declared innocent. But this traditional relation between witches and water doesn't explain exactly what happens to the Wicked Witch of the West.

Second, the act of throwing the water at the Scarecrow goes beyond saving a friend's life. Dorothy is almost literally watering the land (remember, the Scarecrow at the beginning of the film represented non-functional agriculture both at the economic and psychological levels). By nourishing the land, by giving water to "Mother Earth," the ultimate feminine goddess, Dorothy

empowers and nourishes the positive feminine element. And as the positive feminine grows, so the negative feminine, the Wicked Witch, must shrink.



A contemporary Green Man garden plaque.

From still another point of view, we have seen that the Wicked Witch's purpose is to prevent Dorothy from growing up, and thus she represents non-growth. This state must be extremely difficult for someone who is green, the color of vegetation, to maintain. For instance, in most myths, the traditional

Green Man represents fecundity. It must be only with great difficulty that the green Wicked Witch holds growth in check. We can see this both in her body, unnourished and thin, and in her gaunt, bony face. Thus, when Dorothy throws the bucket of water at the Witch, it is equivalent of watering a plant. But since the Witch represents non-growth, it has just the opposite effect on her and kills her.

The shrinking of the Wicked Witch is appropriate in other ways, too. Part of Dorothy's maturation is being able to size up people and correctly judge their nature. The shrinking tells Dorothy that the witch was not really as big a problem as she once thought. After this experience, it would be interesting to see how Dorothy's attitude toward Mrs. Gulch has changed once she returns to Kansas.

Another aspect of the witch's reduction in stature is in relation to Dorothy's size. In this sense, the disempowering of the "big" witch is the same as Dorothy's meeting with the Munchkins. Just as the immature Dorothy lorded it over the diminutive Munchkins in a primitive attempt to get power over the adult world, now Dorothy actively sees through and deflates the negative aspects of adult power. Dorothy has earned her stature.

Fearing that the Witch's guards will be vengeful after the Wicked Witch of the West's death, Dorothy quickly (and politely) apologizes for what she sees as an(other) accidental death. Her perspective on taking responsibility for what she has done, accidentally or not, has changed little over her adventure. This politeness, and many other personality traits she acquired in her positive

and traditional Kansas upbringing, serves her well. However, she quickly learns that, just as she did for the Munchkins, she has released the guards from the Witch's despotic rule. They reward her with the now slightly singed broomstick that she and her companions can now take back to the Wizard to collect their boons.



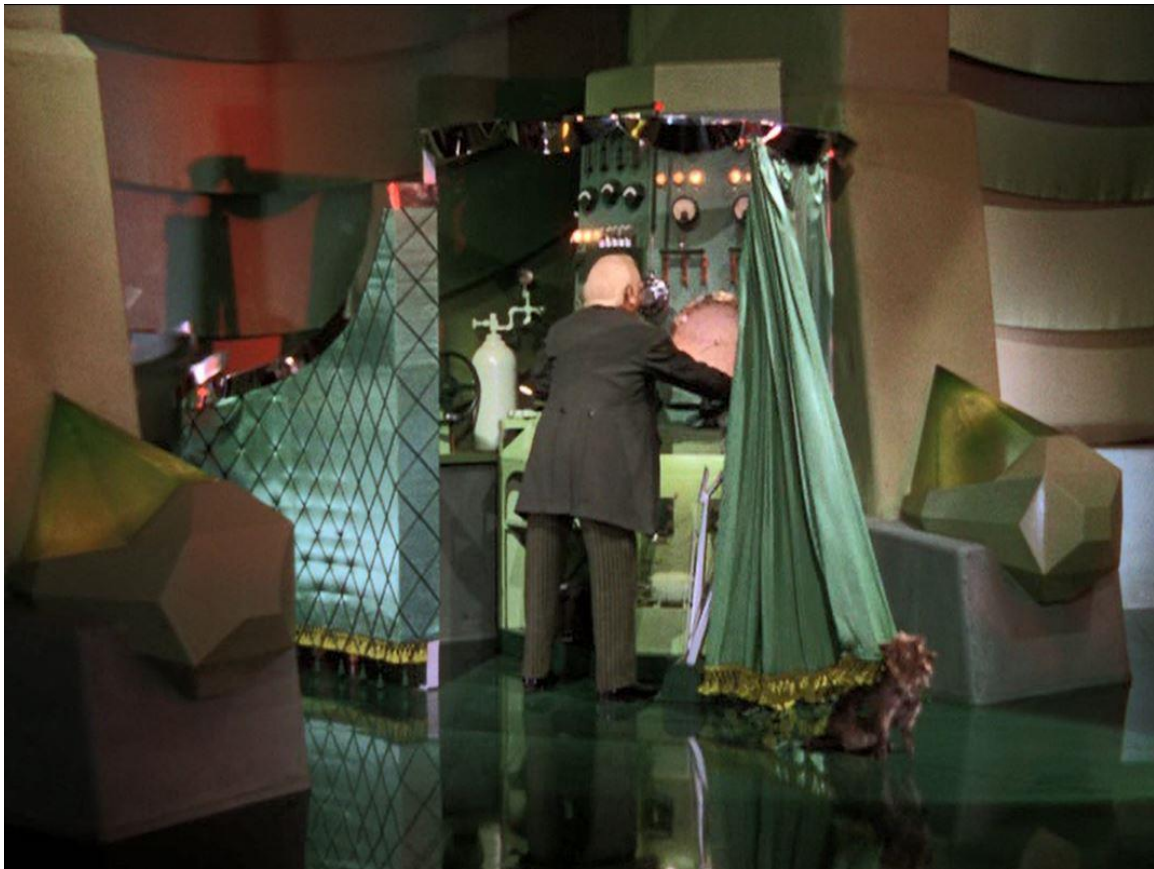
Dorothy's long growth and evolution can be measured by the difference in the rewards she garners for the killing of the two witches. The phallic power contained in the broomstick is a far cry from the lollipops and ballet she got in Munchkinland.

There is, however, one difference between the death of the Wicked Witch of the West in the castle and the Wicked Witch of the East in Munchkinland. The Eastern witch didn't resemble the Munchkins whereas her Western sister's physiognomy strongly resembles that of her guards: green skin, long noses and chins. We must wonder what is the relation between the guards and the witch? Are they related? Mother and children perhaps? If so, we have just witnessed a celebration of a variation on matricide! If this is the case, we can see this scenario is an odd, female variation on the ancient Oedipal theme. Here Dorothy kills their mother figure and acquires the love and respect of the sons.

The psychological message of this segment of *The Wizard of Oz* is clear. Only after Dorothy is reunited with the three aspects of herself, each now matured fully, can she undertake this most difficult task – obtaining the phallic power of the broomstick. The conscious and the unconscious now work in harmony: during the conscious act of caring for a friend, the unconscious has solved much greater and deeper problems. Yet Dorothy's psychological journey is not over, she has yet further tasks to accomplish.

XXXVI. THE WIZARD REVEALED

Thinking that their collective tasks are complete, so with a new confidence and calm, Dorothy and her friends appear before the Wizard broomstick in hand. Once again, the film stresses the sexuality of Dorothy's maturation process using the phallic broomstick as the prize to be obtained from the Witch's demise. (In the book, there is no mention of a broomstick; the Wizard only asks that they kill the Witch.)



Proudly, they offer the broomstick to the Wizard. Confronted, he stalls for time. While the quartet complains and stands up to the Wizard insisting that he honor his contract with them, Toto runs off and pulls back the curtain. He reveals a little man (again played by the ever-present Frank Morgan) who is using a device to imitate the “great and powerful Wizard of Oz.” This is in stark contrast to the book where the revelation of the Wizard is strictly accidental. The film constantly reinforces the idea that Toto is a projection of Dorothy’s instinct.

The quartet is shocked to learn that the Wizard is literally (and metaphorically) a projection. It turns out that the four travelers disempowered themselves while investing their power and their destinies into the Wizard while he never really had any himself. This is a good example of the dangers of projection. With it, we disempower ourselves and empower others, and often they use that power against us. The Wizard apparently sensed this in the quartet’s vulnerability on their first appeal. He manipulated them for his own benefit – to gain the broomstick and its power for himself.

What the Wizard hadn’t counted on is Dorothy’s growth. She and her companions have grown in self-confidence as characters; as projections of Dorothy’s psyche, they have not only increased in strength, but also have become differentiated entities within her psyche. And Dorothy-as-ego has integrated them into her overall personality. Had she not done this, Dorothy would now not have the strength to face the final challenge of her maturation process: withdrawing her projections from the Father image. Dorothy, after gaining all the powers necessary to survive the psychological transition from

childhood to adulthood, is now ready to get in touch with reality and leave behind the comfortable and innocent fantasies of childhood.

By withdrawing their projections from the Wizard, the Tin Man, the Scarecrow, and the Lion find that what they thought they were “missing,” the exact qualities they projected onto the Wizard, are now their own. Of course, they were within all along – *we* could see it from the start. But this is what projection does: it but it not only blinds a person to his or her own qualities, but it also robs the person of those qualities at the same time.

Dorothy’s own experiences with the Wizard at this point are especially telling. Just as Dorothy deals with the love/hate relation every daughter has with her mother at some point in her maturation, now she deals with the father. She accuses the Wizard of being a bad man. He heartbreakingly corrects her by saying that he is a bad wizard but a good man. This recaps in a nutshell every child’s realization about the father.

To the young child, the father is a magical being. When very young, the child sees the father as all-powerful, a wizard. At one point, the child discovers that the father is human after all and not god-like. We expect our fathers to be wizards and when they fail miserably on that score, hate can result. Here the Wizard points out what every child must learn, the father may be a bad wizard, but is still a loving father and a good person.

Dorothy also learns about the weakness of adults in general (recall Aunt Em’s and especially Uncle Henry’s weakness in the face of Miss Gulch’s threats).

She learns that even a child can take possession of his or her own life without depending on undependable adults. And this is a good preparation for adult life, a life away from the regressive comforts of home, a life independent of parental figures, a life on one's own, a life in which the authority figures in whom we invest so much of ourselves turn out to have feet of clay. As substitutes for the absolutism of parental authority, there will always be true and understanding friends and loved ones we can turn to. And, if maturation is successful, a new, more rewarding relationship will be forged with the mother and the father.

Dorothy's realization about the true nature of the Wizard – that he is a bad Wizard but a good man – resolves the split in the father image. She integrates the weak and the strong masculine and comes to terms with the reality of the father – imperfect, but loving and human. It is interesting that she never accomplishes this degree of integration of the split, good/bad, mother image. She never actually resolves the split between Miss Gulch and Aunt Em or between the Wicked Witch and Glinda. This is odd because the film invests so much energy into the various female figures while showing the male figures only passingly. Perhaps the film is saying that it is easier for a young woman to resolve the issues with her father, a female Oedipus complex, than it is to resolve the apparently more complex Mother issues.

As has been true throughout the film, it is Toto that is the driving force in revealing the Wizard. It is interesting to compare Toto's role in the film to that in the original book. Baum's Toto had a far smaller role than the dog in the film. In the book's version of the story, Toto accidentally knocks down

the screen to reveal the sham wizard. In the film, Toto is obviously an active player – I claim a major player – in Dorothy’s successful rite of passage from childhood into young adulthood.

So far, we have looked at the Wizard only in relation to Dorothy and her internal struggle. However, he is a fascinating character in his own right. He seems preoccupied with living up to other people’s expectations of him. He wants to say yes to Dorothy and her companions despite knowing quite well that he cannot come through for them. The same is true of the residents of the Emerald City – he wants to be a good leader even though he knows he’s a fraud. In psychological terms, he has become over-identified with his Persona, that outer most layer of the personality that we present to the public.

In a healthy individual, the persona is flexible and responsive to the psychological environment. For instance, we put on a different “face” or Persona during a job interview than when going out with friends. Much of the Persona is a response to what others expect of us. However, this must be kept in check. If the Persona gets frozen, the person will present an inappropriate “face” in many situations. The Wizard’s problem is that he has submerged his ego – his own personality – in preference to what others expect him to be. (This is much like a modern man who becomes over-identified with his job and has no life outside of work.)

Once Dorothy confronts him, the Wizard is forced to admit his own failings. This leads to his growth – and thereby he contributes to the growth of the others. Once he admits that he’s a bad wizard, he comes to the realization that

at his center he is a good man. And in that good man role, he can help Dorothy and her companions achieve their goals of psychological fulfillment. Only when one's problems are resolved (or at least in the processes of resolution) can one become a catalyst for the healing of others.

XVII. THE WIZARD'S AWARDS

In a series of delightfully satiric comments on contemporary society, the Wizard gives each of Dorothy's companions a symbol that represents their internal state (in this way he acts much like a psychotherapist bring out from a patient's unconscious what is already there).

To the Scarecrow goes a diploma; to the Lion a medal for bravery; and to the Tin Man a testimonial. (Of course, the Scarecrow is no smarter after receiving his diploma than he was before. But, parents beware, a smart kid can take this argument to its obvious conclusion, if my report card grades don't make me any smarter, why should I bother?)

While Dorothy's companions have now realized that they contain within themselves that which they thought they were lacking, and they have redeemed what was previously projected, they still need some externalized symbol of what is internal. This seems a common human desire. Total internalization is not fully satisfying, we seem to need an externalization of some sort as if to be able to step back, look at ourselves, and come to a satisfactory evaluation of a job well done or a state accomplished. We see this

every day in our culture: uniforms, religious garb, fashion/fad clothing, initials before and after names, tattoos, etc. Yet, since Dorothy seems to have no need for this externalization of her internal growth, she is truly ready to “return home.”

XVIII. THE WIZARD’S OFFER

In desperation – and at the insistence of Dorothy’s companions – the Wizard offers to take Dorothy home himself. This is a dangerous and regressive offer. While she has liberally taken advice and guidance from others, so far Dorothy has acted pretty much on her own, performing various tasks and overcoming obstacles. She’s never been given a free ride.

The Wizard’s offer constitutes one last attempt of the patriarchy to disempower Dorothy. Were she to accept the ride home in the Wizard’s balloon, she would lose all the personal power she has gathered along the Yellow Brick Road and she would abandon all that she has learned about dealing with a youthful and distorted mother- and father-image.

The Wizard prepares his balloon. The symbolism is clear: The Wizard is not only a humbug, but his means of getting Dorothy back to Kansas is full of hot air. His arrival in Oz was due to his inability to control the balloon. Back in the Midwest, he was a carnival worker not too dissimilar from Professor Miracle (a point made quite clear in the film by having the same actor play both roles).



Strangely, once having arrived in Oz, he was “instantly proclaimed Oz, the First Wizard, Deluxe.” Perhaps any strange figure entering their lives from the sky – a domain of the gods – would be impressive enough. And certainly, the Wizard is a good talker. While inflated and full of hot air, the Wizard is not a stupid man – he quite practically kept his balloon conveniently parked in case he needed it for a hasty getaway.

XXXIX. DOROTHY MISSES HER RIDE HOME

The Wizard decrees that the future administration of the Emerald City to be in the hands of the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Lion by virtue of their attributes. Indeed, the combination of intelligence, courage, and sensitivity would make for a fine governing body – something that was, perhaps, missing during the Depression Era in America (and perhaps still is).

Here again the film improves on the book in terms of psychology. Baum left the Scarecrow in charge of the Emerald City. This implies that Baum favored an administration based on intellect. The film believes that in the proper administration of a city, the intellectual must be balanced with appropriate doses of emotion and courage – thus the triumvirate of the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Lion to provide checks and balances (shades of the Continental Congress of 1789 finishing the Constitution).

Just when everyone is all set to leave and apparently all the problems have been solved, Toto spoils the show . . . again. Toto first got Dorothy into trouble with Mrs. Gulch way back in Kansas by chasing her cat – an act he now repeats here in the Emerald City. Toto's first "transgression" set into motion a series of interlocking events that set Dorothy on the road to maturation. Toto began Dorothy's journey into adulthood by pursuing a cat, he now concludes her journey with the same cat-chasing act – a truly satisfy symmetry.



Dorothy seems to have matured and is on the verge of returning home. However, on closer inspection we can see that she is not yet ready. Psychic development in isolation, that is, remaining in the unconscious, is of little use because the ego cannot easily access it. The last step in development, therefore, is bringing the new learning from the unconscious to consciousness where it can be of use to the whole personality. This is the essence of the journey from Oz, the land of the unconscious, back to Kansas, the conscious world. However, there are complications.

Because of Toto, Dorothy misses her easy ride home provided by the masculine element, the false Wizard. Indeed, the Wizard, floating away, admits that he doesn't know how the balloon works – a significant admission on the part of the patriarchy that had just tried to take over Dorothy's life.

Had she caught the ride home in the balloon, it would not have boded well for her future in several ways: first, because it is given to her and not earned, second, it is under the control of the inflated patriarchy as would be most of the roles available to women in 1939, and third, all her efforts to mature would have remained inaccessible in her unconscious.

In response to Dorothy's great disappointment in missing her ride back to Kansas, Glinda arrives to straighten things out.

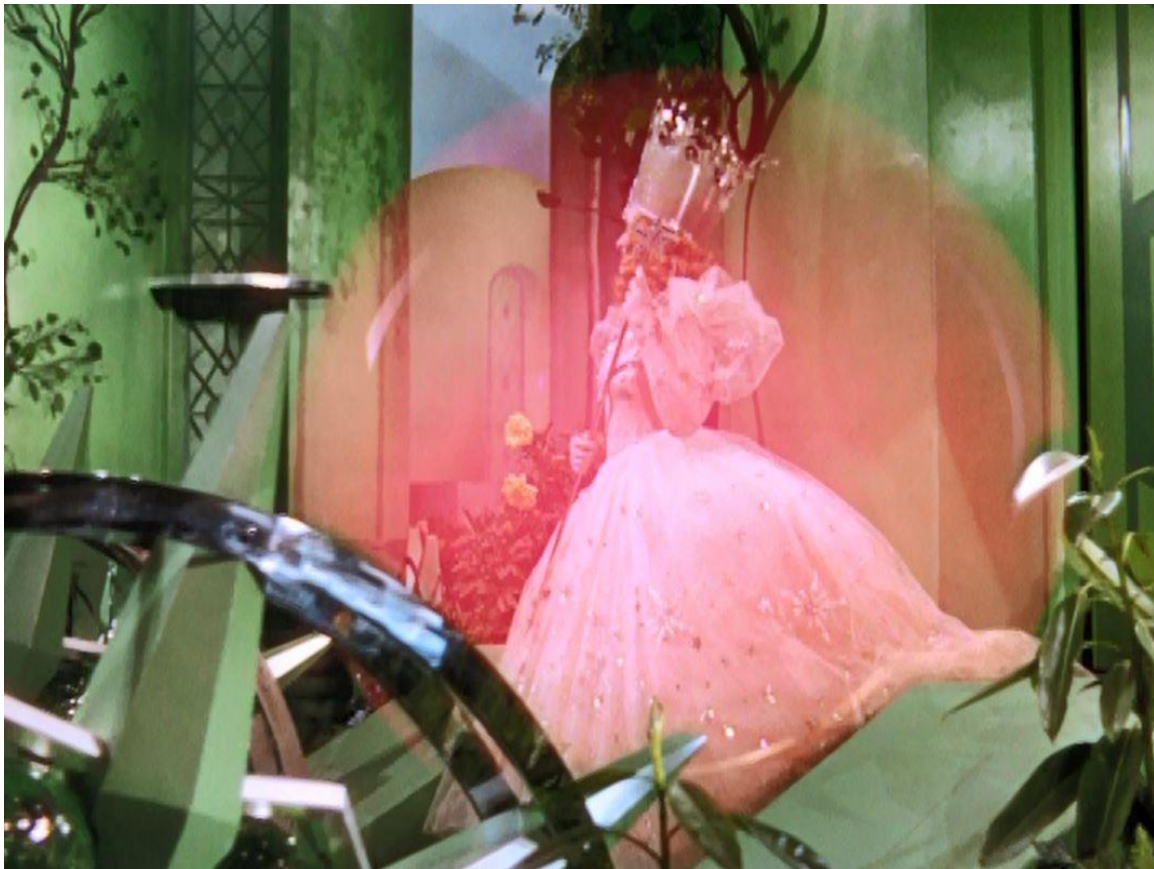
XL. GLINDA'S ADVICE

It is at this point that we finally understand Glinda's significance. I have mentioned above that the sphere is often used to symbolize totality of the psyche – the Self. We have seen this in Professor Marvel's crystal ball and in the Wicked Witch's television-like crystal (both symbols of seeing all and knowing all).

In Carl Jung's book on symbolism, Marie-Louise von Franz describes the organic and inorganic images used to convey the totality of a person's inner workings – the Self. To the inorganic images of the sphere, she adds a

superior human as the symbolization the Self. For women, these are typically powerful goddesses (like the Greek goddess Demeter) or magical fairy godmothers (as in the understanding and magical one in *Cinderella*).

Glinda is a most powerful symbolization of the Self cleverly combining both the sphere imagery and the magical, powerful and wise superior woman. (Again, there is no mention of the sphere in the Baum book.) And it is perfectly reasonable for this manifestation of the Self Archetype to tell Dorothy to look within herself and find there the fact that she has been complete and powerful all along – she had the power to go back to Kansas from the moment she arrived in Oz.



We now come to the philosophical and psychological center of the film: Dorothy decides that “there is no place like home.” According to Cirlot, mystics have always traditionally considered the feminine aspect of the universe to be a chest, an enclosed garden, or – most importantly here – a house. Bayley says a house is a repository of all wisdom and tradition. After her considerably journey, it is no wonder Dorothy would seek repose in the psychological locus signified by “home.”

Glinda, of course, tells Dorothy she’s always had the power to return to Kansas. But had she not been told by this powerful internal force, Dorothy would not have believed it. This is something she must take full possession of for herself.

Dorothy now knows at the level of the text that there is no need to look beyond her home, that is, the small circle of family and friends, for the love a young person needs. At the level of the subtext, she has learned that maturation comes from within by simply recognizing and developing the positive characteristics that lay nascent in the child but must become active in the healthy adult.

By clicking the Ruby Slippers together (which, in terms of transportation, are first cousins to the god Mercury’s winged sandals), Dorothy symbolically puts her newfound female maturity to work. As I mentioned above, the red shoes are a symbol of menstruation. The Witch doesn’t want Dorothy to have them because she is a regressive force trying to keep Dorothy in a

permanently infantile state. Mature Dorothy recognizes her “red shoes” and finds that what they symbolize – maturity – can get her back “home,” that is, return to the world of consciousness a mature woman.



If this aspect of the story has a hint of feminism to it, that may not be at all by accident. Baum’s mother-in-law was Matilda Joslyn Gage, an influential 19th century suffragette and a colleague of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Baum also edited a newspaper that made crusading for women’s right a major issue and was also his local women’s suffrage club secretary.

XLI. RETURN TO KANSAS

On her return, Dorothy describes Oz as both a wonderful and a frightening place. This is appropriate description of anyone's journey of transition from childhood to adulthood with its complications and consequences – wonderful and frightening.

One of the biggest problems *The Wizard of Oz* presents to its audiences, especially modern audiences, is the concept of home. If we look at the film famous motto, "There's no place like home," from a sociological point of view we get a very different set of meanings than if we take it as a psychological metaphor.

To a modern audience, the concept of staying home implies the subjugation of women to traditional gender roles. If "there's no place like home," Dorothy will remain on the farm, not go to college, and not pursue a career of her own. Rather, she will marry a neighbor and continue in the farming life (not that there is anything inherently wrong with farm life if it is chosen from a position of decision making power and not foisted on a woman either because of a lack of alternates or because of ignorance of other possibilities). Is Dorothy's home to be nothing more than the patriarchal home that would be venerated two decades later by immigrant band leader Ricky Ricardo greeting Lucy with, "Honey, I'm Home?"

This view is reinforced by the visual appearance of the film itself. Home is photographed in monochrome sepia in stark contrast to the vibrant color of Oz. This makes it clear that “home” is a place of stability and constancy. No more violent surprises of Oz; now Dorothy must get on with her life. And that life for a woman in 1939 Middle America would be one of steadiness, balance and (unfortunately) endurance.

If, however, we look at the conclusion of *The Wizard of Oz* from a psychological point of view, then “home” means something very different – home is the psyche. In stating that “there’s no place like home,” Dorothy is saying that relying on her own individual and now fully developed internal functions is best and that external influences are to be avoided (including the influence of the patriarchy). Thus “there’s no place like home” becomes a plea for both psychological strength and independence – something far more acceptable to contemporary audiences.

XLII – THE NEXT DAY

At the end of the film, we have a disturbing and emotionally charged unresolved issue. Presuming he survived the tornado, the sheriff is coming the next day to pick up Toto and do away with him. At the level of the text, this would be a tragedy, especially to the small fry watching the film (if they are at an age that can figure that far into the future). At the symbolic level, on the other hand, we get a very different answer. Dorothy no longer needs Toto!

Throughout the film, as we have seen, Toto gets Dorothy into trouble – just the right kind of trouble at just the right time to push her down the inevitable toad toward maturation. As I mentioned at the beginning of this essay, Dorothy begins the film as a whiny little brat but ends a composed, self-confident young adult – seemingly years older – ready to become a member of adult society. Toto represents Dorothy’s instinct to bridge the gap from childhood to adolescence and he has done his task well. While at the level of text, Dorothy would certainly be broken hearted with Toto’s demise, but at the psychological level, Dorothy has bridged the gap between childhood and youth and is no longer in need of the psychological Toto’s instinctive services. Of course, she will need some other (or several) Archetypal guide(s) for his next life’s transition. But that is another story.

Ultimately, *The Wizard of Oz* is a film that reassures us all, children and adults alike, that the problems of childhood – and the problems of adulthood – can be successfully overcome as can the insecurities we drag with us from one state of maturation to the next. Self-esteem, according to the film, is a delicate balance between recognizing one’s potentials of intelligence, courage, and compassion. In this sense, *The Wizard of Oz* becomes not only one of America’s most popular movies, but one of its wisest.

The Wizard of Oz. Starring: Judy Garland, Frank Morgan, Ray Bolger, Bert Lahr, Jack Haley, Billie Burke, Margaret Hamilton, Charley Grapewin, Clara Blandick.

Directed by Victor Fleming. Produced by Mervyn LeRoy. Screenplay Noel Langley, John Lee Mahin, Florence Ryerson and Edgar Allan Woolf from the novel by L. Frank Baum, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Photographed by Harold Rosson. Music by Harold Arlen. Lyrics by E. Y. Harberg. Edited by Blanche Sewell. Distributed by MGM, 1939.

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